

Summary – Doctoral Thesis *Second Nature: A Contribution to the Social Philosophy of Art* (Jakub Stejskal)

In what sense can one speak of art as a source of insight into the social? In my thesis I focus on criticizing a position that explains art's social-cognitive potential in terms of its purported intrinsic adherence to a normative view of society as a reconciled second nature: Art either offers insight into the nature of social reality as such a second nature or it makes us feel its unreconciled condition and becomes a promise of reconciliation. I identify two traditions of art interpretation holding this position, which both have their intellectual roots in early German Idealism: the Frankfurt Critical Theory and analytic Kantian Revisionism. In the writings of their adherents art is – implicitly or explicitly – understood essentially as a means of enchantment and affirmation that can at most suppress its affirmative character in the name of future reconciliation. Against this conception I develop an understanding of artistic modernism as belonging to an aesthetics of disenchantment, which takes art to be a way of establishing a specific cognitive distance from the social second nature without evoking reconciliation.