

The Philosopher and the Poet:
An Impossible Dialogue (continued)

Brenda Machosky

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In beginning “An Impossible Dialogue” between Heidegger and Hegel, Dominique Janicaud notes “a certain series of [Heideggerian] texts [that] inevitably present themselves.”¹ Janicaud does not limit himself to these texts; however, nowhere in the essay does he mention Heidegger’s *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* from 1935-36. In the *Nachwort* to that essay, Heidegger directly confronts Hegel’s judgment about art, admitting in this afterword to his own lengthy treatise on art, that “the truth of Hegel’s judgment has not yet been decided.”² Heidegger also credits Hegel’s *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* as “the most comprehensive reflection on the nature of art that the West possesses.”³ Heidegger paraphrases Hegel’s famous pronouncement that art is and remains a thing of the past as a question: “Is art an essential and necessary way in which that truth happens which is decisive for our historical existence, or is art no longer of this character?” The question of art is, for Heidegger, the question of truth.⁴ For Hegel, philosophy is this truth, but within this philosophy and by means of a continued dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger, art shows itself to be the essential and necessary way in which truth happens in philosophy.

Janicaud identifies “the most secret point of proximity” between Hegel and Heidegger lying “hidden in the friction with regard to phenomenology.”⁵ He points out that Heidegger’s phenomenology is quite similar to Hegel’s. As cited by Janicaud, “. . . Spirit is not the object of a phenomenology. Here ‘phenomenology’ . . . is not one way among many, but the manner in which spirit itself exists. The phenomenology of Spirit is *das eigentliche und ganze Auftreten des Geistes* (the genuine and total coming [stepping] out of spirit).” In Janicaud’s summation, “Hegelian phenomenology is ‘the science of the experience of consciousness’ . . . and is itself

¹ Dominique Janicaud, “Heidegger-Hegel: An Impossible Dialogue,” trans. Nina Belmonte, in *Endings: Questions of Memory in Hegel and Heidegger* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1999), p. 26.

² Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art” (hereafter OWA) in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 80. [*Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* in *Holzwege* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994), p. 68.]

³ OWA p. 79; Holzwege, p. 67.

⁴ Heidegger begins his own essay with the observation, “Art – this is nothing more than a word to which nothing real any longer corresponds (17) [*Die Kunst, das ist nur noch ein Wort, dem nichts Wirkliches mehr entspricht* (Holzwege 2)]. For Heidegger, the question of art is tantamount to the question of being and to the fundamental ontology which Janicaud identifies in both philosophers.

⁵ Janicaud p. 41.

implicated in this experience. It should be understood, says Heidegger, as *die Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft*, the self-presentation of reason.”⁶ Likewise for Heidegger’s own work. Being is not the object of a phenomenology but phenomenology is the experience by which Being appears. I agree with Janicaud when he says, “this word, *Selbstdarstellung*, says everything.” I want only to explore more fully this saying.

True to its literary roots, *Selbstdarstellung* speaks poetically. *Darstellung* is essentially dramatization, and it is therefore entirely appropriate for Janicaud to stage a dialogue, complete with personified figures, in order to interrogate the *Selbstdarstellung* of Spirit and Being. We should keep in mind Janicaud’s rhetorical question, “Isn’t this an artificial, rhetorical operation which courts disaster by making Hegel and Heidegger appear to be two subjectivities each presenting a ‘point of view’?” To say “Hegel” and “Heidegger” in this way is to stage the philosophy in the persona of the philosopher. The “self” or subjectivity of the individual is itself *dargestellt*, presented or represented. The self of *Selbstdarstellung* is necessarily a divided self. The subjectivity of the self is itself staged within the staging of reason, of reason presenting or representing itself. Such a presentation cannot be accomplished “scientifically” but only phenomenologically, as *Darstellung*. In Hegel, the *Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft* is expressed as Spirit; in Heidegger, it is expressed as Being. Hegel and Heidegger both depend on the structure of the phenomenon.

In *The History of the Concept of Time*, Heidegger shows that appearance [*Erscheinung*] is itself phenomenal. Assuming that appearance is something and as something it can be grasped phenomenologically (and not merely conceptually), Heidegger subjects appearance as such to the phenomenological reduction. He begins with the usual conceptual understanding in which appearance reflects the privilege of the essence over the material in a metaphysical system.

Appearances are themselves occurrences which refer back to other occurrences from which we can infer something else which does not make an appearance. Appearances are appearances of something which is not given as an appearance. Appearance has the distinguishing feature of reference.⁷

In this metaphysical structure, appearances refer as their primary function, and presumably the appearances indicate meaning without getting in its way. “The term appearance [*Erscheinung*] therefore means a kind of reference of

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *The History of the Concept of Time* (hereafter HCT), tr. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana UP, 1992), p. 82.

something to something which does not show itself in itself.” In metaphysics, appearances indicate or announce something that is not itself present, and once this function is performed, the appearance disappears into the meaning, the physical yields to the metaphysical.⁸

However, Heidegger then shows that “the possibility of appearance as reference of something to something rests on having that something which does the referring show itself in itself. . . The structure of appearance as reference already intrinsically presupposes the more original structure of self-showing.”⁹ Heidegger thus distinguishes between the ontic understanding of appearance as reference and the ontological understanding of appearance as presentation, as *Darstellung*, which is far more complex and contradictory: “Appearance implies something which appears, and at the opposite pole, something which does not appear.”¹⁰ Heidegger thereby clarifies that phenomenology is not the study of “mere appearances” but the study of how things show themselves. This distinguishes phenomenology from all other sciences “in that it says nothing about the material content of the thematic object of this science.”¹¹ Phenomenology is a way of “encountering something” which shows itself¹² and phenomenology is itself phenomenological.

In saying phenomenology is phenomenological, we are in danger of succumbing to a logical tautology:. To avoid the tautology, we must come to terms with the identity and difference intrinsic to phenomenology and to phenomena as such. Therefore, we follow Heidegger in the turn to art. By turning to art, Heidegger is able to step out of the hermeneutic circle of interpreting Being and instead to strike through Being (**Being**). In this image of a word that is written and then excised in a way such that it continues to appear, Being is and is not, it shows itself without disclosing itself, and it does not mean what it says because what it says has no meaning. “**Being**” may be the shortest allegory ever written, and this allegory grounds Heidegger’s thought on art as well as on Being. The project of “The Origin of the Work of Art” is “to arrive at the immediate and full reality of the work of art” because only in such an arrival will art be discovered in the work of art. Heidegger suggests that “the thingly element” in a work of art (that is, what is ‘art’ in a work of art) is “like the substructure into and upon which the other, particular

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.83.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p.85.

¹² *ibid.*

[*Eigentliche*] element is built.”¹³

Allegory is the “substructure” [*Unterbau*] upon which the work of art is built. As the structure in which identity and difference are present simultaneously, allegory reveals itself as that which brings together the different in the space of the same, the structure in which. Although Heidegger never makes the point explicitly, it turns out that the structure of allegory is essential to phenomenology. Janicaud implicitly points to the allegorical structure of *Phänomensein*, what it is to be a phenomenon by quoting Heidegger on Hegel.

To be a phenomenon [*Phänomensein*], to appear [*Erscheinen*] means coming forward [*auftreten*] in such a way that something shows itself which is other than what previously showed itself, in such a way that what comes forward does so *in opposition to* what previously appeared, and what previously appeared is reduced to *mere illusion* [*Schein*].¹⁴

Janicaud makes the important observation that for Heidegger, both the appearance which steps forward as *other than* what shows itself *and* that which shows itself are equally significant in phenomenology. “‘Appearance’ and ‘illusion’ are diversely founded in the phenomenon for Heidegger. The phenomenon is thus, on both sides, this differentiating showing (or better still this ‘becoming other’ in relation to self) from out of which the ‘thing itself’ unfolds” (Janicaud 42). We arrive then, in the being-of-phenomenon as an allegorical structure in which something appears in that which it is not.

In his description of the artwork, Heidegger suggests why Hegel rightfully asks (in Heidegger’s interrogative paraphrase): “Is art still an essential and necessary way in which that truth happens which is decisive for our historical existence, or is art no longer of this character?”¹⁵ In the introductory paragraphs of the essay Heidegger notes, “Art – this is nothing more than a word to which nothing real any longer corresponds.”¹⁶ Or perhaps it is the case that art has never corresponded to anything “real” [*Wirkliches*], that is anything produced or “worked.”¹⁷ As something “worked” art is appropriable by the metaphysical system which presupposes a direct correlation between the visible and invisible realms. Heidegger offers an alternative to the metaphysical or rational

¹³ OWA, p. 20, translation modified; Holzwege, p. 4.

¹⁴ Cited in Janicaud, p.42.

¹⁵ OWA p.80; Holzwege p.68.

¹⁶ OWA p. 17; Holzwege p.2.

¹⁷ The view that art corresponds to something “worked” originates with Plato. In the *Ion*, Socrates wants to know what work the rhapsode produces and mercilessly compares the product of the poet to the “real work” of craftsmen. In the *Republic*, art is confined to a mimetic function.

explanation. The alternative is poetic, and it is given in the presumably opposing, even mutually exclusive, literary terms of symbol and allegory.

*Vermutlich wird es überflüssig und verwirrend, dem nachzufragen, weil das Kunstwerk über das Dinghafte hinaus noch etwas anderes ist. Dieses Andere, was daran ist, macht das Künstlerliche aus. Das Kunstwerk ist zwar ein angefertigtes Ding, aber es sagt noch etwas anderes, als das bloße Ding selbst ist, *allo agoreuei*. Das Werk macht mit Anderem öffentlich bekannt, es offenbart Anderes; es ist Allegorie. Mit dem angefertigten Ding wird im Kunstwerk noch etwas Anderes zusammengebracht. Zusammenbringen heißt griechisch *syballein*. Das Werk ist Symbol.*

Presumably it becomes something superfluous and confounding to inquire about [the artwork] because the artwork is something else over and above thingness. This otherness which is in it constitutes its art-ness. The artwork is, indeed a manufactured thing, but it says something other than the mere thing itself, *allo agoreuei*. The work makes public something other than itself; it manifests otherness; it is an allegory. With the manufactured thing something other is brought together in the artwork. To bring together in Greek is called *syballein*. The work is a symbol.

In the work of art something appears, and it appears allegorically and symbolically as this other-ness which is its art-ness. A phenomenology of the artwork reveals the structure of this appearance, and that structure is its “origin” – its *Ursprung*, the place from which art leaps, or as Janicaud puts it, though not in terms of art: “The differentiating showing . . . from out of which the ‘thing itself’ unfolds.”¹⁸

We resume the dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger in thinking the unthought essence of metaphysics as art. As Janicaud points out, “At the beginning of the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel affirms that the rationality of the real is the presupposition of philosophy, but he does not question what might happen to thinking *otherwise*.”¹⁹ Nonetheless, something other than the rational is continually operative in Hegel’s most important works. Thinking is itself indeterminate – that is, thinking cannot appear as itself. Hegel admits this and then forgets it.²⁰ Here is perhaps the farthest point of proximity between Hegel and Heidegger. Whereas Hegel assumes that thinking is

¹⁸ Janicaud, p. 42.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 34.

²⁰ Cf. Janicaud, p. 34f.

rational and that “language is the product of thinking and not the inverse,”²¹ Heidegger assumes that thinking is poetic and that language, because it is essentially poetic (not rational), produces thought. And yet, this difference yields to a similarity regarding the centrality of language. Both Hegel and Heidegger see language as something universal, and not something that is bound to an individual. For Heidegger, “*Die Sprache spricht*” – language speaks. In the language of metaphysics, Hegel awkwardly says the same.

If, as Janicaud argues, it is phenomenology which constitutes the “most secret point of proximity” between Hegel and Heidegger, then Hegel’s phenomenology must also have an allegorical structure or *Unterbau*. This allegory must also belie the appearance of philosophy and also show that which philosophy is not. This necessity perhaps explains why Janicaud gathers the difference of Hegel and Heidegger together under the word *Darstellung*.

Darstellung signifies the showing [*monstration*] of the phenomenon which The Phenomenology of Spirit does not deduce but *shows* in the immanence of a consciousness which detaches itself from its aims in order to understand them.²²

In Hegel, the phenomenon is *das Ich*, the “I”. Hegel’s entire philosophy depends on a self divided from itself, and this indeed is an allegory of the *Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft*. In a playful moment in the *Encyclopedia*, but a foundational moment nonetheless, Hegel writes, “*Was ich meyne, ist mein*” (§ 20).²³ This is not simply a play on words which “diminishes the importance of opinion” as Janicaud observes.²⁴ This play on words dramatizes the conflicted *Selbst* of the *Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft*. This phrase is actually part of a longer sentence which concludes by saying something apparently opposite. Hegel has just asserted that language is the work of thought [*die Sprache das Werk des Gedankens ist*], and therefore, nothing can be said in language that is not universal [*so kann auch in ihr nichts gesagt werden, was nicht allgemein ist*]. The following sentence begins, “*Was ich meyne, ist mein . . .* What I mean, is mine,” that is, I say what I mean as an individual, *gehört mir als diesem besondern Individuum an*; it belongs to me as a particular individual. However, the sentence must then double back on itself, or supplement its meaning: What I mean is not mine because I say what I mean in language, and language can only

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 39.

²² *ibid.*, p. 41.

²³ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830) Band 20, (Düsseldorf: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1992), 62f. Translations are my own unless otherwise noted from *The Logic of Hegel translated from The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* by William Wallace (London: Oxford UP, 1892), 35f.

say what is universal. *Wenn aber die Sprache nur Allgemeines ausdrückt, so kann ich nicht sagen, was ich nur meyne.*” I cannot say what is only mine. The entire argument here depends on there being two I’s which are the same I, both identical and different. Hegel explicitly distinguishes between the I which means an individual, only “I” to the exclusion of all others, and the I which speaks and in speaking is in and of itself universal. [*Ich ist das an und für sich Allgemeine.*] The conclusion of this tortuous passage is to show (without proving) that, “that thought is the [word] I [expressed] as Subject.” [*Darum ist das Ich das Denken als Subjekt.*]

Hegel thus clears the way for the absolute subject. One must ask, however, what has happened to the individual I who says the universal I. The simple Hegelian answer would be, of course, that the particular I is *aufgehoben*, sublated by the universal I. But, the universal I continues to need the individual I who speaks the universality of thought expressed as the subject, “I”, and indeed, the individual I again appears in concluding §20. “Since I am at the same time in all my sensations, conceptions, and states of consciousness, thought is everywhere present.” [*Und indem Ich zugleich in allen meinen Empfindungen, Vorstellungen, Zuständen u.s.f. bin, ist der Gedanke allenthalben gegenwärtig.*] Hegel excuses himself from the logical impossibilities set forth in §20 with a rather long disclaimer which itself depends on the structure of the I divided in itself.

Die hier und in den nächfolgenden §§. Angegebenen Bestimmungen sind nicht als Behauptungen und meine Meinungen über das Denken zu nehmen; jedoch da in dieser vorläufigen Weise keine Ableitung oder Beweis Statt finden kann. . .

The propositions giving an account of thought in this and the following sections [§20f] are *not* offered as assertions or opinions of mine on the matter. [i.e. I am not speaking as an individual].

But, in these preliminary chapters any deduction or proof would be impossible [i.e. even though it appears to be my opinion]²⁵

Following this is the well-known assertion that each individual will prove these propositions individually through his [or her] own consciousness, thus making the transition from conception (which is individual) to thought (which is universal). Indeed the appearance of the individual I after the deduction of the universal I stages the disclaimer with which §20 begins. This dramatization presents us with the *Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft* in Hegel. Hegel’s play on words, “*Was ich meyne, ist mein*” and its opposite, “*Ich kann nicht sagen, was ich nur meyne,*” (despite its posture of saying “This is not *meine Meinung*”, my meaning) threatens the universal I, *das absolut Ich* without

²⁴ Janicaud, p. 41.

which Hegel's philosophy is not possible. Hegel's universal I depends on a circularity, not hermeneutic but proleptic. This is evident in the structure of §20 which moves deftly from the particular I to the universal I and back again. One does not interpret the other, but each supplements the other.

The observation and argument that in Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, "thought is proleptic" is made by Paul de Man in the essay, "Sign and Symbol in Hegel's *Aesthetics*."²⁶ In a characteristic move, de Man turns to another work, the *Encyclopedia*, to make most of his argument for the subject of his essay, the *Aesthetics*. This rhetorical strategy implicitly demonstrates the affinity between two works and also stages its own dialogue, not between two different thinkers but between two appearances of the same thought. I will not rehearse de Man's argument but only give its conclusion.

The proof of thought is possible only if we postulate that what has to be proven (namely, that thought is possible) is indeed the case. The figure of this circularity is time. Thought is proleptic . . . This is why thought (*Denken*) is ultimately called by Hegel *Erkenntnis* (which implies recognition) and is considered to be superior to knowledge (*wissen*). At the end of the gradual progression of its own functioning, as it moves from perception to representation and finally to thought, the intellect will re-find and recognize itself. A great deal is at stake in this anagnorisis which constitutes the plot and the suspense of Hegel's history of the mind. . . . [The mind] has to recognize itself as itself, that is to say, as I. But how are we to recognize what will necessarily be erased and forgotten, since "I" is, per definition, what "I" can never say. (99)

De Man points out that the only way for Hegel to proceed is to forget the individual I, even though the entire structure of the universal I depends on the individual I first saying, "I." Hegel essentially says, "I", I struck-through, crossed out in the way that being is struck through by Heidegger. De Man's explanation for this is that the "I" is both a sign and a symbol: "To the extent that the I points to itself, it is a sign, but to the extent that it speaks of anything but itself [including the universal I], it is a symbol."²⁷

To fully appreciate de Man's conclusions about §20, it is necessary to employ his own rhetorical trick and listen to de Man in dialogue with himself. In "The Rhetoric of Temporality," de Man stages a debate between allegory and symbol in literature, a debate strikingly similar to that between sign and symbol in (Hegel's)

²⁵ Wallace translation, p. 36.

²⁶ Paul de Man, "Sign and Symbol in Hegel's *Aesthetics*" (hereafter SSHA) in *Aesthetic Ideology* (Minneapolis, MN: U Minnesota P, 1996).

²⁷ cite

philosophy. I will again only give de Man's conclusions.²⁸

The prevalence of allegory always corresponds to the unveiling of an authentically temporal destiny. This unveiling takes place in a subject who has sought refuge against the impact of time in a natural world to which, in truth, it bears no resemblance . . . The failure of the attempt to conceive of a language that would be symbolical as well as allegorical . . . is one of the ways in which this impossibility becomes manifest. In the world of the symbol it would be possible for the image to coincide with the substance . . . Whereas, in the world of allegory, time is the originary constitutive category. . . We have, instead, a relationship between signs that has become of secondary importance. But this relationship between signs necessarily contains a constitutive temporal element; it remains necessary . . . that the allegorical sign refer to another sign that precedes it.²⁹

The I in Hegel is this impossibility. It is a sign and a symbol, a symbol and an allegory. It is only capable of being symbolic because it has an allegorical structure. I is only a symbol because it is first a sign. De Man's conclusion is not at all limited to the Romantic texts under investigation in "The Rhetoric of Temporality." The symbol "postulates the possibility of identity" and claims coincidence as "part and whole of the same." Allegory presents itself as distant from its origin and by "renouncing . . . the desire to coincide, it establishes language in the void of this difference."³⁰

In the I as it is figured in literature, de Man shows that "dialectic between subject and object . . . is now located entirely in the temporal relationships that exist within a system of allegorical signs. It becomes a conflict between a conception of the self seen in its authentically temporal predicament and a defensive strategy that tries to hide from this negative self-knowledge." De man observes, the "superiority of symbol over allegory . . . is one of the forms taken by this tenacious self-mystification."³¹ I will add, the superiority or dominance of the universal I over the individual I is another. The I that is in language can be universal only by being an allegory. Language as such unfolds in the difference between the individual I and the universal I. That is why Hegel must navigate between

²⁸ Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality" in *Blindness and Insight* (Minneapolis, MN: U Minnesota P, 2nd edition, revised, 1983).

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 206-7.

³⁰ *ibid*, p. 207.

³¹ *ibid*, p. 208.

them from the beginning to the end of §20.

Like Heidegger's *Die Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Hegel's *Einleitung in die Ästhetik*³² is also a phenomenology of art, in its own way an attempt "to arrive at the immediate and full reality of the work of art" and, since this is Hegel, to mediate it *for Spirit*. For Hegel art is the object of philosophical study, that is, what had come to be called in his day, "Aesthetics". And yet, in the opening words of his lectures, Hegel calls the name "Ästhetik" inappropriate [*unpassenden*] and superficial [*oberflächlichen*]. He retains the word in his lecture course with the following caveat:

Wir wollen es deshalb bei dem Namen Ästhetik bewenden lassen, weil er als bloßer Name für uns gleichgültig und außerdem einstweilen so in die gemeine Sprache übergegangen ist, daß er als Name kann beibehalten werden. Der eigentliche Ausdruck jedoch für unsere Wissenschaft ist "Philosophie der Kunst", und bestimmter "Philosophie der schönen Kunst."

We shall therefore permit the name *Ästhetik* to stand because as a mere name, it is indifferent to us, and moreover, has up to a certain point passed into common language, such that as a name it may be retained. The proper expression, however, for our science is "Philosophy of Art", or more definitely, "Philosophy of Fine Art."³³

Perhaps nothing has been as thoroughly forgotten in Hegel as this difference and the indifference of a name which does not refer to its meaning. Hegel as much as admits that his Aesthetics is an allegory which does not say what it means.

Two very different things happen in these lectures. First, art is forced to serve philosophy, to become an object for thoughtful contemplation. At the same time, however, Hegel allows the name *Ästhetik* to stand because of an "indifference" to this "mere name." An indifference to the name *Ästhetik* also signifies an indifference to its etymological definition, i.e. as something capable of perception. By retaining the name *Ästhetik* for his own Science of Art, Hegel has overwritten the Greek meaning with its inverse. In Greek the aesthetic focus is on the thing that appears to perception, that which is capable of being perceived. In philosophy, the focus becomes the

³² Georg W.F. Hegel, *Einleitung in die Ästhetik* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1967). Translations are my own in consultation with *Hegel: Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, tr. Bernard Bosanquet (New York, NY: Penguin, 1993).

³³ Georg F. W. Hegel, *Einleitung in die Ästhetik* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1967). English translation, unless otherwise noted, from *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, tr. Bernard Bosanquet (New York: Penguin, 1993). Hereafter cited as "Hegel A" with the German citation followed by the English citation: 3; 19.

knowledge of what appears. That which appears loses its genuine truth and life, to borrow Hegel's phrase, and is moved [*verlegt*] (or more literally misplaced) into the imagination [*Vorstellung*].

As soon as Hegel establishes the "more pressing need" for a Science of Art, he admits an inherent difficulty in that art resists the systematization required by philosophy. According to Hegel, "Whatever ideas others may have of philosophy and philosophizing, I regard the pursuit of philosophy as utterly incapable of existing apart from a scientific procedure."³⁴ Even as an object of thought, however, as the Science of Art rather than art as such, the concept of art remains a conceptualized contradiction. Hegel allows that art alone must be treated with a "certain relaxation of scientific stringency" [*von der wissenschaftlichen Strenge nachgelassen werden*].³⁵ However, Hegel employs a similar relaxation of scientific stringency in §20 of the *Enzyklopädie* when he admits he can offer no proof, and yet claims, they are not merely "meine Meinung" (my opinion). Art and Science alienate one another, and yet Hegel recognizes that this very alienation is what brings them together. This is none other than the dialectical structure of human consciousness that is established in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. This fundamental dialectic structure, upon which all of Hegel's work depends, is the structure in which reason presents itself to itself; it is the *Selbstdarstellung der Vernunft*.

The Lectures on Aesthetics stages a dialectic encounter between philosophy and art. It appears that the philosophical spirit emerges as the end of art in Aesthetics, but this, too, is but a semblance of the truth. The product of *Geist* is always a measure of *Geist* itself. Consequently, Hegel argues that as an object of thought, art springs from *Geist*. Regardless of their appearance, works of art are permeated [*durchdringen*] with it.

Die Kunst nun und ihre Werke, also aus dem Geiste entsprungen und erzeugt, sind selber geistiger Art, wenn auch ihre Darstellung den Schein der Sinnlichkeit in sich aufnimmt und das Sinnliche mit Geist durchdringt.

Now art and its works, as springing from and generated out of Spirit, are themselves a spiritual form, even if their (re)presentation is taken in the semblance [*Schein*] of the sensual, and the sensible is permeated [thoroughly] with Spirit.³⁶

³⁴ Hegel A, 30; 13-14.

³⁵ *ibid.* 31; 14.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 32; p. 15.

The particular contribution of the work of art is as an object in which *Geist* is able to grasp itself in the shape of thought [*in seiner eignetümlichen Form als Denken zu fassen*] but also to recognize itself again in its renunciation of the sentimental and the sensible form [*sondern ebensosehr sich in seiner Entäußerung zur Empfindung und Sinnlichkeit wiederzuerkennen*]. Hegel therefore concludes,

So gehört auch das Kunstwerk, in welchem der Gedanke sich selbst entäußert, zum Bereich des begreifenden Denkens, und der Geist, indem er es der wissenschaftlichen Betrachtung unterwirft, befriedigt darin nur das Bedürfnis seiner eigensten Natur.

So too the artwork, in which the thought renounces itself, belongs to the realm of conceivable thoughts, and the Spirit, to which the scientific examination is submitted/subjected, satisfied therein only the need of its singular nature.³⁷

For Hegel, *Geist* is the origin of the work of art, and the Philosophy of Fine Art (which is indifferently called *Ästhetik*) is the means by which this origin is revealed. Under the meaningless name of *Ästhetik*, Hegel has established a scientific field of study which is not a study of art as something which appears but a study of art as something in which *Geist* or Spirit appears in something that it is not. The whole *Ästhetik* project is made possible by an allegorical structure which Hegel has emptied of its presumed referential function.

In the section, "*Begriff des Kunstschönen*" [The Concept of Fine Art] Hegel defines the essence of art as *der Gegensatz des Allgemeinen, das für sich in derselben Weise gegen das Besondere, wie dieses seiner seits gegen das Allgemein fixiert wird*. [The contradiction of the universal, which opposes itself against the particular in the same way that [the particular] is itself fixed against the universal.]³⁸ For Hegel art is inherently this contradiction: art is both universal and particular. Contradiction specifies art. In the sensuous realm, the essence of art cannot be fully appreciated because only fully conscious Spirit can grasp (or conceptualize) this contradiction. For Hegel, the philosophy of art is the conceptualization of art as the perfect site of mediation in which the immediate appears in its fullness, not as an empty experience of the sensual [*Erfahrung*] but as the experience of knowledge itself [*Erlebnis*]. In its immediacy, Art is nothingness [*Nichtigkeit*] just like the phenomenal object of mere sense-perception. This nothingness is not nothing, but a privileged site of mediation. In this way, the particular and the universal are mediated in the work of art. In the past, the work of art was experienced immediately; art itself appeared absolute and consequently appeared to be absolved from human consciousness. According to Hegel, art is no longer absolute

³⁷ *ibid.*

because Spirit (human consciousness) has, by stages, broken down this appearance of absoluteness and discovered its own reflection in the work of art. Although there will continue to be great works of art, art as absolute or immediate maintains itself only at an unbridgeable distance from the self-certain, self-positing subject – the I who cannot say I. The work of art becomes irretrievably distant once Spirit recognizes itself there. For Hegel, this is progress.

In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel does not seek to determine what Spirit is, because such determination would only drive Spirit more deeply into oblivion. If Spirit is truly universal and infinite, as Hegel believes it is, then its substance never changes and can never be determined in finite terms. As the merely mortal love of wisdom, philosophy must recognize its own finitude before it can respond to the demands of Spirit.

Diesem Bedürfnisse soll sie [Philosophie] also nicht so sehr die Verslossenheit der Substanz aufschliessen, und diese zum Selbstbewusstsein erhebe, -- nicht so sehr ihr chaotisches Bewußtsein zur gedachten Ordnung und zur Einfachheit des Begriffes zurückbringen, als vielmehr die Sonderungen des Gedankens zusammenschützen, den unterscheidende Begriff unterdrücken und das Gefühl des Wesensherstellen, nicht sowohl Einsicht als Erbauung.

Philosophy is to meet this need, not by opening up the fast-locked nature of substance, and raising this to self-consciousness, not by bringing consciousness out of its chaos back to an order based on thought, nor to the simplicity of the Notion, but rather running together what is put asunder, by suppressing the differentiations of the Notion and restoring the *feeling* of essential being, in short, by providing edification rather than insight.³⁹

This edifice must be capable of sustaining the universal and the particular, of holding together, or gathering in the Greek sense, the realms of the infinite and the finite, of sustaining a conceptualized contradiction that is entirely alien to reason but not to representation [*Darstellung*].

Hegel presumes an epochality which, as Janicaud says of Heidegger, “cannot itself be justified but leads back to the concealment [*Verbergung*] itself of the truth of Being (or of the *Ereignis*).”⁴⁰ Spirit will appear in this edifice not because a philosopher has revealed its mystery with a keener vision, but to the contrary, because the philosopher has respected the *Verslossenheit der Substanz*, the closedness of the substance, its representation

³⁸ Hegel A, p.81; my translation, cf. p. 59.

³⁹ Hegel P, p.12; ¶7.

without the fullness of its presence. The *Verschlossenheit* is not to be *aufgeschlossen*. The closed is not to be disclosed because Spirit cannot be self-consciously brought to consciousness. For Heidegger, “the destinal can longer *know* Being; it only *occurs* and its advent is, like the rose of Angelus Silesius, ‘without reason’.”⁴¹ For Hegel, philosophy cannot *know* Spirit; Spirit occurs, and it occurs without reason (or in spite of it) by appearing in a language which is not philosophical (that is, metaphysical), but poetic.

Postscript

In responding to this paper, Janicaud suggested the possibility of yet a third encounter between Hegel and Heidegger. This third way into the impossibility would invert the argument of the preceding paper by interrogating whether Hegel’s rationality is retrievable in art by way of allegory. This path through art might then present a possibility for thinking Hegelian metaphysics from within, a possibility for thinking the unthought. Janicaud recalled that for Heidegger, the choice was not between art and philosophy but a choice for *Denken*, for thought which is no longer philosophy in the traditional sense nor art in the traditional sense. *Denken* is a way (a *Holzwege*) in which philosophy is not in front of poetry nor poetry in front of philosophy. *Denken* is the way between, and between poetry and philosophy *Denken* opens a new path for the thinking of temporality and the phenomenology of the *Unscheinbar* (that which does not appear). In his comments, Janicaud suggested that an allegory of dialectics might provide the structure of this path. The impossible dialogue continues.

⁴⁰ Janicaud, p.37.

⁴¹ *ibid.*