

Phil 190: Second Short Writing Assignment

Winter, 2026

Instructions

Due, as an attachment, via the “Assignments” tool on Canvas, by 11:55pm on Tuesday, February 24.

Please respond to one of the following questions in three pages or less (double spaced). (Needless to say this should be your own original work.)

Note that this is not a full scale paper — please do *not* write an introduction and conclusion, summarize other, irrelevant parts of the text, etc. Just focus on doing the above.

You can find answers to some commonly asked questions about my assignments and grading in my FAQ (<https://people.ucsc.edu/~abestone/courses/faq.html>).

Questions

1. In the Remark to §125 (p. 195), Hegel discusses the difference between “thing” (*Ding*), a determination of essence, and “something” (*Etwas*), a determination of being (introduced in §90). How is the difference between being and essence supposed to explain the difference between something’s being determined by a quality (*something* as the unity of *determination* and *quality*), on the one hand, and the thing’s having a property (*thing* as the unity of *ground* and *existence*), on the other? (Hint: remember the definition of “quality” as: “determination identical with being.”) Explain, then, based also on the difference between mere transition (passing-over), on the one hand, and “shining,” on the other, why the determination following “something” is “limit” (§92), whereas the determination following “thing” is “appearance.” In what sense is appearance to the thing as limit is to something? Hint: “limit” is the determination in which something, as determinate and therefore finite, is seen to depend on its pure negation: the “spurious” (really, “bad”: *schlechte*) infinite which “is nothing but the negation of the finite” (§94). The world of appearance “proceeds to an infinite mediation

of its subsistence by its form” (§132). How is the bad infinite as world of appearance specifically suited to negate the finite as *thing*?

2. Briefly explain: (a) in what sense the world of appearance is the appearance *of* essence — that is, the way essence taken immediately (Essence as the Ground of Existence) manifests itself, “shines” forth as appearance; (b) in what sense the world of appearance, as the negation of essence, is not the appearance *of* anything; (c) in what sense the world of appearance is the appearance *of* actuality (of the actual) — the way actuality first appears on the scene, so to speak. For all three of these you may find helpful the Addition (*Zusatz*) to §131: for (a) especially towards the beginning; for (b) and (c) especially the paragraph about Kant near the bottom of p. 200. For (c) you may want to compare the “mutual externality” (*Außereinander*) of the world of appearance (§133, p. 201) with the kind of relationships which will be discussed under Actuality, e.g. cause and effect.

3. Consider the following table:

ground	mere possibility
existence	contingency
thing (<i>Ding</i>)	Thing (<i>Sache</i>)

Explain, based on the outline of the Doctrine of Essence as a whole, why we expect to find a certain relationship between the items in the first column and the corresponding items in the second column (note that in some cases a sub-moment stands in for a whole development — justify this). How does each moment in the second column differ from the one in the first? Explain how in each case the difference results from the fact that the aspect of immediate essence (essence as ground of existence) contained in the first column has been united with appearance (has turned out to be its own mere appearance).