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Message from the President

Francis Peddle

This issue of ***ELEUTHERIA*** contains pieces by Peter McCormick and myself. McCormick's essay "Relatively Objective?" was an invited presentation at the University of Ottawa's Philosophy Colloquium, "Realism and Anti-Realism," March 15, 1997. My article on Hegel and music was originally read at the Canadian Society for Aesthetics annual meeting during the Learned Societies Conference, Laval University, Quebec City, May 31, 1989.

McCormick considers primarily the views of Putnam, Rorty and Wittgenstein is his essay on relationalism and relativism. Interpreting Putnam as suggesting that "the language that enables us to say that some things are true, warranted, reasonable, that some things are objective, *is* relative in the sense that it rests on something else; it rests on--trust" leads us to difficult issues of alienation and acknowledgment. McCormick questions whether trust is sufficient to undergird an objectivism. This short discussion of the relative and the objective demonstrates that any consideration of the two appears to involve ineliminable side excursions into scepticism, cultural alienation and doubt about any principle that gives off the ambience of the foundational.

In Hegelian philosophy the underlying principles of rational philosophical speculation, or what twentieth century critics tend to characterize as foundational, are in continual dialectical tension with individuated thought-determinations. In my brief consideration of Hegel's treatment of music in his ***Aesthetics*** this tension often gets onesidedly interpreted by commentators insofar as it is said that Hegel does not consider music an art form which stands forth in its own right but is submerged in the indeterminateness of the transition in his system to the poetical arts. Such an interpretation is inimical to the forceful analytical component that Hegel generally delineates in most thought-determinations (Denkbestimmungen).

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The Internet is rapidly becoming a vast storehouse of information on philosophy as well as providing access to all the major texts of our philosophical and cultural traditions. Most university philosophy departments have websites, often with links to other philosophically interesting homepages. For those who focus on Greek speculative philosophy and literature the ***Perseus Project*** at Tufts University (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu) is a must. There are also discussion groups which can keep you appraised of the latest debates on such thinkers as Kant and Hegel. Just E-mail to listserv@bucknell.edu and write SUBSCRIBE HEGEL-L to become a part of the Hegel discussion group. For many connections with other organizations and sites see in particular: http://www.valdosta.peachnet.edu/~rbarnett/phi/resource.html and ***Episteme Links*** at http://www.arrowweb.com/philo/. A colleague of my mine in Australia recently mused that the Internet may very well be a manifestation of absolute mind. Your comments are welcome, but please use the Institute's E-mail address: isp@raynon.com.

RELATIVELY OBJECTIVE ?

Peter McCormick

Like many today, I am interested in the general question: are objects objective, relatively speaking? In other words, are at least some objects objective only relative to some account?

In this essay I shall not try to answer such a rebarbative question. Instead, I will try to work out formulations of two connected questions that require prior reflection.

I proceed as follows. Taking my cue from the third interlocutor in the *Starmaking* [1] controversies, I consider critically Hilary Putnam's attempts to remain objective despite spirited advances by two sorts of relativistic suitors, the muscular and the cultured. I discuss briefly each of these seducers, offering successive reformulations of our initial question. In concluding, I recall with a certain sympathy Putnam's final refuge against the emboldened relativists in a disarming, yet still disquieting, Wittgensteinian trust.

I. EPISTEMIC AND ALETHIC ASPECTS OF OBJECTIVITY

Basic to Putnam's attacks on relativism over the years, Joseph Margolis argues, is Putnam's pervasive yet mistaken assumption that the defeat of relationalism entails the defeat of relativism.

Relationalism is the view that "true in L" can replace "true."[2] Putnam, the charge goes, purports to show that relativists of this ilk, namely relationalist relativists, must fall prey to self-referential paradoxes.

For these relationalist relativists must claim that they can compare what is "true in L(1)" with what is "true in L(2)." Claiming this however commits them to underwriting the further claim that "there must be an idiom . . . in virtue of which distinctions relationalized to L(1) and L(2) are, there, truly assigned their truth values" (98). And this claim generates paradoxes of self-reference.

Precisely here, Margolis thinks, Putnam is mistaken. For he thinks that Putnam identifies relativism with relationalist relativism.[3] Then, from the argument that all relationalist relativist views succumb to self-referential paradoxes, Putnam mistakenly generalizes to the view that relativism tout court so succumbs.

But, on the assumption that viable non-relationalist relativist conceptions of truth are available, we may contest such a conclusion. "Overcoming relationalist conceptions of truth," in short, "is not equivalent to retiring or overcoming [more robust] relativism[s]" (99).

For Margolis, Putnam's understanding of relativism involves a relativist conception of truth that combines both epistemic and alethic aspects. In other words, this conception of truth combines an understanding of how truth relates to knowledge and an understanding of how the values "true" and "false" and similar truth-like values are to be construed.

In this conception of truth the epistemic and the alethic are inseparable. The alethic aspect however is restricted to bivalence. Taking relativism as relationalism involves attributing to relativists this conception of truth with its salient

[1] *Starmaking: Realism, Anti-Realism, and Irrealism*, ed. P. McCormick (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 171-177.

[2] J. Margolis, *The Truth About Relativism* (Cambridge, MA., Blackwells, 1991), p. 98.

[3] Margolis, on p. 56, cites Putnam's *The Many Faces of Realism* (La Salle, IL., Open Court, 1987), pp. 16-22.

constraints on the alethic. And this constraint is just what makes relationalist relativism vulnerable to objections that generate debilitating paradoxes.

Margolis would concoct a stronger strain of relativism in such a way as to avoid the paradoxes that render the weaker relationalist strain innocuous. He would do so by separating the alethic element, the meaning of the expression, 'true' and other truth-like values, from the epistemic one, "the epistemic appraisal of truth claims" (67-68).[4] This separation would allow displacing the restriction from the alethic component to the epistemic one. And the displacement would in turn yield a robust strain of relativism now resistant to paradox.

But, to appreciate this pharmacy, we must be clearer on the distinction here between a relationalist and a robust relativism. This distinction turns on the difference between the relationalists full commitment to bivalence and *tertium non datur* in all domains (since the formal meaning of all truth values is alethically restricted), and the robust relativist's only partial commitment, since in some domains (for example, literary interpretation and history) we can leave alethic options open for the application of many-valued truth values. The robust relativist does this by limiting his or her restrictions to the epistemic aspect only, leaving the alethic aspect unrestricted.

Grasping this first distinction between relationalist and robust strains of relativism, however, requires noticing a second, more narrow distinction between two ways of handling the shared alethic element. In a relationalist relativism, truth values and truth-like values are relationalized, whereas in a robust relativism they are not. More specifically, relationalizing such values comes to systematically replacing "true" by "true in L." Consequently, all logical incongruencies in all domains must be taken as logical contradictions.

By contrast, a robust relativism does not systematically relationalize truth values and truth-like values; it merely replaces bivalent truth values and truth-like values with many-valued ones in some domains only. Consequently, not all logical incongruencies need be taken as logical contradictions.

We can now better appreciate the key point in a robust relativism. Many-valued truth values and truth-like values are not properly understood as the result of any so-called "epistemic concessions" (as, for example, in the relationalist's "introducing probabilistic truth values that remain, in principle, tethered to overriding bivalent values"). Rather, these values are "offered as an alethic option"(9). The alethic and the epistemic remain conjoined because we cannot finally separate our uses of "true" and "false" and such like words from our understandings of what knowledge is and what knowing particular truths comes to. But, while defining truth values in epistemically restricted ways, the robust relativist leaves the alethic component unrestricted, thereby rendering the robust strain of relativism invulnerable to self-referential paradoxes. By contrast, the relationalist restricts the alethic aspect while leaving the epistemic one unrestricted, thereby rendering the relationalist strain of relativism vulnerable to such paradoxes.

The strength of robust relativism lies in its presenting the alethic aspect as allowing of an option in some but not all domains. When offered as an alethic option, many-valued truth values can function in some domains coherently and consistently. Thus, robust relativism attempts to sidestep Putnam's otherwise effective criticisms against a related but finally quite weaker relationalistic doctrine that offers no such alethic option.

But just here I think a first question arises. This question arises at the level of particular robust relativistic claims.

A good example is the robust relativistic claim that incongruent interpretive judgments in the

[4]NPI, pp. 415-416.

domains of literary interpretation or history need not be taken as either "true" or "false" but can be rightly construed as more or less plausible, apt, reasonable, and "objective." This claim, however, cannot be sustained without arguments.

Moreover, we need arguments not just for the alethic being unrestricted to bivalent truth values in construals of what is objective. Arguments must also be provided for the restriction of the epistemic aspect here, for the robust relativist's claim that relatively objective knowledge of the world is also possible in some non-scientific domains like literary interpretation and history. But making those arguments requires addressing explicitly the difficult matter of the meaning of the "objective."

So, a first question about the objectively relative might run: is the "objective" relative to appropriate constraints being applied to the epistemic aspect only of its two necessary components, the epistemic and the alethic?

II. Causal and Logical Aspects of Objectivity

Besides this first question about where to constrain aspects of the objective, I would like to raise a second question about relative objectivity. And, again, I will try to show briefly how this question may be seen to arise out of recent philosophical exchanges, this time between Putnam and Richard Rorty.[5]

Rorty calls critical attention to Putnam's defenses of objectivity in terms of a relation called "making true."[6] The idea is that, unlike whatever relations that may or may not hold between some beliefs and others (for example, "justifying"), there is at least one relation that holds between belief and non-belief, a relation called "making true." But Rorty recalls that some deny any such relation.[7] For example, Donald Davidson writes: "Nothing . . . no thing, makes sentences and theories true; not experience, not surface irritations, not the world, can make a sentence true."

Putnam himself rejects doctrines of any totality of objects existing independently of our descriptions. Consequently, he also rejects any claims that the word "object" is independent of language. Hence Rorty's puzzlement as to just what, if not "objects," could ever make statements true. In responding to this worry, Putnam glosses several views we have already noted and brings us closer to the subject of our concern with making good sense of the problematic expression, "relatively objective."

Putnam disputes Rorty's reading here that objects cannot, in some sense, make our sentences true. (Note however that Putnam talks of sentences being true, which he thinks is the proper idiom, unlike Rorty who continues to talk of statements being true.) As Putnam reads the issue, what Davidson is attacking is not a particular doctrine about objects but one about states of affairs. The idea is that we must not inflate our ontology by thinking "that some sentences correspond one by one to things called 'states of affairs'" (432). The bone of contention then is states of affairs not objects.

Putnam goes on to restate his own view as follows: "whether a sentence is true or not typically depends on whether certain things or events satisfy the conditions for being described

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[5]See *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 52 (1992), *passim*.

[6]See R. Rorty, "Putnam on Truth," and Putnam's response to Rorty as well as to two other critics in his "Truth, Activation Vectors and Possession Conditions for Concepts," in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 52 (1992), *passim*. Rorty's discussion is based on Putnam's article, "On Truth," in *How Many Questions*, ed. L. S. Cauman (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983). Cf. further criticism of Rorty's versions of relativism in Putnam's *Pragmatism* (Cambridge, MA., Blackwells, 1995), pp. 74-5.

[7]Rorty cites Davidson's "The Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme" in Davidson's *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 194.

by that sentence--conditions which depend upon the ongoing activity of using and reforming language" (432).

Two points are important for understanding this view. First, all of our thinking is caught up in a continuous process of change, the using and the reforming of language. So any particular term, whether "object" or "state of affairs" or "event" or "thing," is subject to shifts in its uses and hence in its meanings.

But, second, the question is not whether a particular expression like "object" or "state of affairs" has a determinate meaning, but whether the determinate meaning it has is single and closed. The question is "whether notions like 'state of affairs' are conceived of as having a single determinate meaning, or an open and forever extendable family of uses – the same question that we must ask about 'object,' 'event,' etc." (432, n.4). And different sentences can describe the same state of affairs just because notions like "state of affairs" can have such an extendable family of use.[8]

A problem arises then not, pace Rorty, from puzzles about "truth-makers," about whatever could make sentences true. Rather, a problem arises from questions about how objects could make sentences true when objects are taken to be independent of our ways of talking. Thus, in issues about truth what is at stake is the putative general independence from our language of something that would make sentences true. And this general kind of independence is "neither ordinary causal nor ordinary logical independence" (433).

But just how can something be generally independent, that is, how can something ever be the case independently of both causal and logical constraints? To clarify, Putnam offers an extended example of what he takes to be such a situation.

> That the sky is blue is causally independent of the way we talk; for, with our language in place, we can certainly say that the sky would still be blue even if we did not use colour words. . . . And the statement that the sky is blue is, in the ordinary sense of "logical independence," logically independent of any description that one might give of our use of colour words. . . . In any sense of "independence" I can understand, whether the sky is blue is independent of the way we talk (433).

But exactly how what makes a sentence true is causally and logically independent Putnam does not say directly. Rather, he says that recognizing that the sky is blue is independent in some way of how we talk. And the reason, Putnam thinks, is quite basic. No one way of describing the world can be privileged because we continue to reform language while using it. Nature does not lend itself to any unique description that is somewhere waiting to be discovered, a unique version that would articulate what nature is "in itself." As Putnam writes, "the 'in-itself' doesn't make sense."

Still, this view might seem to let the door open for relativism. Just because the world is not divisible into things describable in words of single fixed uses, we can never specify objectively the ways in which the world *is* divided. Putnam closes this door emphatically – "it does not follow," he underlines, "that *when a particular use of 'object,' 'event,' etc is already in place*, we cannot say how the particular statements we can make in that particular vocabulary relate to those particular objects"(434).

To support this emphatic claim Putnam adduces one of his favourite examples. He ask us to consider how things in a room can be counted in two different vocabularies, one using the vocabulary of physical objects the other that of mereological sums of physical objects. This practice shows that, even when as in his example

[8]Rorty cites Davidson's "The Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme" in Davidson's *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 194.

vocabularies are not semantically interdefinable, one can still talk variously about each vocabulary relating to the different things in the room. In short, "given a definite language in place and a definite scheme of 'things,' the relation between 'words and things' is not at all indescribable; but it does not have a single metaphysically privileged description any more than the things do" (435).

This comes to the view that some things do make some sentences true. Yet what makes these sentences true cannot have unique, fixed, and closed meanings. Rather, what makes such sentences true both has a definite meaning where a particular use of the vocabulary at issue is already in place, and keeps this definite meaning open to change in the ongoing uses and reforms of this vocabulary.[9]

In that sense, what makes sentences true is not independent of language. But, as Putnam puts the matter intriguingly, "the nature of the dependence changes as the kind of language games we invent changes" (435). And in these language games some things are right and some are wrong. For right and wrong in these activities is determined completely neither by majority vote, nor by consensus, nor by convention.

But just here is where a second question arises. For a muscular relativist can press these matters. He or she can ask: if what makes sentences true is not finally independent of language although the nature of the dependence is relative to the changing language games we choose to play, on just what can such a truth-maker rest if not on at least some kind of metaphysical guarantee?

Thus, a second question about the relatively objective might run: is the objective relative, if not to causal or logical dependencies, then to the language-game dependencies of truth-makers?

So much then for two short preliminary questions about the relatively objective, one about how we choose to constrain the alethic and epistemic aspects of the objective, the other about logical, causal, and linguistic dependencies. But are there still other antecedent questions that require reflection if we are come to sufficiently critical terms for dealing with our initial concern: are objects objective, relatively speaking?

Rather than pursuing these matters here, may I, if not conclude, at least end?

Relativisms, Putnam thinks, eventually succumb to problems with self-reference, or consistency, or solipsism. That is, relativisms as philosophical positions are defeasible. The relativistic attitude, however, is indefeasible by rational argument; the relativistic attitude is, in fact, ineliminable. Linking relativism with scepticism, Putnam writes: "It is not that relativism and scepticism are unrefutable. Relativism and scepticism are all too easily refutable when they are stated as positions; but they never die, because the attitude of alienation from the world and from the community is not just a theory, and cannot be overcome by purely intellectual argument."[10]

Putnam favours this link between relativism and scepticism, for it allows him to invoke his friend's Stanley Cavell's convictions that scepticism is part of the human condition.[11] At other times, however, he also wants to link relativism with its opposite, foundationalism, as if relativism and foundationalism could be taken as manifestations of a similar phenomenon, of different attitudes towards a misplaced concern about metaphysical certainty or a "transcendental guarantee." There is however no such thing as a transcendental

[9]Note however that, while relying generally on the idea that meaning is use, Putnam is attentive to Wittgenstein's qualification in the *Philosophical Investigations*, para. 43 that, in some cases the meaning of a word is not its use. Putnam stresses this point in his Gifford Lectures.

[10]*Renewing Philosophy*, Lecture VIII, p. 164.

[11]See J. Conant's discussion of the influence of some of Cavell's ideas on Putnam in H. Putnam, *Realism with a Human Face*, ed. J. Conant (Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. lvii-lxxiv.

guarantee; nor is one needed.

What is needed is something else altogether, something quite unexpected. To the relativist Putnam says: "some things are true and . . . some things are warranted and some things are reasonable, but of course we can only say so if we have an appropriate language. And we do have the language and we can and do say so, even though that language does not itself rest on any metaphysical guarantee like Reason."[12]

And should we embarrassingly overhear ourselves pressing such matters with respect to a relative objectivity only, not because of particular relativistic positions whether relationalist or robust or linguistic that we may be advocating but simply because of an attitude problem, Putnam responds. He suggests that the language that enables us to say that some things are true, warranted, reasonable, that some things are objective, *is* relative in the sense that it rests on something else; it rests on – trust.

"What can I rely on?" Wittgenstein asks plaintively in *On Certainty?* "I really want to say," Wittgenstein writes, "that a language-game is only possible if one trusts something" (##508, 509).

This trust, as Putnam understands it in the light of Stanley Cavell's views, comes to coping with our "inability to accept the world and to acknowledge other people, without the guarantees."[13] And since the inability is insurmountable, basing the language on trust comes to learning how "to live with both alienation and acknowledgment."[14]

But can such a trust justify claims that objectivity can be relative only? Must objectivity finally rest on trust alone? And is trust here, a trusting something, no more than just another attitude problem?

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[12]*Renewing Philosophy*, p. 177.

[13]*Ibid*., pp. 75 and 178. See also Putnam's preface, "Introducing Cavell," in *Pursuits of Reason* (Lubbock, Texas Technical University Press, 1992).

[14]Putnam, *Renewing Philosophy*, Lecture VIII, p. 178.

HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

Francis Peddle

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy and music have had a varied and ambiguous relation in the history of thought. Taken as a reflection of the harmony of the spheres and as having great power to instill moral virtue, music was, and is, to many philosophers fundamental to education and to an understanding of the world. Equally, it has been derided as corrupting, fanciful and undisciplined. Philosophy distrusts the musical affections for their involvement in feeling and pleasure. Yet much affinity for the art of tone is found in philosophy's pursuit of rational proportion, order and the inwardly universal. The manifold nature of music readily lends itself to a variety of metaphysical, mathematical and ethical interpretations.

For Hegel, art is the apprehension of the absolute. The absolute as spirit apprehends itself in art, religion and philosophy. Art is the immediate appearance of absolute mind. This immediacy is the idea of beauty. The beautiful object of art manifests, in the sense-world, the unity of subjectivity and objectivity. The principle of subjectivity, as it shines through the plurality of the individual arts, provides the underlying concrete unity for the subject of aesthetics. The content of the work of art is spiritual, while its form is the material embodiment of the individual art. The concrete perfection of the ideal in art is the unity of spiritual content and material form. This ideality is the infinite, free, and self-determined work of art purged of all unnecessary externalities and contingencies.

It is important to situate any consideration of the individual arts in Hegel's *Aesthetics* within the overall context of his *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. Only then will the highly nuanced and multitiered meanings of such terms as "subjectivity", "objectivity", "immediacy", "unity", and "ideal" be comprehensible and understandable in their full speculative meaning. Furthermore, since art is absolute mind in its most immediate form, that is, it is a wholly self-determining immediacy, none of the individual arts, like for instance music, can be subordinated to external ends such as moral instruction, social utility or amusement. The self-determinacy of art is also the reason for Hegel's rejection of its interpretation as imitation.[1]

What I wish to argue in this essay is that music is an ineliminable, albeit inadequately developed, concept in Hegel's *Aesthetics*. Therein lies a philosophy of music because the art of tone is, like the other individual arts, suffused with the self-unfolding principles of speculative thought. Hegel's system of philosophy neither impoverishes music, or art in general, nor is it the "funeral oration" of aesthetics.[2]

MUSIC IN THE GENERAL ARCHITECTURE OF HEGEL'S AESTHETICS

The concept of beauty contains the sides of spiritual content and material form. When embodiment predominates over spirit, as in architecture, we have symbolic art. The self-enclosed unification of content and form in a

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[1] See, G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, tr. A.V. Miller (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), para.558.

[2] Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic*, tr. Douglas Ainslie (New York, Noonday Press, 1953), "The Aesthetic of Hegel is thus a funeral oration: he passes in review the successive forms of art, shows the progressive steps of internal consumption and lays the whole in its grave, leaving Philosophy to write its epitaph", pp.302-303.

perfectly balanced totality is the ideal of classical art.[3] The infinite repose and individuated universality of Greek sculpture is the classical art *par excellence*. Finally, in the romantic arts of painting, music and poetry spirit predominates over material form and returns into the infinity of its own subjectivity. This spirituality also heightens the ideality of the material media of the romantic arts by abstracting from the weight of solid matter into the ideality of two-dimensional space and the negative activity of time.

What Hegel referred to as "romantic art" was not the nineteenth century developments we usually find identified in musical and literary histories, but medieval art. Since, in Hegel's view, the principle of subjectivity only got its due with the advent of Christianity, romantic art is intimately connected with religious subject-matter.[4] Nevertheless Hegel wishes to give to art an independent value. Self-consciousness of free spirit is the essential condition of beautiful art, which is defective if its form is not immanent to it.

The intensification of the principle of subjectivity in the romantic arts also means a widened universality that pervades individual peculiarities which in turn are illustrative of an ever present soul-life. The romantic arts in their own autonomy embody varying degrees of negation of the spatial dimensions of solid matter. In painting the three-dimensionality of sculpture is reduced to flat surface. Music negates spatiality altogether and in its formal aspect is an object-free inwardness that has the theoretical sense of hearing, which as subjective is more ideal and adequate to the expression of inner life than sight.[5]

Hegel sees a formal affinity between music and architecture in that they are based on the quantitative relations of proportion. Both arts dissolve the classical identity of inner life and external existence, which in music is a negation of externality into inwardness, while architecture cannot attain this unity. Music lies very close to the essence of the formal freedom of inner life and can thus turn more readily away from, and at the same time determine, its content than the other arts. Poetry has the closest affinity with music because of their mutual use of the perceptible material of sound. Music therefore often allies itself with subject-matter already developed by poetry. Hegel acknowledges and defends, however, the self-determining independence of music.[6] Words provide an opportunity for musical commentary and independent construction. Feeling is the first differentiation of the inward abstraction of music from the world into the self-sufficient self. Music expresses the content of the inner life itself. Hegel declares that "music with its movements penetrates the *arcanum* of all the movements of the soul".[7]

DETERMINATION OF A PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

In music there is a closer connection between its spiritual content and the external medium than in poetry, in which ideas move independent of the sound of language. The differentiation of abstract self-comprehension in feeling is also closely connected with time - the universal element in music.[8] Music has at times been taken, in the history of thought, as the most elemental of the arts because of the supposed

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[3] G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, tr. T.M. Knox (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975), Vol.I, "For classical beauty has for its inner being the free independent meaning, i.e. not a meaning **of** this or that but what means [*Bedeutende*] itself and therefore intimates [*Deutende*] itself. This is spirit, which in general makes itself into an object to itself. In this objectivity of itself it then has the form of *externality* which, as identical with its own inner being, is therefore on its side the meaning of its own self and, in knowing itself, it points to itself", p.427.

[4] *Supra*, *Philosophy of Mind*, para. 562.

[5] Hegel, *Aesthetics*, Vol.II, p.890. Compare Aristotle's views on hearing and music, *Problemata*, tr. E.M. Forster (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1927), Bk.XIX "Problems Connected With Music", 27, 919b, 26-37.

[6] Hegel, *Aesthetics*, Vol.II, pp.900-901.

[7] *Id*., p.906.

[8] *Id*., p.907.

primacy of time over space.[9] Hegel sees temporal movement and its rhythm as the essential reason for the elemental might of music. Nevertheless, the abstract sound of temporal movement is not sufficient in itself for music to have its full effect. To this must be added spiritual content and feeling.

Hegel orders the particular characteristics of music in terms of rhythm, harmony and melody.[10] Temporal duration must be determined in fixed measures. There is a necessity to rhythmic order and proportion. The theory of harmony orders the essential relationship of notes in their consonance, opposition, and modulation. Finally, melody is spiritually free expression which has rhythm and harmony as its foundation. Hegel describes melody as:[11]

> "The poetic element in music, the language of the soul, which pours out into the notes the inner joy and sorrow of the heart, and in this outpouring mitigates and rises above the *natural* force of feeling by turning the inner life's present transports into an apprehension of itself, into a free tarrying with itself, and by liberating the heart in this way from the pressure of joys and sorrows -this free sounding of the soul (*das freie Tonen der Seele*) in the field of music - this is alone melody".

For Hegel, rhythm and harmony form a unity for the free development and unification of notes in melody. Freedom and unity are more developed states in Hegelian thought, although they encompass and pervade necessity and dispersion. Melody is therefore infinitely determinable, but nevertheless must be so regulated that we apprehend it as an inherent totality.[12] Melody expresses the "free self-subsistence of subjective life which it is its task to express".[13]

The relation between music and words in Hegel's *Aesthetics* must now be considered. Music as an accompaniment develops the inward side of a topic already articulated. The singing voice speaks words which give us an idea of a specific subject-matter. The text, however, must be the servant of the music, which develops the inward side of what is set forth in the libretto or in the Latin words of the Roman Catholic Mass. Hegel considers the character of a libretto which is suited for musical composition and the characterizing declamation which must be subordinated to the all-embracing unity of the melody. Characteristic passages are, however, discrete and scattered. One cannot help but think that Hegel had Beethoven in mind when he described contemporary dramatic music as looking for its effect "in violent contrasts by forcing into one and the same musical movement opposite passions which are artistically at variance".[14] The section on music as accompaniment ends with a brief discussion of the principal musical genres such as church, lyrical and dramatic music.

There then follows a discussion of the execution of musical works of art. In epic interpretation, which in effect negates any interpretive ingenuity, the individual personality of the executant is entirely submerged in the composition. On the other hand, the performer may draw heavily from his own resources and thus uniquely express and animate the composition, viewing the written notes and directions as a mere skeleton that must be revivified and developed in performance.

Hegel's analysis of independent music is the most inadequate part of the chapter on music in the

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[9] This primacy, that is, time as eternity and infinite duration, is related to Schopenhauer's declaration that music is independent of the phenomenal world and a direct copy of the will itself, see, *The World as Will and Representation*, tr. E.F.J. Payne (New York, Dover, 1969), Vol.I, pp.256 *et seq.*, and Vol.II, "On the Metaphysics of Music", pp. 446 *et seq.*

[10] *Aesthetics*, Vol.II, p.912.

[11] *Id.*, pp.929-930.

[12] *Id.*, p.944.

[13] *Id.*, p.933.

[14] *Id.*, p.947.

Aesthetics. Nevertheless, he explicitly points out that if music is to be purely musical it must turn away from any element that is not its own, including the determinate sphere of words.[15] The principle of music, as the inner life of the individual, can only give full freedom to the inmost being of subjectivity when sheered of all extra-musical externalities. Hegel states:[16]

> "Now if this subjective experience is to gain its full due in music likewise, then music must free itself from a given text and draw entirely out of itself its content, progress and manner of expression, the unity and unfolding of its work, the development of a principal thought, the episodic intercalation and ramification of others, and so forth; and in doing all this it must limit itself to purely musical means, because the meaning of the whole is not expressed in words".

Unfortunately Hegel does not in any way develop these general remarks and apply them to particular pieces of instrumental music. Indeed, he suggests that only the expert can comprehend instrumental music and that the meaning of this comprehension is primarily harmonic progression, modulation, and so on, or in other words, the rules and laws of music with which the composition is to be compared for enjoyment and criticism.[17] While it is undoubtedly true that a theoretical knowledge of music will enhance one's aesthetic appreciation of a particular composition, it cannot be the case that this appreciation is simply a function of understanding the mathematical and harmonic structure of the work.

COMMENTARY

The chapter on music in Hegel's *Aesthetics* lacks the highly detailed and illuminating discussions presented in the sections on, for instance, poetry or Greek sculpture. Occasionally, he lets his preferences be known, such as when he declares truly ideal music to be the melodic expression of Palestrina, Durante, Lotti, Pergo-lesi, Gluck, Haydn and Mozart. Hegel admits that his knowledge of music is quite limited.[18] Nevertheless, it cannot be argued that he allows personal preference to colour completely his exposition of the concept of music within the system of the individual arts. For example, commentators often note that Hegel preferred vocal music to instrumental, and then erroneously proceed to say that he believed music with a text to be superior to instrumental music.[19] As has been noted, however, Hegel explicitly stated that the principle of music, as is the case with all thought-determinations, can only be true to itself once it has shed any external connections, including the determinacy of words.

It should also be remembered that Hegel's apparent denigration of the principle of music is done within the context of the transition to and exposition of the principle of poetic aesthetics.[20] It is not accurate to say that Hegel finds no

[15] *Id*., p.952.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Id*., pp.953-954.

[18] *Id*., p.893.

[19] See, for example, Julius Portnoy, *The Philosopher and Music: A Historical Outline* (New York, Humanities Press, 1954), p.168, and T.M. Knox, "The Puzzle of Hegel's Aesthetics", in *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy* (New Jersey, Humanities Press, 1980), pp.1-10.

[20] Hegel states: "This is so much the case that music becomes music and an independent art the more that what preponderates in it is the complete absorption of the inner life into the realm of *notes*, not of the spirit as such. But, for this reason, it is capable only to a relative extent of harbouring the variety of spiritual ideas and insights and the broad expanse of a richly filled conscious life, and in its expression it does not get beyond the more abstract and general character of what it takes as its subject or beyond vaguer deep feelings of the heart. Now in proportion as the spirit transforms this abstract generality into a concrete ensemble of ideas, aims, actions, and events and adds to this process their inspection *seriatim*, it deserts the inner world of pure feeling and works it out into a world of objective actuality developed likewise in the inner sphere of imagination. Consequently, simply on account of this transformation, any attempt to express this new-won wealth of the spirit

meaning in instrumental music, or music *per se*, and therefore gives it only token representation in the *Aesthetics*. There is a double philosophical perspective on music in Hegel, that is analogous to how we should understand art within his philosophical system.[21]

Music, like art in general, has a realm of meaning in itself. This meaning has its source in the inward life of free musical invention and creation. From the standpoint of the more determinate sphere of the poetical, musical expression appears as an abstract universality. Within the sphere of its own principle, however, music says what it says in the uniquely malleable medium of rhythm, harmony and melody, in which, in such masterpieces as Bach's *Mass in B minor* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, there is a sublime unity of spiritual content, of rhythmic, harmonic and melodic order, of voice and instrumentation - with the voices, both soloists and chorus, blending and intermingling in a mutually complementary relation with the orchestral instrumentation and colouring. Secondly, it should also be remembered that the philosophical consideration of art, that is, the standpoint of aesthetics per se, concerns the place of music, and art in general, within the total spectrum of human thought and the self-conscious unfolding of spirit or mind (*Geist*). The illuminations and limitations of the principle of music as the sensuous showing (*sinnliches Scheinen*) of inward subjectivity in the ideality of refined and ordered tonalities not only plays a significant role in releasing mind from the boundedness of the phenomenal, but also is itself a glean - a direct, animating and elemental perception - of the freedom, truth, and self-determining force of the Idea in the explicit positedness of absolute mind and the principle of subjectivity.

The place of music in Hegel's *Aesthetics* is not therefore one of a vanishing moment which must be dismissed as an indeterminate and inadequate representation of absolute spirit. Nor is it an art that only has meaning and significance in its connection with other individual arts. Music is a unique and autonomous artistic discipline that can express the full gamut of human spirituality and which can, in its own right, give form, in sound, to deep spiritual content. Nevertheless, it is the place of the philosopher to situate and identify the significance of this spiritual content within the totality of the articulation of self-conscious mind. Hegel therefore does have a definite philosophy of music which is neither supplanted by the other arts, or by religion or philosophy, nor which is in need of their content for its self-subsistence. The source of its self-subsistence is in spirit alone.

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wholly and exclusively through sounds and their harmony must be abandoned". *Aesthetics*, Vol.II, pp.962-963.

[21] See, William Desmond, "Response to Professor Taft", *The Owl of Minerva*, Vol.18, No.2, Spring, 1987, p.164. See also Desmond's, *Art and the Absolute: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (Albany, SUNY, 1986).

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