

Stefano Marino, Giovanni Matteucci  
*The Dark Side of the Truth. Nature and Natural Beauty in Adorno*

Dipartimento di Scienze per la Qualità della Vita  
Università degli Studi di Bologna  
Italia  
e-mail: stefano.marino4@unibo.it, giovanni.matteucci@unibo.it

The concept of nature plays a decisive role in Adorno's philosophy, and must be understood as part of a conceptual constellation that also includes the notions of myth, enlightenment, dialectics, fate, reason, conceptuality, knowledge, freedom, society, and history. In the first section we provide a general analysis of the role played by the concept of nature in Adorno's philosophy. In doing so, we mostly concentrate on his works *The Idea of Natural History*, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *Minima Moralia*, *Negative Dialectics*, and also his 1964-65 lectures on *History and Freedom*. In the second section, then, we turn to Adorno's aesthetics, which must not be merely understood as a philosophy of art but rather as a general theory of the aesthetic that also includes nature among its objects. On this basis, and by referring not only to Adorno's posthumously published *Aesthetic Theory* but also to his 1958-59 lecture course on *Aesthetics*, we explain why, in our view, the question concerning natural beauty holds a special place in the whole of his aesthetics, and why this question is essential indeed in order to properly understand the general meaning, philosophical range and ultimate goals of his philosophical project.