



# Adorno and Philosophical Modernism: The Inside of Things

*Roger S. Foster*

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## **Adorno and Philosophical Modernism: The Inside of Things** Roger S. Foster

Adorno and Philosophical Modernism: The Inside of Things offers an original interpretation and vigorous defense of Theodor Adorno's idea of philosophy as the practice of what Roger Foster calls "philosophical modernism." Adorno's philosophical writings, from the early 1930s to the mature works of the late 1960s, are deeply informed by a distinctively modernist vision of human experience. This book seeks to establish that Adorno's unique and lasting contribution to philosophy consists in his sustained and rigorous development of this modernist vision into an encompassing practice of philosophical interpretation. The essential features of this vision can be discerned in all of Adorno's major writings in philosophy, social theory, and aesthetics. Its defining element is the idea of a pattern underlying ordinary experience, which, although not directly accessible, can be disclosed by the reconstructive work of philosophical or literary language. This vision, Foster argues, can be discerned in the major works of literary modernism (including Woolf, Proust, and Musil) as well as in the interpretive technique of psychoanalysis developed by Sigmund Freud. The importance of Adorno's contribution to twentieth-century philosophy can only be fully appreciated by understanding how he developed this vision into an overarching practice of philosophical interpretation that furnished a coherent and profound response to the decay of experience afflicting late-modern societies. In this book, Foster expounds that interpretive practice, exploring its ramifications and, in particular, its relation with literary modernism, and places it in critical dialogue with alternative philosophical responses.

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