

GROUP MEMBERS:2,14,17,22,38,64,67,79,80,85

Assignment on Hegel

LONG QUESTIONS:

Hegel as a critic: (Roll # 14,67)

Hegel regards history as an intelligible process moving towards a specific condition—the realization of human freedom. And he views it to be a central task for philosophy to comprehend its place in the unfolding of history. **“History is the process whereby the spirit discovers itself and its own concept”.**

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, (born August 27, 1770, Stuttgart, Württemberg [Germany]died November 14, 1831, Berlin), German philosopher who developed a dialectical scheme that emphasized the progress of history and of ideas from thesis to antithesis and thence to a synthesis. Art proper, for Hegel, is the sensuous expression or manifestation of free spirit in a medium (such as metal, stone or color) that has been deliberately shaped or worked by human beings into the expression of freedom. The sphere of **“pre-art”** comprises art that falls short of art proper in some way. Hegel suggests that since a work of art is a product of human activity it might be something that can be known and expounded, and learnt and pursued by other. Hegel tries to come to terms with the truth of Rousseau's - and Kant's - moral position - the concept of an autonomous subject whose essential freedom consists in not being forced to accept anything as valid unless his conscience, will and reason have given consent to it - in three major but distinct ways.

Hegelianism is the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel which can be summed up by the dictum that **"the rational alone is real", which means that all reality is capable of being expressed in rational categories.** His goal was to reduce reality to a more synthetic unity within the system of absolute idealism. Like Kant, Hegel believed that we do not perceive the world or anything in it directly and that all our minds have access to is ideas of the world—images, perceptions, concepts. For Kant and Hegel, the only reality we know is a virtual reality. Hegel's idealism differs from Kant's in two ways.

Hegel was the last of the great philosophical system builders of modern times. His work, following upon that of Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Friedrich Schelling, thus marks the pinnacle of classical German philosophy. As an absolute idealist inspired by Christian insights and grounded in his mastery of a fantastic fund of concrete knowledge, Hegel found a place for everything—logical, natural, human, and divine—in a dialectical scheme that repeatedly swung from thesis to antithesis and back again to a higher and richer synthesis. His influence has been as fertile in the reactions that he precipitated—in Søren Kierkegaard, the Danish existentialist; in the Marxists, who turned to social action; in the logical positivists; and in G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell, both pioneering figures in British analytic philosophy—as in his positive impact.

In 1788, when he was eighteen, Hegel entered the protestant theological seminary in Tuebingen, following in the footsteps of the several generations of Lutheran pastors from whom he had descended. However, he never really acclimated to seminary life. He learned more from his studies outside of official theology and, above all, from the friendships he made there with fellow students Friedrich Hoelderlin, who would become one of Germany's great Romantic poets, and Friedrich Shelling, the future idealist philosopher. The three friends exchanged ideas, excitedly watched the events in France unfold, and

participated in societies in which students discussed and promoted revolutionary ideals. Following his graduation, Hegel did not become a pastor. Instead, he worked as a private tutor for wealthy families in Berne and Frankfurt, devoting his free time to the study of philosophy and theology. Much of his writing represents an attempt to come to grips with Christianity, to wrestle with the significance of Christ and his teachings, and to outline the historical legacy of the Christian Church and its cultural and social implications as an institution. Hegel's lifelong claim that he was an orthodox Lutheran may be subject to question, as it could have easily been motivated by the religious intolerance of the Prussian state, but his philosophy is heavily influenced by theological language, and a theological outlook colors his vision of human experience.

Although Hegel's status in the field of philosophy has varied in the nearly two centuries since his death, his reflections have considerably influenced other disciplines as well, including literary and cultural theory, theology, sociology, and political science. His lifespan roughly coincides with the German composer Beethoven (1770–1827), whose greatness rests partly in the way he took neoclassical musical conventions in new directions and incorporated diverse influences into his music in novel and idiosyncratic ways. Similarly, the originality of Hegel's insights stems partly from his adaptation of the available philosophical language to describe aspects of human experience that were beyond the immediate concerns of his philosophical predecessors. Like them, Hegel would devote a great deal of intellectual effort wrestling with the nature and possibilities of human knowledge. However, he also sought to understand his rapidly changing world and to describe the social, institutional, and historical dimensions of human experience.

Discuss the relationship between idea and sublime? (Roll # 2,22)

The essay deals with Hegel's philosophical Aesthetics. In aesthetics, the sublime is the quality of greatness, whether physical, moral, intellectual, metaphysical, aesthetic, spiritual, or artistic. The term especially refers to a greatness beyond all possibility of calculation, measurement, or imitation. Hegel accept the superiority of spirit over matter, universal over particular, intellectual over sensual. So art is not a sensual material instead it contributes to human understanding of the idea.

Hegel's treatment of the Sublime is both self-consistent and distinctive. He not only defines sublimity, but discovers and ranks its types or stages from one select point of view—the viewpoint of God-world relation; and the way he does this, on the one hand, distinguishes him from many others who have contributed to an understanding of the concept, and, on the other hand, enables him to suggest, if but implicitly, a criterion for distinguishing the sublime from allied concepts. Besides, he discusses the matter in the wide context of diverse cultures, making quite a few insightful references to Eastern literature; and, consistently with his own conception of philosophy, also from the viewpoint of historical necessity, so that the sublime appears, in his Aesthetics, as a specific stage which the evolving story of art must in fact traverse.

Man is a thinking consciousness because divinity has given man a brain. Nature is stagnant. Man has a capability to duplicate himself. Human beings must recognize everything in his surroundings. Art, for Hegel, is essentially figurative. This is not because it seeks to imitate nature, but because its purpose is to express and embody free spirit and this is achieved most adequately through images of human beings. More specifically, art's role is to bring to mind truths about ourselves and our freedom that we often lose sight of in our everyday activity. Its role is to show us (or remind us of) the true character of freedom. Art fulfills this role by showing us the freedom of spirit in its purest form without the contingencies of

everyday life. That is to say, art at its best presents us not with the all too familiar dependencies and drudgery of daily existence, but with the ideal of freedom (see Aesthetics, 1: 155–6). This ideal of human (and divine) freedom constitutes true beauty and is found above all, Hegel claims, in ancient Greek sculptures of gods and heroes.

Note that the work of idealization is undertaken not to provide an escape from life into a world of fantasy, but to enable us to see our freedom more clearly. Idealization is undertaken, therefore, in the interests of a clearer revelation of the true character of humanity and of the divine. The paradox is that art communicates truth through idealized images of human beings (and indeed—in painting—through the illusion of external reality. Hegel is well aware that art can Perform various functions: it can teach, edify, provoke, adorn, and so on. His concern, however, is to identify art's proper and most distinctive function. This, he claims, is to give intuitive, sensuous expression to the freedom of spirit. The point of art, therefore, is not to be **“realistic”**—to imitate or mirror the contingencies of everyday life—but to show us what divine and human freedom look like. Such sensuous expression of spiritual freedom is what Hegel calls the **“Ideal,”** or true beauty.

. Hegel also acknowledges that art can, indeed must, both fall short of and go beyond such ideal beauty. It falls short of ideal beauty when it takes the form of symbolic art, and it goes beyond such beauty when it takes the form of romantic art. The form of art that is characterized by works of ideal beauty itself is classical art. These are the three forms of art or **“forms of the beautiful”** that Hegel believes are made necessary by the very idea of art itself. The development of art from one form to another generates what Hegel regards as the distinctive history of art.

Hegel's view on the work of art as a product of human quality? (Roll # 38,64)

Art is a highly diverse range of human activities engaged in creating visual, auditory or performed artifacts artworks that express the author's imaginative or technical skill, and are intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. The very notion of art continues today to stir controversy, being so open to multiply interpretations. It can be taken simply to mean any human activity, or any set of rules needed to develop an activity. This would generalize the concept beyond what is normally understood as the fine arts, now broadened to encompass academic areas Hegel's view is: -

“Art as a form of human expression of creative nature”.

The introduction to lectures on Fine Arts may be referred to as a bundle of contradictions. Initially, Hegel suggests that since a work of art is a product of human activity it might be something that can be known and expended, and learnt and pursued by other. He further tells us that these works of art produced as result of certain rules can only be something formally regular and mechanical for which a purely empty exercise of will and dexterity is required. However, he has a desire to reject this view for it does not throw light upon what he considered the spiritual nature of art. He believed that the spiritual in art cannot be taught by formal rules. Hegel suggests the opposite scenario i.e. that perhaps “the work of art is a work of an entirely specially gifted spirit”. He claims that: -

“The work of art is a product of talent and genius and emphasizes on the natural element in talent and genius”.

This too, he finds in its applicability. He says even if the talent and genius of the artist has in it a natural element, yet this element essentially requires development by thought, reflection on the mood of its

productivity, and practice and skill in producing. For, the work of art has a purely technical side to it which needs to be developed through practice and not through inspiration. And that art cannot be produced either through gross manipulation of material, nor through pure spiritual abstraction but must combine element of both. The manipulation of the object is tempered by the spirit, and likewise the spirit is informed by the artist skillful (i.e. practiced, formal) manipulation of the object. He then goes on to discuss why art is necessary? Hegel has little interest in art for the viewer, for the critic who would judge a work of art. For him art is essential to man in its capacity to help him gain self-consciousness, an aspect that fulfills its set purpose.

To sum up, Art is a creative activity that expresses imaginative or technical skills. It produces a product, an object. Art is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, performing artifacts, and expressing the author's imaginative mind. The product of art is called work of art for other to experience.

Write in details the particular forms of art, mentioned by Hegel in "Development of the Ideal"? (Roll # 17,79)

Hegel acknowledges that art can, indeed must, both fall short of and go beyond such ideal beauty. It falls short of ideal beauty when it takes the form of symbolic art, and it goes beyond such beauty when it takes the form of romantic art. **The form of art that is characterized by works of ideal beauty itself is classical art. These are the three forms of art, or "forms of the beautiful" that Hegel believes are made necessary by the very idea of art itself.** The development of art from one form to another generates what Hegel regards as the distinctive history of art.

What produces these three art-forms is the changing relation between the content of art—the Idea as spirit—and its mode of presentation. In symbolic art the content is conceived abstractly, such that it is not able to manifest itself adequately in a sensuous, visible form. In classical art, by contrast, the content is conceived in such a way that it is able to find perfect expression in sensuous, visible form. In romantic art, the content is conceived in such a way that it is able to find adequate expression in sensuous, visible form and yet also ultimately transcends the realm of the sensuous and visible.

Classical art is the home of ideal beauty proper, whereas romantic art is the home of what Hegel calls the "beauty of inwardness" or, as Knox translates it, "beauty of deep feeling". Symbolic art, by contrast, falls short of genuine beauty altogether. This does not mean that it is simply bad art: Hegel recognizes that symbolic art is often the product of the highest level of artistry. Symbolic art falls short of beauty because it does not yet have a rich enough understanding of the nature of divine and human spirit. The artistic shapes it produces are deficient, therefore, because the conceptions of spirit that underlie it—conceptions that are contained above all in religion—are deficient.

Hegel's account of symbolic art encompasses the art of many different civilizations and shows his considerable understanding of, and appreciation for, non-Western art. Not all of the types of symbolic art Hegel discusses, however, are fully and properly symbolic. These are connects by the fact that they all belong to the sphere of what Hegel calls "pre-art". The sphere of "pre-art" comprises art that falls short of art proper in some way. Hegel's aim in his account of symbolic art is to examine the various kinds of art that are made necessary by the very concept of art itself, the stages through which art has to pass on its journey from pre-art to art proper.

The first stage is that in which spirit is conceived as being in an immediate unity with nature. This stage is encountered in the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrians, Hegel claims, believe in a divine power—the Good—but they identify this divinity with an aspect of nature itself, namely with light. Light does not symbolize or point to a separate God or Good; rather, in Zoroastrianism, light is the Good, is God. Light is thus the substance in all things and that which gives life to all plants and animals. This light, Hegel tells us, is personified as Ormuzd. Unlike the God of the Jews, however, Ormuzd is not a free, self-conscious subject. In the Zoroastrian vision of the Good as light, we encounter the “sensuous presentation of the divine”. This vision, however, does not constitute a work of art, even though it finds expression in well-crafted prayers and utterances.

The second stage in the development of pre-art is that in which there is an immediate difference between spirit and nature. This is found, in Hegel’s view, in Hindu art. The difference between the spiritual and the natural means that the spiritual—i.e., the divine—cannot be understood to be simply identical with some immediately given aspect of nature.

The third stage in the development of “pre-art” is that of genuinely symbolic art in which shapes and images are deliberately designed and created to point to a determinate and quite separate sphere of “interiority”. This is the province of ancient Egyptian art. The Egyptians, Hegel tells us, were the first people to “fix” the idea of spirit as something inward that is separate and independent in itself. With the idea of spirit as “interiority,” therefore, there necessarily comes the drive to give an external shape to this inner spirit, that is, to produce a shape for spirit from out of spirit itself.

For Hegel, Greek art contains symbolic elements (such as the eagle to symbolize the power of Zeus), but the core of Greek art is not the symbol. Egyptian art, by contrast, is symbolic through and through. Indeed, Egyptian consciousness as a whole, in Hegel’s view, is essentially symbolic. Animals, for example, are regarded as symbols or masks of something deeper, and animal faces are often used as masks.

The fourth stage of pre-art is that in which spirit gains such a degree of freedom and independence that spirit and nature “fall apart”. This stage is in turn sub-divided into three. The first sub-division comprises sublime art: the poetic art of the Jewish people. In Judaism, Hegel maintains, spirit is understood to be fully free and independent. This freedom and independence is, however, attributed to the divine rather than the human spirit. God is thus conceived as a “free spiritual subject”, who is the creator of the world and the power over everything natural and finite. The second sub-division of this fourth stage of pre-art comprises what Hegel calls “oriental pantheism” and is found in the poetry of Islamic “Arabs, Persians, and Turks”.

In the last stage of pre-art, the difference between the spiritual and the natural (or sensuous) is taken to its limit: the spiritual element (the “meaning”) and the sensuous element (the “shape” or “image”) are now completely independent of, and external to, one another. Furthermore, each is finite and limited. This is the realm of allegory and metaphor. Hegel does not deny the magnificence or elegance of pre-art, but he maintains that it falls short of art proper. The latter is found in classical art, or the art of the ancient Greeks.

Classical art, Hegel contends, fulfills the concept of art in that it is the perfect sensuous expression of the freedom of spirit. It is in classical art, therefore—above all in ancient Greek sculpture (and drama)—that true beauty is to be found. Indeed, Hegel maintains, the gods of ancient Greece exhibit “absolute beauty as such”: “there can be nothing more beautiful than the classical; there is the ideal”. Hegel does not deny

that Greek art and mythology contain many symbolic elements: the story, for example, that Cronus, the father of Zeus, consumed his own children symbolizes the destructive power of time.

First, the divine had to be understood to be freely self-determining spirit, to be divine subjectivity. Second, the divine had to be understood to take the form of individuals who could be portrayed in sculpture and drama. The beauty of Greek art thus presupposed Greek polytheism. Third, the proper shape of free spirit had to be recognized to be the human body, not that of an animal. Hindu and Egyptian gods were often portrayed as a fusion of human and animal forms; by contrast, the principal Greek gods were depicted in ideal human form. Not only do Greek art and beauty presuppose Greek religion and mythology, but Greek religion itself requires art in order to give a determinate identity to the gods. As Hegel notes, Greek religion thus took the form of what Hegel in the *Phenomenology* called a **“religion of art.”**

Romantic art, for Hegel, takes three basic forms. The first is that of explicitly religious art. It is in Christianity, Hegel contends, that the true nature of spirit is revealed. What is represented in the story of Christ’s life, death and resurrection is the idea that a truly divine life of freedom and love is at the same time a fully human life in which we are willing to “die” to ourselves and let go of what is most precious to us. Much religious romantic art, therefore, focuses on the suffering and death of Christ.

The second fundamental form of romantic art identified by Hegel depicts what he calls the secular “virtues” of the free spirit. These are not the ethical virtues displayed by the heroes and heroines of Greek tragedy: they do not involve a commitment to the necessary institutions of freedom, such as the family or the state. Rather, they are the formal virtues of the romantic hero: that is to say, they involve a commitment by the free individual, often grounded in contingent choice or passion, to an object or another person.

The third fundamental form of romantic art depicts the formal freedom and independence of character. Such freedom is not associated with any ethical principles with the formal virtues just mentioned, but consists simply in the “firmness” of character. This is freedom in its modern, secular form. It is displayed most magnificently, Hegel believes, by characters, such as Richard III, Othello and Macbeth, in the plays of Shakespeare.

These claims by Hegel are normative, not just descriptive, and impose certain restrictions on what can count as genuine art in the modern age. Hegel is well aware that art can be decorative, can promote moral and political goals, can explore the depths of human alienation or simply record the prosaic details of everyday life, and that it can do so with considerable artistry. His concern, however, is that art that does these things without giving us beauty fails to afford us the aesthetic experience of freedom. In so doing, it deprives us of a central dimension of a truly human life.

SHORT QUESTIONS:

Process of artistic creation: (Roll # 80)

Hegel brings art and freedom together and anticipates the idea of art-for-art’s sake. For Hegel, the Idea is always opposed to Nature. The mind is contrasted to the mindlessness of matter or nature. The mind creates art, which gives an idea to nature. This idea is the unity of the externality or objectivity of nature and the subjectivity or personal vision of the artist. As with Kant, the spectator of the work of art is as important as the art maker for Hegel. Beauty in art is the emanation of the Absolute or Truth through an

object. Beauty can be shown only in a sensuous form called the Ideal, which transcends the Idea to become a special form. Like all of Hegel's triads, nothing is lost: nature and idea are the Other to one another but together they create an organism, the work of art.

The contemplative mind strives to see the Absolute. In order to see Beauty, this detached mind must transcend nature. By freeing itself, the mind perceives the spiritual content of the work of art, which must also be free in order to be Beautiful. Kant insisted that the higher form of beauty had to be free and independent and Hegel followed suit. Hegel insisted that, to manifest Beauty, art must expel all that is external or contiguous or unnecessary. Remember, in Hegel's system, each part of the triad must be **"pure"** and can contain only its dialectical opposite. For art to reveal Beauty is to reveal Truth, which can only be pure. This is why art can never imitate nature, which is, mindless and irrational. Nature must be reversed with its antithesis, the idea, which brings about the inner unity necessary for spiritual content: nature, idea, spirit = art. If art must be free, then art should show, not just Beauty and Truth, but Freedom itself, which is the property of the free mind. Hegel, true to his age, is a child of Neoclassicism and, like many Germans, was looking back to a Golden Age when human beings were free. Part of being "modern" is being un-free. Society has demands, which are placed upon people who have lost their sense of wholeness and self-actualization

Hegel's philosophy of art is a wide ranging account of beauty in art, the historical development of art, and the individual arts of architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry. It contains distinctive and influential analyses of Egyptian art, Greek sculpture, and ancient and modern tragedy, and is regarded by many as one of the greatest aesthetic theories to have been produced since Aristotle's Poetics.

Hegel's philosophy of art provides an a priori derivation—from the very concept of beauty itself—of various forms of beauty and various individual arts. In marked contrast to Kant, however, Hegel weaves into his philosophical study of beauty numerous references to and analyses of individual works of art—to such an extent, indeed, that his aesthetics constitutes, in Kai Hammermeister's words, **"a veritable world history of art"**

Adorno complains that "Hegel and Kant were able to write major aesthetics without understanding anything about art" (Adorno, 334). This may or may not be true of Kant, but it is clearly quite untrue of Hegel: he had an extensive knowledge and a good understanding of many of the great works of art in the Western tradition. Nor was Hegel's knowledge and interest restricted to Western art: he read (in translation) works of Indian and Persian poetry, and he saw at first hand works of Egyptian art in Berlin. Hegel's philosophy of art is thus an a priori derivation of the various forms of beauty that, pace Adorno, is informed and mediated by a thorough knowledge and understanding of individual works of art from around the world.

What is idea of spirit in Hegel? (Roll # 80, 85)

The Phenomenology of Spirit (German: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*) (1807) is Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's most widely discussed philosophical work; its German title can be translated as either The Phenomenology of Spirit or The Phenomenology of Mind. Hegel described the work as an **"exposition of the coming to be of knowledge"**. This is explicated through a necessary self-origination and dissolution of **"the various shapes of spirit as stations on the way through which spirit becomes pure knowledge"**.

Spirit" is only as comprehensible as the concept of "Spirit." mankind by stating that every town and society that has existed has been a test indirectly arranged by the '**world spirit**' in order to eventually create a town in which people would live ethically, and that this process has been done in order for the '**world spirit**' to become aware of its freedom.

Hegel undoubtedly, one of the most famous philosophers of the modern time, sees human history as a dialectical method which involves thesis, antithesis and synthesis. This famous method which is also commonly referred to as dialectics was the brainchild of Hegel who considered human history as a process of development involving human spirit, consciousness and freedom. Starting with the thesis, Spirit is an abstract entity which already contains its antithesis. Spirit becomes real through its antithesis of human consciousness. Human being, the opposition of Spirit, helps the Spirit to actualize its self-purpose of freedom. When the Spirit finally attains its purpose i.e. freedom becomes the synthesis. This process in history continues but in higher form than the first. For inherent in every synthesis (which in turn becomes the thesis) is its antithesis, then to synthesis. Hegel considers the ultimate aim of human history as to attain freedom which is the final product of spirit and consciousness. Development comes out as a parallel but the vital product of this process of freedom in human history. Freedom, spirit and reasoning are some of his key concepts in this regard which he tends to connect with human history in a meaningful manner. Precisely, Hegel observes and interprets human history as the process of attainment of a better state of freedom and development. This study aims to briefly explain and discuss the key concepts of Hegelian philosophy of development and how human history has progressed towards development and freedom.

What is relationship of idea with beauty in Hegel? (Roll # 85)

The beauty of art is higher than the beauty of nature, as spirit (a term with no necessarily religious connotations: **Geist means "mind" and "culture,"** too) is higher than nature. Man, finite spirit—where spirit becomes conscious of itself—is the artist.

There are two arguments (opposed to Hegel) claiming that art cannot be discussed philosophically; art is incapable of rigorous and disciplined treatment.

(1) The first objection to philosophical aesthetics to which Hegel replies is that art is simply supposed to be charming. It **"belongs to the relaxation and recreation of spiritual life"**. Therefore, so serious treatment of art is inappropriate and pedantic. Art might even seem to be a luxury which might soften one's character unless it were justified by its moral content—but adding a moral message to art does not constitute a philosophical approach. Art seems to deal with mere sense appearances, not with concepts.

(2) The second objection to philosophical aesthetics to which Hegel replies is that art tries to be free and diverse and by its very intention beyond the grasp of concepts. Therefore, a philosophical reflection on art is impossible.

Hegel replies to these arguments that he intends to deal only with that art whose purpose is not merely to charm, but to be "one mode and form through which the divine, the profoundest interests of mankind, and spiritual truths of the widest range, are brought home to consciousness and expressed". We usually set up a split between the Infinite beyond and the poor present, the finite here and now. Art heals this split.