

Syllabus

Spring 2016

Course: PHL 550/301 Heidegger I: The Origin of the Work of Art

Day/Time: Thursdays, 3:00-6:15pm

Room: McGowan South 204

Instructor: Will McNeill

Office Hours: Thursday 10:00-12:00

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Course Outline

This seminar will examine one of Heidegger's most influential and intriguing texts, his essay "The Origin of the Work of Art," composed around 1935-36. Directed toward the overcoming of aesthetics, the essay exists in three different versions, each reflecting a different stage of development. There is much more going on in this essay than meets the eye, for it is written not only as the attempt to overcome aesthetics, but also as a corrective of sorts to his earlier, phenomenological work; as a critical confrontation with the history of metaphysics; as an appropriation of the work of the poet Hölderlin; as a question of the relation between poetry and philosophy at the end of metaphysics; as a question concerning *technē* (encompassing art, artisanship, and technology); and as a response to the National Socialist politics of the era (regarding questions of the essence of the political, the concepts of a people, race, national identity, and historicity). Our reading of the essay will try to bring out something of this complexity.

Following a general introduction, we shall read and re-read the essay in three phases:

Introduction: Week 1. Situating the essay and its problematic within Heidegger's oeuvre. The task of overcoming aesthetics.

Phase I: Weeks 2-4. The essay falls into three parts. In the first phase of study, we shall simply read the three parts of the mature, originally published version of the essay (as translated in *Basic Writings*), examining one part per week. In this phase, we aim to familiarize ourselves with the basic conceptuality and structure of the essay, and also to relate it back to themes and issues stemming from *Being and Time* and from Heidegger's early, phenomenological work.

Phase II: Weeks 5-7. In the second phase we shall broaden our perspective on the essay in several respects: (1) How does Heidegger understand the task of overcoming aesthetics, and to what extent is the essay successful in doing so? (2) How does the essay stand in relation to political issues of the time, especially those of national identity, "race," and historicity? (3) What is the influence and role of Hölderlin in the genesis and status of the essay, and what does it mean for the relation between poetry and philosophy? We shall address these questions by examining two essays by Robert Bernasconi; a discussion of Heidegger's 1934-35 course on Hölderlin, and a reading of his contemporaneous, 1936 essay "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry."

Phase III: Weeks 8-9. In the final phase, we shall examine the two earlier versions of “The Origin of the Work of Art”: the first draft, dating from 1931-32; and the Freiburg version, from November 1935, presented as a series of lectures and dating from a year before the final, Frankfurt version. What can the earlier versions tell us about (1) the genesis of the essay; and (2) the philosophical issues that Heidegger was grappling with at the time?

Required Texts

Heidegger, *Basic Writings*. Edited by David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperCollins, 2008. ISBN 978-0061627019. Contains the translation of the originally published version of “The Origin of the Work of Art.”

Heidegger, *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. New York: HarperCollins, 2008. ISBN 978-0061575594.

The Heidegger Reader. Edited by Günter Figal. Translated by Jerome Veith. Contains “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry” and the first version of “The Origin of the Work of Art.” ISBN 978-0253221278.

Bernasconi, Robert, *Heidegger in Question: The Art of Existing*. New York: Humanity Books, 1996. ISBN 978-1573925006. ***This is out of print. PDFs of the required readings will be made available.**

Also Recommended

I. Works by Heidegger

Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine.” Translated by William McNeill and Julia Ireland. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014. The 1934-35 lecture course on Hölderlin.

Einführung in die Metaphysik. 5. Auflage. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1987. Translated as *Introduction to Metaphysics* by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. The course from summer semester 1935.

Nietzsche Bd. I. 4. Auflage. Pfullingen: Neske, 1961. Translated as *Nietzsche. Volumes One and Two* by David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperCollins, 1991. Contains the lecture course “The Will to Power as Art” from 1936-37.

II. Works by Other Authors

Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Especially the essay “Restitutions,” in part a response to Schapiro’s criticism.

Fynsk, Christopher, *Heidegger: Thought and Historicity*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1993. Especially Chapter 4: “The Work of Art and the Question of Man.”

Kelly, Michael (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*. The Heidegger entry contains several useful short essays and references to other secondary literature. Available electronically via DePaul library.

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*. Translated by Chris Turner. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990.

Schapiro, Meyer, “The Still Life as a Personal Object—A Note on Heidegger and van Gogh.” In: *The Reach of Mind: Essays in Honor of Kurt Goldstein*. Ed. Marianne L. Simmel. New York: Springer, 1968, 203-209. Read together with Derrida’s “Restitutions” essay in *The Truth in Painting*.

Taminiaux, Jacques, “The Origin of ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’.” In: *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*. Ed. John Sallis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, 392-404. Useful for situating the Art essay in relation to the early reading of Aristotelian *techne*.

Thomson, Ian, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. See especially chapters 2 and 3.

III. Relevant Essays of Mine (all available as PDFs on D2L)

“Remains: Heidegger and Hölderlin Amid the Ruins of Time.” Forthcoming in: *Philosophers and Their Poets: Reflections on the Poetic Turn in German Philosophy since Kant*. Edited by Charles Bambach and Theodore George. Albany: State University of New York Press.

“Tracing Technē: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Legacy of Philosophy.” Forthcoming in *Examining Heidegger’s Question of Being: Dasein, Truth, and History*, ed. Holger Zaborowski. Catholic University of America Press.

“In Force of Language: Language and Desire in Heidegger’s Reading of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* Ξ .” In: *Heidegger and Language*, edited by J. Powell. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013, 46-62.

“Heidegger’s Hölderlin Lectures.” In: *The Bloomsbury Companion to Heidegger*, edited by F. Raffoul & E. Nelson. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013, 223-35. An overview of the three Hölderlin lecture courses.

“Design and the Enigma of the World.” In *Design Philosophy Papers*, Volume 4, Issue 2, 2006, 93-116. A reading of “The Origin of the Work of Art” in relation to *technē* and technicity.

“Ēthos and Poetic Dwelling: Inaugural Time in Heidegger’s Dialogue with Hölderlin.” In *The Time of Life: Heidegger and Ethos*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006, Chapter 6, 133-52.

“To Things Their Look: The Origin of the Work of Art.” In *The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, Chapter 8, 279-303.

Review of Martin Heidegger, *The Beginning of Western Philosophy: Interpretation of Anaximander and Parmenides*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz. Indiana University Press, 2015. Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews, 2015.10.04. <https://ndpr.nd.edu>.

Course Requirements

Beyond the expected preparation and reading, there are two formal requirements:

1. Either a **written protocol**, or a **presentation**, to be assigned. The **protocol** is to be read in class, summarizing what you take to be the most important points from the previous week’s discussions. The protocol is intended as a summary and recollection, not as a thorough documentation. It may further the previous week’s discussion in a particular respect, by way of questions or the introduction of other perspectives (this is encouraged, but not mandatory). Each protocol should be no longer than 2 single-spaced pages. A printed copy should be distributed to everyone in the seminar before reading. The **presentation** should introduce a particular aspect of the new material assigned for the week. I will suggest a topic or question. Presentations should follow the same length and format stipulations as the protocols.
2. A **final paper**, addressing a key question from “The Origin of the Work of Art.” The topic and perspective are up to you. You may want to run your idea for the final paper by me beforehand. Reference to relevant secondary literature is encouraged, but not required. **Length: 12 pages maximum, double-spaced, 11pt or 12pt font. Because this is an exercise in finding the measure, papers exceeding 12 pages will not be accepted. To be submitted as an electronic copy in MSWord format in the D2L Dropbox. Deadline: 12:00 midnight on Sunday, June 12, 2016.**

Schedule of Study

March 31	<p>Introduction: Setting the greater context. The Overcoming of Aesthetics: “Six Basic Facts...” OWA Introductory Remarks & Epilogue</p>
April 7	<p>Equipmentality, World, & Phenomenology OWA Part I: The Thing and the Work <i>Being and Time</i>, §§14-18</p>
April 14	<p>Earth, World, & Truth OWA Part II: The Work and Truth</p>
April 21	<p><i>Technē</i>, the Rift, and the Event of Truth OWA Part III: Truth and Art</p>
April 28	No class
May 5	<p>The Essence of Art as Poetizing: the Hölderlinian Context “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetizing” (1936)</p>
May 12	<p>Art & Community: The “We” Bernasconi, “The Greatness of the Work of Art” Excerpts from the 1934-35 Hölderlin course</p>
May 19	<p>Deepening the Rift: Nature and Art Bernasconi, “Ne sutor ultra crepidam” “In Force of Language...”: <i>Technē</i> in the 1931 Course ?</p>
May 26	OWA: The First Draft (1931-32)
June 2	OWA: The Freiburg Version (1935)
June 12	Final paper due 12:00 midnight.