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Sophia and Poiesis: Nietzsche, Aesthetics, and the Quest for Knowledge.

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Introduction

In a 2015 study of the scholarship surrounding Nietzsche's Free Spirit works, Duncan Large notes that the topic of aesthetics is almost universally passed over[1]. In works dealing expressly with this trilogy of books – *Human, All Too Human* (1878-1880) *Dawn* (1881) and *The Gay Science* (1882)- discussions of art and the aesthetic are notably sparse, with critics seemingly minimising the role that these topics had to play in the works[2]. Studies on the status of art in Nietzsche's broader corpus offer an insight into why this might be. With the notable exception of Aaron Ridley[3], scholarship on Nietzsche and the arts has tended to adopt the line that the publication of *Human* marked a dramatic about face in Nietzsche's relationship with the aesthetic[4]. Where his early works – most notably *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) – had put aesthetics at the heart of their philosophical worldview, *Human* saw Nietzsche piling scorn on artists and seemingly condemning art as regressive and dangerous. Where the former works has seen the aesthetic as a bulwark against 'Socratic optimism' – the quasi-religious/moral belief in the power of science and the absolute value of knowledge – *Human* saw Nietzsche declaring the start of a new project geared towards a heroic 'quest for knowledge'. More than a simple shift in priorities or approach, the start of the Free Spirit project is interpreted as Nietzsche turning his back on three great 'pillars' of his early thought: Richard Wagner, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Greek art and culture.

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[1] Large 70-2

[2] Ruth Abbey's *Nietzsche's Middle Period Works* (Oxford UP, 2000) and Paul Franco's *Nietzsche's Enlightenment* (University of Chicago Press, 2011) are notable examples of this tendency. Other studies make heavy use of the "aestheticism" thesis offered in Alexander Nehamas *Nietzsche, Life as Literature*, Harvard UP, 1985. Michael Ure, *Nietzsche's Therapy*, Lexington Books, Plymouth, 2006 is an example of a work that builds upon Nehamas' thesis.

[3] *Nietzsche on Art and Literature*, Routledge Press, London, 2007

[4] Besides Philip Pothen and Julian Young, two principal interlocuters for this study, we also have Matthew Rampley's *Nietzsche, Aesthetics and Modernity*, Cambridge UP, 2007 which does not forward the same thesis as Young and Pothen, but which nevertheless sees the Free Spirit works as offering scant pickings for readers of Nietzsche's aesthetic thought.

By this narrative, the 1876 Bayreuth festival – unquestionably a turning point in the thinker's life - is taken to have caused Nietzsche to break faith with art and the 'pessimistic metaphysics' that underpinned his early aesthetic philosophy. Then, in 1878, we see this new-found antipathy set in print, with a work that declared a radical about-face, a declaration for science that was to last at least until the publication of his own 'philosophic artwork', the prose poem *Thus spoke Zarathustra*. This grand narrative offers a compelling explanation for the changes in priority, focus, and style that Nietzsche's work underwent after Bayreuth, and a compelling reason to continue to accept the orthodoxy that has been built up around it. However, as *Human* argues, the fact that a belief is compelling does not in the least speak to its truth; the pathos of narrative feeling should not be allowed to cloud the suspicion we, as scholars, need always hold for stories about clean breaks, about beginnings and ends. The 'Dionysian insight' offered by Zarathustra is that all boundary stones are illusions (Z §III:5). They were placed there by us and should only remain if they continue to prove their worth. It is time we questioned the received wisdom that the Free spirit radically opposes the early works' aesthetic philosophy.

In this study, it will be my concern to examine the argument for a discontinuity between Nietzsche's early and 'middle' period writings. Specifically, I will address the notion that these earlier works represent something that had, by 1878, become intolerable for Nietzsche: life-denial. The typical reading of *The Birth of Tragedy* presents it as a work of Schopenhauerian pessimism, which offers the art of beautifying illusion as the only possible means to escape the relentless horror of existence. Scholarship in the last 20 years has worked against this interpretation, and yet no scholar – perhaps with the exception of Michele Haar[5] - has been able to fully endorse the claim made by Nietzsche in his 1886 preface to the work, "An Attempt at Self-Criticism": that *Birth* offered aesthetics as a remedy to life-denial. It was in the name of opposing this ethos – which Nietzsche most famously aligned with Christian and Buddhist asceticism – that the Free Spirit works were to wage their war against metaphysics and to denounce the 'afterworldsmen' (*Hinterweltlern)* who turn their back on life and seek for meaning in the Beyond. Through a reading of *Birth*, as well as its

[5] *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, trans. M. Gendre, NY State UP, 1996

draft texts – "The Dionysian Worldview" and "The Greek Music Drama"-, the works' proposed follow up *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, and the lectures series this latter was based on (*The Pre-Platonic Lectures*) I will argue for an alternative interpretation. From a Naturalist reading of these early texts and their 'Aesthetic interpretation of Life', I seek to trace a line of continuity that extends into the Free Spirit works.

I will primarily be arguing against the readings of Nietzsche's relationship with the aesthetic offered by Julian Young (*Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art*) and Philip Pothen (*Nietzsche and the Fate of Art*). Young's reading of *Birth* and its aesthetic outlook as essentially metaphysical will be the main thesis that the first half of this study will argue against. In doing this, I will seek to build up a picture of an aspect of Nietzsche's thought that is radically misunderstood in the literature - owing in no small part to the influence of Young's reading. This element is the "Dionysian Artist of worlds" which Nietzsche forwards as the crux of his claim that the world is 'justified' when viewed as an aesthetic phenomenon. This has typically been read as Nietzsche offering an amoral 'theodicy' – one that fails in its task by virtue of its nature as a metaphysical construction. Through engagement with *Tragic Age* and with Peter Sloterdijk's reading of redemption (*Thinker on Stage: Nietzsche's Materialism*) I will argue that Nietzsche uses his vision of aesthetics to radically re-orientate the notion of 'theodicy', 'justification', and 'redemption' to arrive at a god-less, anti-metaphysical doctrine. I shall examine the way Nietzsche constructs his readings of Greek theatre and literature to promote a 'Dionysian Aesthetic' that seeks to break down the boundaries between subject and object, artist, spectator, and spectacle and to thereby render obsolete the idea of a law-based knowledge of objects and concepts. Tracing the development of this idea through Nietzsche's engagement with physics, biology, and philosophy of mind, I will show how the 'science' that Nietzsche adopts in the Free Spirit works finds its roots in his early interest in the aesthetic. From the vision of the world these theories engender, it will be seen that 'the knowledge' that the Free Spirit is called to dedicate her life to grew out of Nietzsche's aesthetic interpretation of life. Far from representing a rebuttal to and disavowal of his early aesthetic thought, I wish to show that the Free Spirit represents a development of this outlook: one that seeks to remedy certain problems that Nietzsche

had identified in thinkers of the past, and that he was, by the time of the first Bayreuth Festival, starting to identify in his own outlook.

Since this study will largely concern the line of continuity between early works and the Free Spirit, I have chosen to focus my engagement with the latter works primarily on the first volume of *Human, All Too Human*. This choice was made for several reasons, not least of which was the tendency on behalf of scholars to simply write the work off as the most self-evidently anti-aesthetic of Nietzsche's writings. By focusing on this transitional work and its critique of the concept of 'genius' I highlight the relationship between the Free Spirit concept of Knowledge, and the aesthetic worldview that grounded Nietzsche's early scientific formulations. Through this, I argue that the sort of stark reversal of commitments emphasised by Young and Pothen is not only a dramatic oversimplification, but one that does damage to our understanding of a critical element of the Free Spirit philosophy.

A contextualisation of this continuity, between aesthetics and knowledge, allows us to better understand the role of knowledge in these later works, bridging a critical gap between the themes of self-knowledge and self-creation, and the more broadly scientific understanding of knowledge as concerning our epistemic relationship to the world around us. By re-enforcing the emphasis on a blurring of self and world that is central to the Nietzsche's Dionysian Aesthetic, I frame the quest for knowledge as a means to negotiate this interrelation in a way that keeps a respectful and critical eye on the 'macrocosm' problem: a distortion of philosophical enquiry by subjective 'states of will' that Nietzsche sees as central to the genesis of metaphysical thinking. My discussion of the early aesthetic writings will show that the Free Spirit is still held by the epistemic framework set out in these works, and that the 'means' to knowing this leaves us with precludes the possibility of viewing knowledge as the objective 'grasping after' objects in our world. However, even before his break with Wagner, Nietzsche had begun to question whether the naturalistic and intuitive approach to our relationship with the world and with our 'self-ness' that his earlier thought had emphasised was not counterproductive: stifling rather than liberating the creative intellect. It was as a means to once more push for a free and creative relationship to our self-ness and our existences that Nietzsche advocated for a 'cooling' of our natural aesthetic drives. It was to aid and supplement these drives, rather than to dismiss them that Nietzsche advocated for a

knowledge of self that would allow, in time, for a more authentic knowledge of the world.

In the first chapter of this study, I will begin to address the arguments offered by critics against tracing a continuity between the early and Middle period writings. Taking "An Attempt at Self-Criticism" and the scholarship surrounding it as a jumping off point, I will seek to frame *Birth* and its aesthetic worldview as Nietzsche's answer to the metaphysical pessimism that informed the aesthetic philosophy of his 'great antipode' Arthur Schopenhauer. In answer to the critical and dismissive approach taken by scholarship to the claims made in the "Attempt", I will argue that the aesthetic vision offered in Nietzsche's presentation of Dionysus resists the metaphysical duality of worlds that he was to later see as inextricably bound up with a hatred for existence. This chapter will examine the conception of life denial and affirmation in Nietzsche's philosophy and set the groundwork for an examination of the 'aesthetic justification' that was the core of Nietzsche's early aesthetic philosophy. Through close textual readings of *Tragic Age* and *Birth*, I will demonstrate, contra Pothen and Young, that Nietzsche's early thought is already geared towards a project of 'vindicating' life in the face of Schopenhauer's metaphysical denunciations.

Far from being a defining characteristic of the 'break' between these early writings and the Free Spirit project, this shared commitment reveals the damage that is done to a reading of both period's writings if we post such a sharp disjunction. This chapter will engage with broader scholarship on the *Birth of Tragedy* and incorporate into our understanding of it a reading of the oft-overlooked *Tragic Age* manuscript, arguing that this uncompleted 'sequel' work contains much that fleshes out and dramatically re-contextualises Nietzsche first book. In light of this, and of close readings of *Birth* and its drafts, I argue for a 'naturalist' reading of the early aesthetic writings. Naturalism is a well trodden path for Nietzsche scholarship in general terms[6], but studies forwarding such a reading almost entirely gloss over the early writings. The heavy reliance upon nature imagery in the *Birth* writings are ripe for examination by

[6] See for e.g. Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation,* UC Press, 1999, Christian Emden *Nietzsche's Naturalism*, Cambridge UP, 2014, *Nietzsche, Naturalism, and Normativity*, ed. C. Janaway, S. Robertson, Oxford UP, 2012

this light, and Nietzsche's engagement with Schiller's humanistic 'naïve' nature philosophy offers crucial insight into Nietzsche characterisation of the 'natural aesthetic force' that human artistry is held to 'participate' in. If it was a central commitment of the Free Spirit to 're-integrate' the human back into nature, then *Birth* can be seen as the starting point of this project.

Central to the first chapter's argument is the claim that the breakdown of the self we see in the Dionysian aesthetic constitutes an appreciation of our existence as an element of nature. In chapter two, I will examine and argue against the prevalent counter narrative. This reading holds that the dissolution of self in Nietzsche's aesthetics constitutes an ascetic and transcendent rejection of the physical world as an illusion. By this understanding, Nietzsche's aesthetic takes its cue from Schopenhauer's metaphysic of the Will and understands the loss of self to be a salvation abandonment of this illusion. This reading takes Nietzsche as offering a form of 'aesthetic theodicy' in his vision of a god-like artist responsible for the continual creation of the world. It is understood that Nietzsche offers a 'justification' of life's suffering on the grounds that it manifests a pleasing spectacle for this artist. Furthermore, we are apparently offered access to this 'justification' through a transcendent dissolution of self which allows us to 'become one' with this god figure. This justification is held to be untenable by the bounds it sets itself, and critics frequently cite the illusory nature of any possible identification with the world artist's metaphysical perspective as grounds for dismissing the worth of the aesthetic justification thesis. As will become clear over the course of chapter one and its discussion of Life denial, this interpretation must be argued against if we are to claim that the Free Spirit works represent an evolution of the aesthetic writings.

To this end, I will offer an alternate reading of the world artist thesis and of the notion of aesthetic justification. Through an examination of Nietzsche's relationship with theodicy, I will argue that he presents his Heraclitean aesthetic world view in direct opposition to theories that demand a 'metaphysical other' to stand as guarantor for life's value. I will do this through extensive engagement with Nietzsche's reading of Heraclitus, which I shall use to inform a reading of Nietzsche's aesthetics of music. Against a thesis offered recently by Daniel Came, I present a Heraclitean vision of musical harmony and its relation to dissonance that underlines a critical element of

Nietzsche's aesthetics – the resistance to determinate identity. This reading will build upon the explication of Nietzsche's lyric aesthetics undertaken in chapter one and feed a further development of the central aspect of this theory: the elimination of the subject and object distinction. To this end, I will also examine Nietzsche aesthetics of the tragic stage to demonstrate how Nietzsche works to collapse a central tenet of the 'modern' aesthetics he saw as wholly antithetical to the Greek sensibility: the concept of 'spectatorial distance' and 'disinterested contemplation'. It is through this idea that I will seek to argue against critical interpretations of the world artist as an 'appreciative spectator' to the 'artwork' of life, which I identify in Nietzsche's work with the philosophy of Anaxagoras.

Having argued against the religious/metaphysical interpretation of Nietzsche's aesthetic in the first two chapters, I dedicate the second half of the work to tracing the way this aesthetic interweaves with Nietzsche's engagement with science. In the third chapter on the concept of 'self-ness', I examine how Nietzsche's aesthetics and their play with the integrity of the subject/object boundary informed Nietzsche's approach to physics and biology. A significant source for this critical exegesis will be the unpublished notes for Nietzsche's proposed doctoral thesis (*On the Concept of the Organic since Kant)* and those he composed during the writing of *Tragic Age* and "On Truth and Lies in an Extra-Moral Sense". In the former of these, we see Nietzsche undertaking a critique of Kant's teleology through an engagement with Kantian aesthetics. We see how Nietzsche used his understanding of aesthetics to radically undermine the grounding supposition of the self, through an attack on the validity of the idea that living things exist as purposive unities. Through this, I go on to examine a central element of Nietzsche's engagement with aesthetics – the concept of purposeless 'play'. I show how Nietzsche used this idea to undermine the Kantian telos, and, through an engagement with Schiller, examine the origins of Nietzsche's search for the 'innocence of becoming' in the Dionysian aesthetic. Nietzsche's debt to Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* is another pregnant area of enquiry that scholarship has almost entirely overlooked, and one which this study will seek to make a small but insightful contribution to.

Interwoven with discussions of Nietzsche's theory of biology, I will also use this chapter to examine the emergence of a Nietzschean physics that would, by the end of

the Free Spirit period, have evolved into the doctrine of the 'Will to Power'. Notes from Nietzsche's 1872/3 notebooks reveal a fascinating but fragmentary early formulation of this theory, one that builds on the 'dynamic physics' of R.J. Boscovich and on the insights of his biology and of the Dionysian aesthetic. I argue that it is this theory that grounds Nietzsche's Free Spirit conception of knowledge. In laying out a world that radically resists identity thinking, Nietzsche continues to scorn the accumulative, teleological understanding of scientific knowledge that *Birth* argued so forcefully against. Instead, I argue that the works forward an understanding of knowledge as a 'practice', one that negotiates the illusory but necessary boundary between 'self-ness' and the world. I frame this physic as Nietzsche's attempt to generate a scientific version of the world artist thesis. The 'force world' doctrine offers a model of a self-ordering 'game' of sapient (but non-sentient) force interactions that exemplifies the primary characteristics Nietzsche ascribed to his world artist: it is a meeting of 'necessity' and random 'play' in which the 'artist' and the 'art-work' exist together as a mutually engendering unity.

Having laid the foundations for an understanding of Nietzsche's approach to science, I dedicate the last chapter to an engagement with *Human, All Too Human* interspersed with discussions of the other Free Spirit works. These will serve to expand upon discussion of ideas I identify in the first work of the Free Spirit trilogy. Against the canonical portrayal of *Human* as 'anti-aesthetic', I offer a reading of the work as concerned to 'purify' the creative aesthetic relation we have to ourselves and our world. In light of the argument developed across the previous three chapters, I frame the concept of knowledge as Nietzsche's means of negotiating the fluid boundary between self and world, learning to identify the 'body' that we have as our sole access to the rest of the world in all its subtleties and nuances. Framed in terms of Nietzsche's critique of the genius, of the idea that certain people can uncritically immerse themselves in the art of world interpretation, I offer a reading of knowledge as a necessary process of honing and developing the 'organ' responsible for that aesthetic act. By understanding the self – the boundaries that society and physics generate that mark the limits of what is and is not 'us' – we understand the world. Knowledge is framed as a process, one in which scientific rigour and aesthetic creativity combine to generate a living 'art-work': a self that is endlessly interpreting itself and its world into aesthetic forms.

I conclude this final chapter with a brief discussion of the implications that this new reading has for what is arguably the most dominant reading of the role of aesthetics in Free Spirit scholarship: Alexander Nehamas' 'Aestheticism' thesis. I offer my own reading of Nietzsche's conception of aesthetics as answering a pressing concern that this thesis raises: the matter of 'heroic autonomy'. Critics such as Michael Ure, Keith Ansell-Pearson and Ruth Abbey have cited the problematic reliance upon an autonomous, heroic self-governing self in theories that read Nietzsche's Free Spirit works in terms of artistic creation. Against this, I offer a reading of Nietzsche through Adorno's aesthetic theory that sees the aesthetic as a means of displacing and 'de-centring' the autonomous artistic subject. It is my hope that this will prove fruitful and fertile ground for further exploration of the Free Spirit works as artistic applications of this principal.

Chapter 1: On Dionysian Affirmation

In "An Attempt at Self-Criticism", published as an introduction to the 1886 re-issue of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche presents his first major philosophical opus as offering a "suggestive (*anzügliche*) proposition": that a 'purely aesthetic outlook' on the world would *justify* existence by offering an antithesis to moral interpretations of worth (AC §5:8-10). The moral worldview, which reached its apotheosis in "Christian, that is absolute, morality" before seeing its fatal, logical culmination in Schopenhauerian pessimism, is framed as a form of sickness, embodying "*hostility to life*, the wrathful and vengeful disgust at life itself [...] essentially and fundamentally the aversion felt by life towards itself" (§5:9). And it was *Birth*'s concern, according to this essay, to offer an antidote to this illness. By this light, the work represents Nietzsche's first attempt to resist what he would come to call 'the denial of life' and to offer a philosophic outlook that might, eventually, lead to a program of recovery. The essay speaks of an affirmative, life-praising energy that "spoke to me" against the spirit of resignation and despair, and that Nietzsche subsequently "baptized... with the name of a Greek god" (§5:10). Dionysus; the dismembered god, the 'voice' that speaks from the heart of nature, through all living things. What that voice speaks, according to the "Attempt", is the 'affirmation of life' in the face of sickness, apathy, and despair.

It would not be overly reductive to say that this endeavor - the attempt to diagnose and treat a profound 'soul sickness' afflicting modern humanity- was the goal of Nietzsche's entire philosophic project. "The trust in life has gone: life itself has become a *problem*", and it is the responsibility of philosophy to prove that "even love of life is still possible" (GS 3:7). If we can take seriously the claim that *Birth* and its aesthetic outlook represents a "fundamental counter-doctrine and counter-valuation" of life, opposed to doctrines of life-denial, then this approach becomes critical for understanding that project moving forward. Unfortunately, it has been the almost unanimous assessment of critics engaging with the work that we cannot, with good intellectual conscience, take the "Attempt" at face value[7].

[7] For an overview of critical receptions to the "Attempt at Self-Criticism" as an interpretation of Nietzsche's argument in *The Birth of Tragedy*, See Came 2016 1n.

The essay is one among a number of introductions that Nietzsche appended to reissues of his works that year, all of which sought to 'contextualise' his early writings as contiguous points along a singular trajectory. For this reason, critics almost universally regard it as something like a '*virtual* history' of *Birth* and its intellectual commitments: an interpretive narrative which, when retroactively applied to the work, transforms it into something it was not originally intended to be, and is not *capable* of being without significant contortions. And, indeed, it is hard to take the essay's principal claim - that *Birth* represents an opposition to moral understandings of the world, and a rejection of the denial of life – as anything other than intellectual revisionism. It would seem evident to any informed reader that this claim is nothing more than an attempt on Nietzsche's part to 'exorcise' an undeniable presence from the work; to efface, as far as is possible, the grim shadow of *The World as Will and Representation*. Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysics of suffering and deception, and his morality of ascetic abnegation would seem to pervade the work to such an extent that no amount of 'whitewashing' could ever clear away its 'damned spot'. Even Nietzsche, at the end of his life, admitted that the 'graveyard stench' of Schopenhauer still came to his nostrils when he read over the work[8]. How then can we take seriously the notion that *Birth* forwards a rejection of Schopenhauer, and an antidote to the dark, pessimistic hatred for existence?

Scholarship surrounding the essay largely falls into one of two camps. However, the division between the two is not drawn according to whether or not we are to believe Nietzsche's claims. Rather, the question is if we should reject the essay *tout court*. Critics on the more generous side of this divide like Philip Pothen argue that the "Attempt", while transparently anachronistic, remains an important document for Nietzsche scholarship. To Pothen, the Dionysian ideal described in the "Attempt" is "almost unrecognizable" when placed against the formulation offered in *Birth*. He sees in *Birth's* Dionysus nothing but a precipitate of distilled Schopenhauerianism: an avatar of metaphysical 'redemption', standing against the horrors of life as "some panacea, some principle beyond life that might seduce to redeem" (Pothen 26). The figure presented in the essay and the post-1886 works is wholly incompatible with this initial

[8] See *Ecce Homo* §3:47

formulation. The later revision of the Dionysian ideal tells us nothing at all about *Birth*. But it does provide a contrasting construction of an important formulation in Nietzsche's thought and thus stands as a useful resource for understanding the shifts in concerns and commitments that Nietzsche went through between 1872 and 1886. Against this understanding, we have the perspective of those critics such as Julian Young, J.P. Stern, and Ivan Soll[9] who council us to a wholesale dismissal of the "Attempt" and other 'revisionist texts' such as *Ecce Homo*[10]. These are held up as "patently a bit of rhetoric" aimed at re-writing Nietzsche's own intellectual genealogy, an endeavor that "grossly, grotesquely understates and represses" the influence of Schopenhauer on his philosophy (Soll 1990, 105)[11].

This viewpoint stands in line with historic assessments offered by the likes of H.L Mencken[12] and Bertrand Russell[13], who hold Nietzsche to be *always and irreducibly* a *Schopenhauerian* philosopher. Some claim of inheritance is, by itself, clearly justified - at least to an extent[14]- and Nietzsche for his part never denied that Schopenhauer was his principal 'Educator'. But these claims go beyond Stern's already over-simplifying assertion that Schopenhauer was "far and away the most important influence" upon Nietzsche (Stern 1981: 222). Rather, it is argued that Nietzsche in fact *never* escaped the Schopenhauerian orbit, that "Nietzsche regarded himself, rightly, as Schopenhauer's successor" (Russell 760), and that we see "the unity of the two philosophers [...] proved a thousand times by Nietzsche's own discourse" (Mencken 37). To Both Soll and Young,

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[9] See Julian Young, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art,* (1992), J.P. Stern, *Frederic Nietzsche (1979), Nietzsche on Tragedy (1981),* Ivan Soll "Schopenhauer as Nietzsche's 'Great Teacher' and 'Antipode'" (2013) "Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and the Redemption of Life (1998), "Pessimism and the Tragic View of Life" (1990).

[10] See esp. the chapter on *The Birth of Tragedy* (48-53)

[11] Soll's (1990) critique, in this instance, is more specifically aimed at the chapter in *Ecce Homo,* which similarly minimises the Schopenhauerian dimension in *Birth* through its claim that it is a work "in which the cadaverous perfume of Schopenhauer stick only to a few formulas": an assessment which re-iterates, through its evocation of the grave-yard stench, the association made in the "Attempt" between Schopenhauer and the negation of life. Young also piles scorn upon the claims made in EC– "a mendacious, deluded book"- and contrasts its method to that of his own study "which aims at truthfulness" (Young 2)

[12] *The Philosophy of Frederic Nietzsche (1913)*

[13] *The History of Western Philosophy (1945)*

[14] Brian Leiter for example makes the case that, though less obliquely referenced, Nietzsche's encounter with Greek and recent Empiricist thought "as much as Schopenhauer, shaped Nietzsche's sensibility and demarcated the range of problems which concerned him. Indeed, in many respects Schopenhauer simply *reinforces* ideas and sentiments that Nietzsche would have found in [these] other sources" (2015 42). Christian Emden (35-40) and Claudia Crawford (1997) also make compelling arguments for viewing Schopenhauer as little more than a conduit trough which Nietzsche drew together the influences of recent naturalist scientists and behaviourists. Kevin Hill, for his part, seeks to show that both Kant and his Neo-Kantian interpreter Kuno Fisher were as important as Schopenhauer for Nietzsche's early thought- if not more so (see Hill §1:7-20, §3, esp. 80-2, 94-7)

the "Attempt" is little more than a transparent and petulant ploy to hide the profound debt that Nietzsche's entire philosophy owes to the 'appalling old grouch' of Danzig[15] - "part of a general campaign to dissociate himself from those that had most influenced him", undertaken as "a means to establish [...] autonomy against the threat posed by a domineering figure" (Stoll 1998, 79-80). In its most extreme iterations, this vein of critique dismisses the essay as nothing but a laughable (perhaps pitiable) and wholly groundless attempt on Nietzsche's part to pretend that *Birth* stood for quite the opposite of the world-view it was written to promote. And, often, this is understood as resulting from the most cynical of motivations.

Mencken's poetical description of the thinker's early works as "burnt offerings upon the altar of the great pessimist" captures something of the attitude that these critics ascribe to Nietzsche, and his 'ploys' to pretend that he had no real relation to the mentor "who was destined to remain his hero, if not his god, until the end [...] he and Schopenhauer were ever as one" (Mencken 32). Nietzsche's 'rebellion' against Schopenhauer is often cast as just another example of his need to strike out at whatever idol he came across, or, worse, an act of impetuous self-aggrandisement. Stern diminishes it as a form of sophistry[16]; Young sees Nietzsche's 'middle period' works as left floundering and groundless by the 'pretense' of this rejection (Young 58-62) - and it was a realisation of this fact that meant that "in the end, reluctantly and with every rhetorical effort to disguise this from us and, more importantly from himself, [Nietzsche] came back... to pessimism" in his later 'mature' works (3). And, to Soll, the entire claim is a somewhat childish attempt on Nietzsche's part "to represent himself as an extremely original thinker... a campaign that increased in hyperbole and shrillness as time passed and his works did not receive the attention they deserved" (Soll 1998, 80). The implication of this is clear. Nietzsche's anti-Schopenhauerian 'pretentions' are to be understood as rhetorical, born of intellectual insecurity (Soll 1990, 107; 1998, 80) and ego-centric self-delusion (Young 3). But while this is an extreme position to take, close examination shows it to be little more than an outgrowth of a basic supposition

[15] Characterisation provided by P.G. Wodehouse. See *Carry on Jeeves*, Arrow Books, London, 2006

[16] "While he [Nietzsche] *insists* upon contradicting some of his tenets […] it is still Schopenhauer he is contradicting" (Stern 1981, 222. emphasis added). Philosophical differences between the two are really just an argument for the sake of argument, a mere tit-for-tat contradiction laid bare by the realization that he is still arguing very much on Schopenhauer's own grounds.

shared by the more moderate critics: the "fairly widespread assumption that the *Birth* incorporates without modification Schopenhauer's metaphysics" (Young 26).

The idea that *Birth* is incoherent and unthinkable outside of a Schopenhauerian context has, for the most part, been taken as read since the work's initial publication[17] and English speaking receptions of Nietzsche's thought have been particularly susceptible to this interpretation[18]. In this field, as in many others, Walter Kaufmann fought an early 'advance guard' against the prejudices of readers in his adopted language. Despite this effort however, it would seem safe to say that, for the most part, *Birth* is still viewed –as it was in Kaufmann's time- as the accretion of an "unswerving disciple" of Schopenhauerian thought[19]. And, indeed, as a perspective this seems intuitive. With all its talk of 'illusion' and 'suffering', the 'metaphysical truth of music', and 'redemption' through art, it is hard *not* to see *Birth* as woven entirely out of the fabric of Schopenhauer's aesthetics and dualistic metaphysics. However, the fact that we can see the shadow of Schopenhauer's thought all over *Birth* does not mean that we should simply write it off as a work of discipleship. Claims that Nietzsche's thought owes its *lineage* to Schopenhauer are too easily taken to imply a *continuity* between their projects. And though it is hard to disagree with Young when he says that "it is impossible to read Nietzsche apart from Schopenhauer" (27), this concession does not preclude the option of reading him in *opposition* to Schopenhauer. Daniel Came's 2016 study of the "Attempt" stands alongside Beatrice Han-Pile's 1999 work in arguing that, while Nietzsche doubtless makes use of Schopenhauer's system -employing its terms and certain of its principles- closer examination shows that the end result "should, overall, be construed as non-Schopenhaurian" (Han-Pile 374).

In this chapter we will undertake just such an examination, offering support of the claim made by these latter critics that it is actually when we read *Birth* as a straightforward Schopenhauerian text that "many difficulties, and even contradictions

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[17] See for example Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff's contemporary review – "FUTURE PHILOLOGY! a reply to FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE'S Ordinarius Professor of Classical Philology at Basel" - which characterized the work and its aesthetic philosophy is little more than a confused bundle of "metaphysical dogmas" derived from "Schopenhauer's 'eternal truths'" (4).

[18] This arguably owes a lot to the early advocates of Nietzsche in the Anglophone sphere. Mencken's influence as one of Nietzsche's great advocates in the USA points to this, and Bohlmann (40-44) similarly highlights the important role played by Thomas Common and W.B. Yeats in Anglophone adoption of Nietzsche's thought. Both these men understood Nietzsche to be essentially a disciple of Schopenhauer's.

[19] Kaufmann 131

appear" (Han-Pile 373). Ultimately, this argument will be undertaken in the name of a more radical assessment of *Birth* than is to be found in either of these prior studies. While both agree with Nietzsche's assertion that Dionysus *affirms* instead of *denying* existence, they both also find themselves compelled to posit an ineffaceable division between *Birth* and Nietzsche's later works. This is because they cannot find their way clear to exonerating the work of the problem highlighted by Aaron Ridley when he calls *Birth's* affirmative element "metaphysically compromised" (2007 30-31). Came and Han-Pile both see the work as fundamentally concerned to offer a *metaphysical justification* for existence through its aesthetic worldview- something that the later, more mature Nietzsche sees as fundamentally incompatible with affirmation. This chapter will thus seek to argue, along with R. Kevin Hill and Michael Haar, that Nietzsche's split with Schopenhauer was "operative even before *The Birth of Tragedy* and was an initial, rather than a belated, occurrence" (Haar 37), and that this split extends to a rejection of (what Nietzsche idiosyncratically labels) metaphysics as well.

Through this examination it will hopefully become clear that the possibility of disentangling Nietzsche's aesthetic project from metaphysics is critically important if we are to resist the claim that these early aesthetic formulations can have little or no significance for the thinker's "post metaphysical project" (Rampley 4). The process of drawing a line between Nietzsche's aesthetic worldview and the metaphysical aspects of its presentation in these early works will be a complicated process- and perhaps one that cannot wholly be achieved. Nevertheless, it remains the contention of this study that in the 'aesthetic worldview' we find the initial blue-prints for Nietzsche's ongoing attempt to resist metaphysics and the denial of life. But in order to close in on this, and provide context for the present study, it is first necessary to gain a clearer picture of just what it was that Nietzsche claimed to overcome with his aesthetic interpretation of life. What *is* life denial? And why must the answer to overcoming this problem necessarily preclude metaphysics?

§1.1: 'To Be or Not to Be': Morality, Metaphysics, and the Denial of Life.

In "We Fearless Ones", the fifth Book of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche returns to address a principle concern of *The Birth of Tragedy*; the problematic faith in scientific optimism (GS §344). Just as in his first work, Nietzsche is concerned to question the grounding of our belief in the inherent value of scientific exploration; a conviction –uncritically presupposed- that "Truth" is something inherently good and worth seeking in and for itself. Though scientific method commands that we do away with all convictions (particularly religious and cultural ones) it nevertheless relies upon our conviction that the process of scientific discovery itself is worth devoting our lives and energies to. This belief draws its power "from the thousand year old faith, the Christian faith, that was also Plato's faith, that God is truth; that truth is divine" (GS §344:201). In this sense, Nietzsche objects that the Enlightenment spirit has failed to break free of the religious worldview which preceded it, so that "We knowers of today, we godless anti-metaphysicians" remain bound to its critical underlying supposition: "a principle that is hostile to life and destructive". This principle is the moral interpretation of existence, the notion that the world and all of life should be regarded as subservient to the ends of morality.

Continuing the Socratic legacy, modern science seeks after truth as a moral imperative- in searching for 'truth', we seek 'god'[20]. *The Gay Science* represents a culmination of Nietzsche's increasing interest in the problem of morality throughout the works of his 'middle period': an interest reflected in chapter titles such as "On the Origins of Moral Feelings" (*Human All Too Human I)* and the subtitle of *Dawn*: "Thoughts on the Presumptions of Morality" (*Gedanken über die Moralischen Vorurteile*). More than anything else, we can see the connection between morality and the 'hostility towards life' as the motivating imperative behind this preoccupation. The psychological studies offered in *Human* and *Dawn* pre-empt the genealogical project of Nietzsche's later work in seeking to understand why the human would develop a way of assessing life that must, inevitably, condemn its existence as meagre and undesirable.

[20] See Nietzsche's formulation of Socratic optimism: "Knowledge is virtue; sin is the result of ignorance; the virtuous man is the happy man" (BT §14:78)

The "Attempt" tries to claim that this interest began with *Birth* and that this work had already formulated the supposition that we find laid out in GS §344: that moral interpretations of the world result from, and perpetuate, a hostility towards life. By erecting morality as the supreme arbiter of value, Nietzsche claims that we "*thereby affirm another world* than that of life, nature, and history; and in so far as [we] affirm this 'other' world, [...] [we] by the same token deny its counterpart, this world, *our* world" (GS §344: 201). This duality of worlds, the assumption of a more metaphysically 'real' world standing 'before' and 'above' our own (the immanent, physical world of nature) is identified by Nietzsche as the central tenet of all moral systems.

Obvious examples of such a dualistic relationship can be found in the Judeo-Christian belief systems which see the transcendent God as the source of all morality, and in the Socratic/Platonic system in which an eternal 'Good' exists beyond the differentiated world of physical objects as the source of all that is Good in the world. But these are not merely specific manifestations of a general tendency. Rather, as Kant had more contemporaneously noted, they reflect the very conditioning possibility of morality itself: the division (going back to the early days of Greek philosophy) of existence between the distinct realms of "nature" and "freedom" (morality) (CPrR 2).

Kant pays explicit homage to the Socratic school in his attack upon the possibility of a Eudaimonic ethics, one that allows ethical action to be dictated by the ends of contingent human benefit (CPrR 287). To admit of even the *touch* of desire, of 'interest' arising from bodily drives, means the utter collapse of moral action. Since desires arise from the physical functions of the body, they are mechanically determined by nature and thus regarded as 'unfree': what is *forced* cannot be moral. Perhaps more importantly, Eudaimonic ethical imperatives are also relative and changeable in a way that no 'True' moral action could be. If something is morally right, it is always right, regardless of contextual mitigation. Kant thus maintains that there can be "no genuine supreme principle of morality but what must rest simply in pure reason (metaphysics) independent of all experience" (26). Morality must be unerring and unchanging, and since nothing in the physical world is exempt from change, or is unconditioned by relative considerations, morality must take its imperatives from another realm distinct from the physical: it must be grounded in the metaphysical.

Kant thus understands morality as a "pure conception of duty, unmixed with any foreign addition of empirical attractions" (27). Nature - expressed through self-preservation, individual interest, and the demands of the body - must be wholly excluded from moral consideration. Anything else would not be morality: "the consequence is the *euthanasia* of morality" (289). This is no mere hollow, formal distinction; the division between freedom (undetermined action) and nature (mechanically, causally determined physical existence) that lies at the heart of morality is necessary if we are to allow for the possibility of moral action. Kant's rejection of Eudaimonia is fundamentally grounded in the belief that the only moral actions are those freely decided upon, without coercive influence. In Kant's eyes, moral action is the *only* manifestation of freedom in an unfree world, a gleam of hope in an otherwise causally bound existence. But Hill shows that what is really at stake here reveals the obvious parallel between Kant and the religious moral tradition:

> "Metaphysical explanation shows how action can be morally accountable despite the determinism of nature by exploiting the phenomenal/noumenal contrast and locating the will [moral agency] outside of nature. This metaphysical setting then paves the way for a 'practical' commitment to the existence of God as guarantor of a moral order outside of nature" (Hill 196).

The 'utopian hope' of a supreme moral order outside of nature goes hand-in-hand with culpability and blame - factors that are, for Nietzsche, the *true heart* of morality.

If we are to be considered as morally accountable creatures, both the moral order and the moral agent must exist outside of the determined world of physical immanence. Nature is mechanically determined and its creatures are guided only by drives and desires that arise as part of this mechanism. But the human has one foot outside of this system and is thus 'free' to make moral choices. This has the effect of 'dividing' the human between a 'free' metaphysical essence- a 'spirit' or 'will'- and its *unfree* life as an embodied creature. The latter, and the world it inhabits, is radically alien to the metaphysical realm of the moral: physical nature is inherently *amoral.* For Kant, this ostensibly just means that nature does not register on the moral spectrum; animals cannot be 'evil' in the way that humans can, earthquakes cannot be censured for the destruction they cause. But Nietzsche sees something far more insidious at play here. We locate freedom, virtue, 'that which is best' in 'another world' and banish it entirely from our own: "before morality (in particular Christian, that is, absolute, morality) life

must continually and inevitably be condemned, because life is something essentially amoral"[21]. Where Kant's philosophy tries to emphasise the positive valuation of moral choice - we are 'free to be good' - Nietzsche claims that morality has always been nothing more than the disguised belief that as physical creatures we are inherently evil. Morality is the freedom to *blame* us for our wants and desires, for our very existence as physically embodied creatures.

In Nietzsche's eyes, to posit a 'pure' moral truth irreducibly distinct from physical nature implies that physically embodied drives and desires are the 'enemy' of moral action. This relation is obvious when we look at ascetic religion's condemnation of sexual pleasure and other physical desires[22], or at the Socratic inheritance of Parmenides' claim that physical sense is the source of all delusion. We see it also in Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals*, which discusses how the desires bound up in bodily functioning – most notably food and sex - can be brought into line with moral good by removing all heed for their pleasurable dimension, and instead subjugating them to 'pure moral right'. Nietzsche traces all this back to a fundamental disposition to hate and distrust nature and our existence as physical entities:

> [morality is] essentially and fundamentally the disgust and aversion felt by life towards itself, concealed and masquerading under the belief in an 'other' or 'better' life. Hatred of the 'world', a curse upon the affects, fear of beauty and sensuality, a world beyond, invented in order to better slander this world (AC §5:8)

This view is perhaps extreme, given that in their specifics both Kant and the Judeo-Christian theologians allow a place for pleasures of the flesh, if approached correctly. As Christine Battersby notes:

> In Christianity, flesh is bound up with both evil and good: with the 'sins of the flesh' and also with 'God made flesh'. The Hebrew texts do not at the start single out flesh as the source of moral corruption; it is only after the fall that flesh is represented as debased and evil (Battersby 143).

Similarly for Kant, we find that emotion "since it is natural, is not in itself morally evil", simply "childish and weak"[23]. It is doubtful, however, that these objections would carry much weight for Nietzsche. Indeed it is likely that he would seem them as re-enforcing rather than weakening his stance on the matter.

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[21] AC §5:9. See also GS §344:201: "*why morality at all*; if life, nature, and history are 'immoral'.

[22] As discussed at length in GM II.

[23] Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, cited Battersby 65.

The idea that flesh only 'becomes' evil after 'the Fall' is the ascetic position *par excellence,* embodying fully the moral message inherent in Kant's condemnation of man's 'weak' and 'childish' inclinations. Morality exists to 'redeem' us from flesh's failures and miss-steps. Physicality may not be 'evil' per-se, but it is wholly inferior and subservient to the higher, greater realm of morality. Our nature as 'human animal' is, at best, immaterial when contrasted to the only thing of 'True worth'- the *summum bonnum* offered by morality[24]. At worse – and Nietzsche is generally inclined to emphasises this aspect- our animality is a deadweight (even an *enemy*) keeping us from the 'better life' prescribed by morality. We can thus see why he came to believe that *any* emphasis on the moral *necessarily* brings with it a condemnation of the physical world. The desire to 'blame' humans for *being* humans- human 'animals' rather than divine, pure human 'souls'- is baked into the very skeleton of the moral worldview. The Kantian idea of 'radical evil' -the belief that passions, though natural, become "*properly* evil" if they are not brought under the control of moral reasoning[25]- translates 'sin' and 'temptation' into the philosophical lexicon. This 'negative' moral outlook- the notion that the world is to be condemned purely by virtue of its amoral nature, its existence as *not* the realm of highest good- is critical for understanding Nietzsche's rejection of morality.

At its core then, Nietzsche's objection to morality is that it pre-supposes the existence of "an 'other' or 'better' life" contrasted to the life that encounters us- the world of physical immanence, of 'nature' and 'history'. Kant is quite clear that morality requires and presupposes such a contrast (the realm of freedom, of 'highest good') in order to exist (CPrR 287-9). But for Nietzsche, it is precisely the postulation of such a world that is the 'moment' of life-denial in moral systems. To his eye, the ethical systems built upon this division are a 'masquerade': a pretence erected after the fact to justify the idea that this world is inferior to another, more 'real', more important metaphysical realm. Systems of moral action merely serve to validate these fantastical creations and to re-enforce their elevation of importance above the physical world. They are thus a secondary result of the need to believe in another world - born of the desire to reduce

[24] For further discussion of morality as the True worth' that justifies nature, see §3.2 of this study

[25] Battersby 64-5. See also Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, Metaphysics of Morality.*

the significance of *this* world: to deny immanent, physical life. The "Attempt" presents a pathological view of the belief in a metaphysical beyond, interpreting it as a form of 'neurotic imbalance' in living creatures, an "aversion felt by life towards itself" arising from "the deepest sickness, fatigue, disgruntlement, exhaustion, impoverishment of life" (AC §5:9)[26]. This "secret instinct of annihilation" and "principle of decay" is important to bear in mind moving forward, for in its simplest form, it is this that Nietzsche means when he speaks of 'life-denial': the hatred for existence as it confronts us, and that illnesses' symptomatic manifestation: the elevation of another, imagined world to a position of eminence over our own.

The World Beyond.

We arrive here at a problem. The claim offered in the "Attempt", that *Birth* is a work that resists life-denial, runs up against an evident objection given the preceding description. If the work adopts (as it appears to) the Schopenhauerian metaphysical schema - with its division of the world into 'false' immanent Representation and 'True' transcendent Will - then it is clearly *not* a work of life-affirmation[27]. For Nietzsche's critique of morality is, in the same breath, a critique of metaphysics in the very specific meaning that Nietzsche affords the term. In *Human All Too Human,* Nietzsche offers the definition arrived at by "rigorous logicians": "the concept of the metaphysical as what is unconditioned" (HAH I §16:26). The meaning of this definition, and its profound significance, will become clearer shortly. But for now it should be said that the concept of the metaphysical that Nietzsche sets out here, in the first of the 'Free Spirit' works, identifies *all* metaphysical realms as irreducibly 'other' to the physical world: having arrived at this definition, philosophy thereby "denied every connection between the unconditioned (the metaphysical world) and the world known to us". The concept of 'metaphysics' is far too complex to offer a thoroughgoing justification of this understanding, but for the sake of clarity this study will work on the assumption that

[26] Emphasis on the element of 'sickness' in metaphysics can be seen mirrored in §2 of the preface for GS (5) and in GS §345.
[27] And this is putting aside the evaluative *content* of the work, which seems to cast even greater doubt upon the idea that *Birth* praises and affirms life.

when Nietzsche speaks of 'metaphysics', he means to evoke this definition: a transcendent world, 'meta' – in the Poetic Greek sense of 'above and beyond'- the physical.

It thus becomes hard to reconcile the claim that *Birth* resists life-denial with the admittance, made in almost the same breath, that the work is concerned to offer a *metaphysical* explanation of the world. Given Nietzsche's apparent opinion as to the inextricability of metaphysics and morality (and his notion that the latter exists secondary to the former) it seems odd that Nietzsche would be so concerned to distance the work from Life-denial while freely admitting its grounding in a philosophical precept that he so closely identified with the denial of life. And this is not the only time during this period (mid to late 1880's) that Nietzsche aligned the work with a metaphysical understanding of the world: Zarathustra similarly admonishes himself for the time "I too once cast my delusion beyond the human, like all believers in a world Behind, Beyond" (Z I §4). It would seem then that Nietzsche himself regarded the work, even at the time he was writing the "Attempt", as bound up in the "craving for some Apart, Beyond, Outside, Above" (GS 5)[28]. Should we not take these words to be an authoritative admission, as Young does (52-3)? As reason to put this argument to rest? If Nietzsche is admonishing *himself* for denying life and forwarding a transcendent metaphysic, then who are we to argue with this portrayal?

We have here a clear dilemma, the resolution of which will determine the significance of *Birth* (and the aesthetic worldview that grounds) for Nietzsche's overall project. If the work promotes a Schopenhauerian metaphysic, then its author was a pessimist and a life-denier. If this is true, then the rest of Nietzsche's project, and especially the Free Spirit, really are reactions against the early aesthetic writings. In order to argue the opposite, and thus to redeem the aesthetic project forwarded in these works from irrelevance, it must be shown that the Nietzsche of this early period was indeed concerned with the question of how to *affirm* life – and thus that life-denial already registered for him as a significant philosophic problem. It must also, therefore, be shown that this 'early' Nietzsche already recognized the *root* of this problem: the

[28] Note the capitalization that both passages apply to the adverbs used to evoke this 'other world'. Much as with the link between capitalized and un-capitalized versions of the word 'truth', Nietzsche is here directing us to see these words as essentially synonyms for 'the Great I-Am' (God, Truth, Being etc.).

desire to look to a metaphysical 'Beyond' for a justification that life is regarded as *lacking*. Other Commentators have undertaken a good deal of leg work towards the later end already. Harr, Han-Pile, Ridley, and Peter Poellner have all drawn attention to the unpublished early essay "On Schopenhauer" as proof that long before *Birth,* Nietzsche had already embraced the Neo-Kantian metaphysical skepticism that he would later *publically* adopt with *Human* (I §9, 16, 21). Hill Further contextualizes this in terms of a project that will become profoundly significant to this study as it unfolds: the unfinished doctoral dissertation on teleology (as well as in terms of his formative readings of contemporary biologists and the Neo-Kantians) (Hill 75-98)[29]. These contextualising elements offer justification the "Attempt" and its claim that the reason we are prone to read *Birth* as a work of Schopenhauerian pessimism result from its 'Schopenhauerian language': the fact that "I labored to express in terms of Schopenhauer and Kant new and unfamiliar evaluations, which ran absolutely counter to the spirit, as well as the taste, of Schopenhauer and Kant" (AC §6: 10).

Read through the lens of this assertion, we can see a different meaning to Zarathustra's assessment of *Birth*. The prophet's description of that work's central thesis (the aesthetic justification of life) as "a drunken pleasure for its imperfect creator" (Z I §4) becomes a description of the work itself: an imperfect creation "born of my fire and my ashes". Mencken's "burnt offerings" find a parallel here. But to Zarathustra, the sad ashes of this *ὁλόκαυστος (holókautos)* are what remained of a *failed attempt* to worship before a god he *never believed in*. He tells us that he is ashamed of this "phantom", birthed of the "suffering and impotence- that created all afterworlds (*Hinterwelten*)", but that it was *precisely* from these embers that "I made for myself a brighter flame" (Z I§4). The metaphysical phantom 'fled' once the fire was allowed its proper form, fed by solitude and the 'mountain'. The metaphysical *trappings* of the aesthetic worldview were a mistake- but this was just a *bad dream* and never the *essence* of that worldview. It was a sickly, vaporous pall emitted by a fire burning off impurities introduced by pain and exhaustion- a fire that grew *into* Zarathustra. But now we must justify this claim, if we are to present the aesthetic understanding of the world offered in *Birth* as an *embryonic* but *impure form* of the project Zarathustra was to round off. In order to make

[29] Additionally, see n.4

the first steps towards this, we now turn to Nietzsche's study of *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* - a prematurely abandoned 'sister work' of *Birth*. In this manuscript we find evidence to support what is perhaps the most roundly rejected of the claims made by the "Attempt": that the early works already had an eye on the problem of life-denial. Moreover, it shows that Nietzsche already saw denial as intrinsically linked to both morality and to metaphysics, and that he envisaged his own project as an attempt to resist it.

'Condemned to perish': the ἀδικία of γιγνόμενον[30]

Tragic Age is arguably less a scholarly examination of Pre-Socratic thought than a highly idiosyncratic narrative *constructed* around the birth of philosophy. Each of the figures touched upon stand as forefather of a certain aspect of philosophy[31], with metaphysics represented by Anaximander, whose formulation of the *Aperon* (indefinite) is seen as "equal to the Kantian *Ding an Sich"* (§4: 47). He is presented as the first philosophical '*Hinterweltlern*', the first of this new breed of thinkers "no longer dealing with the question of the origin of the world in a purely physical way" (48). He is also portrayed as the first *moral* philosopher, driven to formulate the metaphysical beyond by a question: "the profoundest problem in ethics… how can anything pass away that has a right to be?" The Greek understanding of Being as 'that which truly *is*' leads Anaximander to the reasoning that nothing physical has *True* existence, since everything in the physical world appears to change. How can something that truly *is* ever *not be*? He is led to conclude that Being "cannot possess definite qualities, or it would come-to-be and pass away like all other things" (47) and thus that the world *must* therefore be divided between all that comes-to-be and passes away, and True Being "that is devoid of definite qualities that would lead to its passing. Hence its name, 'the indefinite' (*Aperon)".*

[30] 'the injustice of coming-into-being'
[31] Parmenides is the father of Logic (PTA§9:72), Anaxagoras the originator of mechanistic materialism (§17:117) etc.

Here in this work, written immediately following *Birth*, we have a vision of the birth of metaphysical dualism that already displays much that would become central to the critique of life-denial. Since everything that is physical changes (comes-to-be and passes away) True Being must be located *outside* of the physical in order to be exempt from change and finite specificity. The moral dimension of this equation comes in with the claim that it is *justice*, the inherent nature of existence, which appears to demand the undoing of all that is finite: "where the source of all things is [the indefinite "womb of all things" (47)], to that place they must also pass away, according to necessity, for they must pay penance and be judged for their injustices, in accordance with the ordinance of time" (45). If something passes away, the reasoning goes, it must be *right* that it passes away. It must *deserve* to pass away. And since "everything that has ever come-to-be again passes away" (46), everything that has ever physically existed must deserve to be destroyed by justice as "an illegitimate emancipation from eternal Being". "[The] primal Being is superior to that which comes to be" - both ontologically (as the 'womb of all things') and ethically (since it is 'eternal' and thus 'deserves' to exist, where the physical does not) (47). Against this 'perfect Being', all physical matter is judged as inferior, indeed *morally reprehensible,* for its finite nature. In this formulation, we can already see much that Nietzsche was later to denounce in his idea that morality and metaphysics are integrally concerned to slander the physical world.

The link between this depiction of the twin birth of metaphysics and morality, and the arguments made in the "Attempt", is furthered by Nietzsche's presentation of the 'path' that lead to the dawn of metaphysics. It may seem that the relation between metaphysics and morality is reversed here, if Anaximander took a moral supposition as his starting point for arriving at a metaphysical one. But if we look closely, we see that it was in fact a specific *attitude* towards the world that served as the nucleus for these new philosophies. Nietzsche says that it is in the principle of injustice, of 'deserved punishment' that we learn why "Anaximander was no longer dealing with the question of the origin of the world in a purely physical way"- it was "when he saw in the multiplicity of things a sum of injustices that must be expiated" that he was compelled to look Beyond for the source of Truth (48). Reading the relentless torment and evil of our fleeting, finite lives "in the physiognomy of our common human lot" (46),

Anaximander is compelled by his hatred for life to ask the question that gave birth to metaphysics:

> "How can anything pass away that has a right to be? Whence that restless, ceaseless coming into being and giving birth, whence that grimace of painful disfiguration upon the continence of nature, whence the never-ending dirge of all the reams of existence? From this world of injustice, of insolent apostasy from the primal-oneness of all things, Anaximander flees into a metaphysical fortress from which he leans out, letting his gaze sweep the horizon. At last, after long pensive silence, he puts a question to all creatures: "What is your existence worth? And if it is worthless, why are you here? Your guilt, I see, causes you to tarry in existence. With your death, you shall expiate it" (PTA §4:48).

A great deal of Nietzsche's understanding of the '*Hinterweltlern*' as despisers of the world can already be found enunciated here. Unable to stomach existence, they 'flee' from it into metaphysical fantasies, from there to rain their scorn upon life and call for its morally mandated end. Anaximander looks to the "self-contradictory, self-consuming and negating character of the many [immanence]" and sees there something horrifying and revolting to him; as such "its existence becomes for him a moral phenomenon. It is not justified but expiates itself forever through its passing" (49). And it is this fear and distrust of the 'self-contradictory', 'self-negating' character of life that Nietzsche wishes us to understand as the *true* impetus behind life-denial. Anaximander demands a justification for 'restless, ceaseless giving birth' and identifies our continued existence with 'guilt', a refusal of the demands of justice to cease-to-be and return to the eternal 'womb of Being'. Nietzsche places into his mouth the words of Schopenhauer from "Additional Remarks on the Doctrine of the Suffering of the World":

> human beings [...] are really creatures that should not exist all and who are doing penance for their lives by their manifold sufferings and their death [...] Are we not all sinners under sentence of death? We do penance for our lives first by living, and then by dying (PTA §4:46).

How is it that we 'do penance by living? Because the very nature of the physical world, its manifestation as "becoming", as change, impermanence, ephemerality etc. are (to Anaximander/Schopenhauer) evil and pain themselves. Death, loss, change - these are the source of all suffering and uncertainty in the world, and they are the 'essence' of a world that has 'sinned' against justice by the very fact of its existence. And it was the rejection of this world of change and suffering that lead Anaximander to his "acceptance of a metaphysically true Being, a world in opposition to Becoming and the transient physical world" (PP § 7:37).

The opposition between a world of harrowing change and one of static eternal peace is profoundly importance to Nietzsche conception of the 'sickness' that is life-denial. Metaphysical systems are regarded as 'symptoms' of "fatigue, disgruntlement, exhaustion" with life's constant demands and uncertainty, manifesting in "a yearning for nothingness, for the end, for rest, for the 'Sabbath of all Sabbaths'" (AC §5:9). Worn down by life, broken and demeaned by its constant struggles, "crushed under the weight of contempt and the eternal No, [life] must finally be felt unworthy of desire, intrinsically without value". The element of meekness and cowardice that Nietzsche wishes to evoke when speaking of those who 'flee' from life into protective fantasies of peaceful nothingness can be read in the description of Anaximander's flight from the world. We might also see something of the 'despiser of the body' in Nietzsche's description of his solemn, acetic, tragic way of being (PTA §4:49). But Nietzsche nevertheless attributes to his writings a sort of joyous "innocence and naiveté" (45). The notes for the *Pre-Platonic Lectures* similarly seem to exculpate Anaximander of the same kind of deforming bitterness and loathing that characterizes Nietzsche's later portraits of metaphysicians as a class. But in *Tragic Age*, as well as in the lecture notes, we also see the realisation that these naïve first steps were to give birth to a monster: "May the path that lead to it now still be so harmless and Naïve" (PP §7:34).

In the closing of PTA §4, we already see the first signs of this chthonic monster's emergence in the "deep shadows" and "gigantic ghosts"[32] that Anaximander's metaphysical/moral worldview spawned. And "the closer men wanted to get to the problem of how the definite could ever fall from the indefinite, the ephemeral from the eternal, the unjust from the just, the deeper grew the night" (PTA §4:50). The message is clear. The further we followed Anaximander down his path- the more we sought to understand why we suffer in terms of guilt, the more we sought beyond our immanent world for Goodness and Truth- the more we were haunted by the phantom that Zarathustra later spoke of. But the next section of *Tragic Age* presents a direct 'counter-valuation' to this morbid, moralistic loathing:

[32] In referring to Anaximander/Schopenhauer's metaphysical system as a 'ghost', we can perhaps see a foreshadowing of the phantom that haunted Zarathustra (see p.15) – a connection made all the more pregnant by the way that the 'prophet of the lightning' Heraclitus is depicted as resisting this spirit.

> "Straight at that mystic night in which was shrouded Anaximander's problem of Becoming, walked Heraclitus of Ephesus and illuminated it with a divine stroke of lightning" (PTA §5:50)

This passage's associations with the Free Spirit works' iconography should be evident: the illumination of metaphysical darkness in *Dawn*, *Zarathustra* as "a prophet of the lightning" (I prologue 4)[33] etc. But it is Heraclitus' special place in the early writings, and particularly in Nietzsche's formulation of his aesthetic worldview that is of more immediate relevance. Framing Heraclitus' project as aimed *directly* at dispelling the gloom and darkness of his predecessor can be seen as a programmatic declaration on Nietzsche's part - encoded, but undeniable. Here, in the work intended as a direct follow up to *The Birth of Tragedy*[34], Nietzsche 'tells the story' of a philosophy which 'sees nothing but becoming', which denies the metaphysical duality of worlds and emerges to challenge the moral/metaphysical worldview. As this study progresses, as we are able to examine how closely Nietzsche bound his aesthetic worldview to Heraclitus' thought, it will become clear that this was the first example of what Sloterdijk was to call Nietzsche's 'divine arrogance': the 'lightning' he is 'prophesying' here is his *own* project[35].

The significant contortions that Nietzsche undertakes in order to present this narrative to us can be seen, in a small way, as supporting this idea. It has been noted that *Tragic Age* should not be read with an eye to gleaming an accurate picture of the early Greek philosophers. The same can be said of the *Lectures*. But in contrast to Heidegger, who appears to see nothing either original *nor* faithful about Nietzsche's reading of the early philosophers[36] we can, if we care to look, see a number of telling omissions or 'quirks' of translation in the text. The idea that Anaximander represents the dual birth of both morality and metaphysics is arguably just such a contortion. As Greg Whitlock notes, the idea that Thales' heir was concerned with reality's inherent *guilt* derives from a deviation between Nietzsche's translation of Simplicus and "the

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[33] *Tragic Age* also pairs Heraclitus with Zoroaster as his 'Oriental' counterpart (29). The 'lightning' that will reach our eyes one day with the news of god's death (GS§145) is another point of connection.
[34] Cowden 4
[35] Harrison, Robert, "Peter Sloterdijk on Friedrich Nietzsche: An Interview". Audio Blog Post. "Entitled Opinions", Stanford University Radio, Dec 15, 2016, web, accessed May 22, 2018
[36] *Early Greek Thinking*, Heidegger, 13-5

received text": most notably his omission of the word *ἀλληλοις*[37]. Inclusion of this qualifier would mean that the two realms (Being and Becoming) pay their 'penances' *to one another*. Walter Burket notes that this notion of reciprocity places Anaximander's treatment of birth and destruction in the context of the cycles of the days, years, and seasons (68) making him far closer to Heraclitus then Nietzsche is willing to admit. He remains, to Burket, an 'ethical thinker', at least in so far as framing the natural processes in terms of human ethical concepts[38]. But it is a jump to begin with this ethical analogy and end with a pessimistic doctrine of the world's guilt. This 'little translation error' has the effect of radically changing the story of early Hellenic thought in a way that '*co-incidentally*' adds significant weight to the importance of the affirmation/denial dichotomy set up between Nietzsche's 'avatar' (Heraclitus) and Schopenhauer's (Anaximander).

In mitigation of this it should be conceded that Nietzsche was far from alone in excluding this line: As Charles Kahn notes, it was absent from early translations and despite the fact that it was re-introduced to translations subsequent to 1838, many of the 19th centuries critical engagements with the Pre-Socratics continued to ignore the word[39] But Nietzsche undertook his *own* translations of many of these texts, and this is far from the only distortion to be found in Nietzsche's translations in both the *Lectures* and *Tragic Age*[40]: distortions that we must assume are deliberate and programmatic given that they come from the man Fr~~i~~iedrich Ritsch~~a~~l called "the best philologist in Germany" (Whitlock 2000 xxxvii). It seems clear that we should understand this as less of a historic, scholarly reading of the birth of philosophy, and more an attempt on Nietzsche's part to write his own 'titanic struggle' against darkness into a mythic, philosophical past.

Having hopefully thus provided at least a reasonable grounding for examining *Birth* in terms of the project of life-affirmation, we must now turn to the work itself. If

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[37] PP §6:33.n.14

[38] Gary Shap~~ir~~piro takes this up to analyse Anaximander in terms of the ethics of debt presented in *On the Genelogy of Morals*. From this he argues that Anaximander's 'moral' worldview holds relevance for Nietzsche's anti-metaphysical project, and the aim of returning 'innocence' to Becoming. But since it is precisely the ethics of debt that are seen as the genealogical forbears of the metaphysics of both guilt, and of the soul (as 'culpable agent') (GM II), this line of argument appears problematical.

[39] Charles Kahn, *Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology* 194. See also Whitlock 2000 191-3.

[40] See Whitlock's Introduction to *The Pre-Platonic Lectures*, esp §II.

Nietzsche's narrative is justified, and we can indeed say that his "entire intellectual career can be seen as an attempt to find a way of affirming life in the face of Schopenhauer's pessimistic challenge" (Gemes and Janaway, 289), then it must be to *The Birth of Tragedy* that we should look to see the first (perhaps faltering and uncertain) steps in that undertaking.

§1.2: Hellenism and Pessimism; Nietzsche on the Horrors and Absurdities of Life

When addressing the issue of life-affirmation in *The Birth of Tragedy*, we must perforce begin by touching on what is perhaps the most evidently Schopenhaurian element of the work. The words "suffer" and "suffering" appear no less than forty nine times in the main body of the text. This clearly displays a significant pre-occupation with the theme, and while around thirty three of these mentions are in reference to the *specific* suffering of some actual, mythical, or literary individual or group, the fact remains that "the suffering inherent in the world" (§16) is, quite evidently, a central theme. Nietzsche makes frequent reference to the "primal suffering of the world" (§21) and refers to existence as "eternally suffering and contradictory" (§4). This seemingly negative portrayal of existence must be reckoned with; how can Nietzsche be said to praise existence if his representation of it is characterized by something so intrinsically negative?

The answer to this might be sought in Daniel Came's reading of the Schopenhaurian element in Nietzsche's work. Came mirror's Han-Pile in presenting what might be termed a 'soft' claim of parental association, highlighting the importance of the Schopenhaurian *premise* for Nietzsche's thought while simultaneously framing that thought as a rejection of Schopenhauer's *conclusion*. Nietzsche begins by accepting the pessimistic claim about the ubiquity of suffering to life, but does not accept the claim that existence is, ergo, *centrally and essentially characterised* by suffering: that, as Young puts it, existence "is a world of terror and suffering" and thus that "its membership is a curse and not a blessing" (Young 7). In elaborating upon this distinction, Came divides the pessimistic worldview into *descriptive pessimism* -which

merely highlights the systemic ineradicably of suffering in a finite world of Coming-to-be and passing away- and *evaluative pessimism,* which takes this description as the basis for judging, and necessarily rejecting, existence (2016 7-13). This is a profoundly useful framework, one which highlights the lack of critical veracity inherent in the simple assumption that suffering is automatically 'evil'. But Came does not, regrettably, go far enough in applying this principle. He significantly opens the possibility of interpreting *Birth* as an affirmative work in his claim that in it "Nietzsche remains under the spell of DP [descriptive pessimism] whilst trying in particular to find a way to resist EP [evaluative pessimism]" (2016 8). This shows, as he rightly points out, the defining gulf between the two thinker's attitudes towards existence. But his overall assessment allows entirely too much of the *evaluative* form of pessimism to adhere in his understanding of the *descriptive* form.

In both essays dealing with the question of pessimism and affirmation, Came seems to concede the argument made by Young that a simple, honest *description* of reality leads inevitably to an *evaluative* pessimism: that "in the fullness of knowledge, one would *not* affirm life as worth living" (Young 48). Thus, while Came agrees that Nietzsche's *goal* is to resist evaluative pessimism, he is forced to the conclusion that this is possible only through falsity and self-deception;

> "The affirmation of life that tragedy produces, then, is not really an affirmation of life at all- the object of affirmation is not unvarnished reality- but rather an affirmation of a diluted and hence falsified image of reality" (Came 2013 215).

This stance leads Came and others such as Poellner (1995 64-8) to read the affirmation of existence in terms of a mythic obfuscation[41]. Yet as Han-Pile notes in her engagement with Poellner, this need to erect the mythic in opposition to the real -as a world capable of receiving the affirmation which our non-disguised reality cannot instill in us- is still based upon a Schopenhaurian conflation of description and evaluation. She holds that a need to posit deception as the only means of facilitating (a therefore false) affirmation is raised only by the assumption that the ubiquity of suffering in life *therefore* condemns life as "terrible" (391). This slippage is precisely what Came appears to have set out to avoid in drawing a DP/EP distinction. Having noted the failure of critical veracity that leads to a conflation of these two stances – a) life will never not contain suffering, and

[41] See also Gemes 2013,

b) life will never not be terrible- Came then proceeds to replace conflation with necessary correlation: a necessarily leads to b, unless something can be done to divert this passage.

Bernard Reginster asserts that it was precisely his attempt to break this 'necessary' passage from a to b, from DP to EP, that motivated Nietzsche's rebellion against his 'god'. Though he remained admiring of Schopenhauer's "unconditional and honest atheism" (GM, III, §11), Nietzsche never-the-less criticised his forebear's failure to follow that atheism through to its final conclusion. Schopenhauer remains "stuck" in the religious perspective because "he still subscribes to the Christian view that suffering is evil and to the ideal of a life free from suffering" (Reginster 161). This hedonistic principle- that suffering is to be considered universally and unequivocally as a moral evil- is fundamental to the perspectives of the acetic religions, as well as to philosophies of 'resignation'. In moving past this automatic relation, Nietzsche can be seen to 'complete' Schopenhauer's atheistic project by questioning the acetic doctrine's most (apparently) self-evident premise. But to Reginster, this project comes only later in Nietzsche's career. And it is difficult to argue with the idea that *Birth* represents life as inherently 'evil' on the grounds of suffering's ubiquity: especially given the famous –and arguably programmatic- preaching of the 'wisdom of Silenus' in §3. The satyr's powerful address to the "wrenched ephemeral race, children of chance and toil" that "what is best for you is completely unobtainable; to not have been born, to not to be, to be nothing"[42] seems to make clear that life in its reality *cannot* be affirmed. Coming from the mouth of the "stiff and motionless daemon" who stands outside the world of human illusion and sees all, this condemnation of 'coming to be' seems to be presented as a true and honest representation of life. The human animal is portrayed as "wretched" for its ephemerality – for its existence as *"Eintagsgeschlect";* the 'one-day-race'- and for its birth from the twin parents of chance and toil. This seems to unequivocally showcase the 'life-denying' ideology of the work. A human's very birth is an 'illegitimate emancipation' from the Good – non-existence, nothingness- that can be redeemed only (and only partially) by a speedy death.

[42] BT §3 – my translation.

Given this presentation, and its place as something of a 'epigraph' for the work as a whole, it difficult to argue with Poellner assertion that a Schopenhaurian condemnation of life as an intrinsic evil remains the "unquestioning presupposition in the *Birth*" (1998 67), the grounding principle of the entire work. And it is against this backdrop that the argument about the 'truth' of *Birth's* redemptive claims is often measured. The immediate answer offered to this 'folk wisdom' is the world of the Apollonian Gods, the "hallucinatory image" of a world of beauty. As the sum of "powerfully misleading delusions" placed between the human and the world of 'Truth'- ("a realm of Titans [...] monsters)- this world of beauty represents "triumph over the horrific depths of contemplation" (BT §3:29). It offers "the only adequate theodicy" (28) in the Pantheon of Olympus, 'reflected images' of humans that revel in life-as-beauty-and-luxury, serving to distract us from our "great mistrust of the Titanic powers of nature" by recasting life as something divine and wonderful. Against this world is set the Dionysian reality of a universe indifferent to human suffering, a world that echoes with the 'shrill', mocking laughter of the forest god. Encounter with this 'vortex' leads to a vertigo as we face, with nauseating horror, the sheer depths of meaninglessness in the abyssal gaze of "that fearful swirling compulsive process of annihilation which goes by the name of world history" (BT §7:46). Pulled out from the comfort of our illusions by this vortex, we experience an "acetic mood" of lethargy, in which everyday reality is "experienced for what it is with disgust". In this state, the result of having "cast a true glance into the essence of things",

> "existence, together with its glittering reflection in the world of gods, is negated. Consciousness of the truth once glimpsed, man now sees all around him only the horrific or the absurd aspects of existence" (BT §7:46).

It would seem that an encounter with the 'Truth' of reality does indeed, *necessarily* lead to hatred and disgust, a rejection of life. Given these presentations of the dichotomy between Truth and illusion, it would seem evident that the only means of "overcoming pessimism, of avoiding the pessimist's judgment of life is self-deception, telling oneself 'lies'" (Young 48). This, it would seem, is the task of the artist. The Appoline artist covers over the horror of life with pleasurable illusions. She contorts life's Truth, transforming the "horror and absurdity of life" into a "metaphysical consolation" which "seduces us into continued life" (BT §7:48). Tasked with applying

"the curative balm of a blissful illusion" (§21:114) the Apollonian reveals its answer to the question of affirmation: life, in its undiluted reality, is not affirmed. At best it is endured, at worse we flee from it. In this context we cannot speak of a true and actual affirmation of life. Though the Hellene chose to embrace her existence, it was not in fact 'Life' that she embraced, but a false and deluded distortion of it. If this is to be accepted, then we remain very much in Anaximander's worldview. The 'compulsive' vortex of world history – of change, struggle, suffering- is something that the human cannot live with and must be saved from:

> "Even now, fire is destroying your world; someday it will go up in fumes and smoke. But ever and anew, another such world of ephemerality will construct itself. Who is there that could redeem you from the curse of coming to be?" (PTA §4:48).

Against the Schopenhaurian answer, Nietzsche seems to indicate that there is no 'real' and lasting salvation for this crime. To flee from life into death is merely to give in to the wheel's endless turning, and unlike his Buddhist-inspired forebear, Nietzsche seems to offer no lasting peace at the end of an acetic death through slow, painful denial of the life urges. Rather it would seem that life *itself* offers the only salvation we might find: "appearance, madness, error, interpretation, contrivance, art", all these are intrinsic elements of life, and the answer that it gives to hatred and despair (AC §5:8).

But we may well ask if this is sufficient. The deeply Schopenhauerian idea that these 'compensations' are themselves a part of life's horrifying nature- that they count as 'seductions' keeping the 'process of annihilation' running- will need to be addressed. But before that it should be pointed out that the dichotomy just established- between horrifying Dionysian Truth and redemptive Appoline illusion- is by no means as straight forward as it initially appears. Closer reading of the presentation of Dionysus in §7, alongside contextualising features found in early drafts of *Birth*'s thesis like "The Dionysian Worldview" and "The Greek Music Drama", cast the relation of the two divine brothers in a somewhat more nuanced light.

'Where the brackish sea/ washes the beaches [...] stranger and Greek comingled...'[43]

Martha Nussbaum joins Came in highlighting the importance of the literary and historical element in Nietzsche's presentation of Dionysus as an 'encounter' between east and west, and between civilization and nature. Came points to the fact that both *Birth* (§2) and "Worldview" (I) present the cultural importance of the relation between the two gods by framing their meeting in terms of a historical encounter between the Appoline Greeks, and a "grotesque barbaric Dionysian force" sweeping from the east (BT §2:25)[44]. Re-purposing Euripides *Bacchae* as an historical moment, Nietzsche presents us with a vision of Apollo vs. Dionysus in the context of a meeting of cultures, peoples, and most importantly *attitudes*. The sickness that attends the Dionysian moment is re-cast, in this light, as the result of a traumatic encounter with 'the real' for a people too rapt in their own blissful visions of divine power and importance:

> "With their terrifyingly primitive music and wild sexual abandon, the Bacchic revelers tore apart the 'artful edifice' of Apollonian culture [...] In the Dionysian ecstasy, the Greeks were exposed to the full force of nature's 'artistic violence' [...] Faced with the truth of the human condition, the Apollonian illusions could no longer suffice to protect them" (Came 2013 214)

This wound, inflicted upon a people by their encounter with the undiluted truth of existence, appears to be directly related to their cultural and individual relation to that which Dionysus undermines: the Olympian illusion of beauty and order.

The importance of this cultural, contextual understanding of the acetic sickness that attends Dionysus' coming is underlined in Nietzsche's presentation of the divergent manifestations of the god across different cultures. In the Babylonian Sacaea and the more 'primitive' civilizations of Asia Minor, we are presented with a Dionysian which manifest in madness and violence, "a repulsive mixture of cruelty and sensuality" (BT§2 24) in which we see the "regression of man to the tiger and the ape" (25). Nietzsche is keen to highlight "the vast gulf that separates the *Dionysiac Greek* from the Dionysiac Barbarians" and does this by characterizing the primitive's encounter with Dionysus in terms of an orgiastic blackout, a "crude, grotesque manifestation of the

[43] Euripides, *The Bacchae* Dionysus' monologue pp.191-3
[44] See Came 2013 214

Dionysiac" in which weak and ill-defined social boundaries demarcating the human from the animal simply dissolve: "all social and political bonds were ruptured [...] in the destruction of every family feeling through unlimited prostitution" (DW I:84). This state of madness, pleasurable though it is to the revelers, is destructive for civilization, which is swept away in a storm of "effusive transgression" as the human reverts back to "none other than the wildest beasts of nature" (BT§2:24). On the other end of this spectrum, we are told that the "Asian nature cult" had a quite different effect on the more 'formally advanced' civilizations of the east. Dionysus brought them the same horror and nausea which is presented as having assailed the children Helios, but they escaped the 'barbaric' decent into orgiastic violence through a retreat from the encounter into a hatred for existence and the "longing for a Buddhist negation" (BT §7:46). The Hellenes, on the other hand, are shown to have exhibited a much different response. Between the madness and degeneration of the primitive, and the acetic despair of the 'Oriental', they were able to turn the Dionysian into "festivities of world redemption" in which "nature first attains its artistic adulation" (§2:25).

Their resistance to despair and violence is claimed to have arisen "from the deepest roots of the Hellenic character itself"- that fundamental *craving* for life that lead to the creation of their Olympian gods and the Homeric epics, in which the only evil is being called from the banquet of the world to feast instead on vapors and blood in the underworld[45]. We see from these differing outcomes that it is in fact *not* the Dionysian *itself* that generates an acetic mood but rather the *attitude* or 'character' of the one who encounters it. Nausea, repulsion, depression: *embodied moods* that arise in us from the encounter- or more specifically, once "everyday reality returns to consciousness" (§7:46). It is not the Dionysian that leads to pain and nausea: it is the slipping of nature's beautiful 'mask' once the veil returns and the reveler sees beauty as just that, *an ill-fitting mask*. Once we have seen that beauty is just a lie, we find ourselves like Schiller's young traveler: "Ever from his heart/ Was fled the sweet serenity of life/ [...] 'Woe- for she never shall delight him more! [...]'"(Schiller 2009 190-97). Those for whom the spell of beauty has been *dispelled* by the face beneath the veil see only horror and emptiness in the 'everyday world' now made pale and hollow by its absence. But this is shown by

[45] see Homer 1996 §11, BT §3:28-9

Nietzsche to be an *effect* born of *affect*. Nothing has *materially changed* for the reveler on her return to 'the everyday', only her *perspective;* her ability to *perceive* beauty as real and to take comfort from it has fled, as she "*now* sees all around her *only* the horrific and absurd *aspects* of existence (BT §7:46 e*mphasis added*). What has changed here is nothing but the *weight of emphasis* she applies to the various aspects of the world that surrounds her. Where before she saw life as beautiful and wondrous, she *now* sees *only* horror and absurdity. It was this 'collapse' of the ability to look upon life as 'good' and meaningful that confronted the Hellenistic world, as it had confronted the Oriental world.

To Nietzsche, it was a testament to their profound inner strength that the 'descendants of the sun god' were able to resist this dissolution and disillusionment, and instead to arrive, thought the encounter, at their festivities of 'world praise'. He is emphatically clear that this is not the result of 'cheerfulness' on their part; they were decidedly *not* idyllically ignorant of life's hardships. Rather the strength to look into the void and to return from it with something they could praise and affirm was the result of the character that had given birth to Apollo in the first place: the 'will' in them to see the world as good and great that had always "struggled against the artistically correlative talent for suffering" that was also strong within them (BT §3:29). This dichotomy was underlined by Nietzsche in the subtitle he appended to *Birth* in the 1887 edition that also affixed the "Attempt" to the work: *Hellenism and Pessimism*. The parallel relation between a talent for glorification and one for suffering shows these two responses to an encounter with life to be opposing sides of the same coin. Hellenism and pessimism: two different flowers growing from the same stem; one radiant and full of life, the other full of rot and 'negation'. In this perspectival division we see the answer to a *true* separation of evaluative and descriptive pessimism. The Ancient Greeks are portrayed as profoundly aware of the hardships of a fleeting, ephemeral life. But they have *chosen* not to allow that to feed their natural 'talent' for suffering. This speaks to a distinction highlighted by Giles Deleuze as a critical element of Nietzsche's philosophy- one which marks the vastness of the gulf between him and Schopenhauer.

Deleuze draws a line between *suffering* and *pain* in Nietzsche's thought (12). While acutely aware (like his Greeks) that the world necessarily contains "struggle" and "agony" (BT §17:91), this does not, for Nietzsche, automatically translate into the idea

that suffering –a human *relationship* to this reality- is *also* intrinsic to the world. Pain has, for Nietzsche, no pre-given existential or metaphysical value as it does for Schopenhauer. Rather it is given 'value' only through its manifestation in our 'worlds'; the system of valuations that we invest events with in order to interpret our relation to existence. This is why Nietzsche felt it appropriate to speak of the 'artistic' talent for suffering. Pain *must* be placed into a schema of our relation to the world, for it is a pressing enactment of the world upon us. The choice the Greeks were forced to make was between interpreting that pain into a world of *suffering* they should flee from, or to use their artistic power to turn pain into something they could affirm.

'folded in love that fears no morrow'

How is it possible, though, to speak of *affirming* pain? Critics of Nietzsche's claims to affirm life in *The Birth of Tragedy* point to the idea that to be happy about pain and hardship necessarily involves self-deception. Surely it can only be an act of willful self-kidding that would lead me to understand, say, a punch to the face, or the loss of a loved one, or the systematic abuses of children spoken of by Ivan Karamazov as something 'good' or 'desirable'[46], something to be 'affirmed'? However, as Deleuze points out, this absolute thinking still presupposes a hedonistic assumption that the 'highest good' is to be found in the avoidance of pain, and that pain *automatically equals* suffering. If we can question this belief, putting its claims to natural self-evidence under scrutiny, then we might very well say that not all pain is necessarily evil. Nietzsche's later genealogical project was to undertake this scrutiny by means of an enquiry into just why it should be that pain is regarded as evil *prima-facia,* given that it is so inseparable from the human condition. The answer he arrives at in *On the Genealogy of Morals* is much the same as the assertion offered in the "Attempt" and Zarathustra's meditation upon the 'Hinterweltern'. The belief that pain *cannot* be good, and that the existence of suffering proves the world to be evil, comes from those who have become too weakened, sickened, and broken by life's tribulations to be able to affirm them: to continue to love

[46] Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov,* Book V, Ch. 4. The matter of affirmation and suffering raised by Dostoyevsky's atheist nihilist will be returned to and elaborated upon further in §2 of this study.

life *for what it is*, pain and all. It is as a result of this that they demonize suffering and hardship and formulate their metaphysical Beyond as places free from pain. But not only free from pain…

If we look once again to *Tragic Age*, we find another thinker of Being, of the metaphysical Truth behind our immanent reality in the figure of Parmenides. Unlike the Buddha and Anaximander, "The Parmenidean escape was not evoked by a profound religious conviction as to the depravity, ephemerality, and accursedness of human existence" (PTA §11:81). Rather, he fought both his age, and Anaximander's illogical but 'all-too-human' moral bile against life, to escape into "schematism and abstraction" - driven by a "terrible, energetic striving for *certainty* in an epoch which otherwise thought mythically and whose imagination was highly mobile and fluid". It was in pursuit of this goal that he "[grasped] the firm and awful hand of tautological truth about being" and "[climbed] down into the abyss" (§11:77).

For Nietzsche, what Parmenides sought was "peace in being" (§11:81): an escape from the "painful" world of humans beset by "irrationality […] glorified in playful antimonies" which he found excruciating and "incomprehensible", raising from him maddened screams (pp.77-8). His starting point was different, but his path was the same as Anaximander's. He too sought an escape from the suffering inherent in a world of change and ephemerality, a world that must be 'un-True' because its ephemerality and uncertainty caused him to suffer. To that end he dreamt up the world of Being, of un-changing certainty, and cried his prayer to the universe:

> "Grant me ye gods but one certainty…take away everything that comes-to-be, everything lush, colourful, blossoming, illusory, everything that charms and is alive. Take all of these […] and grant me but one poor, empty certainty" (PTA §11:81)

Thus, he flees "from an overabundant reality" into "the rigor mortis of the coldest, emptiest concept of all, the concept of Being" (pp.80-1). In searching for respite from Life, he turns to the peaceful arms of non-existence. This is not death (which retains a place in the cycle of change), but the abdication of life disguised as the embrace of a 'better life'. In the name of peace and rest, all that life contains – colour, lustrousness, growth, joy- are re-cast as worthless and illusory. They are 'mere appearance' before the Truth of Being; "All the manifold colourful world known to experience, all the transformations of its qualities, all the orderliness of its ups and downs, are cast aside

mercilessly", as the corrupt trappings of "this false deceitful world [...] faked into lying existence by the senses" (PTA §11:79). Certainty, consistency, intelligibility, peace, ease, a freedom from pain and loss; these are 'good' and 'divine' to the life-denier, for they are the things that the weakened and broken wish for. And all else - struggle, hardship, change, disappointment and the frustration of desires - is evil. But as Parmenides "house of cobwebs" shows, to cast away these 'evils' is to wish away Life itself. This is not mere poetics on Nietzsche's part, a sentimental, romantic attachment to the beauty of life. Rather, as we shall see in Chapter two of this study, Nietzsche believed precisely that life can permit of nothing eternal.

Where does this leave us on the question of affirmation? It leaves us with two sets of evaluative criteria by which to judge life. If we look to the world and try to find there the 'good' embodied by the world of Being, then we will see at best an imperfect and corrupt world in which 'good' is tainted by its admixture with 'evil'. This is not surprising, since the ideal against which life is being measured is precisely 'not life'; a world specifically constructed to embody those traits that the 'otherworldly' have failed to find in the physical one. But if we exclude these metrics, specifically formulated in order that we might find Life wanting and unworthy, then Nietzsche appears to claim that we find something else, something that *is* worthy of our praise. That something has already been alluded to in the discussion of Parmenides. That something is 'everything'- everything that exists. More specifically, it is Life itself -as an indivisible, inseparable unity of everything- that Nietzsche offers as the worthy object of our adulation. In *The Birth of Tragedy* this is embodied through representations of nature and its symbolic figure, the god Dionysus. This is why we find, alongside images of gloom and suffering and despair, rhapsodic presentations of the Dionysian as the locus of joy and wonderment.

BT §1's depiction of the "chariot of Dionysus" should be regarded as a pair with §7's description of the nauseating look into the Dionysian void discussed above. Both appear prominently in "Worldview" and "Music Drama" in forms that make it clear that Nietzsche was significantly invested in tweaking and re-drafting these sections. §1 seems to have been a well into which Nietzsche poured a great deal of creative energy in order to formulate, just so, his vision of the ecstatic "glowing life" that overtakes the human in her encounter with the god (BT §1:22). In contrast to this state, regular humans

appear "cadaverous and ghostly" as they look on in incomprehension, or "from stupidity turn away in contempt and pity". Overtaken by a joyous "shuddering", those enthralled to the god are possessed by the feeling in them of "dancing [...] aloft to the heights", as gravity and care fall away (23). The scene is contextualized in terms of the climax to the *Ode to Joy/Opus 125*: mankind, as one, sinks to its knees, crying rapt and "awestruck in the dirt" (22) before the "Dionysian artist of worlds [...] do you fall to your knees, multitudes? World, do you sense your creator?'" (23).

There is little of the grim and despairing Dionysus-as-Schopenhauerian-Will to be found in this presentation. Nietzsche's ecstatic flight into elegiac language speaks to the passion he clearly invested in this tableau and the idea it was meant to evoke. In co-opting Schiller and Beethoven's supremely powerful artistic presentation of the voice of divinity speaking through the chorus, Nietzsche clearly intended this passage to 'transport', or perhaps *transpose,* his reader into the midst of the ecstatic spectacle. Added to this touchstone reference, we might see the continual, emphatic repetition of 'now' (*jetzt*)[47] across successive lines of the description to recall the rhythmic, driving, impassioned form of the original Greek odes[48]. Taken together we might be tempted to claim that this was the 'true' face of the Dionysian for Nietzsche, the vision that he set out to 'preach' through the work[49]. But such a judgement - between this vision of the Dionysian as an experience of the "most intense blissful satisfaction of the original Unity" (BT §1:23), and the horrifying vortex of 'world history' - need not be made. Both are the Dionysian experience. Nussbaum points to *The Bacchae's* presentation of the living-god to show how this apparent contradiction was the 'core' of Dionysus as he appeared to the ancient Greeks:

> Cruel, excessive, amoral [...] the Play shows the human Dionysian energies to be both glorious and terrible, transfiguring and pitiless, fertile and fatal [...] the cruelty and

[47] Appearing five times in the closing paragraph of §1.

[48] This repetition also serves to chronologically and linguistically re-center the passage in a manner that speaks to Nietzsche's conception of the mythic: of the 'timelessness' of myth that makes the present the nexus of all temporality. For discussion of the relation of myth and temporality, see Porter (esp. pp.94-104, 148-163), Poellner 1998.

[49] if for no other reason than that we see here some of what Nietzsche may have meant when he lamented the work's prose style : "It should have *sung*, this 'new soul'- rather than spoken" (AC §3:6)

> arbitrariness of life are shown to be inseparable from its mysterious richness. The strangeness of this conjunction is neither condemned nor praised (Nussbaum 1998 51)[50].

In the text of *Birth* this dichotomy is embodied in the figure of the Satyr, who stands against the 'insulting', "sanitised fabrication" of the shepherd and the bucolic Idyll (BT §8 pp.47-8). Where the Idyllic shepherd reclines in peaceful repose, surrounded by a tame and munificent nature, the satyr dwells in the forest, not 'surrounded by nature' but -as it were- 'within it'. Half man, half animal, but not "ape", not something primitive and regressed. His is instead "the architype of man" itself: man as 'human animal'. Delight and suffering, sublimity and comedy, beauty and savagery combine in the uncontrollable 'wild man of the forest', before whom any idea of a safe, sanitised, motherly Nature is washed away as "a counterfeit of the sum of cultural illusions". This is not humanity 'regressed' back to primal savagery, as we saw in the regressive Babylonian variance of the phenomena. Rather we see here the conjunction of 'animal' and 'god-animal': 'Tier' and 'uber-Tier'[51] and a "wise prophet from the depths of the breast of nature [...] symbol of the sexual omnipotence of nature", as well as of its violence and cruelty.

Against the notion that it is only illusion and self-deception that can lead us to affirm life, we are told that "the Dionysian Greek desires truth and nature in their highest power" (BT §8:48) and that she revels in the sight of nature "unadorned" and "un-atrophied"[52]. Apollo offers 'mere beauty' and his solitary rule ensured the "radiant glorification of the *eternity of the phenomena*" and a vision of "triumph over the suffering which is inherent to life" (§16:90). In him, "pain is effaced from the features of nature by a lie". But against the arrival of the 'Roaring One', "a world built up like this and artificially protected" (DW §2:88) could not stand. Confronted with "nature in the omnipotence of its being [...] the most terrible instinct to existence (*Trieb zum Dasin)* and at the same time the continued death of all brought into existence" Apollo's spell wavered and was in danger of collapsing: "nature disclosed herself and spoke of her secrets with terrible clarity, with a tone against which the seductive illusion almost lost

[50] See also Nussbaum 2003.

[51] See also WP §1022.

[52] "auf den unverhüllten und unverkümmert grossartigen Schriftzügen der Natur weilte sein Auge in erhabener Befriedigung" – "on the unadorned and unattrophied grand handwriting of nature dwelt his eye in sublime satisfaction" (BT §8. My translation.)

its power" (DW §2:86). But the unique constitution of the Hellenes meant they were able to stand up to the terrible chthonic voice their Olympian gods had been created to drown out. Their gaze returned from the beautiful distraction of their dreams of 'humans-as-gods' and looked into the abyss of nature. And the unique weapon they had honed and turned into their sun-god allowed them to return from the abyss with an 'art' that allowed the 'truth' of nature to speak in human (or near-human) voices through the satyr chorus. It is this 'truth' that the Dionysian holds up as an object of affirmation. Against the Parmenidian prayer for an end to the epileptic succession of colours and sensations, joys and woes, Dionysus offered "a new and higher means of existence" in "the *birth of tragic thought*"; a worldview in which "the complete *excess* of nature discloses itself in pleasure and suffering and insight all at once [...] 'excess' is revealed as truth" (§2:88).

§1.3: Dionysian Affirmation: "Flowers [...] for emblems of the day against the tower"

Jill Marsden (in her introduction to English edition of "The Greek Music Drama") makes much of Nietzsche's continual use of nature imagery, and of the evocation of surging, 'throbbing' sexual fecundity and potency he invests it with[53]. The Dionysian festival is claimed to embody, in its ecstatic, spasmodic state of rapture, "the powerful drive of spring-time when it bursts forth, a storming and raging in a mixture of emotions" (GMD 14). Buds and flowers bloom, animals multiply, the bees swarm, and all around we find the world overflowing with "the countless forms of existence which crowd and push their way into life" (BT §17:91). In this mad rush of new life fighting and tripping and clawing its way into the world, we encounter, embodied and objectivated, "the overwhelming fertility of the world-will". The Dionysian is claimed to crystallise this in the tragic work of art, and to use this vision "to convince us of the eternal joy of existence". But the 'sexual omnipotence' of nature, its endless power to create new forms

[53] See Marson, esp. 4-9

of life, is here represented 'unadorned', without the prettifying deception that transforms nature into something passive and idyllic.

The confrontation with nature Dionysus forces on us in one in which we see the teeming, overflowing, explosive outpouring of life's energy into individuated forms, a spectacle that brings with it a simultaneous realisation: that "everything that comes into being must be prepared for a painful demise" (91). In presenting nature unadorned, the Dionysian shows both these facets of existence to be inseparable: that which lives, suffers and dies. But Dionysian Hellenism differs from Schopenhauerian Pessimism in the way it interprets this inseparability. For in raising 'excess' as the truth of nature, Nietzsche offers a counter to the metaphysical/moral worldview that can only interpret the world in terms of privation, of lack or absence.

To Schopenhauer, *The Bacchae*'s presentation of nature reveals, in its vision of orgiastic pleasure and violence, an "[honest] description of the terrible side of life"[54]. Tragedy embodies a pressing reminder of

> The unspeakable pain, the wretchedness and misery of mankind, the triumph of wickedness, the scornful mastery of chance, and the irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent [...] here is to be found a significant hint as to the nature of the world and of existence (WWR I §51:252).

Between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, we see two visions of the same world: one that is at once endlessly creative and endlessly destructive. But the valuations they place upon that world are radically different. Schopenhauer's worldview will be addressed in greater detail in the conclusion to this chapter, but we may pre-empt something of this discussion by drawing attention to the 'star' which orientates Schopenhauer's ontological, metaphysical, and moral worldview: the notion that *suffering* is the only 'positive' (which is to say substantive or present) attribute of the world. To his thought, all existence is *willing* and *striving*, and what we call 'happiness' is nothing more than the absence of willing, momentarily achieved when willing is satisfied. When we 'will', we are driven by tortuous desire. When we are satisfied, the desire that was oppressing us disappears for a moment, and we experience 'happiness'- the lifting from our shoulders of the suffering that flows from unfulfilled desire. To live is to be driven by needs and desires, and to desire is to suffer. Therefore, to live is to suffer.

[54] WWR I §51:252. For more on the relation of Schopenhauer to Dionysus, see Nussbaum 1998, 49-52.

Happiness, for Schopenhauer, offers no objection to suffering, since it is not anything 'real' or 'substantive' in the first place. It is nothing more than an 'absence' in the world of willing, serving to remind us that what is 'good' – to escape suffering- is *anathema* to a world that is nothing *but* suffering (and its occasional suspension). This position is based on an idea that the world is driven by 'lack'. Desire lacks its object of satisfaction and this tortures us. We are driven by this lack to strive, and when our goal is achieved, we lack a definitive motivating desire; this is experienced as happiness. But this cannot last, for the subject itself, indeed all of existence, is lack. Desire is a void that seeks forever objects to fill it, to cancel its lack. But this can never happen, and always

> something to desire and to strive for still remains, so that the game may be kept up in the constant transmission from desire to satisfaction, and from there to fresh desire [...] and so that this game may not come to a standstill, [the absence of specific desire manifests] as a fearful, life-destroying boredom, a lifeless longing without definitive object, a deadening languor (WWR I §29:164).

To Schopenhauer, this cycle of torment can only be escaped in the 'metaphysical transcendence' offered by "pure, will-less knowing" (aesthetic contemplation), whereby

> The storms of passions, the pressure of desire and fear, and all the miseries of willing are then at once calmed and appeased [...] we have stepped into another world, so to speak, where everything that moves our will, and thus violently agitates us, no longer exists [...] happiness and unhappiness have vanished (WWR I §38:197)

Since only willing exists in our world - and willing is always frustrated desire - the only way to escape is to pass beyond willing and to thereby transcend the immanent world. But Nietzsche offers a different vision, one that arises from his objection to a glaring flaw to be found in Schopenhauer's theory of desire. Claudia Crawford traces this to Nietzsche's formative readings of Eddard von Hartmann, whose psychology of the unconscious emphases the unity of pleasure and pain under the headings of 'feelings':

> strivings of the will that are not understood in the opposition negative (displeasure) and positive (pleasure) but rather as degrees of satisfaction or non-satisfaction of the will as they are manifest in [...] accompanying representations (Crawford 1997 74).

Put simply, pleasure and displeasure are the same thing - feeling, sensation - interpreted differently according to the degree to which their 'accompanying representations' align with the desires of our will. For Nietzsche, as for Von Hartmann, "pleasure and displeasure are in themselves only one thing in all feelings".

This small difference mounts up to a radically different understanding of life for Nietzsche, and of what it means to exist as a physically embodied creature. In the

Schopenhauerian schema, the only 'real' and 'substantive' bodily feeling ('state of will') is privation, the torturing 'want' of desire. Its opposite is not 'real', being nothing more than the pleasurable absence of feeling. But for Nietzsche there is no such thing as an absence of feeling[55]. Rather, pleasure is the feeling of one's individual will being forwarded, and displeasure is the feeling that arises when the world does not conform to our willing.

Under this schema, the life of the embodied creature transforms. In the Schopenhauerian world, the drives of the body manifest as an endless lack that can only temporarily be suspended. The world around us can never be anything more than fodder for these cravings, which can never give true release. Desire seeks to fill a 'gap' within ourselves- always drawing in and devouring objects of desire in the hope of momentarily slaking the thirst of Tantalus. But in Nietzsche's understanding, desire is not a 'drawing in', but an 'overflowing': a need, not to fill a lack within us but to *alleviate* the excess of longing that threatens to spill out from us. Slavoj Žižek characterises this in terms of the Lacanian 'encore', the cry of 'more' during the sexual act which "stands for *more of the same*, for the full acceptance of pain as inherent to the excess of pleasure which is *jouissance"* (30).

Zizek locates this orgasmic impetus at play in the "Intoxicated song" of Zarathustra – "sing yourself the song whose name is 'once more'" (Z IV §19:333) - but we see it already symbolised in Nietzsche's evocation of spring and its association with the myth of Dionysus. The Zagreus, the dismembered one, faces an endless cycle of painful birth and rending, disintegrating, agonising death; burnt to ash in his mother's womb, torn apart and eaten by Titans, ripped to shreds by his murderous adoptive family, etc (BT §10). Yet ever and anew, Dionysus returns, chooses to return, to the world of torment and joy. Always the god reforms, always is he "*transformed* in multiple affirmations, rather than being dissolved in original being or reabsorbing multiplicity in primal depths" like, for example, the Christ (Deleuze 12)[56]. The god knows that to live is to suffer. Yet because to live is to experience suffering and joy, he chooses to embrace

[55] This doctrine carries over into Nietzsche's concept of choice and valuation: there is no such thing as 'not making a choice' see Z III §12

[56] For an overview of the Dionysian myths and their connection to themes of dismemberment, reconstitution and transformation see Robert Graves 103-7. See also Nietzsche's reference to the titan myth as exemplar of "dismemberment, the properly Dionysian *suffering*" (BT 59)

that pain again and again in its unity with joy. As the seasons turn, so Dionysus comes back 'content to live it all again' like Yeats' samurai[57]. And, because this 'again' will involve the most horrific suffering and death, Dionysus' thirst for new life offers an example to humanity and "affirms all that appears, even the most bitter of suffering" (Deleuze 16).

The Dionysian ritual, for Nietzsche, symbolize the univocal cry of 'more' that arises in all the 'creations' and 'gestures' of nature. Its tragedies evoke screams and weeping laments from the audience, which are simultaneously exclamations (or perhaps ejaculations) of rapture:

> Out of the highest pleasure rings the cry of terror, the longing cry of lament for an irreparable loss. Abundant nature celebrates her saturnalia and her feat of death at the same time. The affects of her priests are mixed in the most wondrous way, pain awakens pleasure, jubilation tears agonising tones from the breast. The god, the 'liberator' has set everything free from himself, everything is transformed" (DW 2:84).

This transformation is achieved when we look to the god's death and see not a *hatred* for the world that has so tormented him, but a *longing* and a *craving* for its return[58]. Through this lens, the explosive fecundity of nature blossoming into spring is experienced by the reveller as Life's "unbridled craving for existence and joy in existence" and this understanding contextualises the suffering that nature also craves when it thirsts after new life:

> the struggle, the agony, the annihilation of phenomena now seems necessary to us... we are pierced by the raging thorn of their agonies in the same moment we have become one as it were with the immeasurable original joy in existence and we sense the indestructability and eternity of this pleasure in Dionysian rapture (BT §17:91).

Where Schopenhauer looked to the infinite succession of willing and saw only an endless parade of torment, Nietzsche sees an endless excess of *everything*, torment *and* pleasure. Both men look, as it were, upon the same world: one in which desire can never come to an end. But in Nietzsche's world this is because there can never be *enough* to

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[57] "Dialogue of Self and Soul" is, quite brazenly, Yeats' poetic homage to Dionysus and the eternal return; with its images of nature and colour set against the 'winding stair' of the broken tower that calls the soul away from the earth, towards non-existence. Its answer to the nihilism of telos and transcendence (embodied in 'the tower' that calls us to the "breathless starlit air" and "that quarter where all thought is gone") provides the title for this section.

[58] The close parallels between Dionysus and the Christ that Nietzsche would so play on can be seen embodied here, mirroring the parallels between himself and Schopenhauer: two near identical visions, two near identical acts, radically different outcomes. Where the Christ 'loves' humanity and suffers his torment as a means of offering them an escape from the world, Dionysus *truly loves the world* and teaches an embrace of the earth. He is thus reborn as a human, rather than receiving eternal life 'beyond' the reaches of death.

satisfy the endless longing for 'more' that we see manifest in the teeming, swarming, flowering spring. This drive, that can never be capped, can never find enough to grasp for and to long for "is to be opposed to being-towards-death: it is the eternity of the drive against the finitude of desire" (Žižek 30). The drive seeks more, but not to satisfy and thus *end* (if only temporarily) its craving. Rather it wills *so that it might go on willing*, that its satisfaction (here *desired* to be fleeting) might quickly give rise to more willing, more experiences and relations, more encounters with the external world of 'life' to satisfy or torment it.

'Of dalliance with a Demon thing'[59]

The vision of nature as maddeningly excessive and fecund, as a continually overflowing fountain of Life-as-'more', offers an alternative to the gloomy Schopenhauerian vision of happiness always felt as *absence*. As the conclusion to this chapter will argue, this vision of happiness *exiled* from the 'penal colony' of life is inseparable from morality and metaphysics as Nietzsche understood them. Zarathustra admonishes himself for following this example in *Birth,* for placing happiness 'beyond' the physical world. And indeed BT §17 appears to confirm this when it declares that "we should seek this joy not in phenomena but behind phenomena" (91). I would argue, however, that in *Birth* and its drafts we find a presentation of the natural world which already gestures towards the opposite, towards that which Zarathustra claims to have only subsequently replaced this 'beyond' with: the body (Z I §3 - 5). In looking to nature and the Bacchanalia for images of life's self-affirmation, Nietzsche relocates 'good' in the imperatives of the body. The moral man says that 'good' is in the avoidance of pain. But if we look to the natural drives of the body, with the sexual impulse as their architype, we see that as embodied animals we endlessly seek out 'more'. And since pain is always an element of 'more' - indeed is identical with pleasure in the heart of its most intensive moments, those which the drives appear to seek most longingly - we see that there is nothing necessarily 'good' about avoiding pain, since it means avoiding 'more'.

[59] Yeats, W.B. "The Wanderings of Osin"

The undercurrent of sexual politics in *The Bacchae* is pregnant with these implications. The image of the daughters of Thebes "driven from their places at loom and shuttle by the madness of Dionysus" (*strophe III,* 195) speaks to the awakening and embrace of personal, bodily desire in the face of an order that seeks to subjugate and oppress it. Pentheus' promise to the disguised Dionysus[60] -that the women who fled the city to dance, naked and covered in blood, in the mountain pastures, "those partners in crime you brought along with you, we will sell them off or keep them here as slaves, working our looms" (Act 2) - should be contrasted with his Mother Agave's speech as she confronts her father carrying her son's severed head: "I have left behind my shuttle and my loom, and risen to great things, catching wild beasts with my bare hands" (Act 6).

Naked, dripping with gore, jumping between sleeping, feasting, and dancing, Agave and her sisters are carried along by their desires. Leaving the city and its subjugation of their animal bodies, they embrace what it is be embodied creatures. The explicitly 'feminine' element of this is coyly masked by Nietzsche in the image of the Bacchae nursing wolves and doe at their breast, (Euripides pp.215-19, DW 2:84) but this serine picture of motherly care is soon juxtaposed (in the play) with a depiction of Agave tearing apart her own son to rapturous howls of triumph. The Bacchae's killing frenzies, described in a manner so reminiscent of packs of lionesses dragging down their prey, locates the women as animals in the most profound sense, as creatures of birth and death in inseparable unity. As she brags to her father that her 'pride' hunted down powerful beasts "not with spears, or javelins, or by using nets; we caught this beast by hand, tore it apart- using our own hands" (pp.234-7) we hear the echo of her exclamation upon seeing her son among the revellers: "From whom was this man born? / he was not born of woman's blood-/ he must be some lionesses whelp" (228). Violence and serenity trip over one another in the mountain scenes of *The Bacchae* as peace and rest give way to activity, tenderness to brutality. And both sides of the equation are *satisfactions*, deep and pure and blissful, of animal desires- to sleep, to feed, to exercise strength and physical power. And just as these urges spring up suddenly and violently in the

[60] Nussbaum similarly notes the politics of sexual repression at play in *the Bacchae*, especially in the messenger's report and Pentheus' response to it (1998 51-2).

daughters of Camus, so nature overflows with sudden sources of satisfaction for these desires:

> a knock of the thyrsus upon a rock and water gushes forth; a knock of the staff upon the ground and a fountain of wine rises up. Sweet honey drips from the branches, when someone touches the ground with only a fingertip, snow-white milk rises up (DW 1:84)

It would be tempting to read this passage, as well as similar ones in *Birth* that evoke the tiger and the panther yoked or speak of "nature voluntarily [giving] up its spoils while the predators of cliff and desert approach meekly" (BT §1) in terms of the biblical Eden. But in contrast to these 'lamb laying with the lion' evocations, which Nietzsche claims to be wholly alien to the Hellenic mentality (BT §8), we should resist the urge to interpret these scenes as nature 'prostrating herself' in the service of a spoilt human master.

The 'return' of the Bacchae to nature should be read against the backdrop of Nietzsche's critique of 'natural man' found in his readings of Rousseau[61] and Schiller. *Birth's* discussion of "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" is particularly instructive here. Images of a serine and peaceful nature 'surrounding' man "assumes the existence of an original age of man when he lay at the heart of nature and in this natural state had simultaneously achieved the ideal of humanity" (BT §19:104). In the Idyll, mankind stands as the centre and purpose of creation, "the spoilt favourite child of nature" and must only follow its innate, primitive humanity "with good-natured confidence" back to that "harmony of nature and ideal" which is Empyrean - the human 'restored' to its special place at nature's breast. Nietzsche heaps scorn upon this "fantastically silly flirtation" and states that "all those capable of measuring it against the fearful seriousness of true nature [...] would be obliged to shout out in disgust: Away with this phantom!" (§19: pp.104-6). So how are we then to interpret Nietzsche's Dionysian vision of "a completely magical world" where "nature celebrates her atonement with mankind" (DW 2:84)? In the presentation that *Birth* offers of this "gospel of world harmony": of the human "not only reunified, reconciled, re-incorporated, and merged" with all other living things, "but genuinely one" with them (§1:23). The human is not 'reconciled' in the world of nature but recognises itself as insolubly a part of it.

[61] See for e.g. BT §8:29.

The Idyll, Schiller's "spontaneously dreamed harmony between man and nature" (Haar 169) manifests as the paradisiacal hope that nature will one day conform to 'idea': that the human will one day find in the natural world what it believes it *ought* to find there. Though this 'ought' originally grew out of opposition to the religious notion of a corrupt and 'evil' world of nature, it did so in the name of 'humanism'; of forwarding the notion of an inherently good 'human nature'. It thus redeemed the 'natural' only by subordinating it to the human, placing it as the 'lost home' and 'greatest meaning' of a "good Man" (BT §19:102). The 'naturally good' human sees its 'vision' of nature as the goal of the natural world. From the mourned 'loss', Eden can be restored to both man and nature if the human conforms to its 'good nature' (and if it "discard certain things in order to regard ourselves once again as this primitive" (BT §19:104)) and nature returns from its state of 'loss'- of non-conformity to that which the 'good' and 'divine' human knows it should be (or rather what its metaphysical moral insight *tells her* it should be). The Dionysian, on the other hand, counters this humanism- born of nothing but the human's need for its own "optimistic glorification" (§19:102)[62]- with a *naturalism* that does away with all ideas of 'ought' and takes as its guide the idea of human "as *satyr*, as nature being among nature beings" (DW §3:94).

Michele Haar locates something of this in the presentation of Sophocles found in "Worldview": "reconciliation with reality *because* it is incomprehensible! Aversion to solving riddles because we are not gods!" (DW §3:91)[63]. While Haar's close reading of this passage seems too selective to follow much further[64], these lines do indeed serve as an instructive gesture towards the values of the Dionysian. Oedipus seeks for 'truth' because he does not understand the "limits of man" and believes that 'truth' and 'comprehensibility' are values that the world intrinsically respects and defers to (DW §3:91). The *hybris* inherent in his vision of himself as the seeker of truth and the solver of riddles leads the tyrant to his downfall and to his eventual reconciliation with nature (as fate/world-order): the acceptance that he is controlled by the 'ruthless Moriah' who rule over all living things. We see here an image of ruin arising from the human's

[62] See also D §31
[63] See Haar 169-72
[64] The passage goes on "joyful living in the contempt of life! Triumph of the Will in its annihilation", marking this interpretation of the great tragedians as grounded in Schopenhauer's theory of 'tragic resignation'

demand that nature conform to its ideals. Oedipus finds peace only when he accepts his place, seeing (in his final blindness) "the worth of man and his limitations" before "the wisdom of the world order" (DW §3:90). An affirmation of life (*Tyrannus'* choice to go on living as a blind outcast) finally arises when he chooses to give up the ideal his eyes symbolised, and to defer instead to the wisdom that speaks from nature through blind Tiresias. Life is finally affirmed for what it *is* – incomprehensible and indifferent - when the ideals of what it 'should be' are abandoned.

Here we see the importance of naturalism as a counter to both metaphysics and humanism. For in both these perspectives, we see manifest a claim that naturalism cannot permit of: the claim that the "Human being possess something extra-natural (whether consciousness, mind, spirit, rationality, language, or morality) that sets it apart from, and places it above, other natural creatures" (Cox 75). Naturalism, on the other hand, claims that there is nothing that does not flow from nature and thus nothing about the human perspective that would validate its belief that 'good' lies in the exercise of these supposedly supra-natural faculties. Where philosophy had previously claimed a special place for reason and morality on the grounds that they were unique to the 'highest' creature in the world – and thus constituted the God-given tools for seeking after 'true value' - Nietzsche's naturalism denies that anything in our world has its origin in anything except the workings of nature. And, as Oedipus came to realise, even the greatest of humans are as bound to fate as the lowliest animal. Nothing exists that is not bound to the world-order.

Nietzsche's 'declaration' of the need to "begin to *naturalise* us humans in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature" (GS §109) is only specifically formulated towards the end of the Free Spirit arc. But this was only to put into words a methodological imperative underlying both *Human* and *Dawn*'s investigation of moral phenomena and of the value of reason: the understanding that "everything we know as the *Socratic virtues*- are of an *animal* nature" (D §26). I wish to argue that this imperative was already present in Nietzsche's early works, manifesting as the notion of an 'aesthetic justification of existence'. This notion will be taken up and explored fully in chapter 2; but by way of laying groundwork for this, I point to a partial, yet instructive analysis of Nietzsche's deployment of the aesthetic offered by Christoph Cox.

Cox points to the aesthetic as an ideal ally for the naturalist perspective because, as a category, it "affirms sensuousness, materiality, multiplicity, becoming, historicity, creativity, and the irreducibility of interpretation" (6). The original definition of the aesthetic was offered by that branch of philosophy's founder[65] as the science of 'perception of the objects of sense': "[in contrast to] the object of logic, the aistheta are the subject of the episteme aisthetike"[66]. This marks the aesthetic as a category grounded in the *sensate body*, in contrast to the 'Noeta': "what can be cognized through the higher faculty"[67]. If we keep this definition in mind, it will cast Nietzsche's interest in the aesthetic as a means of re-focusing the human on the sensate. Of course, it is far from immediately evident that this is what Nietzsche meant by the aesthetic, and we will shortly conclude this chapter by examining a glaring opposition to the naturalist interpretation that arises from *Birth*'s treatment of the notion. But if we are to take up, just for a moment, the partial sketch of the aesthetic offered by Cox -as a sort of 'constellation' of associated ideas orientated around the experience of the sensate creature in an ever-changing world- then we can narrow in on what it might mean to establish nature as a 'locus' of value.

As Cox avers, Naturalism is intrinsically anti-metaphysical, in that it not only "denies supernatural entities (souls, Forms, God, etc.) [but also] Extra-natural (disembodied, a-historical, non-contextual, foundational, infallible) points of view" (6). Talk of nature as the 'locus' of value run the risk of straying into a form of the latter: into 'onto-theology' as Heidegger and Derrida called it[68]. The idea that nature represents something of a 'God' or divinity in *Birth* is difficult to circumvent, but we can go some way towards this task with the help of this notion of 'aisthetike'. The 'newly redeemed nature' that the Free Spirit works sought as the locus of human value is specifically a "de-deified" one (GS §109). The claim that humans can obtain their values *from* nature would appear to mark it as just another form of Being- an eternally self-same essence "untouched by becoming, context, or difference" (Cox 6) to serve as a normative 'guide'.

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[65] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten

[66] Baumgarten *Meditationes* §CXVI

[67] Ibid

[68] See Heidegger *What is Metaphysics, Identity and Difference.* For commentary on Derrida's contribution, see Coward. Haar, for his part, holds that "despite his opposition to traditional metaphysics and theology, Nietzsche repeats traditional onto-theological structures" (Williams 330. Cf. Haar 164).

But if we interpret 'nature' along the lines offered by this understanding of the aesthetic, we can arrive at an idea of it as, similarly, a 'constellation', or perhaps rather as a 'field' or 'stage'.

Nature simply means everything that exists for the physically embodied animal; all the world of sight and sensation and desire, change and growth, life and death. It should be contrasted to the idea of, for example, 'human nature' forwarded by Hume. Nothing grounded or essential is implied. It is just the 'play' of forces on one another, and the impressions these forces leave on our bodies. In opposition the idea that we receive our values from nature (with all the implications of a deferential subject bowing before its God), naturalism with respect to values is simply the claim that we form values as a part of that unbroken natural unity, and that our values should reflect that fact. In formulating our values thusly, we turn away from the denial of Life: which is to say, the tendency to formulate our values in opposition to life, or at the very least to formulate them in terms of a world that is *not life*.

The Dionysian is claimed to provide, through its insight into the 'sexual omnipotence of nature', a contextualisation of suffering as simply one perspective on a world that is "at the same time supreme suffering and supreme pleasure" (Haar 39). The image of nature's undying thirst for 'more', even if this means more suffering, inspires the human to be as Dionysus, and to overcome a focus on pain and negativity in the name of embracing the thirst for 'more' that runs through her as well. However, this inspiration only works if we accept the world of sensate feeling as all that there ever could be. If we imagine, as Schopenhauer and the other 'hinterweltern' did, the existence of a place where pain could somehow be *distilled* and *removed* from existence, then *that* world would doubtless be preferable. The absolute unity of pleasure and pain that Dionysus points to shows this to be impossible in a sensate world. It is because of this impossibility that those who cannot handle 'more' if it means more pain, create for themselves 'other worlds'; beyond the play of sense, of pleasure and pain. Understood from the perspective of nature however, these creatures are not 'higher', as they like to believe. Rather they represent a 'malfunction' of the world, a creature that still desires 'more', but has invented for itself a fantasy through which to seek imagined versions of it; impossible 'satisfactions' that can paradoxically exist disentwined from their other interpretive 'identity' as pain.

This fantasy requires the creature to negate and dismiss the world of sense which is satisfaction's only *real* locus; the animal turns away from life. As Zarathustra formulates it:

> Even in your folly and contempt, you despisers of the body, you serve your [animal] Self. I tell you: your Self wants to die and turn away from life. Your Self can no longer perform that act which it most desires to perform: to create beyond itself [...] And therefore you are now angry with life and with the earth. An unconscious envy lies in the sidelong glance of your contempt (Z I §4).

Naturalism presents an opportunity to recognise that any claim to be serving an interest 'higher' than those that could be derived from the earth and the world of nature is a sham. And, as *The Bacchae's* vision of nature giving forth succour and delights is intended to show, the world can provide for *this-worldly* needs. When the honey of life turns to ash in the mouth of the self-loathing Self, when it cannot find in the world what it desires, it looks to other worlds for pure and easy satisfactions that cannot exist. But such satisfactions will only ever be pale shadows of what the embodied creature truly desires, things that only the world it has turned its back on can offer. As Deleuze puts it, if "life takes charge of justification", if life is allowed to provide the metric by which it judges itself, then it "makes suffering an affirmation" and "affirms even the harshest suffering" (15)[69]. Conversely if life is excluded, and another, transcendent metric is permitted, then suffering becomes "a convulsion, a numbness... a means of accusing life, of contradicting it". Life, judged by its own standards, affirms suffering in its identity with joy. But if our metaphysical fantasies of a world without pain are to be placed against a life that is *entirely* pain, as it is *entirely* pleasure, then life can only ever be condemned - for failing to be what was dreamt up as its antithesis.

Life as the metric for judging life, the denial of any other possible world against which to compare it and find life wanting; this is the way Nietzsche conceived of his affirmative interpretation of existence. Central to this task: the goal of "translating man back into nature" as a means of making the human "deaf to the siren song of old metaphysical bird catchers who have been piping at him too long; 'you are more, you are higher, you are of different origin'" (BGE §230). But is the doctrine of 'life judged by

[69] This reference may appear to contrast the earlier definition of suffering as distinct from pain. However, this should be understood through Deleuze's assertion that pain manifests as either positive suffering "suffering from an abundance"- the painfully over-fecund desire for life- and the negative suffering of privation (12-6).

its own metric' (reliant as it is upon the denial of the metaphysical) what we in fact find in *The Birth of Tragedy?* Does the 'corpse smell' of Schopenhauer's metaphysics not undermine this, dispelling naturalism and with it the affirmation embodied in Dionysus?

Conclusion: Day and Night; Duality and the Problem of Affirmation.

Against the arrangement given so far -which foregrounds the rhapsodic presentations of Dionysus-as-nature and the evident enthusiasm exuded by the tripping, 'Rausch de Gefuhle' infused prose in which they are presented- it should always be recalled that *Birth* is also filled with equally poetic flights of mourning for a world contorted by gloom and misery. Philological arguments tracing the development of the former imperative across the successive drafts of the work are all very well. Henry Staten's keenly observed insight as to the gradual modulation of the word 'Will' into less 'loaded' terms in the final draft should be recalled (192). But so should Ridley's reservations about reading the work in, as it were, two halves (2007 pp.29-31). The pessimistic gloom that frequently overtakes the piece provides more than ample grounding for Ridley's ("admittedly hazy") feeling that the work still embraces a redemptive metaphysic, which sees salvation in an escape from the world of individuation. As Ridley shows, this seems to go hand-in-hand with the psychological thesis by which Staten seeks to ground *Birth* in a wholly immanent materialism. The two are knotted together to such an extent that it to read the work as schizophrenically split between its 'true' intentions and the Schopenhauerian 'façade' it felt required to maintain, reduces both sides to incomprehensibility.

Unless we can find a way of explaining the apparently metaphysical distinction between unity and differentiation in non-metaphysical terms, we are left with the inescapable conclusion that *Birth* fails Nietzsche's own test of offering an affirmative view of life. We are forced to concede that the work continues to substantively divide reality between a world of suffering – physical immanence- and one of 'hope' – 'The Beyond'. And if this is correct, then we must accept that aesthetics merely stands in for morality- as a 'path' to that Beyond- instead of offering the means to efface and dispel it. The apparent 'inversion' of this schema offered in BT §3 (immanence as the salvation

from the 'torment' of the beyond) does little to undermine this problem. Either Life -by its very existence as individuation- is the source of all evil ("we should regard the state of individuation as the source and original cause of suffering, as something objectionable in itself" (BT §10: pp.59-60)), or differentiation is a balm, by which the 'primal unity' – "eternally suffering and contradictory"- finds "redemption from itself" (§4: pp.30-1). Either the answer is to flee individuation, or to hide in delusion from the horrors of reality. In neither case are we offered an 'affirmation'. And in both instances, aesthetics offers the path of salvation, either towards or away from the metaphysically 'True'.

The problem of reading *Birth* as a work of affirmation is nicely captured in Deleuze's inconsistent presentation of the work and its 'affirming' god. In what is clearly intended as a metonymic evocation of both *Birth,* and of Nietzsche's career as a whole, we are told that "from the outset, Dionysus is presented as the *affirmative* and *affirming* god. He is the god who affirms life, who must affirm life" (12). Nietzsche sets out to vindicate life. But immediately after the claim that Dionysus "affirms the *pains* of growth, rather than reproducing the *sufferings* of individuation" -and is as such a symbol for "the affirmation of life instead of its higher solution or justification"- we are told that "Under Wagner and Schopenhauer's influence, the affirmation of life is still conceived in terms of resolution of the suffering at the heart of the universal, and a pleasure which transcends the individual" (Deleuze 13).

Staten offers a comparable summary, casting the Dionysian redemption as a sort of 'Thanatos', drawing on historic accounts of the Dionysian mysteries and the cultic notion that we might "die into eternal life" (114). The reading offered previously- of Dionysus choosing life over permanent dissolution- is inverted, as the rending death of the god comes to represent the birth of the individuated world: Will rent apart in agony. The 'rebirth' of the 'Zagreus' into a complete human body conversantly represents "the bliss of ceasing to be". This metaphoric construction is problematic, and Staten admits as much- though he puts this down to a problem of authorship. The 'death drive' is the fundamental imperative behind the Dionysian rapture, but it is communicated through a metaphoric structure that Nietzsche "never fully controls" (115), preventing this insight from fully crystalizing in the work.

The obvious objection to this would be that the problem lies with Staten and his willingness to contort the Dionysian to conform to a Freudian framework: one that casts the god as symbol of hysteria and castration anxiety (pp.116-19). But the claim of a 'will to death' underlying *Birth,* and the theme of a unity dismembered, must be confronted. This point is touched upon as a profound problem by Deleuze, who observes that

> The supra-personal element always accompanies the affirming element and finally takes on its benefits… Demeter learns that she will give birth to Dionysus once again; but this resurrection of Dionysus is only interpreted as the 'end of individuation' (Deleuze 13).

There is no doubt that *Birth* speaks in what Young calls "apocalyptic terms" (46) of a "hope" for the end of the phenomenal world; "a joyful hope that the spell of individuation is to be broken", manifesting the "only…ray of joy" that might "cross the face of the world which is torn asunder and broken into individuals" (BT §10:60). This does not sound like an affirmation of the world.

The life-denial inherent in eschatological visions of 'the end of individuation' should be clear. Additionally, the 'supra-personal' dimension discussed by Deleuze negatively effects the alternative interpretation offered above: that life is to be embraced as preferable to the horrors of Truth. If 'hope' lies in this 'supra-personal' (here still interpreted as 'metaphysically transcendent') perspective, then the question arises if what is offered here can ever give solace to the human animal. This question prefigures a significant theme addressed at length in the next chapter of this study, one that is important to at least touch upon in the context of the present discussion. As Young puts it, if the unity is 'metaphysically other' to the immanent physical world, the Dionysian rapture can only be conceived of as a state in which "one identifies with a *non*human being, the primal unity, or 'will to live' which celebrates, says yes to, not the inexhaustibility of human life but rather 'its *own* inexhaustibility'" (53). In the Dionysian, the human "is rescued, *for its own purposes*- by life" (BT §7:46 *emphasis added*). This distinction appears to mark a difference between the interests of the embodied creature and that of the Unity and evokes with it the Schopenhauerian moral idea of life's perfidious 'seduction' of the living. A brief assessment of this idea, and Nietzsche's relation to it, will be instructive for showing just why the naturalist schema gestured toward in this chapter is important for understanding Nietzsche's aesthetic worldview as the *only* possible lens through which to affirm existence.

Schopenhauerian morality takes its cue from the Kantian system, and while Schopenhauer was deeply critical of elements in Kant's moral theory[70], he never-the-less praised the latter's demonstration that morality is "transcendental, or metaphysical", that it constitutes "the bridge leading to [...] the world of Things in Themselves" (OBM 11)[71]. This understanding, and Nietzsche's opinion that it represented the essential thread uniting all moral (as opposed to purely ethical) world-views was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Schopenhauer's thought was regarded by Nietzsche as the zenith of these worldviews- their logic taken to its fatal culmination- and is thus especially instructive for understanding the problem of metaphysics. This is because Schopenhauer, more than perhaps any other moral thinker (with the possible exception of some Gnostic and Buddhist sects) had emphasized that animal existence is not simply something *inferior*, which morality allows us to rise above. Rather, our very existence as embodied animals speaks to an irredeemable and inexcusable evil- one so insidious that only morality can save us from it. Life is cast as not only radical evil, but *manipulative*: a devouring slave-master whose victims actively fight to perpetuate their slavery.

Morality is important to Schopenhauer because it 'breaks the spell' of individuated immanence and reveals the unifying nature of all life: suffering. Within the immanent world of nature, Schopenhauer says that there is only 'good', defined as "fitness or suitability of an object to any definitive effort of the will" (WWR I §65:360). This is to say that something is good if it achieves the ends of some aspect of willing - if it has instrumental value. Taken purely from the perspective of nature, there is *only* good, since everything in it is purposive towards the 'ends' of nature: to endlessly play out the insatiable desires of the Will. Everything in nature perfectly objectivates this goal[72], and even in 'failure' (death) the Will's creations serve the purpose of 'keeping the

[70] Notably that "It is precisely *what is moral within us* that [Kant] describes as being in closest connection with the true *essence-in-itself* of things" OBM 14-18. See also Cartwright 1999 255-57; 1998 123-4, Janaway 1994 74-5.

[71] For commentary, see Cartwright 1999 256

[72] As shown in the discussion of organs as manifestations of desire: "the parts of the body must correspond completely to the chief demands and desires by which the will manifests itself; they must be the visible expression of these desires. Teeth, gullet, and intestinal canal are objectified hunger; the genitals are objectified sexual impulse; grasping hands and nimble feet correspond to the more indirect strivings of the will which they represent" (WWR I §20 108).

engine running', so to speak. Everything contributes to the higher good of the system of nature, and thus every part of nature contributes –in all its activities- to the eternal perpetuation of the Will's desire to 'will ever afresh' through the simple expedience of existing. Within nature, nothing is not 'good'. But the integrity of this enclosed economy is broken by morality, which offers a glimpse behind the wizard's curtain.

In claiming that something might be *absolutely* and *unconditionally* right, morality places upon valuation the need for a "highest good, *summum bonum"*: a perfect moral state that moral action guides us to (WWR I §65:362). This *absolute* cannot exist immanently, in a world that knows only relative, instrumental good. The human turns instead to the 'metaphysical', looking for the immutable higher purpose that unites and validates all individual goods. But once it does this, the 'mask' slips and life's smile of endless self-satisfaction becomes a demonic grimace of predatory malevolence. The 'eternal purpose' of the world is revealed to be only the perpetuation of willing, and thus the perpetuation of suffering. Against the backdrop of life's eternal striving after its own perpetuation, 'highest good' becomes the 'death' of the Will and of nature itself. The teleological attainment of a final, perfect 'good' would be tantamount to "a final satisfaction of willing, after which no fresh willing might occur; a last motive, the attainment of which would give the Will imperishable satisfaction". So not only is willing not able to stand as a perfect, highest good, but its continued existence actively prevents, actively works against, such a highest good from coming into existence.

In the world of immanence, which knows only the endless succession of partial and temporary goods, *summum bonnum* "cannot be conceived. The will can just as little through some satisfaction cease to will always afresh, as time can end or begin". Thus, Schopenhauer insists that "[t]here is good only locally, relative to some particular occurrence or state of willing"[73], but that the very existence of the Will as an essential, unending striving precludes the possibility of attaining any final, moral ends. Cut off from the true Good as 'final ends', all life is shown as the absurd striving after nothing but more striving: suffering exists only so that we might continue to suffer as the "wheel of Ixion" inexorably turns (WWR I §38:196). In the world of nature, radically cut off from final ends, "the suffering [life] perpetuates cannot have any teleological justification. So

[73] Janaway 1999 326

human individuals not only suffer- they suffer pointlessly" (Came 2016 10). Pointlessness is, however, far from the worst of it. Wholly and inescapably immersed in the 'evil' of the Will's world, the animal creature is 'tricked' into believing that the Will's deceptive, false 'good'- that which serves its 'evil' ends- are good and desirable for the creature, instead of being the means by which their misery and servitude are perpetuated.

Nietzsche's emphasis on the sexual dimension of the Dionysian comes into play here, since sex is to Schopenhauer the perfect example of the way that animals are 'seduced' into fighting to perpetuate life through instinctual drives and physical pleasure[74]. The animal, as nothing more than its drives, is kept enthralled to the Will's strivings by chemical stimulus. Human consciousness exists in partial detachment from this, in so far as it is able to observe its own drives from a spectatorial remove. But in the cruelest of the Will's jokes, it cannot *escape* those drives and has only limited control over their exercise. Consciousness, even more than the pre-conscious animal, is a prisoner of the Will; "the will to life already inhabits us prior to any understanding or deliberation [...] the primary will to live 'in' me is not *my* will" - does not have anything to do with the desires or volitions of the consciousness that 'is' me - and thus "life is an unchosen goal of our striving" (Janaway 1999 326)[75].

Enslaved by the Will, cursed to have emerged from an animal mind jerked around on the puppet strings of desire and aversion, the human is condemned to a pointless existence of suffering it did not choose and cannot escape. When it believes itself an animal like all others, the human is not aware of this violation and is largely content to act out the Will's endless dance of violence and sorrow. But in the moral capacity, the ability to conceive of a 'higher good' above the relative good reached by satisfying its animal urges, the human first glimpses the possibility that violence only satisfies the Will while giving misery to the creatures it has created to play out its desires. In realizing that suffering is absolutely wrong when viewed from *outside* of nature, we see that a life that endlessly perpetuates suffering in order to defer what is 'right' must be resisted:

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[74] Schopenhauer's own essay "Doctrine of Affirmation and Denial of the Will to Live" (PPL II XII) famously demonstrates this with the Roman maxim "illico post coitum cachinnus auditur Diaboli". 'Directly after copulation the devil's laughter is heard'

[75] See also Georg Simmel, *Nietzsche and Schopenhauer* pp.30-1

> [As this] knowledge reacts on the will, it can bring about the will's self-elimination, in other words resignation. This is the ultimate goal and innermost nature of all virtue and holiness and is salvation from the world (WWR §27:152).

We see here just what Nietzsche sought to achieve through his resistance to morality. In the *wholly immanent* world that Schopenhauer's morality revealed as a 'lie', everything that serves the ends of life is 'good'. Within the enclosed space of the physical, nature always serves its ends: to continue – or for Nietzsche, to 'grow'. It is only the rupturing of this space and the invention of something Beyond that allows for people to begin positing 'metaphysical' perspectives against which to compare the world.

It was this 'amputation' of the metaphysical that was the goal of Nietzsche's naturalist project- to close the hole in the economy of reality (Life) by denying that anything about morality or reason gives any kind of insight into a world outside of that economy. These treasured 'higher faculties' are subjected to psychological examination and shown to be "nothing beyond entirely mundane developments and transformations of our original and fundamental human animality" (Schacht 192). If the aesthetic project remains concerned with metaphysics, with the bridging of a gap between the nature world and some external 'other', then it can have no part in that project. But if, on the other hand, it does as Nietzsche claims, and offers an alternative valuation that shows all worth to originate in Life itself, a valuation that radically denies the existence of a Beyond that Life is subordinate too, then those aspects of the Dionysian aesthetic discussed in this chapter are revealed as the founding movements in that undertaking. The division, ultimately, comes down to the nature of the answer that *Birth* offers to the problem of suffering: the Dionysian state in which "for a few short moments we *really are the original essence itself*, and feel its unbridled craving for existence and joy in existence [...] and we sense the indestructability and eternality of this pleasure in Dionysian rapture" (BT §17:91). Are we to understand this as a unity with *Life*? As the human's immersion in nature, the realisation that she is nothing more than a manifestation of that joyous, omnipotent power? Or must we understand it as the stripping away of Life's deceptive specificity, a flight into a "metaphysical level [...] which underlies the ordinary world of experience" (Ridley 2007 30)?

It will be the concern of this chapter to discuss the relationship between the aesthetic and the metaphysical in Nietzsche's early writing. The ultimate question that must be faced is whether the aesthetic worldview Nietzsche proposes is substantively different from the moral systems he argued against. Can we really see the aesthetic as a 'counter valuation' of Life, one that resists and overcomes morality's attempt to subordinate Life to a metaphysical 'other'? Or is this new valuation just another form of morality, one stripped of its ethical content in favor of Romantic aestheticism: an 'immoral' morality, rather than an 'amoral' counter doctrine?

The answer to this offered in "An Attempt at Self-Criticism" is contradictory and problematic. AC §5 states that the original introduction of the work- a dedication to Wagner- establishes "art- and not morality- as the proper (*eigentlich*) metaphysical activity of mankind" (8). This would seem to indicate that art is offered as a straight swap, a replacement for morality as the 'proper' means to metaphysical insight. In addition, the subsequent assertion that the aesthetic worldview represented "the first time that a pessimism 'beyond good and evil' announced itself" would seem to support this idea: that Nietzsche simply stripped out the normative, ethical substance of morality while maintaining its essential structure. A new morality, with good and evil simply replaced. However, this 'beyond good and evil' is claimed to have been achieved by relegating "[morality] to the world of phenomenon"- i.e. by stripping it of its metaphysical pretentions and *naturalising* it. In its place, the aesthetic is offered, a system of valuation embodying "that perversity of mind against which Schopenhauer tirelessly directed the curses and thunderbolts of his greatest wrath" (8). Here we have the moral 'pathway to beyond' naturalised and desecrated (brought back to its all-too-human, all-too-natural origin) and replaced. But with what? With what Schopenhauer calls, in the essay "On Human Nature", "the real perversity of mind [...] that which religion has personified as Anti-Christ": the claim that "the world possesses no moral significance and alone a physical one" (PPL §108).

We might explain this tension as Nietzsche attempting to forward a sort of 'limited metaphysic'- one that takes the physical meaning of life to be its exclusive metric for valuation. However even this idea remains problematic, given the discussion

undertaken in the previous chapter; after all, *any* metaphysic, any idea of a view from 'outside' of life opens up problems for Nietzsche - problems that will become even more apparent and significant as this chapter proceeds. It will be seen that even if what Nietzsche proposes here is nothing more than a way of 'looking-back-in upon' nature from 'above' as it were - with no 'otherworldly' co-ordinates of reference needed- the mere fact of positing such a metaphysical perspective 'breaks' the absolute frame of immanence required if life is claimed to be justifying itself*:* to be 'affirmed' and 'loved' for itself.

If we now turn to *Birth* itself, we can see these problems starting to manifest. The most obvious assertion of the metaphysical nature of the books aesthetics to be found there is in BT §4, where Nietzsche forwards the "metaphysical assumption" (*der metaphysischen Annahme*) of a division between the "Truth" of unity and the "the delightful vision" (30). James Porter, in *The Invention of Dionysus* offers a reasonable (though by no means conclusive) argument that Nietzsche worded this section to avoid fully committing to the "constitutively iffy" philosophic fairy-tale presented therein[76]. But far more substantive- and far more pressing for the question at hand- is the formulation offered in the works penultimate section.

Towards the close of *Birth,* it is offered that "art is not merely an imitation of nature, but a metaphysical supplement to the reality of nature, set alongside it to overcome it" (§24:127). This formulation, more than any other, would seem to put us squarely back in the realm of the moral. Recall from chapter 1 that it is morality's role to act as a normative 'other', through which we might 'escape' our debased animality. The idea that art 'supplements' reality in order to 'overcome it' seems to speak precisely to a Kantian understanding of morality as some miraculous intervention into the world from Beyond: "in accordance with the mere course of nature in the world, happiness in conformity with moral worth is not to be expected and is held to be impossible" (CPrR 116). Only through morality can what is 'best' enter into a world radically alienated from it. Is this what Nietzsche means, when he calls art a 'supplement' that will 'overcome' nature? We should recall that in the Free Spirit works, 'overcoming' is predominantly meant, not as a 'casting off' or 'escaping' (in the sense of 'overcoming the temptations

[76] See Porter 47-56

of the flesh' etc.), but as the process of 'elevation' into a higher or more refined state[77]. We see this most famously in the analogy of the 'bridge to the superman' in Zarathustra's prologue, which re-orientates the movement from physical to metaphysical into a natural register: one between animal and 'über-' animal. Though it may be argued that reading *Birth* in this light is anachronistic, closer philological examination of BT §24 would seem to widen this gap and favour a reading that radically differs from the Idealist conception of morality as a 'corrective' to the world: something which intervenes to 'save' a world that cannot ever hope to 'redeem' itself.

Nietzsche's assertion that art is "nicht nur Nachahmung der Naturewirklichkeit"[78] is pregnant with meaning. Art is not '*simply/only*' an imitation of nature, but this means that it *is* that- it is just *more* as well. We *could* take this as simply referring to the 'representational' nature of art- the mundane claim that art simply replicates reality's objects. But the torrent of ink spilt by Nietzsche in his Schopenhauer-inspired praise of music-as-non-representational-art[79] would seem to undermine such a reading (which would also introduce a certain 'platonic' dimension that is also at odds with the rest of the work). These writings, combined with the use of '*wirklichkeit*' point to a different understanding. Nietzsche makes a point of highlighting the significance of the word and its advantages over "Realität" in a passage from *Tragic Age*. He points to the relation between "wirken" and "wirklichkeit" – "the nature of reality is its acts" (PTA §5:53) - to promote the notion of reality as a 'process' rather than any discreet and definable 'thing'. Read with this understanding in mind, we see that art is conceived of as an imitation of nature's 'process-which-is-its-being' (or of its 'be-*ing* as coming-to-be').

It is in this light that we should view the proclamation, made in the opening chapters of *Birth*, that the Apollonian and Dionysian are "artistic powers, which burst forth from nature itself, *without the mediation of the human artist"* (§2:23). The human artistic process is cast as a limited manifestation of some naturally occurring process; a facsimile that somehow channels or arises from the way that nature creates its own

[77] See for e.g.: D §9, GS §301, Z I Prologue, II §12.

[78] All German language text of Nietzsche's work cited in this study is taken from the Digitale Kritische Gesamtausgabe Werke und Briefe (eKGWB), http://www.nietzschesource.org 2009–

[79] A theme common to the *Birth of Tragedy*, "The Dionysian worldview", "The Greek Music Drama" and "On Music and Words". For Schopenhauer's theory of music, see WWR I §52.

'artworks'. If this is the case, then 'overcoming' fits nicely into a naturalist 'emergence' thesis. Human artistry develops from out of nature as the natural artistic process' act of 'self-overcoming': its elevation to a more refined- but not substantively different- plain. It is not a 'supra-natural' intervention from some metaphysical other, 'correcting' nature's course towards something that Nature itself would never achieve. It is simply another layer, another repetition of nature's process. Nevertheless, the claim that this supplement is metaphysical in origin still poses significant problems for Nietzsche's affirmative claims. Not least of these problems is that if we maintain this distinction- between a metaphysical creative force and the creatures that are its creations- then we find ourselves once more butting up against the seduction thesis examined in the conclusion to the last chapter. How is this 'artistic power that flows from nature' to be understood as different from the enslaving, manipulating Will?

In order to answer this, we now turn to the great 'hope' that the supplement of art is claimed to offer for the suffering creature: the notion that "as aesthetic phenomena [...] Life is justified to eternity" (AC §5:8).

§2.1 Redemption and Theodicy.

> All philosophers are instinctively eager to imagine a comprehensive consciousness, a conscious living and willing which accompanies all that occurs, a spirit, a 'God'. But they need to be told that it is *in just this way* that *existence* would become a *monster,* that a 'God' and a general *sensorium* would without question be something on whose account existence would have to be *condemned*... The greatest *reproach we ever cast* upon existence was our belief in the *existence of God*... (WP §707)

Nietzsche's claim that Life is 'justified' if we consider it to be an aesthetic phenomenon is often traced to the symbolically pregnant image of the "Dionysian artist of worlds" (alluded to in BT §1 and further elaborated in BT §3 and BT §5). The image offered here frames all of physical reality as the 'artwork' of a sort of omnipotent creative force- a 'world-artist'- which is responsible for the teeming multitudes of forms and organisms that comprise our immanent reality. This is –apparently- an analogue for the Schopenhauerian Will, with a 'playful' artistic process of creation standing in for the macabre scheming and manipulations of the World Will. It is this 'entity' that we are

claimed to experience union with in in the Dionysian festival, as well as in our experience of music; an art form which "when placed alongside the world", exemplifies "what is to be understood by the justification of the world as an aesthetic phenomenon" (BT §24:128). Music is described as a feeling of "the beating wings of longing, which accompanies the highest joy in clearly perceived reality": the realisation that "even ugliness and disharmony is an artistic game which the will plays with itself in the eternal abundance of its joy". The Dionysian experience of nature is mirrored in the rapture of music, a flight of enthusiasm in which share in the painful joy/joyful pain that Life feels as it madly 'vomits out' more and more of its 'creations', never able to make enough to slake its lust, "suffering from the superabundance of life" (Deleuze 15).

The 'divine' rapture of the Dionysian lets us feel as the world-artist itself feels as it spews out its life forms in tripping, orgasmic delight. We find 'identity' with the 'creative force' of Life, experiencing it in its full force as an unbearable "superabundance of life, of suffering and delight" (BT §20). It is claimed that we experience the world as its creator does, to be driven along by the same mad, insatiable, orgiastic need for 'more' that compels the world-artist to endlessly create the multitudes of nature. Typical analysis of this identification, and of the cultic, quasi-religious means by which it is reached, orientates the Dionysian as a sort of religious 'transubstantiation'. The votary 'shrugs off' the necessary conditions of the physically immanent universe (individuation) and communes with a 'deified' nature/'world-forming force'. In adopting this perspective, Young finds himself in no doubt as to the true nature of this 'world-forming-force' and of its role in Nietzsche's thought:

> The best way, however, to see that *Birth* is a life-denying work is to note its fundamentally religious character and to conjoin this observation with the well-known view of the later Nietzsche that religion [...] is a product of those who, damaged and demeaned by life, are fundamentally hostile to it (Young 48).

This understanding reflects the almost universal critical consensus regarding the nature of the world-artist: the idea of it as a form of god. In light of Schopenhauer's pessimistic proof as to "the impossibility of reconciling the character of the world with a morally perfect, omnipotent creator", Nietzsche appears to have sought "to fill the void left by the demise of the Christian god" with a new god (51).

Understood this way, the aesthetic justification of Life is nothing more than a rearrangement of the theological/teleological world-view to make it more palatable to

the tastes of a Romantic pseudo-atheist; 'because god says so' recast to by-passes the incongruence inherent in the idea of a benevolent deity ruling over a horrific world. If this is correct, then Young is right to dismiss *Birth* as a life-denying tract, concerned to forward a sort of immoral aesthetic religion. Moreover, Nietzsche's own discussion of the role of religion in the work would seem to offer support for this idea. If we agree with him that it has typically been religion's job to provide a buffer against "practical pessimism" ("a horrifying ethic of genocide from compassion' that would accompany the realisation of life's utter futility and meaninglessness") it would seem that the world-artist is created expressly to fill the now vacant throne of the moral god (BT §15:84). Dionysus becomes a cultic Greek stand-in for the now untenable god of goodness and mercy. Indeed, given the choice to frame the world-forming force in terms of an 'ur-artist', it is hard to argue with the interpretation of that force as anything but an aesthetically oriented version of the old, discredited creator god, whose existence as 'Highest Truth' validates the world in so far as it is His creation. This 'divine justification' thesis is only strengthened by the wording of what is to be taken as *Birth's* programmatic declaration[80]; that "we have our highest dignity in our meanings as works of art - for it is only as aesthetic phenomena that existence and the world are justified to eternity" (BT §5:38).

The desire to impart 'dignity' and 'meaning' upon humanity aligns strongly aligns the notion of aesthetic justification with the image of religion that emerges in the later Nietzsche's naturalist genealogy. As Alan Watts notes, Nietzsche was quite clear that the religious impetus coalesces in human society for no other reason than to impart meaning on the meaningless:

> 'god' is a projection by human beings which is then reflected back to provide some sense of purpose and wellbeing [...] God was created in order to provide the answer to the experience of human suffering' (Watts 50).

A claim that the human attains its 'highest dignity' through relation to a deity, to a metaphysical force that stands as the source and meaning of the physical world is clearly antithetic to life-affirmation. Given this presentation, it becomes obvious why works like *Human, All Too Human* conflate aesthetics and religion and call for an end to the "blissful and blinding errors that stem from metaphysical and artistic ages" (§3:17). And

[80] This sentiment re-appears several times in the work and is identified as its central thesis in AC §5:8.

if the 'omnipotent artistic powers' that 'speak through nature' have their origins in a god, then clearly we cannot see this as anything like an attempt to overcome metaphysics through naturalism.

The slippage between naturalism and nature worship- between an omnipotent, all-encompassing nature and a 'god-as-nature'- is something that naturalist philosophies must constantly be wary of. Few things have proven more damaging for truly naturalist presentations than the tendency to allow humanist or deist inflections to creep into understandings of the human-animal continuity. Ilya Prigogine and Isabella Stengers identify a recurrent trend in secular philosophies of nature towards the establishment of a "new covenant": worldviews that sneak divinity back into nature so that "humanity is no longer a stranger in a strange mechanistic world. Rather, within the universe there is a tendency towards higher complexity and order"[81]. We are left unable to find anything in the 'meagre, cold, and mechanistic' materialist universe on which to pin our dignity or support our innate need for purposeful meaning. Therefore, we instead posit a 'superior order' in the world- generally in scientific admiration for the intricacies and complexities of 'natural law'- and align ourselves to that order[82]. The divine creeps back in as cosmic reason, and the human's unique ability to consciously observe and participate in it allows, once more, for our return to a place of special significance in the universe. Through participation in this 'higher' order - a necessarily teleological one since it reflects the dictates of a fixed and determinate 'Being' inherent to ('given' in) the universe - humanity believes it will become "progressively freed both from material constraints, and the deceitful servitude of animalism" (Monod 180).

The deification of nature's 'higher processes' clearly reflects the Socratic moral worldview denounced so vociferously in *Birth*, with its belief that to 'know' the universe will allow humans to 'correct' it (BT §13-14). And even if the order offered is an inscrutable and 'useless' one that we are entirely passive before, we are still left with the idea that we somehow possess a special place in the universe by virtue of our ability to perceive its 'higher order'. (As we shall see, this is central to another form of 'aesthetic justification' that Nietzsche seems to dismiss). Although the work clearly rails against a

[81] *Order out of Chaos*, cited Drees 107.

[82] HAH II §14 addresses the "superstition" associated with mankind's search for uniform order in the universe. This matter, and this aphorism, will be returned to in chapter 3.

scientific version of nature-deification- and against the broader idea of nature as a beneficent 'mother' to her spoilt, favoured child- the introduction of an aesthetic order does, perhaps, leave us in the same place. We are left with at least something of the question that Nietzsche ventriloquizes into the mouth of his imagined critics in the "Attempt": 'but sir, if *your* book is not Romantic, then what in the world is? [...] Mister Pessimist and Deifier of art' (§7:11). Do we not have Nietzsche's own admission that the world-artist could be construed as "a god, if you like, but certainly only a completely thoughtless and a-moral artist-god" (AC §5:8)?

We need not take this as Nietzsche directly *calling* the world-artist a God thought. The almost shrugging '*wenn man will*' we get here could very much be seen as another example of the linguistic contortions identified by Porter: a sign of Nietzsche's (apparently Kant inspired) reluctance to fully commit to any of his 'metaphysical assumptions'[83]. And the concession can also be seen to gel perfectly cogently with the fact that Nietzsche appears content to refer to his 'natural forces' by the names of Greek gods, without this being taken as the slightest indication that he wishes us to take seriously the superstitious pantheism of ancient Hellas.[84] Nevertheless, the question of the world-artist's status as theistic demiurge will need to be settled more conclusively than this. It would seem that the pertinent test of if Nietzsche is proposing a god here (whether a 'man in the sky' type god or a 'mother nature as divine intelligence' model) would be whether or not the world-artist serves the *role* of a god in Nietzsche's thought, and if that thought is expressly motivated by religious concerns. Watts highlights the importance of this distinction when he claims that despite the fact Nietzsche's (later) thought clearly has no place for a traditionally conceived deity per-se, his thought never-the-less remains intrinsically religious.

Discussions of 'redemption' and 'justification' in Nietzsche's thought are held to reveal him as – despite fervent protestations to the contrary- "a radical religious reformer [...] heir to part of Christianity's theological tradition" (Watts 54). Watts thus interprets his thought as an attempt to save religion from the death of god; "to show not

[83] See note p.55

[84] A willingness he shares with two of his great ancient inspirations, Heraclitus and Lucretius. See, for example, Heraclitus: 'λέγεσθαι οὐκ ἐθέλει καὶ ἐθέλει Ζηνὸς ὄνομα' : Logos is 'both willing and unwilling to be spoken of by the name of Zeus' (DK22B32, tr. Kahn 2001 82).

that god exists, still perfect in the world' but that 'it is still possible (indeed necessary) to experience [life] *as sacred*". This is, as we shall see across the course of the chapter, a common assessment of Nietzsche's relation to theology. The deliberately ecclesiastical oratory of Zarathustra shows that there is clearly something to be said for Nietzsche's self-aware understanding of his place in relation to the religious tradition. However, many of these criticisms forward a far stronger claim of continuity. Daniel Came's characterisation of the early aesthetic project is an emblematic example. Like Watts, he 'sees no god up here', but nonetheless frames aesthetic justification as 'a self-conscious echo of the western theological attempt to justify God to man' (Came 2006 45) - albeit one enacted as a 'proto-existentialist revision' of this attempt (2016 6). Even if the world-artist is *not* a god in the traditional sense, the imperative behind its postulation marks it as working very much within a theistic framework.

Ultimately, the persistence of this framework renders moot the 'god or no god' question. After all, if Nietzsche *set out* to transpose into the heart of being a recognisably human order, guaranteed by an anthropomorphised 'creator' figure, then he has done nothing more than create a Romantic, a-moral religion. He may very well approach the matter "in terms of [...] existential need, and thereby [seek] to displace it from its traditional theological foundations" (Came 2016 6). Nevertheless, if this is attempted by means of positing a subject-like figure that exists in discrete separation from reality (which it creates and controls) then this figure is, by default, a deity; no matter how assiduously one insists that it is only an existentially motivated projection. We thus have two issues that need to be resolved here. First, the matter of if Nietzsche breaks apart his immanent naturalism through deification: the positing of "something transcendent to the world of flux [immanence]" (Griffin 85) which fills the role of a god (and in effect *is* one, no matter what label we choose to adopt). Secondly, we have the problem that the entire question of 'justification' would seem to indicate that Nietzsche has "a religious need to satisfy" (Young 116); especially considering the claim that existence is to be 'justified to eternity'.

As Jill Stauffer and Bettina Bergo point out, if Nietzsche remains tied to theological questions and seeks to answer them within the co-ordinates set by theology, then he likewise remains tied to the life-denying perspective he claims to have transcended. If we see the aesthetic justification as born of 'the imperative to redeem

suffering - as opposed to the responsive awareness of its protean inevitability', then we are forced to conclude "that Nietzsche was ultimately [a] religious thinker".[85] The very idea that the aesthetic justification is offered as a means of 'redeeming' suffering is taken to mark the concept as Nietzsche's attempt to answer the perennial question posed by theology: it marks it as a form of *theodicy*.

Paingod- and other Delusions.

Broadly speaking, theodicy is defined as the religiously motivated attempt to defend claims about the goodness and desirability of the world's order – or, more specifically, the god in charge of that order - from the problem of evil and suffering.[86] Suffering is 'redeemed' by way of a divinity that guarantees the overall goodness of existence. Grounds for reading the world-artist in such a light can be found in BT §4, in which Nietzsche forwards the "metaphysical speculation" that the world of Life exists to fulfil the "fervent desire for appearance" manifest by the "omnipotent artistic drives in nature" - thereby to provide their "redemption through appearances" (30). This section of *Birth* is steeped in Schopenhauerian imagery and gives what is arguably the most striking and unambiguously metaphysical formulation in entire work. Nietzsche speaks here of empirical reality as "that which does not truly exist, [...] a continual becoming in time, space, and causality" and avers that this "false causal world", "the world of torment *is necessary* in order to *force* the individual to produce the redeeming vision"- a vision required by the world-artist for *its* redemption (31 *emphasis added*).

This presentation of the world-artist clearly falls into the category of a life-denying philosophy: the 'world of suffering' exists for the gratification of its creator, and the creatures within it suffer for the ends of this omnipotent 'other'. Only a metaphysical insight offers solace for this suffering. Of course, this is structured as an *inversion* of the

[85] Stauffer & Bergo 16. This opinion is mirrored by Llewellyn (195-8) and May (211-6). Young, Geuss, and Hill also touch on this claim in their assessments, but their arguments will be discussed in more detail in the pages to come.

[86] See Stone 325. The etymological root of the word- *θεός δίκη*- will be discussed further shortly.

traditional theodicy, with immanence serving the redemption of the other; existence redeems god, not the other way around. Nevertheless, the ends are ultimately the same: the world *becomes justified, becomes 'redeemed'* by way of its importance to a god-like 'other'. This understanding leads Gemes and Sykes (whose assessment of *Birth* is otherwise responsive to the scope of the division between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer in the work) to conclude that we must "still take Nietzsche as offering a substantive metaphysic" on the basis that "the success of his punitive theodicy is dependent on this metaphysical truth" (88). Theodicy only stands if there *really is* a god to stand as guarantor.

BT §4 offers the most substantive declaration of the aesthetic 'theodicy' in *Birth*. However, it is by no means the only one. Just as in the case of the Dionysian insight, we find that various formulations of the aesthetic justification emerge in the work to vie for dominance. As with the presentations of the Dionysian, these can be divided into two generalised thrusts which appear contradictory, but which, when read together, 'modulate' the meaning of both presentations[87]. Alongside the gloomy image of a tormented Being seeking for redemption, we have a parallel image: the "clearly perceived reality" that the world-artists creation is "an artistic game which [it] plays with itself", born of "the overflow of an original joy" rather than a pressing need to 'redeem' a horrifying existence (BT §24:128-9). The "Attempt" embodies this modulation effect nicely when it re-casts the world-artist's 'flight' from the "eternal suffering and contradiction" of its nightmare reality (BT §4:30) in terms borrowed from the anti-Schopenhaurian aspect of Dionysus. The world-artist creates to relieve itself "from the *distress* of *abundance* and *overabundance*" (AC §5:8) as suffering becomes the ecstatic need to be free from the "pressing contradictions" that well up in the creative force which drives existence. The world is 'happily justified' as the 'god' figure finding "pleasure and self-satisfaction in [...] creating worlds".

However, a simple shift from the miserable to the joyous is far from enough to break this 'theodicy' away from its status as life-denial. We are still left to conclude that

[87] 'Modulate' here refers to the musical phenomena whereby the superposition of one harmonic function in relation to another changes the colour, sound, and 'feel' of both functions (frequency/harmonic synthesis). Confusingly this needs to be differentiated from the compositional practice of the same name, which is simply the process of transition from one function to another.

the key to understanding the claim 'the world is *justified* as aesthetic phenomena [...] lies in realising that this phenomena is not for us' (Hill 75). The world is justified 'to eternity', to the god. Not to Life itself, and certainly not to the creatures that (partially) comprise it. As Young puts it

> There is no suggestion here that all humans find or can find *their* life pleasurable or justified. To suggest otherwise would be to suggest that because a concentration camp 'justifies' itself to its sadistic (or perhaps merely playfully mad) commandant as a pleasurable 'entertainment', so too the inmates find it justified (Young 52).

We find ourselves once again confronting a variation of the 'seduction' problem. If there exists a substantive metaphysical division between that which is satisfied with/redeemed by the spectacle of suffering, and that which must *endure* that suffering to produce said spectacle, then the 'joy' that the Dionysian imparts is rendered worthless: nothing more than a seductive pleasure by which the god manipulates its victims into continuing to dance for it.

Raymond Guess seeks to overcome this objection and to claim that "it shouldn't be out of the question for me to be able to see the world as [the world-artist] does, and to share not only the [artist's] viewpoint, but the pleasure it takes" (106). However, he finds himself forced to concede that the transcendent perspective of the creator/spectator makes this identification ontologically impossible. In order that the artist be able to 'spectate' its playful artwork, the world artist must exist separated from its creation, standing 'apart' and 'above' it, so to speak. Thus, to both Guess and Young, the fact that it necessarily exists "beyond the principle of individuation" (in the metaphysical Schopenhauerian sense) means that nothing 'within' the world of individuation can ever share that perspective. Both critics concede that in this schema the world-artist "is (in some metaphysical sense) the reality of which I [...] am a mere appearance", and thus that "since [the artist] is me, is the reality of which I am the mere appearance, its pleasure is in some sense (potentially) mine" (Geuss 106). Ultimately however, we must face the reality that the world-artist "is also not me", that "'I', as an empirical person belonging to a world of individuated objects" exist only on this one side of a metaphysical barrier that divides me from the position which my existence serves to 'redeem'. To cross this barrier means to cease to be 'me' -the individuated illusion justified by the transcendent position - and to accept that it is only in this acetic abnegation of my human existence (its revelation as illusion) that this existence can find

worth. The aesthetic theodicy's apparent claim to offer us a true, redemptive access to the world-artist's perspective is (onto) logically contradictory. The aesthetic perspective is thus revealed as a tool for "*deceiving me* about the non-identity that exists between me and the [artist], and the possible implications that has for my ability to see life as worthwhile" (Geuss 108). Redemption actualises only if we 'lie' to ourselves and wish away our individuated actuality.

Against this claim, Bernard Reginster holds that it is indeed possible for living things to share in the 'justification' that Nietzsche offers. He argues this by showing that the aesthetic 'theodicy' relies upon a reformulation of what it means for something to be 'justified'. Nietzsche's reformation of the hedonistic underpinnings of religion has a knock-on effect that allows him to dramatically recast the concept of redemption: away from Christian groundings and towards an appraisal that sees suffering as meaningful in itself. The religious definition of redemption is taken to rest on a calculus of 'burden to reward', in which redemption is understood as the 'repayment' or 'neutralisation' of suffering in favour of hedonistic pleasure. The 'ledger' must be balanced; the overwhelmingly negative and problematic aspects of life must be outweighed – "compensated for" - by some "pure good" that negates the pain of suffering[88] (Reginster 232).

Reginster's encourages us to divorce any such ideas from Nietzsche's use of the words 'redemption' and 'justification', owing to their grounding in Christian life-denial.[89] If we remain under the sway of this schema, "suffering is still seen as something for which we require compensation. Life, we might say, is affirmed only *in spite* of the suffering in it" (231). Life *may* end up coming out well, if the balance falls in our favour. But it is still not *good in itself*, and though suffering is 'counteracted' we would still ideally wish this suffering *wasn't there* in the first place. Something intrinsic to Life remains cast as 'evil' and in need of expropriation, and a dream that offers this impossible wish is *ideally* preferable to the troublesome reality. Reginster proposes that "Nietzschean redemption, unlike Christian redemption, involves a radical re-evaluation

[88] See also D §202

[89] This seems a somewhat weak basis of making an important claim by itself. A rebuttal to this line of reasoning can be found in Sadler §3 which offers an alternative interpretation of Nietzsche's use of the language of 'redemption', emphasising its *continuity* with received religious understandings.

of suffering that demonstrates its essential contribution to intrinsic goods, like creativity" (233). In this way, suffering is positively affirmed rather than counterbalanced (negated). It thus ceases to matter if we can *actually* identify with the transcendent artist-god, since the world is regarded as good in itself, with suffering contributing directly to this immanent good. The 'transcendent' perspective of the god simply becomes an allegorical means of recognising this fact.

Reginster is correct when he points to this 'radical re-evaluation' of suffering at the core of Nietzsche's thought. However, his assessment remains problematic for its failure to appreciate just how radical this shift is, leaving it still firmly within the framework of theodicy laid out in the Christian theological tradition. M. F. Stone's definition of theodicy as a theological *defence* of theism (the broad definition we have been working with thus far) should be laid alongside Charles Teliaferro's etymologically grounded definition: that theodicy represents the attempt to bring evil into line with ideas about θεός δίκη[90] – 'divine justice/order'. From the earliest models of Christianity's founding theologians, theodicy has sought to "provide an overriding framework within which to understand at least roughly how the evil that occurs is part of some overall good- for example that the overcoming of evil is itself a great good" (Teliaferro 473). This understanding reveals the Christian through-line in Reginster's 'uniquely Nietzschean' conception of redemption[91]. On the surface, it might be argued that this hangover from theology is perfectly acceptable and provides exactly what Nietzsche was seeking for: a vision of Life as positive, arrived at through acceptance – perhaps even praise- of its ostensibly negative (but ineluctable) aspects. It would also stand as a neat and simple understanding of the 'aesthetic' nature of the justification: the 'ugliness' of the world interpreted as a necessary precondition for some overarching beauty.

Textual support for an interpretation like this seems to come when we look again at Nietzsche's claims about music; that the experience of musical dissonance manifests in us the feeling of "the beating wings of longing, which accompanies the highest joy in clearly perceived reality": that "even ugliness and disharmony is an artistic game which the will plays with itself in the eternal abundance of its joy". Framed according

[90] *Theós Díkē*

[91] See for example *Romans* 5:3-4: "we rejoice in our suffering, for we know that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character".

to Reginster's interpretation, this understanding of the 'necessity of ugliness' emerges as something akin to Leibnitz's aestheticized theodicy. Much like Nietzsche, Leibnitz foregrounds music as his primary point of reference and takes dissonance- the fall into en-harmony and musical conflict- as a metaphor for the problem of suffering. He "likens evil to the dissonance necessary for [the emergence of] harmony" (Beiser 33). Under such a principle, evil, far from being something that needs to be compensated for, is almost to be desired. Just as the composer deliberately disturbs the tonic balance of a passage to introduce dynamic tension (hanging cadence, escalation of chord dominance etc) "the greatest beauty arises from the unifying of the greatest possible dissonance, so the perfection of the universe emerges from the conflict of evil itself" (33).

By existing as the aesthetic spectator to its own creation, the world-artist, like Leibnitz's God, can appreciate the beautiful whole of the symphony, instead of being stuck in discomforting pre-occupation with some (deliberately) enharmonic trill. But closer examination reveals that this idea also leads back to Life-denial.

"Theodicy was never a Greek concern"

"But what do I care for avenging them? What do I care for a Hell?" – Ivan Karamazov.

By recasting the 'undesirable' elements of Life as the necessary preconditions for the desirable ones, dissonance is 'justified' for its role in the production of harmony - of a final 'good order'. The fact that humans cannot *directly* perceive this order is not a problem - they must simply trust in the god that stands as audience and who judges the performance to be 'good'. The mere existence of this spectator's gaze permits us to postulate the unity of the world into a single 'grand performance', and to allow the parts we *like* about the total experience to outweigh those we do not. But is this so different to the claim that suffering needs to be compensated for?

The model of theodicy forwarded by Leibnitz offers a framework in which evils are justified materially rather than simply metaphysically[92]. And while this still requires the god as a sort of 'mirror' outside the world, a perspective from which to at least imagine we hear the whole of the world-symphony in all its glory, it is not necessarily the god itself that 'justifies' the system per-se. Of course, this fails to meet the demands for unbroken immanence established thus far; but if this is simply an imagined perspective made to reflect on the nature of physical reality, then is this really such a problem? It is if it is the god that 'judges' the world to be 'good' and this idea is inherent to both Reginster and Leibnitz's version of theodicy. For in both cases, the evils of the world are still evils, even if they are now necessary evils. The 'divine spectator' position contextualises disharmony as a necessary end towards harmony, "an essential fact of existence, as necessary to the perfection of the cosmos as dissonance is to beauty" (Beiser 33). But no matter how much evil is valued for the good 'ends' it produces, such a valuation does not allow for the affirmation of these parts of Life in themselves. To contextualise suffering in terms of a resulting good concedes that suffering is only justified "as compliment and precondition" to what is really being affirmed- the resulting richness of harmony. Dissonance is only valued for its negation, for its dissolution which allows space for 'good' to emerge. It is a necessary burden, to be endured for the sake of the true goal.

Negation and condemnation of some part of the world lies at the heart of any system that "seeks to posit a supreme principle of good that cannot be obtained without the possibility of the relevant evil" (May 213). And no matter how assiduously we assert that this good cannot be achieved without the bad, it would, nevertheless, be better if it could: 'what is best is already denied you'. Any trace of this must be done away with, if we are to understand the aesthetic justification as "a joyous fatalism [...] a *ressentiment*-free affirmation of the world as it is, without negation or exception" (213). However, as Simon May aptly points out, this problem may be systemic to the very notion of justification itself: the very idea of offering a 'justification' of Life is grounded upon an intrinsically life-denying premise - the proposition that the world is *in need* of justification. This notion arises as the result of 'suspicion', the creeping feeling that Life

[92] In the Nietzschean sense: justification is experienced in immanence, not just by the transcendent god.

might not b*e* justified, or even justifiable: 'to justify means to distrust' (May 222). As our discussion of Anaximander in chapter 1 makes clear, if life-denial is nothing else, it is just this *suspicion* and *distrust* of Life. Thus, any suggestion that Life requires justification has, at its foundations, a distain for Life that the seeker after redemption is looking to assuage.

Several critics[93] have approached this aspect of Nietzsche's thought by means of a contrast with the writings of Emanuel Levinas and criticise Nietzsche – as Young does in a similar context- for his obsessive need for a "redemption of all the past" (Young 116). This need - a fundamentally religious yearning - is taken to lead him towards a negation of Life 'as it occurs' (as a parade of misery) in favour of a final 'end' that will contextualise (and thereby redeem) all the suffering of the world: 'Nietzsche values the redemption of suffering above substituting happiness for suffering' (Llewelyn 198). Talk of 'substituting happiness' should not be understood in hedonistic terms in either thinkers' case: Levinas was as fervently incredulous as Nietzsche was of ideas about a 'perfected life' free from suffering. Rather, these critics contrast Nietzsche's redemptive aspirations to Levinas' sensitivity to the "protean inevitability" of suffering and his hope that we might find happiness within the pains of existence.

This criticism seems unwarranted- especially considering the discussion of Nietzsche's attitude towards pervasive hardship discussed in chapter 1. In this regard, as in so many others, Nietzsche and Levinas are, in fact, in concordance. Nevertheless, the problem raised by these critiques remains pertinent. If Life is in need of 'justification', if what Nietzsche offers is a 'theodicy' in this sense, then we remain in the world of Life-denial. Stauffer and Bergo join May in their concession that Nietzsche resists Life-denial in so far as he "justifies suffering in terms of a good that he considers not to be motivated by the will-to-nothing" (May 221).[94] However, they also concur that the persistence of ideas like 'redemption' and 'justification'- inherent to the very idea of theodicy- brings with them an inescapable dimension of life-denial: "theodicy with neither god nor Arche remains a doctrine of justification" (Staffer & Bergo 15).

[93] See Stauffer and Bergo (14-6), Llewelyn (198).

[94] The Aesthetic justification is 'Nietzsche's answer to the nihilism of ideas of soul, divinity, and ultimate happiness' (Stauffer & Bergo 15).

An appreciation of the need for a fundamental paradigm shift is on clear display in the presentations of Life-affirmation to be found in the Free Spirit works. The opening aphorism of "St. Januarius" (GS IV) presents us with a flash outline of the 'yea-sayer', the archetypal affirmer of life. She is one who has rid herself of suspicion with regards the difficult aspects of Life: 'I do not want to wage war on ugliness. I do not want to accuse; I do not want to accuse even the accusers. Let *looking away* be my only negation' (GS §176:157). We see here an acute sensitivity to the problem of negation inherent in appraisals of the world's 'worth'. The insidious suspicion that is the very septic root of denial leads to the question of how to 'redeem' Life, and any attempt to do so relies on negation of what is suspected. The very question is a symptom of Life-denial and thus "the real challenge is to stop being obsessed with the question itself" (May 226). As *Birth* makes clear, this cannot be achieved through by a vulgar 'cheerfulness' which seeks to ignore or downplay Life's problematic elements. Nor can it be reached by a 're-casting' of the world's 'evils' as secret (instrumental) goods in the manner of Leibnitz when he avers that "often an evil brings forth a good, whereto one would not have attained the good without the evil" (Leibnitz §9). Such a recasting would be to 'de-fang' suffering, to denature reality in much the same way that the optimist seeks to minimise Life's difficulties and thereby to 'wish away' its ambiguity.

Watts, for his part, accuses Nietzsche of doing just this. Reiterating Ivan Karamazov's agonising, pathos driven critique of theodicy, he concludes that "there is something disgusting in the attempt to explain away the greatest crimes in history [...] to down play the evilness of 'evil' by showing its positive results" (49). However, already in *Tragic Age* we see Nietzsche exhibiting a deep suspicion of those who would wish to justify the problems of Life in instrumental terms - as means towards ends. This comes out in his critique of the Stoic School and their "dragging down" of Heraclitus's aesthetic understanding of Life "to signify a vulgar consideration for the world's useful ends, especially those that benefit the human race" (PTA §7:66). In 'putting the boot' into the Stoa, Nietzsche poetically accuses them – on account of their insistence upon a beautiful, beneficent order in the universe, guaranteed by a higher power - of degenerating Heraclitus' cosmology into "a crude optimism with the continual invitation to Tom, Dick, and Harry to *plaudite amici"*. Belief in an 'ordained order' that contextualises and vindicates apparent suffering for its place in 'God's Plan', is here

aligned - through enigmatic reference to Beethoven's (purported) last words[95] - with the Cycibine dream of the life-denier: "ἀπόθανειν θέλω"[96]. Those who see a 'plan' in the universe look forward with expectation to the completion of that plan, yearning for the 'happy ending' to the comedy of suffering.

In this sense the Stoics can be seen to prefigure the 'last Men' of Zarathustra, beings that "left the regions where living was hard", effacing struggle and existential responsibility, and wrapped themselves in "agreeable dreams' to await 'an agreeable dying" (Z I 16). It is also easy to see how this early objection was to inform an 1887 fragment[97] in which Nietzsche denounced theodicy and justification. He speaks here of the "*supreme devaluation*" inherent in the idea that "the world is the work and expression of a God: in which case it must be supremely perfect", and that the world's evils "must proceed from God's supreme purpose: (WP §411:221). The very question of justification forces the conclusion that either "evil must be only apparent", or "our world is imperfect, evil and guilt are actual and determined and absolutely inherent in its nature; in which case it is not the *real* world" (222). Optimism and pessimism/asceticism are revealed as two ends of the same continuum - both force us to 'reject' the world as it encounters us and look for something else to explain or contextualise it. But in the 'yea-sayer', we are offered a third path: one which refuses to see the world's problematic aspects as 'blameworthy' in the first place. Close examination of the 'aesthetic justification of existence' reveal it to be grounded in just this attitude, and in this, it breaks the bonds of theodicy.

§2.2: Aesthetic Justification: A God Before its Canvas?

Matthew Rampley claims that it is to Schopenhauer we should look to understand Nietzsche's approach to redemption. He credits the arch-pessimist with "assiduously avoiding the Christian impulse to give suffering a meaning" and claims that he instead

[95] "*Pladite amici, comedia finite est*"; 'applaud friends, for the comedy is over'. For commentary on this story, see *Beethoven, Anguish and Triumph*, Jan Swafford, §33. Handwerke also cites it as the last words of Emperor Augustus (HAH II 450)

[96] 'I dream of death"- Juvenile's *Satires*, employed as an epigraph for T.S Elliot's *The Wasteland*.

[97] Revised 1888.

"prefers the deeper insight that our fear of suffering and pain is misplaced" (90). This assessment is clearly problematic, given the great *moral* significance afforded to suffering in Schopenhauer's thought. It is even more so given the realisation that this 'displacement' of suffering is possible for the thinker only through a denial that Life and the problems inherent to it are 'Real' in the first place. But the general thrust of the assessment, and Rampley's choice to frame it in terms of Peter Sloterdijk's concept of "Algodicy", is never-the-less worth taking up. Formulated as part of his *Critique of Cynical Reason,* Algodicy is expressly framed by Sloterdjik as a "metaphysical interpretation of pain that gives it meaning in modernity [and] takes the place of theodicy as its converse [...] if there is no god and no higher meaning, how can we bear the pain?" (1988 460).

The persistence of the idea of 'meaning' imparted by 'a metaphysical interpretation of pain' would seem to mark this as very much still in a religious framework. Even as it later develops, Sloterdijk maintains (despite the atheistic suppositions embedded in the name) that the concept marks a persistence of the religious impulse in the post-religious world; proof that "the religious question has survived the end of religion" (1989 77). However, the idea that it concerns the persistence of these matters in a world devoid of gods and 'higher meanings' should contextualise the appellation 'metaphysical' here. In developing the idea in his 1989 study of *Nietzsche's Materialism*, Sloterdijk offers an astute insight into the way that Nietzsche sought to break the spell of religious redemption, and in doing so offers a far more radical re-evaluation of suffering than Reginster arrived at. According to this understanding, Nietzsche's idea of justification is not concerned with defending or 'excusing' existence in the face of suspicion. Rather the aesthetic justification should be understood in terms of an aesthetic 'exoneration' of Life, a project that "stands in direct opposition to the program of moral abrogation" (78). Nietzsche's use of the term 'justification' should not be viewed in terms of its theological meaning – "the action whereby [Life] is accounted or *made* righteous by God",[98] except as an appropriation and subversion of this meaning. Nor should it be understood in terms of its slippage into common use: as "the action [...] of vindication" or as "a spoken, written, or printed

[98] Definitions taken from OED.

defence".[99] Justified (*gerechtfertig*) read as a past-participial adjective rather than a verb*:* As aesthetic phenomena, existence *is (*already) justified.

This statement marks the beginning of Nietzsche's project of 'restoring innocence' to Life[100] through the exculpation of suspicion. In proclaiming "Die Welt, in jedem Augenblicke die *erreichte* Erlösung Gottes" (AC §5) we still have the persistence of a god. However, the world is "in each moment the *achieved* redemption/release". In its existence as "the eternally changing, eternally new vision of greatest suffering, greatest contradiction" the world is 'redemption manifest' and the 'redemptive action' comes in undoing our abrogation of existence on the basis of this understanding. Innocence is not retroactively 'imparted' upon Life by the Dionysian realisation. Rather it is the means of seeing that we had no grounding for accusing existence in the first place[101]. The metaphor that Nietzsche uses for this return of innocence to existence comes out in the penultimate section of *Birth* as the 'clearly perceived reality' that Dionysus opens the window upon. In encountering the superabundance of nature, we see

> the playful construction and destruction of the individual world as the overflow of an original joy, as Heraclitus the obscure compares the world-forming force to a child at play, arranging and scattering stones here and there, building and then trampling down (BT §24:129).

The innocence of existence against the claims of redemptive theodicy is Nietzsche's answer for finding the world to be 'good'. In *Tragic Age*, Nietzsche further elaborates upon his vision of the world as nothing but innocence:

> In this world only play, play as artists and children engage in it, exhibits coming to be and passing away structuring and destroying, without moral additive, in forever equal innocence. And as children and artists play, so plays the ever-living fire. It constructs and destroys, all in innocence. Such is the game that the aeon plays with itself (PTA 7:62)

This understanding of the world is claimed to offer a pure, immanent, instantaneous justification of everything that happens in the world. It is because of this understanding that Nietzsche claims Heraclitus "had no reason why he *had* to prove (as Leibnitz did)

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[99] Definitions taken from OED.

[100] For broader examinations of the theme of 'the innocence of becoming', see D.L Clark "Blake, Nietzsche and the Disclosure of Difference". Also Leiter 2018, Shapiro 2017.

[101] The Latin 'exoner' (freed from a burden) and 'exculpa' (freed from blame) are helpful referents here, especially when contrasted to 'acquitare', as 'discharge of debt'.

that this is the best of all possible worlds. It is enough that it is the beautifully innocent game of the aeon" (63).

The figure of 'the Aeon, boy god of the zodiac' (PP 13:70) is chosen by Nietzsche to stand for the various anthropomorphised figures[102] that appear in Heraclitus' thought (most frequently Zeus) as personified embodiments of the 'world-order' he called *Logos*. This is the figure, likened to a small child playing in sand, is Nietzsche's further elaboration on the 'Dionysian artist of worlds' initially sketched in *Birth*. The 'sublime image' of the world-creator as a small child raptly playing with blank matter for its joyous amusement is often read as the principal source of this theories' claim about the 'innocence of becoming'. However, as Young and Geuss are apt to point out, this is an unsatisfactory explanation for Life's hardships when taken at surface level. If we were to turn this image into one of a child burning ants with a magnifying glass, then we would easily see how close the 'playful innocence' of the childish mind is to 'gleeful sadism'. And the idea that we are the toys of a "playfully mad" cosmic deity (Young 52) seriously undermines the claim that torment can be excused on the grounds of the 'amoral innocence' of the perpetrator. As Geuss phrases it; "This play follows no rational or moral rules; the child is merely gratifying its aesthetic predilection [...] [but] dying painfully in a highly interesting and dramatic way- won't be nearly so satisfactory for me" (106-8).

This presentation would seem to forward the worst aspects of theodicy, without any of its redeeming positives. As the later Nietzsche was to emphasise, the introduction of a conscious actor responsible for pain and suffering makes of life a horror and an absurdity. Worse, even, than claiming that all this pain serves that being's 'higher Truth' is the assertion that we suffer *for the enjoyment* of this being. Moreover, if the 'aeon' stands as a god-like consciousness controlling the world, then all the other problems of affirmation discussed up until now come flooding back. So, has Nietzsche just replaced the judgemental moral god with a sadistically indifferent game-playing one?

Treatments of the aeon in the literature have been sparse and surface level for the most part, and the majority of ink spilt on the relation between Heraclitus and

[102] See note 77

Nietzsche has been on the subject of the 'agon' in their writings[103]. However, it was upon Heraclitus' cosmology that Nietzsche pinned the transformative hopes of (what were intended to be) his first two 'great works'. The concept deserves a more thorough examination, if for no other reason than this. But there are to be found other, profound reasons for looking to Heraclitus and his aeon for an understanding of Nietzsche's early project, and for productive veins of thought we might trace into the Free Spirit works. Heraclitus is mentioned only two other times in *Birth*, but a reading of Nietzsche's wider meditations on the world of the Ancient Greeks shows that his shadow lies over the work to an extent belied by these sparse references. The portrayal of Heraclitus as the affirmative opposition to Anaximander's moral/metaphysical pessimism we offered in chapter one is not without wider precedent, and neither is the claim that Nietzsche 'hitched his star' to this figure in his early career.

There is no shortage of evidence to show that Nietzsche the young Basel lecturer was profoundly taken by Heraclitus' philosophy[104]. Perhaps most importantly for the present study we have the opinion of Greg Whitlock who, in his introduction to the "Pre-Platonic Lectures" lists, the core concepts of the Free Spirit works that can be traced back to these lectures, in which 'Heraclitus [especially] emerges as a pre-Platonic Nietzsche': 'concepts such as the will to power, the eternal return of the same, the overman, gay science, self-overcoming, and so on, receive rough formulations' (xxxvii) [105]. A great deal of these ideas were to be tied together by Nietzsche in an unpublished note from 1885, which sets out perhaps the most complete picture of the world as 'will to power' in his corpus:

> 'And do you know what I take 'the world' to be? Shall I hold my mirror up to it? This world is a monster of energy, without beginning or end, a fixed and invariable magnitude

[103] See for ~~e~~Example H~~.~~ Huttler, E Friedland, *Nietzsche's Therapeutic Teaching*, Bloomsbury, 82-95, Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche, Naturalism, and Interpretation* UC Press, 1982, 186-191 Timothy Wilson, "Nietzsche's Early Political Thinking: 'Homer on Competition'", Minerva journal, Vol. 9, 2005.

[104] A letter to Erwin Rohde (June 11th, 1872), which outlines his thesis on the Pre-Socratic thinkers places Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides as the most important thinkers of their age, and those between whom a struggle for the 'soul' of philosophy must be seen to have started. And the fact that Heraclitus, above the others, 'gave flight' to Nietzsche's philosophy (as Dionysus appears to have) can be attributed to by the testimony of his student Ludwig Von Scheffler. The ecstatic tone that is claimed to have come over Nietzsche during his lecture on Heraclitus and the way he ended the lecture with the words (in both Greek and German) "I sought myself" seem to speak volumes in this respect: "the lectures voice was also overcome by a gentle trembling, expressing a most intimate interest in the subject matter": (Von Schaffer, in Gillman 1987, 67)

[105] It should be noted that Whitlock goes on to say that 'nevertheless, the young professor behind these lectures was still far from the thinker he would become once he had rid himself of his enchantment with Wagner and Schopenhauer' (PP xxviii).

> of energy, no more, no less, which is never expended, merely transformed, of unalterable size as a whole, whose budget is without expenses or losses, but likewise without gains or earnings [...] a determinate space and not a space that could be empty anywhere, but on the contrary a space everywhere filled with energy, a play of energy and waves of energy, simultaneously the 'one' and the 'many', waxing here, waning there, an ocean of tempestuous and torrential energies, forever changing [...] forever blessing itself as that which eternally recurs, a becoming that knows no satiety, disgust, or weariness- this, my *Dionysian* world of eternal self-creation, of eternal self-destruction [...] *this world is will to power- and nothing besides!* And you yourself are this will to power- and nothing besides!' (WP 1067).

In this vision, we see what Nietzsche truly valued about the Heraclitean insight. The idea of a 'world of energy', one without end *or ends*, a '*Dionysian* world of self-creation' in which there is '*will to power - and nothing besides*' embodies perfectly the 'closed economy of Life' that Nietzsche sought in his naturalist attempt to undermine morality and metaphysics. It is this understanding, as an echo of his vision of 'aeon', that should inform our readings of 'his' Heraclitus and of the aesthetic justification of existence. But is this vision compatible with a world in which the universe's 'self-creation' is attributed to the work of a 'world-artist'? Does the very idea of an artist, of a sovereign creative mind directing the flow of the universe, not undermine the naturalist formulation *par excellence*, Laplace's (regrettably apocryphal) 'Je n'avais pas besoin de cette hypothèse-là'? We can begin to answer this by looking at that which Heraclitus apparently erected his system against.

'Who can distinguish darkness from the soul?'

Nietzsche's theory of the 'Tragic age of philosophy' emphasises the interconnection of its first three great figures. Heraclitus represents (at least for Nietzsche) a rebuttal against Anaximander's world of guilt and injustice, while Parmenides is claimed to have balked at the ambiguity inherent in the theory of *Logos*. However, the noted Heraclitus scholar Charles Kahn sets up another figure as Heraclitus' principal opponent: Parmenides' precursor, the poet-mystic Xenophanes (10-13).

A contemporary of Anaximander, Xenophanes made a significant philosophical leap in the attempt to reclaim the 'reigns of the universe' from the hands of anthropomorphic god figures. His philosophic poetry sought to dispel belief in a physical world governed by the capricious whims of human-like deities. To this end, he

forwards a vision of a world unified under a single set of laws affixed to the will of a single, all-powerful 'mind'. This *'Nous'* was an ordering principle that built heavily upon the Milesian concept of cosmic order (Kahn 12) but sought to offer an answer to the persistent question of *why* the universe exists as it does by grounding its explanation in theology. What we find here is thus "essentially the conception of a *cosmic god*: a deity conceived… as the ruling principle of an orderly universe" (11). Differing from the cultic gods of his own people, Xenophanes' *Nous* was not modelled on humanity, possessing recognisable motivations, discernible character, or a physical 'form' – "in no way alike to humans in mind or body". Rather it was simply a 'governing will' ordering and controlling the universe, which "without toil [moves] all things by the thought of his mind".[106] This 'one god' that "with the whole of his being beholdeth and marketh and heareth"[107] is the first clearly enunciated description of the all-seeing, all-powerful, all-knowing god of the monotheistic religions. But interestingly, Nietzsche is insistent that Xenophanes' god "is not some doctrine of an (im)personal god *existing beyond the world*, which would be some pure spirit: rather the entire dichotomy between spirit and matter, deity and world, is absent here" (PP §11:78). He sees this force as "nature worship of the One […] attributed to the purest predicates' under which 'this incredible unity [introduced by Thales] breaks: into what should it transform?" (78).

What we find in Xenophanes is a 'nature-theism' like the one championed by Alfred North Whitehead. Whitehead held the notion of a divine governing intelligence ordering the mechanisms of nature to be not only compatible with, but *required by,* the naturalist position, arguing that naturalism's model of a universal nature essentially reflects the "generic idea of God".[108] Xenophanes' vision was of god as a 'mind' that controls the universe as its 'physical body'. The two are united as part of the same 'system', but there remains a critical metaphysical divide between the two 'aspects' of the universe. While the physical universe is taken to be in eternal change, the One God "always remains in the same place"[109]. It exists as a point of absolute fixity and

[106] DK21B25 tr. Whitlock 78
[107] DK21B24 tr. Whitlock 78
[108] Griffin 84. See Whitehead, A.N, *Process and Reality* and *Science in the Modern World*. See also Pratt: Modern understandings of theism tend more and more towards "that nature towards which naturalism also seems to be tending" (168).
[109] DK21B26 tr. Whitlock 78

immobility, an eternal, unchanging point of reference around which the universe is constructed. As Aristotle observed, the nature attributed to god here- unmoving and active "without toil", thus indicating "absolute repose, which amounts to the denial of both locomotion and disturbance [...] tantamount to freedom from all kinds of movement including change" - is incompatible with the idea that this god is *identical* with a world of change and motion (Finkleburg 1990 109-10). The problem is resolved only if Xenophanes is taken to mean by his 'unchanging god' an "intelligible essence unifying the sensible manifold" (112), granting the 'One God' a differing ontological status to physical materiality.

This shows that Xenophanes' god, like Whitehead's, breaks apart the monism so inherent to the naturalist position: there is matter, and then there is mind. Thus, we find here, as Nietzsche points out, "a dualism similar to Anaximander's Unlimited: here, the world of becoming and passing away; there, eternally fixed divine primal matter" (PP 11:80). The world is wholly enthralled to and under the control of this god, and everything that exists does so to serve its ineffable whims. The god itself, on the other hand, exists apart from the world that assails the poor, stupid, uncomprehending human, existing as a "vision of divine rest, of the permanence of all things within a pantheistic archetypal peace" (PTA 10:75). This is exactly the sort of onto-theology that naturalism is prone to fall into. Though the god is reduced to its barest qualities as 'order' and 'master' and is thus made identical with the laws of nature, there is nevertheless (as Nietzsche observed) a rupturing of the unity of existence represented by Thales' monist proclamation. The naturalist dictate that "nature is the whole of reality" [110] may *appear* to be maintained in the idea of god-as-nature. However, as John Dewey noted in his rebuttal to Whitehead, this means (when taken seriously) that naturalism can permit of 'no other realm, even a realm consisting entirely of forms or ideas, which transcends the natural process constituting nature' (243).

The separation of the world into 'that which moves' (mind) and 'that which is moved' ('body'/physical matter), with the former being unchanging and of a different 'ontological' status (if not strictly a different metaphysical nature) means that a division exists between nature-as-law and that law's productions/manifestations. And thus, once

[110] Griffin 85. See Dewey *Naturalism and the Human Spirit* 243.

again, the problem of seduction rears its head. Since the Nous is regarded as invariant and excluded from coming-to-be[111], its relation to its 'body' (physical matter/the natural world) must be regarded as reflecting the relation of the Will to Representation, in so far as change 'applies not to the will, but only to its phenomena' (WR I §25:128). Though there is a 'unity' between the two realms, the 'pantheistic peace' of the god means that it itself does not and cannot change, unlike the world of "plurality [...] directly conditioned by space and time, into which the will itself never enters". Change and the pain and uncertainty it brings are wholly excluded from the peaceful repose of the divine master:

> [the will] is by no means included in that plurality, that change... the struggles of the form of matter, all this does not concern it, but is only the matter of its objectification, and only through this objectification does all this have an indirect relationship to the will (WWR §28 158).

Schopenhauer's likens this relationship to the one between a magic lantern and the phantasmagoria it produces: multiplicity emerges as the secondary, phenomenal after-effect of a single, unmoving flame. Just as the flame exists prior to and radically removed from the shadows it casts, so too does the will exist in transcendent absence from the world to which it has only an "indirect relationship".

That the world is secondary to the whims of the divine, existing only for *its* ends, is already a problem here. That Xenophanes doubles down by showing the suffering of humans to be for the amusement of a perfect and blissful deity that simply has no more concern for us than we have for ants (and rightly so in his eyes) re-enforces the problem. We suffer unheeded as the god continues to languish in its blissful state of peace, away from trouble or hardship. *Tragic Age* makes it clear that Nietzsche regarded just this fantasy of voyeuristic escape from struggle as the imperative behind Xenophanes' creation: born to a tired old man, weary of a life of restless, fruitless wanderings and searchings (PTA §9). A god that wills *us* to suffer while *it* does not (apparently for its 'divine satisfaction') is the purest crystallization of the horrific comic-tragedy of life engendered by the absolute division of matter and will. And Xenophanes' own 'theodicy' is a cold, dispassionate acceptance of that reality. The world is not justified (or

[111] As Nietzsche notes, the idea that god came to be (that there was a time when it was not, and was not self-identical) was the highest of blasphemy in Xenophanes' eyes. (PP §11:78).

justifiable) to humans because they lack the basic epistemic tools required to see the 'perfection' of the world order as the god does (PP §11:80). All we can do is *have faith*: trust that the universe operates as it should, and that pain is necessary for the achievement of a higher order that we cannot know (and ultimately have little place in).

We arrive here at something that mirrors the conventional critical understanding of the world-artist's justification. The only difference is that unlike the misanthrope Xenophanes, Nietzsche is taken to claim that we *can* share in justification if we can look upon the world-order as the aeon does. However, this is taken to require a special perspective, one that originates from the ability to view Life from a detached vantage, as an 'aesthetic spectacle'. We might point to the image of "warriors in a painting" (BT §5:38) for illustration of this: the madness and pain of battle becomes order and beauty when 'viewed from without'; from a position of omniscient remove, set back from the world inside the frame. This is what tends to be understood as the aesthetic dimension of Nietzsche's 'theodicy'. We are apparently encouraged to view our own pain and suffering as we would the agonies of the *supplice* depicted in devotional paintings, or the beautified slaughter of, say, Ruben's *Massacre of the Innocents*. However, as Young points out, this is problematic because one, the salvation is fleeting (only there when we occupy the aesthetic standpoint), and two, comes only when we cease to be embodied humans, i.e., the *subjects* of the suffering. It is only when "we are transported out of the role of protagonist in the tragedy of life and into that of its 'soul author and spectator' that we see the world as justified – but this does nothing to justify the life of an inmate to an inmate" (Young 52).

Once again, we return to the problem that affirmation *cannot* function while there is a division between that which suffers, and that which it suffers *for*. Any potential justification on the grounds that we can 'share' in the divine's pleasure at existence must come up against the problem that we can do so only in so far as we 'share' in its divinity. The 'animal' human (that which suffers) is left behind while the 'spiritual' human is shown that suffering is an illusion it can escape through renunciation. This division *must* be overcome, and it was in Heraclitus that Nietzsche appears to have found his answer. Kahn frames the Ephesian's project as *explicitly opposing* the mystical dualism of Xenophanes through a system of monism unprecedented in the history of western

thought up until this point (Kahn 2001 131)[112]. If the Heraclitean insight that "all things are one"[113], that "the ordering [is] common to all"[114] is to be taken seriously, it requires that the *logos* which *orders* his universe (in place of the *Nous*) *be immanent to that order*. Heraclitus' cosmology is thus wholly predicated upon

> a denial of any fundamental duality between a generated world order and the eternal source from which it arises or the ruling intelligence by which it is organised. Insofar as it is made, it is self-made; Insofar as it is organised, it is self-organised; in so far as it is generated, it is identical with its source (Kahn 2001 134).

Nietzsche's insistence that "Heraclitus rejected the world of Being altogether and maintained only the world of Becoming" means that the ordering principle of that world must be *immanent* to Becoming. No longer is the source, the reason, the 'master', the 'Truth' of the physical world *outside* of this world. Instead, reality *is* its ordering principle. What does this mean for justification, and for the human's access to it? To understand this, we must now look at another interlocutor that Nietzsche lays alongside Heraclitus: a variation on Xenophanes' 'world-mind' that appears in *Tragic Age:* Anaxagoras' *Nous* as 'world-architect'.

'Confronted with the enormous art object of the cosmos'

Across Nietzsche's early corpus Anaxagoras is treated to a somewhat scattered and unclear presentation. Notebook entries detailing various abortive plans for the *Tragic Age* project serve to cast his thought in a number of different, often contradictory lights. One note from 1872 for example pairs the thinker with Heraclitus as a philosopher who attempted to impart meaning upon the world, in opposition to Democritus' "pessimism of contingency"; a mechanical/scientivistic vision of a "world lacking in all moral and aesthetic significance"[115]. Other notes from the same period place the two in related but

[112] Kahn differs from Nietzsche in so far as he does not see Thales's system as a true monism, But Nietzsche is also inconsistent on this point. Heraclitus and Parmenides are claimed as the only true monists: (PP 44, 80. See also Whitlock 224 n.128).
[113] DK22B50 tr. Kahn 2001 pp.44-5
[114] DK22B30 tr. Kahn 2001
[115] CW 11 23[35]: pp.129-30.

opposing categories, as thinkers of Art vs. Purpose[116] or of ethical vs. logical anthropomorphism[117]. Indeed, in the final draft manuscript for *Tragic Age* we have now, it would seem that Nietzsche wishes to draw a close affinity between the two. Like the *logos,* Anaxagoras' *nous* is portrayed as an artistic force of cosmic creation:

> [A] most tremendous mechanical and architectural genius, creating with the simplest means the most impressive forms and orbits, creating a moveable architectonic, as it were, but ever from the irrational free random choosing that lies in the artist's depths (PTA §19:112)

Nietzsche proclaims that "the Spirit [Geist] of Anaxagoras is a creative artist" and that by virtue of our relation to it, we are able to stand as it does, 'confronted with the enormous art object of the cosmos' (PTA §19:113). So why should it be that in the "Pre-Platonic" lectures, Nietzsche refers to Anaxagoras as 'the true antagonist' to Heraclitus' worldview (PP §13:101)? Is this just another ambivalent shift in Nietzsche's evaluation of the pair?

Notebook references claim that both thinkers look upon the world as "spectators at a tragedy" but see in its unfolding not "a reflection of the wretchedness of existence" as the metaphysicians had; rather they perceive the cosmos "as artistic construct" and emphasise the "likeness of the laws of the world"[118]. However, their articulations of this world of law differ in small details that add up to a tremendous division between their worldviews. Much like Xenophanes, Anaxagoras conceived of a spiritual force of 'intellection' as the guiding principle of the universe, motivating and directing the unfolding of matter's formation. But unlike his forebear, whose theories require that the 'Mind' of the universe be metaphysically distinct from its 'body', Anaxagoras was primarily a scientific investigator and was concerned with the 'mechanics' of the immanent physical universe. Nietzsche heaps praise upon the simple, common sense approach of Anaxagoras, who was willing to trust the evidence of his senses and the discoveries afforded "through the most immediate experience" (PTA §15:98). It is as a result of this method that he was led to affirm the reality of a world of change, to maintain that "change is motion" and that "motion is truth and not semblance… in spite

[116] CW 11 19[116]:39
[117] CW 11 19[116]:40, see also 19[181]:57
[118] CW 11 23[35].

of Parmenides" (§14:92)[119]. This emphasis on the reality and overriding importance of change to Anaxagoras' thought clearly mirrors that element of Heraclitus' philosophy that was so captivating for Nietzsche. Existence *qua* existence is taken to be an *activity*, and to 'exist' *as* 'existence' – as "life" – in so far (and only in so far) as it dynamically moves and changes.

Anaxagoras' opposition to the material scepticism of the Eleatics is seen by Nietzsche to extend into a metaphysical scepticism reminiscent of Kant. Further demarcating his principle of 'mind' from the god of Xenophanes, Anaxagoras is presumed by Nietzsche to have asked himself *how* it can be that a controlling force of intellection exerts power over- and thereby organises- matter: "does the impetus for motion lie outside the many real substances? Or... does this change originate in them? And is this to be explained mechanically or magically?" (§14:93). The answer that Anaxagoras gives -that "what is absolutely alien to one another can in no wise exert influence upon one another, hence neither move nor be moved"[120]- can leave no doubt that his thought is concerned to present a *wholly immanent* vision of a mechanically ordered world. By denying that what is not physical can affect the physical, he does away with the 'magical interventions from beyond' sketched in Xenophanes' theology. Beginning from the axiomatic principle that motion *must* derive from an exertion of force in the physical plain, Anaxagoras claimed that whatever instantiates this force must itself *be* physical. Mind *must* therefore be material, if it is to be regarded as the source and guiding principle of motion in the physical world. This means that to Nietzsche he was a pure materialist, whose philosophy draws no firm *material* definition between the substance of matter and of mind[121]. Both *must* be material, and there can exist nothing that is *not* material (at least in a meaningful sense).

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[119] Nietzsche also claims this revelation to be the result of the "indubitable succession of ideas in our thinking" in what seems an homage to Kant- though his citation of Spir's critique of the Kantian notion of time and succession (§14:97) casts some doubt as to whether this is the case. Nevertheless, his discussion of the shortcoming of the "inner-sense" argument that follows (pp.99-100) makes it clear that to both Nietzsche and Anaxagoras, time *is* real and the human perception of it should be regarded as more than simply the deceptive imposition of semblance upon a "dead motionless globe" (93).

[120] "Take two essences, each existent in itself with a totally different independent being in itself… with their nature as described, they can never collide, never move each other, never attract each other. There is no causality between them, no bridge; they do not touch one another, concern one another, disturb one another. Repulsion is exactly as inexplicable as magical attraction between them" (PTA §14: 93).

[121] PP §13: pp.99-100.

But this paradigm nevertheless brings with it the same attendant problems that we saw afflicting Xenophanes. *Nous* is envisaged as the controlling and moving element of the universe, the 'engine' that brings inert matter (Homœomeres) into motion and that oversees its formation into the complex arrangements of the physical world. And as *nous* is nothing more than a part of that world, we are then left with "a well-ordered totality creating itself, without the aid of arbitrary fictions, only by the impulse of ordered laws of motion" (PTA§17: 110). But in order that this should be the case, the *nous* must be omnipotent- it must, like Xenophanes' *Nous*, move all by its power, without effort. It must be able to exert absolute control over the universe of matter, *without itself being affected* in return:

> Nous is unlimited and self-ruling and has been mixed with no thing but is alone itself by itself. For if it were not by itself, but were mixed with anything else, then … the things mixed together with it would thwart it, so that it would control none of these things in the way that it in fact does (Anaxagoras DK59B12 tr. Curd)

Despite all the effort that Nietzsche puts into arguing against a *metaphysical* duality between the two, we are still left with a hierarchic relation between two fundamentally separate aspects of existence. This, to Nietzsche, is the essential division between Anaxagoras and Heraclitus' philosophy, the reason that Anaxagoras is held up as Heraclitus' 'true' antagonist: "no element is alive… matter is not simultaneously what lives" (PP §13:101).

In place of a metaphysically divided reality, Anaxagoras introduces into materialism an ontological dualism similar to the famous Cartesian one. Though Nietzsche still insists that "the Greek view of the world in no way distinguished body from spirit as matter and non-matter" we in fact find in Anaxagoras "for the first time the crude opposition of soul [*seele*] to matter: a force that knows and sets goals but also wills, moves, and so on" (PP §10:72). This is profoundly significant when read in the light of notes made early in Nietzsche's career for his abandoned doctoral thesis on the concept of teleology. Philosophies of nature aspire to exorcise theology from their worldviews. But for Nietzsche, all prior attempts at this endeavour had failed; in their recourse to Reason as a universal organising principle, they had remained trapped in the fundamental supposition that

> There is a creating intelligence. The acceptance of such an intelligence is made after human analogy: why can there not be a power which unconsciously creates the designed,

> i.e. nature [...] One no longer posits cognition outside of the world. But we remain stuck in metaphysics and call on the thing-in-itself for assistance (KGW i.4. 550 (1868) tr. Hill).

Nature-theology is just another form of metaphysics, merely one that finds another means of expressing its flight from reality:

> two metaphysical solutions are attempted: the one, still coarsely anthropological, places an ideal person outside the world, the other still metaphysical, *flees into an intelligible world*, in which the designedness of things is immanent (KGW i.4. 550 (1868) tr. Hill *emphasis added*).

Considered in this light, *nous* manifests the baseline attribute that marks the boundary between nature-theology, and the sort of indecisive "cosmic spiritualism" that arises from simply labelling mechanical process as 'God': a "materialism grown sentimental" (Forrest & Majoran pp.68-9).

Though expressly atheistic and materialist, Anaxagoras' theory maintains something recognisable as a god, a discrete and sovereign entity that acts according to 'intention'. This 'willing intention' marks the *nous* as a 'subject', something discretely differentiated from the rest of reality- and 'redemption' comes through identity with that subject. In so far as we are animals, our lives "are but the direct result of blind mechanical movement" (PTA §19:117). It is only in our 'escape' from this mechanical nature, in our becoming like the eternal transcendent subject-spectator, that we might find our lives to be 'aesthetically justified'. This is the essence of the aesthetic redemption that Nietzsche aligns with Anaxagoras, who answered the question as to why human existence has value as follows: "Because it allows me to view the heavens and the whole order of the cosmos" (17:113). The world is justified as an art-object, the object of an *aesthetic gaze*. The human occupies a special place in the universe owing to its being the "wisest of beings, harbouring a greater fullness of Nous in himself than all the other creatures" (§19:114), which imparts upon us the unique capacity for *comprehension*. We, alone of all the animals, have the ability to perceive the world (albeit in a limited way) as the nous does: as a dance of order and beauty. It is as 'the paragon of animals', the greatest and highest of *nous'* creations upon which it has bestowed some part of its discerning, understanding 'intellection', that we find our redemption. However, this relies upon our capacity to identify with the *nous'* perspective, through an exercise of our capacity to see as it does - something that Nietzsche understands to be alien to our normal, animal existence.

Nietzsche praises Anaxagoras for his insight that plants experience 'states of will'- '*lust*' and '*urlust*'- that inform their growth. This principle extends willing –the drive towards or away from states of will induced by external stimulus- to all animate thing: "every perception is accompanied by pain" (PP §11:104)[122]. But he also shows how Anaxagoras differentiated between a *passive* intellect- that which simply reacts to stimulus- and an 'active' one "noticeable above all in the will". This is the difference that raises humans above animals- that they possess enough *nous* to pass out of the purely passive state of willing and achieve the 'active' state of the cosmic *nous*- 'how noble in reason [...] in apprehension how like a god'. This gap, though small, introduces an insurmountable gulf between the embodied, physical *animal* and the 'higher' comprehending being that stands as cosmic spectator. The ability to perceive life as justified, therefore, relies on our ability to separate ourselves from the 'animal interestedness' of our physical lives, and to exist as the 'Geist' does: unaffected by the striving and privation that comprise the mechanical, physical world. It relies, in short, on the attainment of a disinterested aesthetic state, one in which the demands of 'passive' animality are transcended[123]. Anaxagoras' aesthetic redemption thus reveals its roots in Schopenhauer's principle of the 'aesthetic state' of 'disinterested contemplation': the 'pure, will-less state' of escape from impassioned, embodied care[124].

'Oh these Greeks, we sighed, they overturn our aesthetics!'

Existence as a human is glorious for Anaxagoras because comprehension allows us front row seats to the spectacle of the universe. However, the human has another existence: that of 'art object' and 'passive tool'. We find an interesting formulation of the divine/embodied divide that Nietzsche identified in Anaxagoras' thought coming through in discussions of the organic brain. In a proclamation that becomes profoundly

[122] This principle will become important for Nietzsche theory of the 'physics of forces', discussed at length in chapter 3.

[123] This is not a fully 'ascetic' translation: after all, passive and active willing are regarded as united: "intellect is only the finest and purest of all things" and "representation and drive are united in the one concept intellect: both are effects of the *life force*" (PP §11:100). To 'comprehend' is still to perceive and thus to will. But we nevertheless have here something of the problem that Nietzsche ascribed to theories of art that delineate the specifically aesthetic state from one characterised by embodied passion.

[124] See WR I §37. For extensive commentary, see Vasalou (esp. §1), Vandenabeele 2015 §1-4, Foster 1996.

significant when read in the context of Nietzsche's philosophy of the body, we find that Anaxagoras drew a distinction between the *brain* and the *mind*:

> It seems curiously eccentric [...] to separate the 'spirit', the brain-product, from its *causa* and to imagine its continued existence after such a separation. But that is what Anaxagoras did; he forgot the brain, its astonishingly elaborate refinement, the delicacy and convolutedness of its labyrinths, and instead decreed 'the spirit as such' (PTA §15:100-101)

Spirit has no reciprocal relationship with the physiological activities of the body, but rather precedes them, animating body and organs into life as its puppet[125]. This state of affairs is *necessary* if the spirit is to maintain its eternally 'self-same-identity', unchanged and unaffected by the physical world. In exerting its 'will' over matter, it must not be affected in turn. Therefore, the labyrinthine complexities of the brain are relegated to the world of 'mere mechanical motion' and can exert no influence upon the 'spirit as such'. This division, reflecting the one between free, active *nous* and lowly, determined, passive matter (homaeomens) runs to the heart of this presentation of the aesthetic worldview. In so far as we are 'spirit', we are 'free' and justified. In so far as we are animal, we are only the means of that justification; and, crucially, 'never the twain shall meet': for what moves is not what is moved.

Of course, the physical animal does nonetheless remain 'justified' in so far as it *is* such an art object; and as the greatest of artistic creations, the apex of *nous*' artistry, the human is the 'most worthy' thing in the material world. The *nous*, when it dwells within matter as living things, "always builds for itself out of the available material, tools suitable to the degree to which it appears" (§19:114) meaning that the more 'spirit' an animal possesses, the more 'beauty' it possesses. The human stands as "the very image of the Anaxagorean cosmos, the image of *nous* itself that has built for itself a most beautiful and worthy mansion". Worthiness is manifest most fully in the human hand: the cleverness and dexterousness of its functioning is directly manifest in the measure of its proportions, and the organ is metonymic of the whole: 'in form and moving how express and admirable'[126]. The relation of function and beauty is interesting to note here, as we see that the human is most beautiful because she is "the best tool" (PP 11:99). In

[125] Or, as Nietzsche puts it, nous' "home" (PTA §19).

[126] For Aristotle's discussion of the hand and its significance for Anaxagoras, see PP §13:99-100. See also Aristotle, *Of Parts and Animals*, Book 1

her, the *nous* has created something that concentrates its creative capacities to such a degree that it has become not just a work of art, but also a work *towards* art, "an instrument to further instruments"[127]. Not only does it spectate the world as the *nous* does: it creates as it does too, and this affords it some claim to dignity that is directly linked to its animal existence as physical matter.

Nietzsche aligns this value strongly with the Athenian hegemony that nurtured Praxiteles and Myron and gave birth to the Parthenon - a work that stood as proof to the Athenian *physis* that "coming-to-be is not a moral but an aesthetic phenomenon" (PTA 19:113-6). In particular, "Pericles represented the visible human realisation of the constructive, moving, distinguishing, ordering, reviewing, planning, artistically creative, self-determining power of the spirit" (PTA §19:114). However, critically it should be noted that 'Pericles the man' is nothing other than a 'visual' manifestation of this imperative. We see this come through in Nietzsche's imagined description of the Funeral Oration. The man himself "stood before his people [...] in the beautiful rigidity and motionlessness of a marble Olympian [...] wrapped in his mantle, its draperies unmoved, his continence without change" (§19:114). The calmness and serenity of this statue-like figure "his strong voice powerfully even" should remind us of Xenophanes's immobile, sovereign, commanding god, especially in the contrast between this presentation and that of the "thundering, flashing, destroying, redeeming" power of the words that speak out from this 'possessed' edifice of immobile matter. The difference between this power and the passive, noble 'figurine' it emanates from highlights what Staten claims about the aesthetic justification: that the human fulfils her "ontological vocation as vessel of a higher purpose" (110). In this, we see that the analogy to Hamlet's soliloquy we have teased out so far is more than just superficially suggestive. The human is 'in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel'- but we are to understand this in terms of what the apocrypha tells us of angels: that they are ornamental automata, existing only to praise the deity, carry out its will, and prettify its paradise.

As Nietzsche states in "The Hellenic Will", the human in her embodied, material 'aspect' is "*nothing* but a tool of the will... But there is something *in [her]* for which the

[127] PP §13: pp.100-1, N.28. See also above note.

dance of the stars and the states is performed as a showpiece"[128]. As physical 'actor' she manifests as nothing but a passive object of the *nous'* creative drive. Nevertheless, somewhere 'within' her dwells a creative and speculative divinity that recognises itself as the "aim and final purpose" of existence: a creature that can stand as an appropriate and worthy spectator to the cosmic play (Staten 110). The spectatorial stance, with its inherent difference between 'observer' and 'observed', implies a gap that cannot be closed. Many critics have been willing to simply accept this problematic as beyond the ken of Nietzsche's concerns. We may well be tempted to join them, and to read an embrace of our vocation - as passive means to a divine end - as the meaning of *Birth's* claim that we find out dignity as 'works of art': as well as the claim that when we create artistically, we do so as "the only subject which truly exists" (BT 5:38). By this understanding, all artists are just a 'medium' (in the spiritualist sense) through which the 'world-artist' enacts its creative 'vision'.

The problem with this comes when we try to link the notion back to the idea of an imminent, human justification for life. It establishes a difference between the 'purely human' state (the creature-as-work/tool) and a divine 'aesthetic' state, one in which the human is able to view itself 'from an aesthetic remove' and appreciate the tribulations of the suffering animal as an impassive spectacle of beauty. This is all very well when we are able to 'distance' ourselves from these tribulations. However, as Nietzsche's history of the encounter between Apollo and Dionysus shows, no aesthetic 'fantasy' of beauty and grace, no matter how elaborate and powerful, can withstand the howling gale of change that blows from the void of becoming. The 'shrill laugher' of the forest god would have shattered the "flattering mirror" of the Olympians had it not been able to resonate with that cry, turning it into a joyous, ecstatic laughter instead.

Anaxagoras' 'Praxietelean' vision of human grace and dignity can inspire love-of-life when suffering in not too great. However, once the agonies of animal life become too strong, we are inevitably dragged back from the beautiful dream by the sheer weight of torment that the world can heap upon the living animal. To speak of 'grace' and 'dignity' of the human condition is all very well when the sun is shining. But such a

[128] "schliesslich sind auch sie nichts als werkzeug des willes und haben das wesen des willens an sich zu erleiden: aber etwas ist in ihnen für das der reigentanz der gesterne und der staaten als ein schauspeil auf geführt wird" (K*GW 3:285-6*. My Translation, *emphasis added*).

vision, like that of the life of ambrosia atop the magic mountain, becomes pale and insubstantial to the beaten, shivering, starving creature that needs *amour fati* more than anyone. Pain breaks apart the illusion of human dignity, and with this melancholia, justification through beauty vanishes: Anaxagoras' 'brave o'er hanging firmament' degenerates rapidly from a 'majestical ceiling, fretted with golden fire' to a 'foul and pestilent congregation of vapours'. To most critics, as was said, this is not seen as a problem and is in fact taken as the grounding for what Salim Kemal calls "Nietzsche's politics of aesthetic genius" (257). Kemal joins others like Staten in claiming that it was Nietzsche's political purpose to re-introduce the 'republic of geniuses' through his cultural project, and that works like "The Hellenic Will" and "The Greek City State" stand as testimony to this. Yes, reality can break down the conviction of the strongest among us. That is why we require slavery (it is argued): to ensure that those most capable of producing and disseminating works of beauty to inspire 'love-of-life' are kept in the 'aesthetic' state of ease and joy.

This reading would seem to miss something critical about the idea of the human artist as 'world-genius': something which attests to the unique vision of the aesthetic Nietzsche saw in Ancient Greek art. Indeed, in his framing of the problem posed by lyric poetry to modern aesthetics, we might be tempted to see Nietzsche offering a direct *rebuttal* to those who interpret his theory of aesthetic justification in terms of a Schopenhauerian redemption through aesthetic withdrawal. Nietzsche castigates modern aesthetics for a myopic belief that art and the aesthetic sphere is concerned only with dispassionate speculation (BT §5:34). Under such a dictum, he claims that we are unable to recognise the lyric poetry of Archilochus of Paros *as art*, properly speaking. The mercenary poet's works, which passionately manifest "the screams of his hatred and scorn [...] the drunken outbursts of his desires", are held as wholly alien to the aesthetic landscape of contemporary Europe:

> we know the subjective artist only as a bad artist and demand above all in art the defeat of the subjective, redemption from the 'I' and the silencing of each individual will and craving, indeed we cannot conceive of the slightest possibility of truly artistic creation without objectivity, without pure disinterested contemplation (BT §5:34).

Schopenhauer's reading of song and poetry (WWR I §51) offers an advance over this theory, in that it can accommodate Archilochus' works under the category of fine art. However, it does so by drawing a division between the passionate creature and the

artist. The lyric emerges from a state of 'vacillation' between interest and disinterest: a flickering back and forth between a state of embodied passion (which cannot be aesthetic) and a state of disinterested contemplation of these passions (which is). The one state provides the 'content' for poetry in its flights of lust and anger, while the other passively observes these paroxysms and gives them form as art.

Just as with the vision of justification through aesthetic spectacle offered above, we see that the state of 'embodied willing' will forever attempt to drag us away from the 'healing vision' that makes of our feelings a distant and disinterested spectacle:

> In this [the aesthetic] state, pure knowledge, as it were, approaches us in order to redeem us from willing and its pressure: we follow, but only momentarily: willing, the memory of our personal goals, tears us away again and again from calm contemplation; but equally the next beautiful surroundings [...] entice us away again from willing (BT §5:37).

The upshot is a vision of the lyric as "an incompletely achieved art, an art which, as it were, reaches its goal only seldom and sporadically", emerging from an alternation between "the un-aesthetic and the aesthetic state"- between the desires that give content to the work, and the disinterested artistic state that imparts upon it form (BT §5:37). This can be seen to mirror the 'incompletely achieved redemption' that arises if we view the aesthetic justification in terms of this 'modern' aesthetic outlook. However, for Nietzsche this theory only arises because modern civilisation has developed a false and counterfeit understanding of the work of art based in a concretisation of the relation between subject and object, and between intellection and materiality. The truth of art, revealed in the lyric's evolution over the epic, is that "the whole opposition between subjective and objective [...] is completely irrelevant to aesthetics". In the properly aesthetic state, the demarcation between spectator, artist, and artwork collapses: or rather we are "simultaneously subject and object, simultaneously poet, actor, and spectator" (BT §5:38).

To view the world aesthetically is not to withdraw and view one's embodied physicality as a distant and unreal object of dispassionate speculation. It is rather the ability to understand that the 'spectator' to the world tragedy is herself a part of the play: that she is the artist, the audience, and the work all at once.

§2.3: 'Fire Everliving': Heraclitus' Aesthetic Cosmodicy.

Where for Anaxagoras the human lives a dual existence as artwork and art-appreciator - combined but never entirely mixed - the Dionysian aesthetic that Nietzsche sees in lyric and tragic art serves to bridge this divide. The 'aesthetic wall' that separates the spectator from the spectacle and marks the latter as an 'unreal' and 'safe' object of disinterested contemplation, is removed- or at the least profoundly transmuted. We see Nietzsche's vision of this unique 'totalisation'[129] of the artwork most clearly in his presentation of the tragic satyr-play, in which "the distinctions between characters, chorus, and audience are problematized or weakened" (Mulhall 110).

The chorus' role as a sort of 'frame' for the play, a "living wall which tragedy built around itself" might seem at first to undercut this interpretation. The claim is presented as a rebuttal to the 'ideal spectator' theory forwarded by Schlegel, a dismissal tied up with Nietzsche's rejection of the "people's chorus" –the chorus as the "immutable moral law" of the democratic mass (BT §5:pp.42-4). We might then take this, in conjunction with the ire expresses towards Euripides for his having "brought the *spectator* onto the stage" (§11:63) to indicate a 'barricading' of the difference between artwork and spectator. This is Sloterdijk's reading, one which emphasises the importance of the chorus as an ever-present "Apollonian catch mechanism", preventing the demonic powers of the god from overflowing the stage by re-enforcing its status as art, and thus as 'unreality' (Sloterdijk 1989 24-5). Upon closer examination however, we find that while the chorus does indeed 'frame' the tragic stage, it does so as a *conduit* rather than as a delineating boundary.

The framing of the stage, its re-enforcement as a construct and work of art may well serve to "[ensure] that no orgy will result from the orgiastic song" (Sloterdijk 1989 24), but it does not serve to render the spectacle of the Tragic 'artificial' and thus ''tame' or otherwise 'unreal'. Rather, as Stephen Mulhall notes, the position of the chorus "at the innermost of the concentric circles of terraces at which the spectators sat" meant that "their singing and dancing [...] was essentially liminal with respect to both drama and spectators, internally related to both and so not exclusively identifiable with either"

[129] What in *Zarathustra*, he was to call "homological art": See Pothen §3

(109). They were, in effect, audience members "capable of interacting with the characters in the drama in ways not available to mere spectators", and the audiences' identification with them (the chorus) served to overcome the spectatorial distance between observer and artwork. For Nietzsche, "a public of spectators as we know it was unknown to the Greeks"; sat in the stalls with the chorus, each individual was able to "imagine oneself as a member of the chorus" (BT §8:48). The fact that "there was at bottom no opposition between public and chorus" meant that the 'enchanted world' of the drama *spilled out* to fill the theatre of Dionysus, which was transformed into the mountain pass in which the Roaring One appeared to the Bacchae. Through identification with the Satyr chorus, the audience "imagine themselves as recreated geniuses of nature, as satyrs", and "*as satyr [she] in turn beholds the god"*. They are enfolded in the art-world of the stage and undergo the same transformation that that ensures we "do not see the awkwardly masked man" but instead "the arrival onstage of the god" (§8: pp.48-52).

The 'magic spell' of the stage seeps out into the stalls via its conduit, the chorus: half spectator, half artwork. In merging with this intermediary, the audience becomes part of the artwork- a satyr who is "the *sole* beholder of the stage's vision world" (BT §8:48). This vision, of a work of art that observes itself, that encompasses both spectacle and spectator, is the key to understanding Nietzsche's aesthetic worldview. When he asks of Schlegel what sort of art form is built upon the "spectator in himself", he points to the reciprocity of this process: to think "the spectator without a play is a nonsensical concept" (§7:44). Aesthetic distance collapses; the observer is revealed as part of the artwork. It is in this light we should understand the aesthetic justification. It is not the joy of some privileged third-party spectator that is taken to justify existence: rather it is revealed that the audience is a part of the work, and that this work acts as its own justifying spectator. Nietzsche's understanding of the aesthetic perspective is one in which the human, as both observer and observed simultaneously, "resembles the uncanny image of the fairy-tale, which can turn its eyes inside out and contemplate itself" (§5:38).

The vision of the aesthete god, standing in appreciative removal from its beautiful, tormented creation is radically undermined by this reformation of what the aesthetic actually means. Rüdiger Grimm highlights an 1886 notebook fragment in

which Nietzsche delineates between an "*aesthetisch"* and an "*artistisch"* perspective and criticises the latter as the inclination to "...sich vor das leben hinsetzen": passively to 'sit before life'[130]. This difference is significant, as it speaks to Nietzsche's growing distrust for artists in the period after 1876, while showing his willingness to preserve this active and immersive new definition of 'aesthetic'. The distinction is, however, instructive for us in other ways. It should remind us that we have only shown how Nietzsche envisaged the unity of spectator and artwork, while apparently leaving the distinction between that work and its creator unopposed. We are now forced to reckon with the other half of Nietzsche's aesthetic worldview: the claim that as "knowing beings" that we are not "one and identical with that essence, which as sole creator and spectator of that comedy of art prepares for itself an eternal pleasure" (§5:38).

It would seem that having claimed for ourselves the role of spectator and artwork, we are still left to conclude that there is a substantive metaphysical divide between our empirical existence as that 'artwork', and the 'great creative subject' that is its originator. However, it is here that the importance of Heraclitus' version of the world-artist and the "game that aeon plays with itself" comes to the fore. The fundamental Heraclitean dictum ἓν πάντα εἶναι – 'all things are one' – is manifest in the notion that the child is materially identical with the matter of its creations: "transforming itself into water and earth" (PTA §7:62). However, this identification is taken further. In what is perhaps the most important statement that Nietzsche attaches to the aesthetic justification, we are told that

> only aesthetic man can look thus at the world [i.e. as Heraclitus did], a man who has experience in artists and the birth of art objects how the struggle of the many can yet carry rules and laws inherent to itself, how the artist stands contemplatively above and at the same time actively within his work, how necessity and random play, oppositional harmony and tension, must pair to create a work of art (PTA §6:62).

The idea that the world-artist is both 'contemplatively above' and 'actively within' its creation points us back to the overcoming of the subject-object distinction in aesthetics. But here, we see Nietzsche gesturing towards what is perhaps the most important insight to emerge from his aesthetic thought: the disintegration of determinate identity.

[130] KGW VIII, 1. 264, cited Grimm 148

The 'game' of the aeon can only be fully understood in the contrast that Nietzsche draws between it and the *nous* of Anaxagoras. We have already addressed the difference between mind and matter in that philosophy, and the problems that arise from differentiating between a discriminating, self-identical intellect and the world is 'governs'. But Nietzsche further delineates the two thinkers with a subtle but profound difference that further helps to outline the meaning of the aesthetic in Nietzsche's thought:

> We find here a purely aesthetic view of the world [...] for the cosmic child behaves with no regard to purposes but rather only according to an immanent justice: it can act only wilfully and lawfully, but does not *will* these ways. That constitutes the abyss between Heraclitus and Anaxagoras (PP §10:70).

Nietzsche's insistence that the aeon 'does not will' - that it acts without cognisance and without intention - will prove critically important for Nietzsche's formulation of the aesthetic. However, in the context of the present discussion, we see what Nietzsche frames the aeon as a radical breakdown of the idea of a self-same creating 'god'. Heraclitus' world-order is conceived of as nothing more than "the continuous working out of a unified, lawful, reasonable justice"- a justice *wholly immanent* to the process itself (PTA §7:64). It does not derive from any sort of 'divine intelligence' as with the "superficial" Stoics (PP §10:70 n.72). 'Justice' is instead a game that plays *itself* and the 'player' of that game- the aeon – is conceived of as nothing more than the game playing itself out. The whole universe as "joy and joylessness, wisdom and un-wisdom, great and small [..] all but the same, circling around, up and down, and interchanging in the game of eternity [...] in discord, in concord" – this is the Dionysian realisation offered by Lucian's 'Heraclitean'[131].

Eternally becoming, eternally just, eternally *justified* by its own nature; as the necessary 'coming to be' of justice and nothing else; "only the Greeks were in the circumstances to discover such sublime thoughts as *cosmodicy*" (PTA §7:64). This term, borrowed from Erwin Rohde, was selected by Nietzsche to stand in for 'theodicy'. Replacing 'theos' with 'cosmos', the universe itself is taken to be both the sole source, and the sole justification of Life[132].

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[131] Lucian *Philosophies for Sale* (XIV), cited PP §10:65.
[132] For commentary, see Gillham pp.146-48.

'Before his fire-gaze, not a drop of injustice remains'

> No one else has watched so attentively the everlasting wavebeat and rhythm of things. And what did I see? [..] the whole world the spectacle of sovereign justice and of the demonically ever-present natural forces that serve it. Not the punishment of what has come-to-be did I see, but the justification of all that which is coming-into-being [...] where injustice rules there is caprice, disorder, lawfulness, contradiction. But where law and Zeus' daughter *Dike* rule alone, as they do in this world, how could there be the sphere of guilt, of penance, of judgement? How could this world be the execution-arena of all that is condemned? (PTA §5:51).

References to the 'justice' of the world are replete in Heraclitus' thought, which "generalises the notion of justice to apply to every manifestation of cosmic order, including the rule of the jungle" (Kahn 2001 15). Kahn, like Nietzsche, traces this as Heraclitus' inheritance from his Milesian predecessors and sees in this inheritance the residual of an ethic of vengeance: "for the killer will be killed in his turn [...] conflict is justice" (Kahn 2001 18). But should we take this inheritance as the defining imperative of Heraclitus' universe? His world is in line with generic Ionian cosmology in so far as it interprets "physical change as a conflict of elemental powers within a periodic order of reciprocity and symmetry recognised as just", but it makes a number of critical advancements over the Milesian school in its understanding of what this reciprocity actually means. To speak in 'sibylline tongue' as Heraclitus might, the difference is that between a pendulum and a coin.

Kahn notes that the Milesian concept of cosmic justice derives from a principle of symmetry elaborated from the 'Theogony' of *arche:* 'what came first of all'"(2001 pp.18-19). The 'genesis' of existence in an initial act of creation is taken to open a logical 'bracket' that must end in the 'Omega': the return of everything to nothingness. The pendulum's arc begins, and the laws of its motion mean that it will return to that beginning. But to Heraclitus, the movement between one state and another it not this sort of 'vacillation', the inevitable progression from 'birth' to 'death', and from 'crime' to 'retribution'. Rather "all things are requital (*anamoibe*) [...] as gold for goods and goods for gold" (DK.21.B.90). Kahn avers that the introduction of this language of 'equality of exchange' fundamentally shifts the conception of justice we find here: Instead of

'punishment' inevitably following on from 'crime', we have an economy in which "nothing is taken without repayment" (114).

Heraclitus' explains his concept of reciprocity in the proclamation that "the name of the bow is life; its work is death" (DK.21.B.48). This pun on the difference between *βιός* (bow) and *βίος* (life)[133] plays on the fact that the bow gives life (in the shape of food) by enacting death (hunting). Critically though, we should understand this exchange as unified in a single moment that highlights the inseparability of life and death. As Kahn puts it, "the life-signifying name of the instrument of death" serves to dispel "the error of taking the opposition of life and death as irreducible" (2001 201). This idea, that life and death are two separate and opposing things, arises only when we "do not comprehend how a thing agrees at variance with itself; it is an atonement turning back on itself, like that of the bow and the lyre" (DK.21.B.51). This is Heraclitus' conception of justice. Against his Milesian predecessors, 'coming into being' does not introduce a 'debt' into the ledger of existence for which 'passing away' is the repayment. Rather both are the same thing viewed from different perspectives. The 'impoverishment' of one party is always and necessarily the enrichment of another, for nothing is 'destroyed' or 'lost' in any such exchange- merely moved or transformed: "living the other's dead, dead in the other's life" (DK.21.B.16), "The same… living and dead […] for these transposed are those, and those transposed again are these" (DK.21.B.67).

It is by this light that we should view both Nietzsche's assertion as to the inseparability of pleasure and pain, and his claim that the 'game' of the Aeon constitutes "coming to be and passing away, ordering and destroying […] in forever equal innocence" (PTA 7:62). In the phenomenon of 'birth/creation' aeon "builds towers of sand like a child at the seashore", while in that of 'death/destruction' it "tramples them down again". However, both are just part of the same game- indeed the same movement. Each act of destruction *is* an act of creation, each creation a destruction of what came before. Heraclitus denies that the universe could have a beginning or an end, or that the 'energy' that is Life can ever exhaust itself - "The kosmos, one and the same for all, no god nor man has made, but is and was and ever will be: fire everliving- kindled in

[133] A pun furthered by the fact that written archaic Greek had no means of differentiating ó from o (See Kahn 2001 pp.65, 201)

measure and in measure going out" (DK.21.B.31A). All that appears as death, decay, loss, negation, is simply the payment of measure (*metas*) into more measure- into something else. Nothing is lost, nothing is negated, and only the formations or arrangements of things are 'destroyed'- but only in so far as they become a different arrangement.

The genius of this ideal for Nietzsche was that the 'going out' of the fire is shown to be one with its kindling: that the fire's 'dying back' is not *a negation* or *annihilation* of fire. Rather "everything which coexists in space and time has but a relative existence": it only "exists through and for another like it, which is to say through and for an equally relative one" (PTA §5:52)[134]. To stay with the fire analogy, this means that as a pyre grows cold and dark, it is not 'ceasing to be'. The heat and light that characterised the flame have simply shifted to become cold darkness. This is not to be considered a negation, for darkness is not a negation of light, just as cold is not a negation of warmth. They are both simply differing relative stations on the same continuity. Heraclitus' world is thus one in which fixed, bounded, and essential properties do not exist. The implications of this for the concept of justice are profound, and can best be understood in terms of the 'cosmic harmony' that Nietzsche sees arising from this paradigm.

Dostoyevsky nicely encapsulates the pitfalls of theodicies of harmony- briefly touched upon in §1.2 – in a famous chapter of *The Brothers Karamazov*: "if the sufferings of children go to swell the sum [...] necessary to pay for Truth, then I protest that truth is not worth the price" (Dostoyevsky 474). Leibnitz's claim that evil is not *just* there to be overcome, but is to be valued in itself falls flat before Dostoyevsky's nihilism of pathos. Against the idea that "shadows enhance colours; and even dissonance in the right place gives harmony" (Leibnitz 130), we are treated to the description of a child, torn to pieces by dogs for the amusement of sadistic bandits and asked what consolation or justification can be found in the idea that "my sufferings may manure the soil of [...] harmony for somebody else" (Dostoyevsky 472). All these problems can be seen to arise, as previously stated, from the fact that dissonance exists only to for the sake of harmony. Dissonance ('evil') is 'desired' only for its relation to another, and is at best *tolerated* for

[134] This understanding is claimed by Nietzsche to have arisen from Heraclitus' intuitive understanding of space and time: "the present is but the dimensionless and duration-less boarder between [past and future]", while the past and future -"as perishable as any dream"- exist only in relation to this present (PTA §5:53). None of these have discrete existence in and of themselves, but they are equally not 'figments of our feeble human minds', as Parmenides believed (52).

its contribution to the emergence of its opposite: for its eventual negation. It is never willed in itself. However, the Heraclitean notion of Harmony that comes through in Nietzsche's aesthetics of music paint a very different picture of the role of dissonance in the 'world-symphony'.

Daniel Came (2016) forcibly argues against reading Nietzsche's discussions of harmony with any idea that it represents an 'ends-orientated' model of justification: dissonance praised as a means towards resolution. Citing the philosopher's explicit emphasis upon the "pleasurable sensation of dissonance [...] which *can* receive no resolution", he astutely points to the 'Tristan Chord', which he cites as establishing a 14-minute-long passage of unresolved dissonance in the prelude of *Tristan and Isolde* (pp.32-4). He thereby draws analogy between Nietzsche's conception of the role of dissonance in the world, and Wagner's principle of endless melody, holding that "Nietzsche conceived of the dissonance of tragedy in this Wagnerian model" (33).

This understanding gestures in the right direction, and evokes parallels between the tripping, endlessly unresolved dissonance of the chord and the tripping, protean descriptions of the Dionysian procession alluded to in chapter one. The Dionysian-Heraclitean world, 'that fearful, swirling, compulsive process of annihilation', is mirrored in the chord's duelling dissonances: resolutions may come, but always there is a suspension still open. Again and again, Wagner "resolves one of these dissonances but not the other, thus providing resolution-but-not-resolution" (Magee 208). Individual moments of dominance and dissonance arise and are resolved, but there is no true resolution or negation, no final harmonic sublation. For all these individual dissonances exist as the result of the one initial dissonance that is its ground. The dynamic tension that is the very existence of the chord is predicated on the continual impossibility of finally negating this foundational dissonance:

> if the sea stir up its water of itself, if it beget the ground of its commotion from the depths of its own element: then is this agitation an endless one and never pacified; forever returning on itself unstilled, and ever roused afresh by its eternal longing (Wagner 1993 §4:113)

Unfortunately, Came's presentation is neither as accurate nor as penetrating as it could be. It is not just nit-picking that beholds us to note that the suspended dissonance began in the opening of the opera does not in fact find *complete* resolution until Act III Scene 3 and the *'leibes-tod'*. That this resolution coincides with Isolde's

dying words as she 'drowns in the universal stream of the world-breath' and surrenders herself to dissolution[135] is telling of an important detail in Wagner's understanding of dissonance: that it is an 'evil' that love must overcome. The Tristan chord is an expression of frustrated longing, which 'seeks' chromatically upwards in its first 14 bars. This 'sublime seeking' towards the heavens for release speaks to the chord's original name; The *Nirwana chord.* It is an eternally frustrated dream of paradisiacal release:

> I often gaze around, yearning for a glimpse of the land of Nirvana. But Nirvana quickly turns into 'Tristan'; you know the Buddhist theory of the origin of the world. A breath clouds the expanse of heaven: [Wagner here reproduces the chromatic lead-out from the chord's enharmonic G#] it swells and grows denser, and finally the whole world stands before me again in its impenetrable solidarity.
>
> (Wagner 1987, letter to M. Wesendonk, March 1860).

In the opera, love (as 'love-death') serves as a redemptive 'presence from beyond' that mirrors the god of traditional theodicy. It is a filler for the chord's 'abyssal remainder', a justifying 'Truth' that allows the world a redemptive 'completion-in-final-harmony' that *it itself* can never find:

> [if this] measure-giving object step towards [the world] from the sure and sharply outlined world of manifestment….the flame at last, when its wild glow has smouldered down, will shine with mild serenity of light…[leaving] Man, rejoicing in the sweet harmony of his whole being (Wagner 1993 §4:113)

Dissonance only stands until 'Truth' arrives to free it of its burden.

Sentenced to carry the consequences of evil forever and anew?'

The discussion of the unending suspension of resolution in Heraclitus and Schopenhauer to be found in *Tragic Age* shows his conception of it to be at radical odds to Wagner's. After drawing a parallel between the two thinker's models of material nature as an endless succession of "mechanical, physical, chemical and organic phenomena" that exist to "greedily push to the fore, snatching matter from one another" (WWR I §27, cited PTA §5:56), Nietzsche then goes on to expressly proclaim what it has been the concern of this study thus far to demonstrate. He states that while the two

[135] "in the heaving swell, in the resounding echoes, in the universal stream of the world-breath- to drown, to founder – unconscious- utmost rapture" Wagner, *Tristan and Isolde* III 3

thinkers began from an identical conception of reality, Schopenhauer's evaluation of this world

> is quite different from that which Heraclitus offers, because strife for Schopenhauer is a self-dissociation of the Will [...] which is seen as a self-consuming, menacing and gloomy drive, a thoroughly frightful and by no means blessed phenomenon (PTA §5:56).

The restlessness of Schopenhauer's Will derives from a 'defect' or 'rupture' in its Being that it can never overcome: a 'lack' that can never be filled. Because it is *broken*, the Will can never find peace. Heraclitus however, did not see harmony as 'peaceful resolution', and this alternative understanding provides the basis for a very different theory of music for Nietzsche.

An instructive way to look at this is through the profoundly significant discussion of *ὕβρις (hybris)* that Nietzsche treats us to. The notion that "satiety gives way to hybris" is taken (by Jacob Bernays and others) to mean that fire's "outpouring into the forms of plurality" represents its 'fall' into 'otherness' (PTA §6:61). Overcome by some internal defect, pure fire 'degenerates' into impure forms[136]. Matter's return to its 'pure' and 'true' state as fire is thus a "purification, or catharsis" of this corruption (PP §13:67-9). We might relate this concept to Andrew Bowie's presentation of the becoming-into-its-being of Being in Hegel's *logic*. Utilising musical metaphors to explain the dialectic, we are told that dissonance for Hegel constitutes the 'fall' of identity to an internal tension that must be resolved. In the act of resolving - the 'catharsis' that returns the dominant to its tonic (or idea to its self-identity) - we arrive at the goal: "Only this movement, as the return of identity to itself, is the Truth"[137]. The 'musical theodicy' is expressed in the 'becoming itself' of the idea, and dissonance is a means to that goal- to 'achieved consonance'. This is because the idea-tone's 'identity', its 'truth', is regarded as lying *in consonance*: dissonance is merely the *means* to reach this.

This presentation speaks to an important connection between harmony and morality. Stripped back to its purest form, morality is understood by Nietzsche as the gesturing towards an end point, towards the final consummation of the movements of existence. It is the promise of *identity* - the hope that one-day, the self-dislocation of

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[136] By this understanding, the 'wisdom' of fire is "weakened by fluids", and that references to 'moisture' as "the watery element" most opposed to fire is symbolic of "psychic dissolution or partial 'death'" (Kahn 2001 244. Cf. CVI)

[137] Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Cited Bowie 297.

existence that gives rise to pain and hardship will be effaced, and all will become as it 'should be'. Morality's gesture towards 'Being', towards an eternal, unchangeable 'in-itself' speaks to this idea, and the justification of suffering based on its utility towards this goal makes of life the grudgingly paid cost of its own undoing. Life and 'history' becomes nothing but Truth's "eternal deferral of itself" (Nabais 67). Nietzsche holds that if we view Heraclitus in this light – if we allow moral questions of 'ought' and of the 'rightful state of the universe' to enter into this philosophy – his "countenance [...] is transformed before our eyes. The proud light in his eyes is extinguished, wrinkles of painful renunciation, of impotence become apparent [...] is not the entire world process now a punishment for hybris?" (PTA §6:61). For Nietzsche/Heraclitus however, dissonance is not the 'untruth' of en-harmony that must undergo *aufheben*. Rather the whole idea that one side of the construction/destruction dichotomy is preferable to the other is "completely un-Heraclitan [...] a consequence that he himself did not draw" (69).

Much as in the discussion of pain and pleasure in the first chapter, we find that "Becoming and Passing away constitute the primary property of the [aeon]" (PP §13:63). Just as pain and pleasure are just 'sensation' viewed from different perspectives of will, creation and destruction are just differing manifestations of 'change'- the aeon's only property. We should not take this to mean that the two are the same thing, that the "con-tuitive" perspective (which sees the inter-relatedness of things) collapses their difference into a 'pantheistic peace'[138]. The movements of Heraclitean 'harmony', the endless interplay of united opposites, are to be understood rather as a continuously enacted 'reconciliation' of these opposites. This is not a reconciliation in the usual sense of something that is 'achieved' at the end of a process. It is more the continuous enactment of the fact that they are (inalienably) reconciled, in their continued existence as pure act. Kahn identifies this lesson in the allegory of the bow and the lyre. The translation of this fragment offered above uses the suggestive word 'atonement', but the archaic Greek *ἁρμονίη*, (harmonie) is noted to more properly refer to the harmonious

[138] In this regard, Nabais is right to claim that "Nietzsche's philosophy is inimical to all forms of monism or pantheism" (65). However, as we shall see in the following chapter, the conflation of monism with pantheism here is not warranted.

agreement of antagonisms – "Reconciliation- the child of Aries and Aphrodite" (Kahn 2001 196).

Kahn's learned etymology of *ἁρμονίη* locates its origin in the word used by shipwrights for the art of 'joinery'. While this may imply the act of fixing together two pieces of wood to make something that cancels their difference (a boat), Kahn is equally clear that "from the beginning, the word is also used figuratively, for agreements or compacts between hostile men" (2001 195). This is not 'peace', not the effacement of *νέμειν* ('Nemesis', whose other name is 'she who cannot be escaped' (*Ἀδρήστεια*[139])). Rather, Harmony is the sister of "Strife" and "Conflict" and a "principle of proportion and agreement which creates a harmonious unity out of potentially hostile powers". The word 'potentially' here does not mean that the hostility is lessened or overcome. Rather it is the dynamic potentiality of the bow or the lyre, which produce their effects only because the tension of their opposing ends are not effaced but are rather harmoniously measured against each other[140]. The 'harmony' of the lyre is not one in which the tensions inherent in its construction have been 'cancelled out' by their unification into one thing. Instead it is an agreement (*ὁμολογέει* 'homologee') born of "a thing at variance with itself" (*διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῶι)* (Kahn 2001 197).

Raymond Williams instructively analyses this notion in contrast to the Pythagorean understanding of harmony and reconciliation. For Pythagoras "*after* reconciliation the opposites are no longer hostile or in tension. Reconciliation and the resulting union suppresses their differences" (338). Heraclitus, on the other hand, "believes that a vital unity or harmony does not destroy or suppress the opposites, but rather maintains them in tension". Indeed, such a system cannot permit of suppression, an "equilibrium of opposites in peace": "if this equilibrium/ tension were eliminated, the whole (the cosmos) would disintegrate" (339). Just as the bow and the lyre exist only as

[139] Adrastea, the other daughter of Ares and Aphrodite. Sometimes presented as the handmaiden of Nemesis, sometimes her non-chthonic counterpart (see Graves pp.27-8, 77). And sometimes, as the blind, scales bearing goddess of equilibrium, also as the Olympian manifestation of *Δίκη*

[140] The dynamism created in Praxiteles' sculptures by the tension between rest and motion captures this effect of antagonistic 'potentia' perfectly. Sloterdijk's description of Dionysus and Apollo as "frozen in a vision of struggling movement" like "a sculpture carved in stone of two superhuman wrestlers whose potential for violence is immediately apparent […] without their ever having to move" (1989 25) also encapsulates this. It shows that the 'reconciliation' is still imbued with violence and ceaseless motion, without devolving to a flickering vacillation.

objectivations of their dynamic internal contradiction (everything that is 'is and is-not'), the kosmos only exists as *Wirklicheit:*

> "only by way of its acts does reality fill space and time [...] reality consists of nothing more than this [...] its whole being and nature exists only in the orderly changes which one of its parts produces in another" (PTA §5: pp.53-4)[141]

To wish that the lyre were not under continual tension is senseless. To wish that the world would come to rest in a peaceful self-reconciliation is equally absurd: for the world is nothing but this tension. Without a stable, self-same 'identity' that it could ever finally settle into, it is nonsensical to speak of the world not being what it should be, as the metaphysician and the moralist do. Moreover, it is even more non-sensual to speak of it finding its 'True" state- its only truth, its only existence, is its continual, perfectly reconciled movements.

Conclusion: Nature and the Myth of Identity.

> [if] there is no such dualism between a world of the unlimited [Being as it ought to Be] and one of qualities [then] all arising and passing away [are] tools of justice [...] The φθορά is in no way a punishment. Thus Heraclitus presents a *cosmodicy* against his great predecessor, the teacher of injustice in the world (PP §13:63)

The difference between a Hellenism and a Pessimism is announced in the forgoing distinction. The need for "Truth" - for the final resolution of the world into what 'ought to be', and existence's perpetual frustration of this *saudade* - makes of life a torment. However, in exorcising 'ought' from our vocabulary, we reaslise that there is nothing to condemn life for, except the persistence of that feeling within us. By understanding this, we realise what is meant by the answer that Heraclitus is presented as offering "if we press upon [him] the question of why fire is not always fire": that "it is a game. Don't take it so pathetically and –above all- don't make a morality of it!" (PTA §7:64). What may initially seem like a callous dismissal is contextualised when we recall that

[141] Citing WWR I §4. See also WWR I §27

"*pathetisch*" has other meanings besides the direct translation of 'pathetic' (in all its condescending implications). If we understand the word to mean something like 'histrionic' or 'overwrought', then the warning 'do not make a morality of it' comes into sharper focus. In the Preface to *Human All Too Human II*, Nietzsche speaks of being overcome by "the sorrow of a relentless suspicion" – "I, after this disillusionment, was condemned to mistrust more deeply, despise more deeply" (6). Just as with the presentation of Anaximander, Nietzsche states that he found himself taking his personal experience of life and projecting the "anger, *against myself,* and *for* everything that caused *me* pain and was difficult" (7) into the heart of existence[142]. The tendency to take one's personal feelings as a condemnation against life itself returns in Zarathustra's theory of redemption, and the anguished cry of the life-denier: "Cloud upon cloud rolls in over the spirit, until at last, madness preaches: 'Everything perishes, therefore everything *deserves* to perish" (Z II §20:116).

The answer to this riddle is the realisation that there is no 'morality' dictating the world's actions: that nothing 'stands behind' the world and judges if a thing 'deserves' to be happy or to suffer. It is only against the backdrop of our idealisation of the world that we judge its actuality to be lacking and defective. That ideal, for Nietzsche, is only born of our pain and our distrust:

> Heraclitus only describes the world as it is [...] Gloomy, melancholy, tearful, sinister, bilious, pessimistic, generally hateful; only those can find him thus who have good cause to be dissatisfied with his natural history of mankind (PTA 7:64).

Nietzsche's 'cosmodicy' is thus to forget these 'ought's' and the belief that Life must be 'fair', that it must be driven along by 'reasons' and that suffering or fortune must derive from punishment or reward- from 'motivations'. In order to do this, we must resist the urge to see Life as serving anything other than its own ends. We must view it 'aesthetically'. This conjunction has two interwoven meanings. Firstly, it speaks to the origin of the term as a 'science of sensuous experience'[143]. We should remain 'superficial':

> "Oh those Greeks! They knew how to *live*: for that purpose, it is necessary to keep bravely to the surface, the fold and the skin; to worship appearance, to believe in forms, tones, and words [...] Those Greeks were superficial- *from profundity! [...]* and are we not [we free

[142] This tendency will be examined further in §4.2
[143] see §1.3, p.43

> spirits] precisely in this respect- Greeks? Worshipers of forms, of tones, and of words? And precisely on that account- artists?" (GS xi-ii).

The injunction to 'not be so pathetic' is an encouragement to the "ordinary, cheerful, confiding, superficial natures against the rule of the graver, profounder, more contemplative" (GS §350). If we stick only to this sensate, surface layer, innocence returns to the world as we banish 'reward and punishment [from] the nature of things'[144].

Left as it is however, this interpretation of the aesthetic as simply 'surface' and 'sense' is incomplete. We have succeeded in removing the god of 'reasons' that stands behind the world, but nothing has replaced it. What is left now to stop the world from falling back into the status of blind, indifferent chance, as "a fragment, a riddle, a cruel coincidence" (Z II §20:117)? In removing God and the transcendent moral order, have we not given ourselves up to the 'pessimism of contingency'? Moreover, where does Knowledge come into a world without any sort of knowable order? The answer to this can be found in seeing that Nietzsche's aesthetic worldview extends beyond the call to remain superficial and to an understanding of the world itself as an art-work.

[144] paraphrase of GS §294

~~C~~Chapter 3: The Aesthetic 'Self-ness' and its Worlds

Critics who read a firm line of demarcation between the early aesthetic writings and the Free Spirit works, typically point to the apparent shift in the status of knowledge between the *Unfashionable Observations* and *Human, All Too Human*. Julian Young's study is typical of this approach and of the claim that "[Human] adopts and inhabits [...] the stance of 'theoretical', 'Socratic', or 'Scientific' man" (Young 59). This critical vain reads the work as "an affirmation of scientific realism" grounded in the belief that "the world *is* the way a completed natural science claims it to be" (Young 60), and the book's praise for the scientific method would seem to support such a claim. Presenting as its goal the pursuit of a "genuine science, *as the imitation of nature in concepts*" (HAH I §38:47) It is hard not to see *Human* as anything but a radical about-face when laid against Nietzsche's previous works. This is especially true of the unpublished essay "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense"- a work which radically denies the validity of concept-based knowledge. Young entirely omits "On Truth" from his study – a significant oversight in a work that seeks to understand Nietzsche's reading of art – and instead reads *Human* as a continuation of the metaphysical schema he diagnosed in

Birth. The difference now is that this metaphysical world is rendered intelligible by science. In contrast to the 'mystical' metaphysics of *Birth*, *Human* is claimed to forward a metaphysic in which "the 'real' world as it is in itself […] is the world described by science", one that "can be known about, quite directly, by humans" (Ridley 2007 37).

That Young sees both *Human* and *Birth* as concerned to promote the same metaphysics, in different forms, is telling of the problem that arises in reading the former – in its enthusiasm for science - as a work of Socratic optimism. This problem shows through in the confusing definition that Young offers of *Human*'s worldview, in which he concedes that Nietzsche denies the existence of "things-in-themselves" but nonetheless maintains that science can allow us to know and grasp an objective metaphysical reality (Young 60)[145]. Against the argument forwarded in the previous chapters - that there exists only the physical world of flux with nothing 'metaphysical' preceding or conditioning it - it is argued that the goal of Nietzsche's scientific turn was an attempt to fulfil the dream of the Socratic man. Nietzsche's new science seeks to discover the laws that govern reality, thereby rendering it objectively *knowable* (Young 60), *predictable* (pp.62-4), and *correctable* (pp.64-6). By this 'optimistic' hope, *Human* apparently promises safety and freedom through knowledge, and the deliverance of humanity from the "arbitrariness" of the "Dionysian god-child" (62). The movement away from "On Truth" and its scepticism is completed and the conceptual "columbarium's" - that the essays called "the gravesites of perceptions" (TL 151) - are transformed into the hope of humanity.

The problem with this estimation is that (as Young himself concedes) *Human* maintains precisely the Heraclitean worldview that had underwritten both *Birth* and "On Truth". This world is, as has been argued, *radically alien* to the demands of Socratic reason[146] which is built on "the assumption that the object of enquiry is self-identical and unchanging with time, that correctly predicated properties are valid at all times, and that there is a determinable essence to such objects" (Rampley 25). In an attempt to square this circle, Young claims that Heraclitus's thought simply denies the existence

[145] Ridley's 2007 study offers compelling textual arguments that undermine this idea of a 'metaphysic of science' and show the work to be grounded in the same sceptical stance found in "On Truth"- a refusal to say anything at all about the nature of reality 'in itself' (Ridley 2007 34-41 See also HAH 1 §10, 16-18, and TL 145).

[146] This amenity is shown by the thinker's denunciation of the 'Men of flux' in *Theatetus* and the discussion of rhetoric and sophistry in the *Gorgias*.

of discrete objects, while still maintaining that flux is governed and determined by material laws. Thus, it is possible that "the world can be *both* flux, in the sense of there being no material objects that persist through time and change, and be predictable" (63). He points to Nietzsche's reading of Ruđer Boscovich as grounding this "hypothetical"[147] claim, offering §107 of *Human* as exemplar. This aphorism subjects the apparently chaotic "bending's, twisting's, and breakings" of a waterfall in flow to a version of Laplace's, (or rather 'Boscovich's) Demon'[148]. "If at some moment the wheel of the world were to stand still, and an omniscient, calculating understanding were to make use of this pause" it might "describe every track on which that wheel had yet to roll" (§107:82). This section is held up as the first instance of a "new knowledge" of "necessity" which science is able to oppose to the arbitrary and capricious metaphysic of the world-artist.

This interpretation is, however, unsatisfactory. As was discussed extensively in §2.2, Nietzsche took great pains to emphasise that there is nothing capricious or arbitrary about the *aeon*: "Caprice" and "disorder" are taken to be the marks of a world "where injustice rules" (PTA §5:51). Rather, Heraclitus' philosophy taught "*lawfulness in becoming* and *play in necessity*" (§8:68), a combination that *Tragic Age* presents as united "only [...] in artists and the birth of art objects" (§7:63). This melding not only shows that Nietzsche's interest in "necessity" predates his 'Socratic turn', but also serves to highlight an important element of Nietzsche's concept of necessity that is lost in Young's reading. This misconception leads him to posit *another* stark about-face in Nietzsche's work, dividing the Free Spirit project into two distinct phases[149]: a disjunction between the view of "necessity" offered in *Human* and that forwarded in the *Gay Science* aphorism entitled "*Let us beware"*:

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[147] Ridley (2007) correctly notes that Young offers no textual evidence for this assertion (37-8). Nevertheless, a link to Boscovich and evidence of his influence can be asserted. Studies by Greg Whitlock, (1996, 1999), Peter Poellner (1999) and Keith Ansell-Pearson (2000) have all offered significant elaborations upon Karl Schlechta's 1962 work, which traced Boscovich's influence in notes at least as early as 1873.

[148] As Boris Koznak notes, Boscovich presented Laplace's famous determinist thought experiment 50 years prior to the Frenchman's 1814 essay "A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities". Boscovich's theory was not only chronologically pre-eminent but was also more substantively grounded in mathematics than Laplace's metaphysical/rationalist presentation. See "Who Let the Demon Out; Laplace and Boscovich on Determinism"

[149] Or perhaps just a shattered and fragmented abortion, given that he sees the perspective of *Human* I abandoned in Volume II (Young pp. 73-89) before returning (in a sense that is not really developed to all) in *Dawn* (pp. 88-91) and yo-yoing away again for *Gay Science* (pp. 92-100). This highly fragmented timeline would seem to indicate that something about the lens through which Young is viewing Nietzsche's development is not appropriate for that task.

> "The total character of the world, by contrast, is for all eternity chaos, not in the sense of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, organization, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever else our aesthetic anthropomorphisms [*Menschlichkeiten*] are called. [...] nor does it observe any laws. Let us beware of saying that there are laws in nature. There are only necessities: there is no one who commands, no one who obeys, no one who transgresses. Once you know that there are no purposes, you also know that there is no accident; for only against a world of purposes does the word 'accident' have a meaning" (GS§109 pp.109-10)

Young interprets this as Nietzsche's return to a mistrust of science and the optimistic hope for a metaphysically grounded conception of knowledge. But is this the case? Or has Young simply misunderstood the view of science forwarded in *Human*?

GS§109 offers what Nietzsche, at the concluding end of his Free Spirit arc, regarded as the criteria for a wholly 'god-less', naturalist world. Its denunciation of order and of law in the world is undertaken in the name of approaching a "completely de-deified nature", a time when "all these shadows of god will no longer darken us" and we can "begin to naturalize humanity with a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature". The question thus becomes whether the world-artist thesis is compatible with this presentation, or if this 'de-deified nature' is entirely different from the world forwarded in the early aesthetic writings. The explicit rejection of 'aesthetic anthropomorphism/humanisms' we find here would seem to indicate that it is not compatible. The rejection of 'law' and of a 'commanding' creator also seem to argue against such a continuity, while the assertion that the world is nothing but chaos without order would seem to point to a glaring internal inconsistency in the world-artist thesis itself: if there is nothing but 'Dionysian chaos', how is it meaningful to speak of a world-artist/artwork? This question can be seen to interweave with the problem we were left with at the end of the previous chapter: if the world has no transcendent order, what saves it from falling into randomness as dispersion?

Through the course of this chapter, we shall examine the answer that Nietzsche gave to this question in the form of his nuanced conception of "necessity". In doing so, it will become clear that the formulations he attached to the aeon – as embodying both "necessity" and "random play" – remain critical for understanding this, and that while scientific 'discipline' became significant in the Free Spirit works, Nietzsche's view of the world continued to rest on ideas developed in his aesthetic writings.

§3.1: Forms of Freedom and Necessity

In Nuno Nabais' estimation, "Nietzsche's philosophy represents the last *metaphysics of necessity* of the modern period" (65). Contrary to Young, Nabais emphasizes this as the core of the 'aesthetic justification' thesis, which is claimed to rest upon the notion that "only in the absolute rejection of contingency will human existence be revealed [...] without reference to transcendent values". Only a metaphysical guarantee that the world *cannot permit* of contingency would render the world's events justified by the sheer 'facticity' of their existence[150]. But Nabais' choice to label this as a 'metaphysic' points to a problem that, while it does not seem to bother Nabais, did appear to bother Nietzsche. The discussion of natural law in Anaxagoras lays this problem out:

> "if the *nous* had to fulfil by means of its motion a purpose necessary to its nature, then its starting movement is no longer a matter of free choice. In so far as nous is eternal, it would have to be determined by its purpose eternally [...] Anaxagoras always had to emphasise most strongly and with greatest conviction that spirit has free, arbitrary choice" (PTA §19:116)

This is to say that if the world is governed by strict and immutable laws of the sort posited by natural science, then we have arguably only 'displaced' legislation by locating 'eternal law' in the world-artist's metaphysical 'nature'. This is what was at the core of Nietzsche's rejection of Spinoza and his 'logical pantheism': if the world adheres to an inherent, immutable course of Reason, then that Reason effectively becomes the 'true identity' or 'essence' of reality (WP §55). And the world of change becomes nothing but the 'playing out' of that essence; a 'coming-into-being' of Truth/identity.

The inability to permit of any form of contingency means that everything in the universe exhibits a form of predestination. If the world is the 'coming to be' of a perfect order, then life is nothing but the 'unfinished opus' of the great artist, whose *goal* is the final completion of that work:

> When someday, at an infinitely remote time, it is accomplished, when all the likes are gathered together, and the primal essences lie side by side, undivided and in beautiful order, when each tiny particle has found its companions and its home, when the great peace enters the world after the great divisions and splits of the substances and no more split or divided material is left-then *nous* shall return to its self-movement, no longer roaming the world, itself divided, at times into greater, at times into smaller masses, as

[150] Nabais argues this by drawing a strong correlation between Nietzsche and Spinoza (pp. 65-7), a connection that Moles does a good deal to qualify in a way that undermines Nabais' metaphysics of necessity (see Moles pp. 213-22)

> vegetative or animal spirit, indwelling in alien materials. Meanwhile the task is not yet at an end, but the kind of motion that the nous has figured out, in order to accomplish its end, demonstrates marvellous efficiency, for by it the task is nearer completion with each passing moment (PTA§17:107)

The *nous* is not 'determined' or 'bound' to this goal, but the universe and the world of material change is, owing to the existence of an immutable logic that will, given enough time, reach perfection. In Nietzsche's estimation, such a determinism gives rise to a world in which "becoming and passing away do not exist, but rather everything is the same for all time" (PP §13:96). The only way he was able to 'save' this world from becoming like the frozen globe of Parmenides was to posit a fragment of absolute free contingency – *nous* – and place it 'outside' the remit of causality.

This problem – and its metaphysical solution - Nietzsche wished to avoid by *denying* that the *aeon* is determined by any eternally fixed rationality. If the game of aeon "were but the coming-to-be-visible of the struggle between eternal qualities" – the playing out of essences interacting with one-another in accordance with determined, essential laws - then becoming would be reduced to a phenomenal phantasmagoria (as with Schopenhauer's 'magic lantern'): Life as "but the dust cloud of the Olympic battle and the flash of divine spears- a coming-into-being, in other words" (PTA§ 6:51). The claim that Nietzsche promotes a 'metaphysic of necessity' thus skirts dangerously close to the "detour [...] back into a dual world order" that *Tragic Age* identifies as potentially arising from the idea of the aeon as a 'god'. But this world without becoming, in which time is nothing but the slow playing out of eternally pre-determined battles is precisely the world that proponents of the 'scientivist turn' appear to promote in their readings of "necessity".

If we turn back to Young, we see something like a 'metaphysic of necessity' being proposed in his reading of Boscovich. It is claimed that he found in the mathematician's worldview a way to arrive at a mathematically determinable understanding of the world, in which every future event could be mapped. In Young's defence, it is hard to read §107 of *Human* and arrive at any other conclusion. We are in fact *expressly told* that that the universe's "every movement [would be] mathematically calculable" (82), if we were able to freeze time and expand our reasoning powers to a sufficient degree. This leads Young to claim that Nietzsche, like Boscovich before him, sought to use science to render the

world of flux knowable and predictable (and hence to subject it to immutable, eternal laws that would, by Nietzsche's definition, constitute a metaphysic).

Historically speaking, the idea that in "knowing the present state of the universe, [we could] predict and retrodict its state with certainty at any given past or future instant of time" served to underwrite

> "one of the fundamental principles of scientific understanding that would persist across all scientific disciplines and popular culture all the way from Laplace up to the present day: that nature is, in principle, knowable and that science can offer a detailed, precise and reliable way to that knowledge" (Koznjak pp. 41-2).

This was undoubtedly Boscovich's assessment: that the world could be rendered *mathematically predictable* (Koznjak 40, 44), neatly explained in all its intricacies by a "formal [...] quite practical algorithm" (47). Moreover, there is little doubt that the theory of forces upon which this claim was based was tremendously important for Nietzsche, as we shall see. But the mechanistic implications of this theory are very clearly at odds with the early writings and their dismissal of the Alexandrian optimist's "*Deus Ex Machina";* the "god of machines and melting pots" (BT §17:95). It is also very much at odds with *The Gay Science*'s rejection of "Mr Mechanic, who nowadays likes to pass as a philosopher and insists that mechanics is the doctrine of the first and final laws on which existence may be built, as on a ground floor" (GS §373:239). So is this in fact a vacillation on Nietzsche's part? Did it take until the 'period straddling' fifth book of *Science* for him to realise that mathematical determinism would constitute *precisely* the sort of 'law of first and last things' that *Human*'s first chapter set out to reject?

The answer is that by volume II of *Human*, we see Nietzsche expressly denouncing mechanical determinacy as a "superstition", a "last refuge of mythological thinking" alongside all other claims that "nature conforms to certain laws" (§9 pp. 15-6). As with the presentation of Anaxagoras' 'aesthetic justification' discussed in the previous chapter, mechanical determination sees us "enraptured by the idea of a creative mechanic who has made the most artistic of watches, with living beings decorating it". But we need not even look as far afield as this for evidence against Young's presentation. §19 of volume I sees Nietzsche begins his first Free Spirit work with an apparent re-iteration of "On Truth's" epistemic scepticism, aimed specifically at mathematics' claim to offer 'knowledge' of the world:

> The invention (*Erfindung*) of the laws of numbers was made on the basis of an error [...] that several things might be identical (but actually there are no identical things) or that there are at least things (but there is no 'thing') [...] error already holds sway, already we invent beings, unities, that do not exist [...] the laws of numbers are completely inapplicable in a world that is *not* our representation: these have validity only in the human world (HAH I §19:30).

Once again, we see Nietzsche maintaining that our symbols of the world can never give us a 'True' picture of it, because they are based on a supposition that simply is not true: that the world inherently possesses a persistent identity that these symbols could adhere to.

We find the same view expressed in HAH I §11 and its claim that logic and mathematics[151] "rests upon presuppositions to which nothing in the real world corresponds; for example, upon the presupposition of the likeness of things, of the identity of the same thing at different points of time" (22). In Nietzsche's eyes, however, we have now shown this to not be the case, and have come to realise that the world ostensibly 'described' by our languages are in fact the 'product' of them. With this realisation in mind, we can work towards a "new Knowledge", one no longer built upon fixity and immutable determination.

Given that discrete, self-same identity is rejected, it becomes clear that a mathematical determinism, of the sort that Boscovich proposed, is inconsistent with Nietzschean necessity. To claim that the universe can be 'boiled down' to a set of elementary rules, which can be used to predict with absolute certainty everything that will happen in the casual unfolding of said laws, is to claim that these rules precede and condition the world: that they are *essential* and *self-same* throughout time. We thus see that necessity must be 'total' enough to exclude any random or arbitrary occurrence, while not so fixed and 'absolutising' as to reduce becoming to the 'playing out' of Being.

It was precisely this problem that Nietzsche explored in his high-school essays on "*fatum*"[152]*:* if nature is *automata* (is fully causally determined) then all its actions are inherent in their beginnings; fate becomes *telos*. Both Michele Haar[153] and Robert

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[151] "mathematics, which certainly would not have come into being if one had known that there was in nature no exactly straight line, no real circle, no absolute magnitude" (HAH I §11:22).
[152] "Fate and History" and "Freedom of Will and Fate" (1862), reproduced in *The Nietzsche Reader*, ed. K. Ansell-Pearson, D. Large, Blackwell-Wiley, Hoboken NJ, 2006,
[153] *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, Suny Press, 1996 120-143

Williams[154] pay a great deal of attention to this problem in their studies of Nietzschean necessity and justification, emphasising his rejection of "the concept of totality; it is a god-term" (Williams 329). In order to avoid this fall into finality, the universe must permit of contingency. Chance must remain.

"This blessed certainty I found in all things: that they would rather - dance"

> "Oh heaven above me, so pure, so high! That is what your pureness means to me,
> that there is no eternal reason-spider and no spiderweb-
> -that for me you are a dance floor for godlike accidents, that you are a god's table for godlike dice and dice-throwers" ("Before Sunrise", Z III §3:138)

Nabais (65) admits that Nietzsche's works are "loaded with symbols of contingency", like the dance or the dice-throw, but these are rejected as poetic embellishments that weaken his philosophical position. Set against this we have Deleuze's famous discussion of "The Dice-Throw" (*Nietzsche and Philosophy,* §11 pp. 23-6) which underlines the importance of contingency to Nietzsche's non-teleological world: "To abolish chance by holding it in the grip of causality and finality [...] the operations of a bad player" (25). Necessity and chance are combined in the throw of the dice, where anything that *could* happen *might* happen - until the bones land and '*iacta alea est*'[155]. After this moment, the outcome is fate: it *had* to happen. But it only *had* to happen *once it had happened*. No plan, law, or certainty set this beforehand, and in the moment of chance, the dice *could* have fallen in any way that they would allow[156]. 'In absolute chance, there is

[154] *Tragedy, Recognition, and the Death of God: Studies in Hegel and Nietzsche.* 322-348. Esp. 333-340

[155] 'The die has been cast'

[156] This is of course the great paradox of the eternal return and Zarathustra's 'redemption': to affirm the *absolute necessity* of everything that chance delivers, without turning life into an immutable 'divine plan'- as the Stoics did with *their* version of necessity

absolute necessity': the properly Heraclitean 'harmony' whereby determinacy does not subsume and destroy contingency. This is why Nietzsche rejects a world of order governed by natural laws. But any theory of chance offered must also respect this boundary, and Nietzsche must ensure that chance does not overwhelm and negate necessity.

In order for 'justification on the grounds of necessity' to stand, Nietzsche cannot allow his vision of chance to involve arbitrary and capricious randomness. Herman Siemens offers a productive framework for understanding this task in his characterisation of Nietzsche's naturalism as an attempt to "rethink 'necessity' in a non-anthropomorphic, non-moral way that offers an alternative, non-legalistic explanation or interpretation of natural processes and the regularity they exhibit" (88). To do this, Siemens sees Nietzsche attempting to move away from viewing what regularity the natural world seems to display in terms of "*sollen;* the constraint, compulsion (*zwang)* to follow the moral law". Necessity instead becomes "an impersonal, amoral *Mussen"* "that which *remains* after thinking away anthropomorphic laws of nature". We can further outline this framework by showing how the perennial theme of 'law' in Heraclitus is (despite appearance to the contrary) commensurate with this idea. Kahn notes that while Heraclitus was undoubtedly the father of natural law, this term (νόμος – *nomos*[157]*)* did not carry the same implications for his archaic tongue than it would for his later Stoic interpreters (118)[158]. Law is instead conceived of as "every manifestation of cosmic order", including the fact that creatures kill and eat one another (DK.21.B.80), and *human law*- the law of the city- is just another form this order takes: "there is no split in principle between law and nature. As an institution, law is neither manmade nor conventional: it is an expression in social terms of cosmic order" (Kahn 2001 15). The 'written' institutions of a city are regarded as simply codifications of *social reality*, the

[157] Much closer to 'custom', the word derived from νέμω (*némō)* meaning 'allotment' or 'distribution' and referred as much to boundaries (between territories and musical styles) as to the specific laws of cities etc). This will have important inference for the notion of 'wisdom' as the ability to delineate what is to be 'allotted' to one or another-where the 'boundary' should lie.

[158] "later writers had no hesitation in speaking here of 'divine law' or 'natural law' (as in Lucretius' Lex natural)", but Heraclitus does not express the notion of a 'divine law' *theios nomos*. Instead he leaves us with a characterization of the common as 'the divine one"' (Kahn 2001 118).

"unifying principles of the political community" that arises "as a consequence of the common human possession of speech and understanding"[159].

Far from transplanting the human legislative law into nature, Heraclitus offers a naturalist understanding of the institution as a formalisation of *actuality*: of the way it *is* and *must be*. A city *is* its laws: it only exists as the political enactment of the dynamics of community, and those dynamics are nothing more than the actuality of creatures living together in a polis. Similarly, natural law is the playing out of physical dynamics, and in neither case is law a case of compliance with a pre-eminent dictate or commandment. You either live 'lawfully', or *hybris* ('en-harmony'/lawlessness) disintegrates the community, like a hearth fire that has spread out of bounds and consumed the house[160]. We should understand Heraclitus' discussions of the 'natural laws' that ensure the sun does not set out of bounds according to this framework[161]. There is no 'lawgiver' who has ordained the order of nature; it is simply that to overstep (*hyperbesetai*) the 'limits' (t*ermata*) would mean instantaneous annihilation by the unstoppable furies. It would not contradict any 'law', but would go against the 'lawfulness' by which the universe operates.

This is the distinction that Nietzsche appears to be arguing for when he says that the *nous* wills its creations, while *aeon* simply acts lawfully and without a determinate will[162]. We should therefore say that the difference between *sollen* and *mussen* is translatable into the distinction between the Stoic and Heraclitan *nomos*; between 'law' and 'lawfulness'. Nietzsche's philosophy of necessity requires that the universe act 'lawfully' without this lawfulness ever ossifying out into determinate 'law', and it was aesthetics that provided the framework for understanding this possibility.

In *Aesthetic Theory*, Theodore Adorno identifies the essence of aesthetic phenomena as lying in their 'autonomy'. Elaborating on Kant, we are told that- "artworks detach themselves from the empirical world and bring forth another. Thus, however tragic they appear, artworks tend a priori towards affirmation" (1). On one level, this just means that for something to be considered aesthetic, it must be 'free' – i.e.

[159] This can be seen highlighted by the tripartite pun on the Greek word for 'understanding' found in fragment XXX: understanding as 'what is shared/common and 'what is law' (Kahan 43)
[160] See Kahn- 2001 pp.179-181.
[161] See Heraclitus XLV, XLVI
[162] See §2.3 p.96

undetermined by natural causal law[163] or moral law[164]. Douglas Smith points to contemporary approaches to musical aesthetics, with their "insistence upon the autonomy of art from outside forces and the primacy of aesthetic over moral criteria", as hugely influential for Nietzsche[165]. We can see, in this claim that the aesthetic is exempt from externally imposed moral dictates, why Nietzsche gravitated towards the aesthetic phenomenon as a model for a godless world. However, the principle of autonomy goes further. Without the interference of external ordering rules, the artwork is beholden to itself for its own order. An artwork that has no ordering is dispersion, a fragmented, incoherent mess: "Without its immanent necessity no work would gain objectivation" (Adorno 187). This middle space leaves aesthetics (both creation and judgement) as, in Kant's formulation, the practice of an 'art' (*Kunst)*, a practice that "relies upon the ability to use rules, as one does in a craft, but [in which] the application of rules cannot be made rule bound"[166] (Bowie 189). Thus, while the aesthetic adheres to a form of 'logic' – its 'inner necessity' – this logic is "a paradox for extra-aesthetic logic [...] a syllogism without concept" (Adorno 187). Aesthetics cannot permit of determinate law dictating its unfolding, –yet cannot exist without adhering to lawfulness in that unfolding.

Nietzsche was far from the only philosopher in the wake of Kant to look to the aesthetic for a model of 'lawfulness without law'. But unlike others – such as Schiller and Schleiermacher – he leaves us with no formalised aesthetic theory to interrogate. We must piece together his views on the subject from disparate sources. The most stable and coherent way to do this is from the ground up, with the conception of reality that Nietzsche saw as underlying this world of necessity and contingency. Once this has been established, we can then set about piecing together how this 'physic' relates back to a specifically aesthetic view of the world. Nietzsche's understanding of physical reality was, by the end of the period under discussion, taking its final form as the theory of the

[163] Which would make it "pleasant": that which conforms to our embodied interest (CJ §3)
[164] Which would make it "good": that which conforms to our moral interest (CJ §4)
[165] Smith cites the Symbolist movement and especially Walter Pater here, but his link between Nietzsche and the 'art for art's sake' movement is puzzling, given Nietzsche's explicit rejection of that aesthetic ethos. See Pothen chapter 5 for commentary.
[166] This is not simply a question of autonomy for Kant – he rather seeks to show that a rule-bounded aesthetic would mean a regress of rules for rules (for commentary see Kukla 10-12).

'will to power'[167]. But a series of notebook entries from 1872[168] – scattered amid (or often as part of) fragments that would evolve into "On Truth" [169] and *Tragic Age* – set out the initial suppositions of a 'physic of forces'. This theory shows an obvious debt to Boscovich's 'dynamic physics'[170] in so far as it rejects 'corpuscularian' physics[171] and proposes a view of physical reality as the inter-relations of quality-less, extension-less 'constellations' of energy[172].

Nietzsche begins by positing 'sensation' as the "primordial fact of matter"[173]. All motion in the universe is speculated to derive from 'attraction or repulsion' of one 'quantum' of force for another. The meeting of the two gives rise to 'sensation'[174], a change in the effected quanta that manifests as one of these two motions: drawing either towards or away. It is worth noting that Nietzsche resolves this into quite anthropomorphic terms: "the entire logic of nature is reduced to a system of *pleasure* and *displeasure*. Everything grasps for pleasure and flees displeasure, these are the eternal laws of nature"[175]. This may seem problematic- both for the dismissal of 'eternal laws' and for the critique of hedonism outlined in the first chapter. But it appears that Nietzsche envisaged this to be as bare an essential rule of reality as possible, and that it has little to do with anything so essentialist as hedonism. This will be revealed as our investigation goes on.

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[167] For commentary on the importance of the 1872 notes for Nietzsche's later thought, see Gray 488-90, Danto 38.

[168] Notebook 19, dated "summer 1872- early 1873" by Colli and Montinari (*KGW*). For brevity, the following footnotes (for the remainder to §3.1) will simply cite the note numbers assigned by this edition (or more specifically R.T Gray's translation: CW 11). All note numbers in square brackets (e.g. [123]) refer to book 19, unless specified.

[169] [43], [66], [67], [77], [78], [84], [97], [141], [144], [153], [155-6], [160], [166], [172], [175], [178], [228], [230] and [235] are among those notes that express ideas or themes discussed in "On Truth". [79] and [140] specifically use the 'Chladni sound figure' example (see TL 144) while [236] discusses object identity with reference to trees (TL 148).

[170] See n.[170~~170~~] p.61

[171] One of the foundational notes for this theory [159] does refer to "impact, the influence of one atom upon another" (51) which is clearly at odds with the Boscovich theory of 'force over distance': nothing 'touches' and there is nothing that could 'touch'. The very reference to force as concerning 'atoms' is also problematic for this thesis. Ultimately it is to be left to the discerning reader if the rest of theory (and the discussion of ancient atomism in PP§15) is compelling enough reason to view this as the sort of laxity of terms permissible in a rough notebook draft- or if this fatally undermines the argument being presented here.

[172] The terminology I will be employing here is borrowed from Grimm: 'quanta', 'constellation' 'power centre'. Boscovich originally referred to all these as 'puncta', while Moles uses 'neighborhoods'. Nietzsche himself begins to use the term 'quantum' in later notes, but only seems to refer to 'forces' in the 1872 notes.

[173] [146]

[174] [159], [164]

[175] [161], [164]

Having presumed that motion is decided by sensation, he then posits that the only other thing needed for the emergence of complex formations is 'memory': for a sensation to not be exhausted in the initial moment of interaction but 'preserved' in the quanta[176]. This is regarded as 'essential' along with sensation; indeed it is "part of the essence of sensation"[177] and Nietzsche is careful to distance his use of these terms from the organic: like sensation, "memory has nothing to do with nerves, with a brain"[178]. They are "primordial" to the play of forces, and memory is argued to be a *requirement* for the emergence of the brain and of consciousness, not an artefact of them[179]. It is here that Nietzsche seemingly doubles down on the determinism and fixity of his new universe of forces by speaking, once again, of 'eternal things':

> "The inviolability of the laws of nature means: sensation and memory are part of the essence of things. The fact that a substance reacts in a certain way to contact with another is a matter of memory and sensation" (CW 11 19[161]).

What we have here is Nietzsche's formulation of the 'necessity' of the force world. But these necessities – that sensation gives rise to motion, and is preserved as memory – mark the frontier of fixed invariability in the interaction of forces. Nietzsche goes on to say that, while the way quanta act when confronted with another is wholly down to memory and sensation, "the actions of substances are *derived laws*": a quantum will react in a determined way, but "at some time it *learned* this"[180]. When a meeting gives rise to a sensation, something of this is preserved in the quanta involved as a form of 'echo'. The sensation itself will give rise to motion – attraction or repulsion – but critically it is only the existence and the inescapability of these mechanisms that are fixed: quanta will *always* be drawn towards 'pleasure'. But what elicits this attraction is entirely contingent upon the memories of the quanta and the way that these memories have conditioned it to 'interpret' sensation.

Nietzsche envisages a system whereby quanta that are attracted and drawn together combine into "complexes of sensations, larger or smaller [which] could be

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[176] ibid
[177] ibid
[178] [162]
[179] [159]. See also (CW 11 27[37]:167); "the world is not a quality produced by the brain, rather, the brain is itself a part of these sensations and representations".
[180] [159]

called 'wills'"[181]. As these 'constellations' grow, absorbing, destroying, repelling other quanta or complexes of quanta, they accumulate memories, which, since they are merely the reverberating persistence of sensations, spread through the constellation. The accumulation and interaction of memories gives to these quanta a sort of 'character'- a collection of "habits"[182], as Nietzsche terms the tendency of memory to form sensation along certain lines- "a number of *protean* qualities" which determine the effect that they have on other quanta[183]. But these are in no way fixed or essential to the quanta- which is nothing more than a locus of energy attracted to or repelled by other loci on the basis of pleasure or displeasure: all qualities are "nothing but particular modified activities of a single material"[184]. In this vision, we see replicated the central tenets of Boscovich's 'dynamic physics', with all properties and attributes of the universe reduced to a single immutable 'law of motion'[185]. Boscovich's universe is

> "a place of constant motion and change, with points of matter (*punctorum materiae*) permanently approaching and receding from one another and arranging and rearranging themselves into smaller or larger conglomerates of matter in an 'immense vacuum' (TPhN §7)" (Koznjak 45)

In such a world, "nothing is immutable except the very simple, indivisible, non-extended, and homogenous points of matter and the law of forces itself"; a law which is itself nothing more than "the propensity (*determinationem*) for mutual approaching or receding of points of matter" (Koznjak 45). Like Nietzsche, we have quanta, and we have 'force'- the propensity for quanta to attract or repel[186]. But the critical distinction is that, for Boscovich, the interactions of the quanta are *fixed* by the law of force and are thus *always predictable*: "the force between particles oscillates between repulsion and attraction, depending on their mutual distances" (Koznjak 44). Postulating this 'logarithmic scaling' of force over distance, Boscovich then felt able to create his '*curva Boscovichiana'* algorithm, a mathematical formula that would allow anyone who knew the distance between quanta and their momentum to perfectly calculate how the

[181] [159]
[182] [187]
[183] [164]
[184] [164]
[185] See Koznjak pp.43-6.
[186] "the propensity (determination) for mutual approaching or receding of points of matter, which is actually the very definition of 'force' in his system (see TPhN §9)" (Koznjak 45).

attractive or repulsive forces would act[187]. But Nietzsche did not follow Boscovich in positing such a universal and immutable determination behind which of the two motions would arise in any given situation. And it is here that we find the contingency in the heart of absolute lawfulness.

Though Boscovich attributed to the quanta themselves a degree of determining influence[188], in Nietzsche's eyes it seems that attraction or repulsion are entirely determined by the sensation that the quanta elicit in one-another. And, critically, the *way* these sensations are received is *entirely* down to the composition of the quanta involved: their habitual 'character'. The 'memories' of preserved sensations inform the reception of new ones, and the habits that they engender in the quanta in its relation to others is subject to "*change*" through the development and interaction of these memories, which "depending on the nature of the attack [encounter] it [the quanta] stresses, re-enforces, and employs for the benefit of the whole"[189]. Nietzsche here goes so far as to theorise "a kind of *free will* that modifies the essence of a thing, out of pleasure and a flight from displeasure". But this is once more regarded as something both learnt and automatic/nonconscious, entirely governed by the quanta's singular determining imperative: to seek 'pleasure' and avoid 'displeasure'[190]. Indeed, the first note that appears to directly relate to these speculations on the nature of physical materiality in the 19th notebook (note 54) kicks off the enquiry by postulating that "chemical transformations in inorganic matter" show the same principle of discernment that we find in organic evolution: attraction or rejection depending on the "mimetic roles that are acted out by a force". It is not a question of 'will' -which, in this theory, emerges from the interactions of quanta- nor is it a question of volitional 'choice'. The motions of quanta are always *lawful*: they cannot *but* repel or attract, based on

[187] Koznjak replicates the '*curva Boscovichiana'* diagram (44) and demonstrates the mathematical formula needed to calculate it (48).'

[188] Mostly related to the 'size', 'influence' and 'relative power' of a constellation; e.g.: "The smaller the conglomerates, the more "tenacious of form" they become, i.e., the more capable of preserving "their forms in opposition to even very strong forces from without" (TPhN §398)" (Koznjak 45)

[189] [164]

[190] This categorisation is better understood in terms of its later development in the theory of the will to power, which removes the biological association of these determinations. By Nietzsche's famous later formulation, 'pleasure' is to be understood as an *increase in power*- displeasure a *decrease.* (See §2 of *The Antichrist*: "What is happiness? The feeling that power is *growing*, that resistance is overcome"). Thus, sensation and the way it manifests should be understood- even in this early formulation- as discernment based on "the sole criteria [of] the relative increase or decrease of power" that an encounter with another quanta engenders (Grimm 156).

sensations. But this does not mean that they are 'fixed' or 'predetermined': all 'chemical transformations' are lawful, "but there are *several*! That it can *play!*"[191].

For the Purpose of Play

The notion of 'play' introduced here is of critical importance for Nietzsche's physics. The necessities of the force world provide a determinate framework of lawfulness. However, this is only a framework. As an 1887 note clarifies, "absolute necessity [...] is not a determinism ruling events, but merely the expression of the fact that the impossible is not possible" (WP§639). Nothing can happen that is not within the realm of 'lawfulness', and thus is not the result of a sensation being interpreted through the memory-character of the quanta. However, as with the chemical reaction discussed above, this does not mean that there is only a single, mechanically determined possible outcome. In laying out the conception of aesthetic logic as immanent necessity, Adorno directs us to

> Nietzsche's comment [...] that in artworks everything only appears as if it must be as it is and could not be otherwise. The logic of artworks [...] grants every particular event and resolution an incomparably greater latitude than [conceptual logic] does (Adorno 181).

The artwork provides a model for something that is wholly an accretion of its own inner necessities, but whose product is not reducible to a mechanical product of those necessities. Later in this chapter, it will be necessary to examine Nietzsche's discussion of the 'cultic aura' that adheres in works of art once the 'contingency' of its logic is forgotten and they begin to be viewed only as 'divine necessity'. This discussion is best saved for a context in which justice can be done to the breadth of its importance. For now, it is critical to note that Nietzsche's ideas of this draw firm parallels with Adorno's claim that a work of art is nothing more than the playing out of its inner necessities through 'logical' developments that "have the shadowy quality of being both binding and slack" (Adorno 181), like the rules that govern the games of children.

Taking this model, we are left with a view of the force world which is entirely 'determinate', and to this extent Young is correct about Nietzsche's relation to

[191] [54]

Boscovich: "the total state of the universe at a later time is a function of its state at an earlier time" (63). All motion arises from sensation and memory – from the state of the quanta – and occurs within the limits set by that state. It should be understood however that, though every event is determinate, it is not 'determined'. This is where Young oversteps Nietzsche's definition of 'necessity' and claims that the latter state of the universe is not simply a function of its earlier state but the causally pre-determined result of it. Nietzsche avoids this ossification into teleology by presenting the necessity of each event as shot through with an irresolvable element of contingency. The 'chain of causality' in which every state is absolutely purposive towards the goal of producing the next state is denied, and a new understanding of 'causality' is substituted. This causation is one of necessity and play, a relation that we must now do more to develop, if we are to arrive at a meaningful understanding of this new model.

Historically speaking, Nietzsche's interest in aesthetics as the meeting point of 'necessity and random play' places his thought in dialogue with Kant's third *Critique*. The Kantian critical project formalised division between human freedom and natural necessity: Humanity is free, while the rest of the world is governed by the natural laws of causality. In the *Critique of Judgement,* we are told that our capacity for aesthetic determinations marks the meeting point between freedom and determination: "the judgement of taste must rest on a mere sensation of the reciprocal activity of the imagination in its *freedom* and the understanding with its *conformity to law*" (CJ §35:129). F.X.J. Coleman calls the book "a work of philosophical diplomacy in which Kant attempts to reconcile the laws of nature [...] with the laws of freedom" (3). It stands as the 'capstone' of the critical project, which took as one of its goals a reconciliation of 'freedom' - "a self-determining agent acting in accordance with the universal principles of morality" (Coleman 5) – with the mechanically determinate nature of physical reality. Presentations of the sublime in the work (and to an extent of beauty also) were intended to show that freedom from the dominion of natural causality is possible in the sensate world itself. The capacity to judge a scene as sublime is bound up with "an ability to judge ourselves as independent of nature, [which] reveals in us a superiority over nature" (CJ §28). Similarly, "the experience of beauty is felt to be an experience of freedom [..] a sensate representation which can symbolise an otherwise unintuitable object of pure thought" (Guyer 252, CJ §59).

The third Critique's attempt to reconcile freedom and nature through the aesthetic is often regarded as the great failure of Kant's critical system. Indeed, in Kai Hammermeister's estimation "the problems that arise from the separation of freedom and nature, beauty and morality" in the work, its "inability to reconnect the autonomous spheres to each other convincingly [gave] rise to one of the most exciting periods in the history of philosophy, namely, German Idealism" (Hammermeister 154). The prominent role that aesthetics played for Idealist and Romantic thinkers who followed in Kant's wake speaks to the enduring allure of the field as a means of overcoming this gap, as well as of developing a relation to 'reason' that transcended its cold and rigid conceptual instantiations. Thinkers like Schelling, Schiller, Hegel, and Schopenhauer looked to the aesthetic as something redemptive, a nexus of freedom that either afforded, or signified the human's escape from the base, causal world of the natural.

Unlike the "various idealistic metaphysics of art" he inspired, "Kant himself did not think that mediation as a higher, synthetic unity of nature and freedom" (Dusing 79), instead seeing the aesthetic as a sign of humanity's ascendency over nature: the sensate triumph of freedom in the material world of un-freedom. He locates in the aesthetic a "'super sensuous substrate' in which conditioned nature and freedom can be reconciled", and puts it to work

> "to find a way of showing how the existence of rational beings who can transcend nature is the final purpose of creation, an idea he infers from the independence of moral self-determination from the chain of natural causality" (Bowie 42).

But Nietzsche, on the other hand, sees the aesthetic as a means, not of raising man *above* nature, as its goal or purpose, but to undermine the *very idea* of purposive in nature. And play served a pivotal role in this.

Play is roughly defined by Kant as 'purposeless activity', or rather as an activity "which could only prove purposive as play, i.e. an occupation which is agreeable on its own account" (CJ §43:133). Play is *purposive* -i.e. is directed towards an aim- but its only purpose is to be 'agreeable in itself': to exist *as* play. It is introduced into the critiques as the basis of differentiation between the aesthetic cognition of beauty, and the everyday, 'practical' form of cognition employed by theoretical reason. In such cognitions, the understanding, provides a set of 'conceptual rules' which governs the imagination in its task of assembling manifold sense perceptions into images "as a

servant of the understanding, readying intuition for understanding's rule *according to the latter's own, discursive principles*" (Kukla 10). But when we have only a disinterested concern' with what is being perceived- the cognitive powers enter into a "free play of imagination" in which "no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition" (CJ §9:48-9). Interested cognition attempts to identify the nature of objects in the name of survival- of our 'interest' as living, embodied creatures. But when not governed by this requirement, the cognitive powers are left free to 'experiment' and produce representations that are simply 'pleasing' to them, or rather "to the subject and its feeling for pleasure or displeasure [...] its feeling of life" (§1:35).

From this we can already see why the third Critique would have held a special place for Nietzsche, and why the presentation of the aesthetic found here should have been so appealing. We can only imagine with what enthused wonderment the developing 'Dionysian philosopher' read the "*Remark*" Kant attached to his "Analytic of the Sublime":

> The changing free play of sensations (which do not follow any preconceived plan) is always a source of gratification [to the subject], because it promotes the *feeling of health*; and it is immaterial whether or not we experience delight in the object of this play, or even in the gratification itself when judged in the light of reason (CJ §54:159).

Play is an activity that produces, without determined law, representations that have no aim or purpose save the stimulation of *life*; the 'feeling of health'. If we take this to be the grounding supposition of Kantian aesthetics, then it becomes evident why the Heraclitean image of the 'child at play' should have resonated for Nietzsche- and why he took pains to link this image so strongly with aesthetic activity. To conceive of the world as aesthetic phenomenon it to claim life itself as play, as a purposeless, aimless seeking after delight, which pays no heed to reason – precisely what Nietzsche was looking for in a view with which to oppose both teleology (the subjugation of life to final purpose) and pessimism (a condemnation of the world for its purposelessness). Both play and art are purposeless; yet remain justified in and of themselves. The importance of this purposelessness for Nietzsche's thought is not restricted to the 'cosmic'; It is also central to his new form of science, and helps to break apart the concept of causal determination, on both the macroscopic and the 'quantum' levels.

There are, however, problems with simply designating the world as aesthetic, especially within the Kantian framework. We have already touched upon the issues that

Nietzsche had with disinterest, and this was, for Kant, precisely the quality that allows aesthetic play to exist as undetermined and without purpose. Indeed, in the Kantian framework, the aesthetic is specifically contrasted to the natural world - a matrix of interconnected 'interests' which aesthetic 'disinterest' draws us away from. Joao Constantcio stands as an example in recent scholarship of an attempt to bridge the antithesis between Nietzsche and Kant on the matter of disinterest[192]. Pointing to the pleasurable 'feeling for life' that persists in the state of disinterested aesthetic speculation, Constantcio draws parallels with the aesthetics advocated in *On The Genealogy of Morals* – a Stendhal inspired grounding of aesthetics in the sensuality of sexual attraction[193]. This can be seen to share a degree of overlap with the Dionysian and the link it draws between reproduction and aesthetic creation, but the conclusion that Constantcio draws – that Nietzsche had misunderstood Kant, conflating his disinterest with Schopenhauer's to produce a 'vulgar Kantian' straw-man (77-82) – is hard to fully endorse[194]. It also seems to be an unsatisfactory resolution to the issue of disinterest, one which fails to contend with *Birth's* stated intention of overcoming and doing away with the very concept. In pursuing this aim instead of a reconciliation with Kant, we can better arrive at an understanding of how Nietzsche felt able to extend the aesthetic to encompass all of existence.

§3.2 Nature, Freedom, and Purpose?

As R.K. Hill notes, critical engagement with the third Critique has tended to overlook the overarching structure of the work, which ties the discussion of aesthetics to a prolonged exegesis on the teleology of nature. This is partly as a result of the gulf

[192] See "'Who is Right, Kant or Stendhal?': On Nietzsche's Kantian Critique of Kant's Ethics", *Nietzsche and Kant on Aesthetics and Anthropology*, ed. M.J. M Branco, K. Hay, Bloomsbury 2017, pp. 63-98

[193] "beauty is a promise of happiness" (See GM III §6 83-5)

[194] Constantcito's argument appears to overlook Kant's discussion of Epicurus in CJ §54, which specifically delineates the pleasure of *gratification* which "pleases in sensation" from that which "*pleases simply in the judging of it*" (159). The former of these is grounded in "*animal*, i.e. bodily sensation" (163) and is quite separate from the contemplative, intellectual pleasure associated with morality and aesthetic appreciation.

between the disciplines that the two halves of it are concerned with[195], but arguably more significant is the fact that "The Critique of Teleological Judgement" "seems to commit [Kant] to a theology rendered obsolete by Darwin" (Hill 40). Readings thus tend to minimise the argumentative thrust that informs this structure and in doing so to push aside the ultimate aim that compelled Kant to address aesthetics in the first place:

> "[an attempt] to link the harmony manifest in aesthetic apprehension of natural objects with the idea of natural teleology, thereby revealing the ultimate connection of nature as a whole to the ways in which we think about it and relate to it" (Bowie 32).

The 'purposelessness' of aesthetic play is deliberately contrasted to the teleologically ordered and purposeful world of nature. That we are able to find aesthetic beauty in the world is taken to demonstrate

> a 'mimetic' side to the imagination which suggests we can indeed in some sense harmonise with nature. We do not in this case wish to order nature in any other way than it is already constituted when we feel the disinterested pleasure it gives to us by appearing to be formed in terms of ideas (Bowie 32)[196].

Teleological judgement, which 'reveals' nature to be a purposeful chain of casual moments, is justified by *aesthetic* judgement.

The 'unity of reflective judgements' outlined in the Critique means that for Kant "aesthetics and teleology fit together [...] such that organisms, people, and even the world itself become works of art" (Hill 75). Kant resolves this unity to the favour of theology, with the 'art-like' nature of the world being used to show that it is the 'work' of an ordering, creating intellect. The world is specifically *not* an aesthetic creation, but rather the purposive unity that it forms finds its closest analogy in a work of art[197], and the unifying systems that inform aesthetic constructions are employed to argue for the purposive interconnection of the system of nature. Nietzsche, on the other hand, sees this unity in quite a different light and uses Kant's theory to work towards a dismantling of his teleology, and ultimately of the distinction that separates nature and the aesthetic.

The *Critique of Judgement* uses aesthetic judgements to prove teleological ones through its play with the distinction between *purpose* and *purposiveness*. When bringing multiplicity into a unified schema, the imagination must have a "cause" for

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[195] It is not many philosophers who seek to combine aesthetics and the philosophy of biology. But Nietzsche was one such thinker.
[196] See also Hill pp.58-67
[197] CJ §65:203

producing in that way. In reasoned cognition, this is provided by the understanding in the form of a concept: "concept is regarded as the cause of an object [...] the causality" (CJ§10:51). The faculty of desire can produce *only* with regards to 'ends'- to a definitive purpose. But free from desire and its imposition of concepts, the imagination is left to impose its *own* causality on its constructions, leading to "a purposiveness with respect to form [...] without resting it upon an end"- a determinate 'goal' for that production (52). The aesthetic construction is 'purposive' in so far as it has 'causality: its parts fit together in the service of the whole - the 'formal unity' that is the cause of that arrangement. But it has no 'purpose', in so far as that unity serves no determinate end beyond itself. The 'goal' that its causation works towards is nothing more than its own existence as a formal unity- its 'end' is itself. "Purposiveness, therefore, may exist apart from purpose", and we have here an explanation for aesthetic representations - cognitions that emerge from the imagination without conceptual determination.

Kant then goes on to show that the formal unity we find in aesthetic representation is the same as that which is to be found in our representation of the 'organisms'- naturally exiting "formal unities which exhibit, like works of art in this respect, a different and more internal kind of purposiveness and appear to exist for their own sake, and that of the species", rather than "[serving] something entirely beyond and independent of itself" (Walker xviii). Such naturally existing formal unities - the recognition of which does not rely on the mind's concepts - is then taken to 'prove' the existence of formal order in the world *apart from* the order imposed by our conceptual cognition. And, ultimately, it is argued that we must see "our purposive productivity [of formal unity as] being of the same kind as that which results in natural organisms" "which would make our spontaneity an aspect of nature in itself" (Bowie 32).

Nietzsche's idea that human artistry is simply a 'participation' in the 'artistic powers of nature' should be seen as descending from this idea. But a critical difference between these two notions lies in the division that Kant makes between natural and aesthetic forms. Like art objects, organisms for Kant are purely formal unities. Their 'causation' is not a purpose that lies beyond them, but rests instead in the unity that their parts comprise. In the case of an animal or plant, this means that the whole relies on the functioning of the parts, and the parts depend entirely on the functioning of the whole (CJ §65-6). The organism would not exist if it were not a unity of its parts; but is

not just a 'sum' of parts - since the parts would not exist in the way they do were they not united in the whole. But the difference comes in the question of *where* this unifying form emerges. For Kant, to recognise the systematic unity of a thing - and the necessary interdependence of whole and part - is to *make of it* art, which is to say that the idea of unity under which the parts are subsumed is provided by the observing subject: "it is the product, in other words, of an intelligent cause, distinct from the matter, or parts, of the thing [...] determined by its idea of a whole made possible through that idea, and consequently, not by external nature" (§65:201). The unity of the 'art-object' is imposed upon a manifold by the viewer (or by its creator in the first instance). But the natural product is one that contains that idea *within itself* so that parts "combine themselves into the unity of a whole by being reciprocally cause and effect of their form". The art-object is ordered by a rationality external to it, while the organism is ordered by its own inherent 'idea'.

This division is further underscored by the fact that while both art and organism exist in isolation as 'intrinsic unities' – ordered by their own qualities, rather than according to a definitive external purpose- natural forms are also embedded in a system of 'extrinsic qualities'. Organisms may be their own end and purpose, but they also rely on one another for their existence -with procreation being the one irrefutable sign Kant can identify of the interrelation between the intrinsic and extrinsic (§82:255). So while an aesthetic object is 'internally purposive' but ultimately purposeless, the organism can only be conceived of as part of a web of "extrinsic relation" that constitutes "a system of the whole kingdom of nature following final causes" (256). Kant argues that once we have established the existence of an organism (as self-ordering system) we are compelled to see nature as a system of extrinsic ends connecting these organisms in necessary interdependence. He then goes further to claim that the unity of the world can only be conceived if it has, like the teleologically ordered organism, a unifying principle under which its manifold may be subsumed: an "*ultimate end of nature,* in relation to whom all other natural things constitute a system of ends" (§83:258). This 'goal' is the moral human being.

We thus begin from the claim that organisms "*appear* to contain an 'idea' which makes them take the form they do [...] as if the whole of an organism preceded the parts which we can analyse in the terms of the understanding" (Bowie 27). From here it is

argued that we are *forced* to concede, if we accept the existence of the organism, the existence of "an organisation suitably constituted with a view to all these forms of life", without which "the possibility of the purposive form of the products of the animal and plant kingdoms is quite unthinkable" (§80:248). Where the first book on aesthetic representations argued to show that we "are able to render the explanation of [an aesthetic form's] possibility intelligible to ourselves only by deriving it from a will" (CJ§10:52), the same principle "necessarily leads us to the idea of aggregate nature as a system following the rule of ends, to which idea, again, the whole mechanism of nature has to be subordinated on principles of reason" (§67:207). We are therefore forced, on the basis of the internal self-organisation of the natural form, to posit "an intelligent world cause, regarded as the supreme artist" (§85:266) and a *final end*[198] that will provide the 'causation' for what Nietzsche calls the "world organism" (KGW i.4 565). Without such a final end, Kant argues, the internal ordered consistency of the organism becomes unthinkable. This is a lesson that the young Nietzsche seems to have taken very seriously, but which he adopted to rigorously sceptical ends.

In Nietzsche's 1868 notebooks, among passages copied from the third Critique on purpose and teleology (notes made for the abandoned doctoral thesis "On the Concept of the Organic Since Kant"), Hill draws our attention to a quotation from Goethe's "On Morphology": "no living thing is unitary in nature; every such thing is a plurality. Even the organism, which appears to us as individual, exists as a collection of independent living entities"[199]. Positioned as it is, this can only be Nietzsche introducing, via Goethe, a rebuttal to the grounding supposition of Kant's teleology. As the notes go on to say:

> The concept of the whole does not lie in things but in us. These unities that we call organisms are also only multiplicities. There are in reality no individuals; rather

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[198] "For apart from a final purpose we are unable to relate all these natural ends to a common point of reference, or form an adequate teleological principle, be it for combining all the ends in a known system, or be it for framing such a conception of the supreme Intelligence, as cause of a nature like this, as could act as a standard for our judgement in its teleological reflection upon nature. I should have, it is true, in that case an artistic intelligence for miscellaneous ends, but no wisdom for a final end, which nevertheless is what must, properly speaking, contain the ground by which such intelligence is determined. I require a final end, and it is only pure reason that can supply this a priori for all ends in the world are empirically conditioned and can contain nothing that is absolutely good, but only what is good for this or that purpose regarded as contingent. Such a final end alone would instruct me how I am to conceive the supreme cause of nature" (CJ §85:269)

[199] Cited Hill 89

> individuals and organisms are nothing but abstractions. Into these unities, made by us, we later transfer the idea of designedness" (KGW i.4 560. trans. Hill 89).

Kant took the organisation of the organism to be conceivable only as the result of artistry: of τέχνη (*tékhnē*)[200]. The subjugation of multiplicity to a unity *that is the cause* of that multiplicity, the existence of an organised whole "*in which everything is an end and on the other hand also a means*" and "nothing in it is in vain, pointless, or to be attributed to a blind mechanism of nature" (CJ §65), *proves* that the universe is *designed*. But in Nietzsche's eyes, the unity that proves the necessary existence of all other unities is itself an *invention.* Organisms *do* require a 'τέχνη' for their form. But its 'artist' is not god: it is *us*.

The possibility that natural form, like aesthetic form, is provided by the subject- rather than being inherent to the organism itself- is dismissed by Kant on the grounds that

> *Intrinsic natural perfection*, as possessed by things that are only possible as natural ends, and that are therefore called organisms, is unthinkable and inexplicable on any analogy to any known physical, or natural, agency, not even excepting—since we ourselves are part of nature in the widest sense—the suggestion of any strictly apt analogy to human art (CJ §65:203).

They are 'too perfectly formed', too 'ideally suited' to their teleological purpose to be the products of our imaginations. But for Nietzsche, this 'awe' at perfection is just a bluff, a means by which we disguise our own artistry. The dissertation notes discuss the way we only marvel at the 'designed' complexities of organic systems- of that which most resembles our idea of our own perfection[201]. Later, "On Truth" was to mock us for our surprise at 'discerning' such neat and perfect conceptual categories in Nature as species and genus: "If someone hides something behind a bush, looks for it in the same place and then finds it there, his seeking and finding is nothing much to boast about" (TL 147)[202]. The human wishes to be amazed by the intricate complexities of the world it

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[200] "'Art' here has the Greek sense of *techne*; the capacity to produce in a purposive way" (Bowie 27). See also CJ viii

[201] See Hill 88

[202] See also TL pp.149-50: "how little all of this resembles a product of the imagination, for if it were such a thing, the illusion and the unreality would be bound to be detectable somewhere […] but if we are forced to comprehend all things under these forms alone then it is no longer wonderful that what we comprehend in all these things is nothing other than these very forms"

'finds itself confronted with', so it constructs marvelous architectonics out of reality in order to be amazed- and then marvels as 'Nature's' capacity *to* amaze.

This amazement is in fact central to Kant's theory of both beauty and teleological order:

> When the imagination manages to grasp nature as purposive [...] we feel pleasure necessarily, delighting in the contingent gift that enables us to satisfy our necessary desire to find articulable order in nature. This pleasure in the discovered suitability of nature for comprehension by the discursive understanding – or in other words, pleasure in the purposive- ness of nature – is at least closely related to the aesthetic pleasure we take in the beautiful, which concerns the harmony between our sensible presentations and the goals of the understanding in general (Kukla 19).

This Judgment of formal purposiveness is "grounded in the pleasure derived from contemplating how each part of the object contributes to the whole of that object without losing its own value – how each part can be both a means and an end in itself" (Bowie 6). When we see beauty in nature, we are pleased by the fact that it is formed as our reason says it should be- according to 'ideas' (32). But for Nietzsche, this pleasure just shows that we have made of the world something that pleases and flatters our intellect.

Nature as art-work

In the 'play' of aesthetic cognition, the imagination creates freely from the material given to it by intuition (reconstituted sense data), forming it into arrangements that please it (or rather, that pleases 'the subject'). But where Kant goes on to differentiate these aesthetic creations from 'truly existent' natural forms, Nietzsche sees no reason to make that leap and regards the organism as just another of the aesthetic forms produced by the imagination in its play. The unifying idea "*organism* [does] not belong to the thing in itself. The organism is *form.* If we abstract away that form, it is a multiplicity... organism as a product of our organisation" (KGW i.4 558 trans. Hill, *emphasis added*). Thus in so far as the unifying idea is *given* and not *inherent*, the 'organism' is, by Kant's definition, an *aesthetic representation*. It is a product of our judgement. In "On Truth" and its attendant notes, we see this scepticism extended beyond organic forms to all objects and concepts, which we believe to exist

> Only by virtue of the fact that a mass of images, originally flowed in a hot, liquid stream from the primal power of the human imagination has become hard and rigid, only because of the invincible faith that *this* sun, *this* window, *this* table is a truth in itself – in short only because man forgets himself as a subject, and indeed as an *artistically creative subject* (TL 148).

The 'subject-object' distinction that the essay seems grounded in appears at first to problematize this presentation into a form of solipsism. The 'mind-dependent' nature of the world under discussion would seem to place the human subject as a form of 'creative god', responsible for engendering objects into existence. But only for itself: the god is stupid, deluded, blinded to the abyssal reality that "would mean the end of his 'consciousness of self' (*Selbstbewußstein)".* This understanding of 'mind-dependence' leads Hill to frame the 'world-artist' as a form of 'transcendental subjectivity':

> The only way [Nietzsche] could maintain that nature is mind-dependent was to posit a noumenal perceiver to produce the phenomenal world before the existence of animals and human beings, thus preserving his intuition that the world has a structure, cohesion, and intelligibility that transcends the plurality of individual experiences (Hill 99).

This is a strange claim, given that Nietzsche appears to expressly deny order, structure, and particularly intelligibility[203]. Moreover, this understanding of mind dependence is directly argued against in a draft note for "On Truth", in which Nietzsche casts derision on a humanity that "immediately exploited Kantian epistemology for a glorification of the human being: the world only has reality in them. It is tossed back and forth in their heads like a ball"[204]. The correction that he offers to this view is that

> There is a work of art, and a stupid human being to contemplate it. To be sure it exists as a mental phenomenon for that stupid being only in so far as he himself is an artist and carries the forms about in his own head. He could boldly assert: outside my brain it has no reality (CW11 19[153]:49).

This is a profoundly important and pregnant formulation, the full implications of which will take some time to unpack. But we can begin by looking back to the Dionysian tragedy, and the insight into the relation between the 'stupid human' and the 'artwork' it observes.

In §2.3, we discussed the collapse of spectatorial distance that Nietzsche saw enacted through the satyr chorus, who act to efface the line between stage and audience. But we must now ask how this is to be reconciled with the characterisation of the chorus

[203] See §2.2 for Nietzsche's discussion of intelligibility as another form of metaphysics
[204] [153]

as a "living wall erected against the pounding storm of reality" (BT §8:47). This has typically been read to mean that tragedy substitutes a deceptive counterfeit reality for the unacceptable 'true' one. But we should take Nietzsche more seriously when he insists that the vision 'summoned' by the chorus (whose enthused, enchanted 'psychic distortion' of the world allows us to perceive the immanence of Dionysus) is "a portrayal of a more truthful, more real, more complete image of existence than that of the man of culture who commonly considers himself the sole reality"[205]. What we are told is that the chorus in fact serves to exorcise the spectre of "naturalism in art" (§7:44), a notion that might seem odd given the weight of emphasis given so far to naturalism in this study. But what we are in fact seeing here is a re-affirmation of *philosophic* naturalism against a sentimental *aesthetic* naturalism. Adorno's discussion of 'natural beauty' in relation to Hölderlin and Hegel is instructive here. Adorno sees in Hölderlin's poetry what Nietzsche sees' in *Messina's* chorus: a war on "the fetishism of nature- the pantheistic subterfuge that would amount to nothing but an affirmative mask appended to an endlessly repetitive fate" (Adorno 74). This is then laid against Hegel, whose view of natural beauty is claimed to offer "a theodicy of the real":

> As physically objectivated idea, life that animates nature is *beautiful* in that as life the true, the idea, is immediately present [...] because the idea can take no other form than that in which it is realised, its 'first appearance' [as the system of nature] is 'suitable' and therefore beautiful (Adorno 74)

We can explain this difference by grounding it in Nietzsche's objection to the idyllic, briefly touched on in §1.2. The difference between the satyr – the 'nature creature among nature creatures' – and the shepherd – languishing in a peaceful, munificent, reconciled nature-world – reproduces this dichotomy nicely. In the idyllic world of the latter

> Nature and ideal [...] are objects of joy, in that they are imagined as real [...] the ideal is neither felt to be unattained, nor nature felt to be lost. This sentiment assumes the existence of an original age of man when he lay at the heart of nature and in this natural state had simultaneously achieved the ideal of humanity, in a paradisiacal goodness (BT §19:104)

[205] "der Chor ist eine lebendige Mauer gegen die anstürmende Wirklichkeit, weil er — der Satyrchor — das Dasein wahrhaftiger, wirklicher, vollständiger abbildet als der gemeinhin sich als einzige Realität achtende Culturmensch" (BT §8 My translation)

Aesthetics of idyllic beauty cast the pleasurable feeling that arises from nature as expressive of a grand harmony and the human's privileged place within it. It speaks to the pre-eminence of 'idea', a fixed *essentia* that speaks to humans in their own language. But the satyr experiences nature in all its untamed, satanic indeterminacy; without 'idea', without 'nature', at least in terms of a fixed 'identity'. Rather, "as Hölderlin taught [...] nature, as it stirs mortally and tenderly in its beauty, does not yet exist" (Adorno 74). Adorno sees this experience as manifesting in a "shame felt in the face of natural beauty" that "stems from the damage done to what does not yet exist by taking it for existent": the 'violence' done to reality by Idealism's identity thinking[206]. In his 'redemptive critique', Adorno casts this realisation as to the illusory character of natural beauty as heralding a divine promise: that nature will one day find the identity we now only pretend that it has. But Nietzsche's approach substitutes the promissory 'not-yet-existent' for a more properly Dionysian rejection of even the possibility of identity.

If we trade Adorno's redemptive 'not yet' for the Heraclitean 'is-and-is-not', then we have a view of nature's redemption into self-identity as both 'never-achievable' and 'always-already-archived'. By this light we can begin to gain a sense for what Nietzsche sought to express in his paradoxical assertion that the Dionysian is both 'truth' and 'illusion'[207] together. The satyr is presented as both the *reality* of the human's relation to nature (immersed in it as 'nature being', as opposed to the autonomous 'noble animal' of the idyll) and a "fictitious *creature of nature*" inhabiting a "fictitious *state of nature*" (BT §7). The Hellenes are claimed to have 'created' nature in order to place their satyr into it[208]. This paradox is resolved however, if we recall that the collapse of spectatorial distance, the enfolding of the individual in the mass of the chorus and in the artwork, serves to extend the 'art world' of the stage.

Under its influence, the audience "do not see the awkwardly masked man" but instead "the arrival onstage of the god" (BT §8:52). As with one whose mind sees flashing visions of a lost love in anyone "of similar build and gait" who catches their eye, the

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[206] See *Minima Moralia* §153, *Aesthetic Theory* pp. xiii-v, 60-72,

[207] In BT §15 Nietzsche places his own Dionysian vision of a world that 'flows eternally on' alongside the apollonian and Socratic deceptions.

[208] This notion may owe its origin to *AE §*2 pp.23-4, though Schiller's assertion that the invented state "is the necessary result of [man's] rationality" seems to indicate that, despite knowledge that this invented state is different to the 'True' state of nature, Schiller never the less remains close to Rousseau in his postulation of a determining 'Idea' of the natural life.

reveller transfers "the whole image of the god" into the masked figure and dissolves its empirical reality into a "ghostly unreality". But critically, this is not a narcotic 'hallucination'; at least not in the sense of something 'false' or 'unreal' taking the place of 'reality'. Rather, the aesthetic world of the stage washes over the audience, enveloping them in an art world that renders 'empirical reality' "ghostly and unreal" but does not to dispel or erase it. The audience member is made "insensitive and unresponsive to the impression of reality [...] occupying the rows of seats around him" but this world still *remains* (BT §8:49).

While in a dream we are so thoroughly blocked off from the waking world that we might forget we are dreaming, the tragic drama reminds us constantly that what it presents is an 'effect'. In it we constantly have "the vision together with its transfiguring frame [..] visible to every eye" (52). The wildly deformed tragic masks and the sparse, deliberately artificial scenery of the θέατρον (*théatron*) serve the effect of 'alienating' the dream of the stage into "symbol [...] drama props do not stimulate the pleasure of illusion, rather we understand them as symbol and understand the reality which is meant by them" (DW IV:93). Their anti-naturalism serves to aid, rather than hinder, the audience's immersion beneath the spell precisely by resisting a merging of the vision with the mask. Rather than eclipsing the mundane world, the art world 'trades places' with it, as it were: what was previously experienced as the 'solid', 'immutable', 'true' world of the everyday becomes as ethereal and insubstantial as dream. If a mask could become as real as a living person, while at the same time remaining an uncanny and impossible parody of the human face, if the theatre with its painted scenery and carved stones could be experienced as a mountain pass filled with trees, then why should we believe in the 'Truth' of our apparently solid everyday experiences? 'All that is solid melts into air'.

The grotesque distortions of the mask serve to prevent the dream from merging too completely with the empirical – as is the case in our delusional belief in an Idyllic nature: "Natural beauty is ideological where it serves to disguise mediatedness as immediacy [...] [in idyllic beauty] the experience of nature is deformed"" (Adorno pp.68-9). The naïve takes nature to be 'given' – immediate – and thus disguises from us the fact that these forms are our own creations. But in the anti-naturalism of the stage, the fact that something so clearly 'non-natural' could have the effect of becoming natural

and taking on life breaks apart the 'ideology' of a 'given' world. If the 'mirage' of the stage can appear as real as the nature world, can distort and supplant it, then both are revealed as constructed artifice[209]. But we should not rush to call either world 'false' on this account.

The legend that "Worldview" relates, of Dionysus's re-birth, is instructive for understanding this. We are told that Apollo 'reconstructed' the dismembered Zagreus, bringing together the fragments of the god that had previously wandered the world broken, vicious, and raging, sewed them together, and gave to Dionysus a human form[210]. This act - in which Dionysus is "rescued from Asiatic dismemberment" (I:84) - is allegorical of the 'embodiment' that the drama was finally able to give to the "eternal sea" and "changing weave" of the dithyramb (BT §8:52). In this form, Dionysus can finally 'speak', "no longer restricted to those forces that were only sensed", but he does not use this speech to 'condemn' his brother as a fantasy and deception. Tragic drama instead voices the 'harmony' of his union with Apollo: without Apollo, Dionysus is the dismembered Zagreus. Without Dionysus, Apollo's weapon against chaos, "the medusa's head" (§2:25) would freeze the world into rigid, statuesque un-life. It is in this union that Nietzsche locates the essence of art.

In his aesthetics of tragedy, Nietzsche frames the effect of the tragic drama as inducing in its audience an insight into the aesthetically mediated nature of our everyday reality. Just as Apollo gave form to Zagreus, the empirical world we assume to simply 'present itself' to us is stitched together by our Apollonian minds from dismembered parts. But perhaps the most important insight comes in the dissolution of ourselves as 'observing subjects'. The breakdown of divisions – of subject and object, observer and observed, even between the individuals in the audience – points us to the realisation that as 'nature creatures among nature creatures', we ourselves are aesthetic creations as well. Like the Zagreus, like the teleological 'unity' of the organism, we too are stitched together from dismembered parts.

[209] "the world of day veils itself and a new world, clearer, more intelligible, more gripping than the other… is born before our eyes" (BT §5:52)
[210] DW I:84. See also Sloterdijk 1989 pp.31-2

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Worlds without ends.

> [nature] vanished from aesthetics as a result of the burgeoning domination of the concept of freedom and human dignity, which was inaugurated by Kant and then rigorously transplanted into aesthetics by Schiller and Hegel [...] perhaps nowhere else is the desiccation of everything not ruled by the subject more apparent, nowhere else is the dark shadow of Idealism more obvious, than in aesthetics (Adorno 82).

In breaking down the barriers between nature and aesthetic creation, Nietzsche can be seen as attempting to enact dissolution of a foundational division erected by idealism. In line with that tradition (and its Romantic offshoots) he sees the aesthetic as the answer to overcoming the "great gulf" dividing unfree nature, and free humanity (CJ IX). But in contrast to his predecessors, he sees in the aesthetic a means to efface the difference all together, challenging the very grounds on which the distinction was made. For Kant, the difference between interest and disinterest, between the rational and the aesthetic, comes down to a division between the 'interested desire' of the embodied creature in a system of ends, and the disinterested purposelessness of play. Through his Dionysian insight into the artificiality of the individual, and his biological insight into the artificiality of the organism, Nietzsche's vision of nature strives to render this division obsolete – and with it, the distinction between the un-free world of purpose, and the free world of purposelessness. In doing this, he strives to secure for life that which art strives for: "[aesthetics'] task is to divest itself, in opposition to all imposed order, both of hopeless natural necessity, and chaotic contingency" (Adorno 150). In order to understand the nature and implications of this shift, we now turn to a work

that that undoubtedly exercised a significant (though not explicitly admitted) influence over *The Birth of Tragedy*: Frederic Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*[211].

This connection is notably under-discussed by commentators[212]. Hammermeister points to this indebtedness as part of an attempt to demonstrate the unoriginality of Nietzsche's aesthetics (142-3), but discussions of play are almost wholly absent from both Nicholas Martin's full-length study of the Nietzsche-Schiller connection, and either Brent Kaver or Adrian Del Caro's (1989) shorter discussions. And though Paul Bishop and R.H Stephenson's masterly study of *Nietzsche and Weimar Classicism* addresses the connection, attributing Nietzsche's conception of the *aeon* as a child at play *directly* to *Aesthetic Education,*[213] the point is not elaborated to any great extent.

Schiller's conception of play follows Kant insofar as he conceives of it as free activity that is its own 'end'. In framing the phenomena, he builds upon Kant's division between art and mere labour or 'drudgery' (CJ §43) – putting aside the epistemological element in favour of a more practical approach to 'play'. The division between the aesthetic and the determinative in Kantian cognitive theory is traced back to an origin in the world, and to two different orders of activity that map onto this division. Schiller envisages a boundary that the living creature crosses over when its activities are no longer governed by the "*physical seriousness*" of the 'unfree' nature-world- no longer ruled by "the sanction of need" (*AE* §27:105). The *merely* animal life is one that is lived enslaved to blind desire: it is 'passive' and governed entirely by natural causation. All its activity is aimed towards the alleviation of want, of instinctual needs that the embodied creature experiences as lack. But when it is *freed* of this dominion, when all animal want is satiated, the creature's actions can transcend desire and act under "the sanction of superfluity": "the animal *works* when privation is the mainspring of its activity, and it *plays* when the fullness of its strength is this mainspring, when superabundant life is its own stimulus to activity".

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[211] There is little doubt that Nietzsche read *Aesthetic Education* while at school (Brobjer 44) and Nicholas Martin draws a close association between the Form Treib and Sinnlicher Treib outlined in the letters, and the Apollonian and Dionysian (56-8). But the work's influence over Nietzsche's early aesthetics is not universally accepted by scholarship (cf. Nicholas Rennie argument that *Birth* owes its aesthetic sensibilities to Lessing's *Laokoon*, for e.g. (186)).

[212] At least in the Anglophone sphere.

[213] See Bishop and Stephenson 52 n.8

Aesthetic activity emerges as the highest form of this play, when the human, "not content with what simply satisfies Nature and meets her need, demands superfluity" in order to satisfy her "formal [play] instinct [...] to extend her enjoyment beyond every need" (§27:104-5).

Superfluity expresses itself as "superabundant life", and Schiller's presentations of it in the nature-world is illustrated through the fecundity of spring, in poetic images that clearly prefigure the Dionysian vision offered in works like "The Greek Music Drama" (see §1.2):

> The insect swarms with joyous life in the sunbeam; and it is surely not the cry of desire that we hear in the melodious warbling of the song-bird [...] the tree puts out innumerable buds which perish without developing [...] what the tree returns from its lavish profusion unused and un-enjoyed to the kingdom of the elements, the living creature may squander in joyous movements. So, nature gives us even in her material realm a prelude to the infinite, and even here partly casts off the chains (*AE* §27:105)

In the state of play, the animal expends the excess energy that nature has invested it with: a vitality that courses through the creature and animates it. The animal expresses this energy in a form that has no other meaning than as a delighted display of power in excess. Take for example the lion, whose "idle energy creates for itself an object; he fills the echoing desert with his high spirited roaring, and his exuberant power enjoys itself in purposeless display" (AE §27:105). Play is the ecstatic "free movement" by which the creature "simply delights in its absolute and unfettered power" (106).

The significance of 'revelling in one's power' for Nietzsche's thought is obvious, but we also see a direct association drawn between superfluity and play in a *Nachlass* fragment from 1885 (contemporary with book 4 of *Zarathustra)*: "'Play', what is useless (*Unnnützliche*), as the ideal of someone who is overfull of strength, as childlike [...] παῖς παίζων [a child at play][214]" (WP §797). Like Kant, Nietzsche here offers play as the distinguishing mark of "the phenomenon 'artist'", and Schiller too identifies play in its purest form with aesthetic activity. However, the caveat 'purest' marks a critical divide between Nietzsche and Schiller - for in Schiller's eyes, aesthetic play is *transcendent* of the 'merely natural' phenomena of "physical play". Play as exhibited by animals - and by humans so long as they remain bound to their "purely animal life" - is "still of a material

[214] Referencing Heraclitus XCIV

kind and declares itself by simple natural laws", while the *truly free play* of the aesthetic is reachable only by a "leap" *away* from nature and animality:

> "A leap we must call it, since the wholly new force now comes into play; here, for the first time, the legislative faculty [reason] interferes with the operations of a blind instinct [...] so long as Nature, which knows no law other than hurrying restlessly from variation to variation, is still too powerful, it will oppose that necessity [of lawful reason]" (AE §27:106)

The infinite - total freedom from "external sensuous restraint" though a world of "independent creative power" - is only attainable for humans. Animal play can merely *gesture* towards that promise.

It is not only the 'un-freedom' of determining desires that must be overcome, but the restriction of the individuated world of change, and of difference. The wild, subconscious animal imagination must always remain trapped in the flux of what is "variable", "arbitrary", 'indigent', 'insatiable' in its "unrest", all that is forever "hurrying restlessly from variation to variation"- in short, all that is "sensuous". The animal's play act is *partially free*, in so far as it is not occasioned or conditioned by desire; in it, the creature "is already approaching independence, at least from a distance" (AE §27:105). But only reason, in stepping in to 'control' the imagination, grants access to what is 'truly free'- the infinite world of "immutable and eternal unity" that lies behind the individuated, sensate world of natural immanence (106). We find here an almost religious vision, a metaphysic that looks to art to 'liberate' us from our enslavement to nature and desire. Animal instinct *corrupts* play and keeps us tied to our un-freedom: "the aesthetic play impulse [is] hardly recognisable yet in its first attempts, as the sensuous impulse, wherever it appears, is incessantly interfering, with its headstrong caprice and its savage appetite" (pp.106-7). Only aesthetic man, who with the help of reason raises himself above nature, can realise the promise of play.

Play, for Schiller, thus gestures *away* from nature and towards the infinite that is its opposite. But for Nietzsche, the aesthetic gestures the *other way*, and in the phenomenon 'artist', we see *straight through* "to the basic instincts of power, nature, etc" (WP §797). He too sees this as a gesture towards the infinite – but it is the infinite as *source;* the *origin* of all that lives, not the ethereal, unbounded unity that lies *beyond* a limited and unfree nature world. Schiller's animal strains to escape its bonds, grasping out for the freedom that will come when its enslaving, conditioning law bound

animality no longer determines it: when the 'forms' its action takes is no longer passively derived from nature. For, in being tied to the nature world, its actions are still governed by *ends*- even in animal play, "which is itself ends and means" it has not reached "the lofty freedom of the beautiful, above the fetters of every purposed end" (AE §27:105). But if, like Nietzsche, we conceive of a nature world without organisms that 'unfree' actions might serve; without a mesh of embodied 'ends'; without 'given forms' that tie action passively to the determinations of nature – in short, a world in which nothing is ever 'means to an end' but is always both means *and* end combined - then does talk of 'breaking free' from determination and enslavement towards unfree ends not lose its meaning?

Throughout the Free Spirit works, we see Nietzsche attempting to develop a new theory of 'causes' to do away with the Kantian notion of 'purposive causation". In GS §360, Nietzsche holds up as "one of my most essential steps forward" the realisation that we are prone to mistake "causation" for "cause": to look at the notion of cause from entirely the wrong end of an action (GS §360:225). To seek for the cause of an event should be to look for its origin- the "driving force" behind it. But a "very ancient error" means that we have become habituated to seek for this instigating cause at the end of an act instead of its beginning: in its goal or purpose. Purposive causation holds events to be determined by their goals: I am hungry, so I find food and eat it – the instigating cause (hunger) determines the end (finding food). In this way, purposiveness marks the action as 'unfree': the path that I take to that goal- the 'causality' of steps between it and me- would also be determined by that goal. But Nietzsche argues that a goal is not a "cause of acting" but rather "the cause of acting in a certain way, in a certain direction". Instead, he holds that all events are the result of an *overabundance* that must be expended: "a quantum of damned up energy waiting to be used up somehow, for something". All 'causes' are identical (save in the volume and intensity of the overabundance that seeks after discharge). Overabundance has no 'intention' determining *how* it will expend itself: It is simply necessary that it does so. The quantum has no intentional, predetermined *goal* in its expenditure (save *to* expend) and the 'ends' towards which the action is (apparently) directed should be seen as "quite insignificant, mostly a small accident in accordance with which this quantum 'discharges' itself". The quantum is driven only to express its energy; it only needs a means through which to

manifest that drive. And 'the event' is merely that opportunity. It is the 'match' that allows the keg to explode.

Consider the analogy of a river: it begins as a mountain pool and ends where its great delta meets the sea. Is that delta its 'purpose'? Is that purpose the cause of the river? The river was, in fact, 'caused' when the pool grew too full for its bounds, overpowered and overflowed their restraints, and began to discharge itself. And it is Nietzsche's reasoning that we should place just as little emphasis on the apparent 'motivation' behind an event as we do on the weakness of the pool's edge that was the site of the first overflow:

> Among these small accidents and matches I consider all so-called 'purposes' as well as the even more so-called 'vocations': they are relatively random, arbitrary, nearly in- different in relation to the enormous force of energy that presses on, as I said, to be used up somehow" (GS §360:225).

We are 'driven' to eat, or mate, or fight? No. We are 'driven' to expend. These are simply the forms that expenditure happens to take. But can we really take this seriously as an understanding of biological life? Does this adequately serve to efface the difference between the 'serious' and apparently highly regular and restricted actions of *survival*, and the care-free '*fröhliche*' play-act? All action may well result from 'overabundance'- and thus be *technically* play, by Schiller's definition- but surely, we cannot view the struggle against starvation in the same light as a child's game? Here we should recall the answer Nietzsche ventriloquized into the mouth of Heraclitus- 'do not act so pathetically'. The reason that we view these events so differently is because we believe that they have consequences beyond themselves: if I do not eat, I will die. If I do not play, I will be bored. These are not the same thing. But it is only our *pathos* that differentiates them.

As Nietzsche puts it in the 1886 notes, when Life "draws a lot out of the urn, and it is not death, [what is drawn] is neither designed nor undersigned, but [...] chance, that means without prior intention"; and what is drawn is simply "the conditions of ... further existence"[215]. Think of the stream as it trickles around roots and stones, seeking for a path to cut. Every instant of its flow repeats the moment of its first overflowing; every moment it is bound to either overcome, or be overcome by, the resistance it faces.

[215] KGW i.4 556. trans and cited Hill 89

No 'chain of causation' is at play here; rather "every power draws its ultimate consequence at every moment" (Moles 212). Expend the energy and keep flowing or be overcome and cease. That, to Nietzsche's Heraclitean eye, is all that is at play in the world: from the smallest to the largest phenomena, there is nothing but this dynamic confrontation of forces, playing itself out on multitudinous levels of reality. In GS §127, Nietzsche marks the belief that "no suffering of an effect is ever pure and without consequences" as one of the "*Aftereffects of the Oldest Religiosity*": the "primordial mythology" that sees our will as something real and persistent in time (121). This same mythology led early humans to believe that (for example) natural disasters were the result of displeased gods: that some prior wrong had 'caused' a present retribution. This is precisely the 'pathos' that we apply to all events: because we (mistakenly) believe that we are discrete, existing wills, we believe that actions carry consequences for future events: "the feeling of will suffices for him to assume cause and effect, but also to believe that he *understands* their relation".

Do we mourn those streams that fail, dry up before they reach the sea? Do we think it a cruel game of fate for them to end in swamps or lakes and never see the delta? Clearly not. So why do we assign more significance to acts that continue to (or rather *appear to us to)* support the organism - that 'drain into' the 'telos' of the river's delta? Only because we assume that *this* end or *that* outcome is somehow more important than another, when in fact all that matters in the playing of the game is *that it continues to be* played. If we understand the motions of the world in terms of aesthetic play, an act that finds its only 'purpose' in its very enactment, then we have envisaged a world that is its own continually manifesting self-justification. At every moment, it does precisely what it is 'supposed to', fulfilling its only aim and 'goal' in every instant[216].

Nietzsche extends 'free play' to all of existence by presenting a picture of a world in which the idea of a coercive, external determinism conditioning events is

[216] Perhaps we may object that a tributary is *better* if it feeds into something 'grander', that the internal logic of the game itself encourages us to see more value in those tributaries that have overcome enough to develop into sublime, picturesque rapids or majestic canyons. However, this is to privilege complex constellations that arise from multitudinous incidental force actions over those actions themselves: a valuation that is bound to arise in a being that judges itself to be the example *par excellence* of such complex systems. In truth, we have no grounds (save anthropocentric arrogance) to claim the 'unity' of the river (a unity that we ourselves *impose* or *overlay* onto things) as the 'aim' and 'purpose' of these aimless, purposeless events.

meaningless. But he also does away with the idea of a 'free agent' acting according to 'choice', dismissing the idea that '*we*' exist as the sovereign helmsman of the ship of our lives as "a beautifying pretext, a self-deception of vanity after the fact that does not want to acknowledge that the ship is *following* the current" (225). The ship "certainly has a direction", but perhaps this is *just* the current, and there is "no helmsman whatsoever?" Even if there is, how can we be sure what 'its' free will would be? Perhaps "it 'wills' to go that way *because it – must?*" Not only the organism, but now even the 'willing agent' is just a shadow, a 'result' rather than a *cause* of anything. But can we say that Nietzsche has totally removed the subject from his world? What about the 'artistically creative subject' that "On Truth" saw as the origin of all discrete objects? What is it that 'gives form' to manifolds of difference to create the semblance of organisms? The answer to this lies in the world of forces, and the nature of the 'quanta' that are the 'subjects' of all action.

§3.3 Illusion and the Aesthetic Self

The analogy of the river offered in the previous section embodies what Alistair Moles dubs an "occasionalist"[217] understanding of necessity[218]. Each 'event' of power fluctuations is understood to be simply the occasion for some expenditure of power, one which is entirely embodied and expended in its moment of enactment. The only thing that arises from each occasion is the necessity of *subsequent occasions*. This (ostensibly) prevents the unbroken succession of events from becoming a causal chain, in which each event conditions the next: it *necessitates* the next but has no control or influence over it. In this way, each event immediately accomplishes its *end* (the displacement of force) in its *means* (force displacing). In each moment, the universe is purposive towards the resolution of that moment of harmonic tension, and each subsequent moment is just a fresh tension occasioned by the prior shift of forces. In their 'totality', all these occasions are aimless, but in their individual occasions, they are

[217] This should be differentiated from the theological meaning of this term outlined by Kant in CJ §81, which holds God (and not any earthly conditions) to be the only true cause of any event.
[218] See Moles 207-222

the absolute expression of their momentary necessity. All is expended in the occasion, and thus necessity never 'totalises' out into a rigid, grand uniformity: the universe as a whole "does not maximise itself. Yet every force within the universe maximises itself [...] and consequently necessity is the rule. The necessity of the universe is the totality of such 'local' necessities" (Moles 218). So we have a universe that is, taken together, purposeless, but that is absolute necessity in all its 'local' iterations. Beyond their own (contingent) 'characters' "there is no constraint or necessity governing the behaviour of power-quanta, nor are there external principles governing their actions" (179).

In Grimm's estimation, this absolute expenditure of necessity in the moment shows that the theory of the 'will to power' emerged to supersede and nullify the Heraclitean 'unity'. If we are to keep necessity isolated to within events, there can be no question of the force world being anything other than "isolated power centres" acting upon one another (Grimm 175). He firmly emphasises the 'monadic' quality of each quantum event, as well as the absolute isolation of the individual quanta in their loosely aligned 'constellations' (pp.171-2). However, this threatens to reduce the force world to something like atomism- wholly isolated units acting, collectively, with complete arbitrariness. Life is, once again, a "fragment and riddle and fearful chance" (Z II§21). Grimm recognises this and tries to avoid it by re-iterating that the quanta are wholly "dynamic and relational"- that they have no existence except that which emerges in their relation to the other quanta and are thus "unified through necessary reliance" (172). This means that the 'splendid isolation' he tries to invest the quanta with is impossible, since all changes in the force world dynamically affect *all* its quanta:

> the balance of power between forces in any neighbourhood[219] is the momentary occasion for a new balance. The changes in one neighbourhood occasion changes in the next. Even a small change in the balance of power at one point may lead to big changes in another point (Moles 212).

In the Heraclitean sense: 'ἓν πάντα εἶναί"[220].

The problem that we arrive at here is how the *local* necessities of each force moment can be prevented from 'totalising' into a 'rigid, universal necessity'. The answer

[219] Moles' term for 'constellations' of quanta: one which advances over Grimm's in so far as it emphasises the looseness of the quanta, but loses a lot of the quality of arrangement that seems important to an understanding of them as 'power centres' rather than simply quanta adjacent in space.
[220] 'all things are one'

to this is 'chance', the element of 'chaos' in the universe that "saves the world from becoming petrified into being and moral finality" (Williams 342). Raymond Williams' study pays a great deal of attention to this tension, and (contra Grimm) forwards Heraclitus' *harmoníā* of opposites as the answer: an idea of unity that resists becoming singular and absolute; that

> is not metaphysical in so far as it is not a closed totality, as it does not congeal into a system [...] opposing terms constantly change roles and intertwine in an endless play of compensations of successful or failed attempts at equilibrium (Haar, cited Williams 344).

Chance 'disrupts' the mechanistic patterns of necessity, preventing it from 'congealing over' into a teleological determination. But the question is, where does this 'chance' reside? And does its introduction not 'break' the necessity of the world and reduce it once more to fragment?

Moles answer takes the form of a Heraclitean 'is-and-is-not'. Having said that all necessity is *local* and never totalises (218), he immediately turns around to say that "At the local level, chance is everywhere; but when the whole universe is considered, every event is strictly necessary" (219). This dichotomy is justified by saying that 'chance' and 'necessity' are differentiated by *perspective*. 'Necessity' is that which is "inner" to the quanta- what is 'within its domain of control'- while chance is what is "external" to it: "other forces are beyond its domain: they are chance". The 'inner necessity' of some 'force centre' is confronted by forces outside its control- but since this 'other' is just a *competing necessity*, we have a world in which the 'sea of chaos' is revealed as contrasting necessities. Individually, from the perspective of their rivals, they appear as chance. But taken together, each is a manifestation of its own absolute necessity. As a result of this competing necessary perspectives, "the universe cannot be transformed permanently into a single inner necessity. It is in this sense that Nietzsche calls the universe essentially chance". Each force acts to maximise itself at the expense of all the others and this continual grabbing for resources means that no one quanta can ever come to define the whole of the force world: "for the killer will be killed in his turn [...] conflict is justice" (Heraclitus LXXXII).

This is a compelling construction, and one that seems to fit the criteria we set ourselves in discussing the 'world-artist's' redemptive perspective. Unlike the *nous*, we are not required to adopt a special perspective dependent on a certain frame of mind

(dispassionate 'awe' for the 'beauty' of the universe). Instead, just have to understand that those things that encounter us as 'evils' are no more nor less 'right' and 'necessary' than the things we regard as 'good' (our own so called 'desires'). Moles' emphasis on the *predatory* nature of the process clearly has precedent in Nietzsche's writings on the subject[221], and the image of forces greedily grabbing for more corresponds with the images of nature's deluge (explored in chapter one of this study). However, Moles' presentation threatens to overstep the fine line between a Nietzschean image of this process and the Schopenhaurian/Darwinian one – into an image of nature as a vicious grabbing after finite resources, rather than an 'innocent' striving after 'more'. Given that Nietzsche is so concerned to maintain the 'innocence' of becoming and the 'Agon' in the face of the grim, victimising 'antagonism' of the individual alone in a sea of viciousness, this seems like a dangerous border to blur. And when combined with the language of 'inner and outer' -of what is under control and what is not- Moles' presentation of chance becomes alarmingly reminiscent of Epictetus. It would seem that 'love of fate' thereby becomes an injunction to 'resign ourselves' to the necessity of the events that overpower and destroy us. In addition, we are left to ask 'if all chance is merely necessity *misinterpreted*, then does chance *really* exist? Would this mistake be 'remedied' by the 'correct metaphysical perspective'?" Moles seems to have opened Nietzsche up to the possibility that, from the perspective of a 'god', all chance would be rendered illusory – 'necessity improperly interpreted'.

On top of these issues, Moles' presentation leaves us with the pressing question with which we concluded the last chapter. What can these worlds of 'inner' and 'outer' actually *mean*, in a world that cannot permit of boundaries? Nietzsche is clear in his presentation of the wholly quantitative world of the forces: "there is no *form* in nature, because there is no distinction between inner and outer"[222]; in the force world, "it is only a matter of degrees and quantities"[223] and what we have been calling 'quanta' have no discrete existence. They are simply 'concentrations' in the force matrix, differentiated only by their relative coordinates with respect to the rest of the matrix. Much like colours (our experiences of differing intensities [frequencies] of light) they are 'defined'

[221] See for e.g. WP §728, GS §3
[222] [144]
[223] [80]

only as relative stations along a contiguous spectrum. And like colours, it becomes impossible to definitively say where one starts and another ends. Moreover, we find that since they only exist relationally, they are in fact only really 'existent' 'for and through' all of the rest of the force world: they nowhere exit as 'things' but only as 'effect': "the power quanta *are* at each moment what they do" (Grimm 179)[224]. Given all of this, we are left to question what we can regard as 'inner', and if we can call anything truly 'external' to a quantum if it is defined only in relation to all other quanta.

The answer to this would seem to lie in the 'constellations', the 'domains' of control that a quantum gathers as it draws towards others, compelled by pleasure. Nietzsche seems to see something like 'form' emerging as the relations that the quanta develop as they draw together, and this could easily map onto the definition of 'inner' that Moles offers as 'under the quantum's control'. If this is the case however, then we are faced with an even more serious objection to Mole's emphasis on 'dominion' and 'subjugation'. The idea that quanta 'appropriate' one another, overpowering and drawing them into their dominion is clearly a part of the way that forces interact. But to conceive of this as a 'conquest' in the way Moles does would be to say that one quanta 'devours' another- that one *specific* quanta is the 'hub' or 'unity' of these constellations under whose power all others are subsumed. *'It'* overpowers and devours, adding power to itself. In contrast to this, an 1885 note on the nature of the 'subject ego' seems to offer a different model for understanding power centres: "A kind of aristocracy of 'cells' in which dominion resides [...] an aristocracy of equals, used to ruling jointly and understanding how to command [...] the subject as multiplicity" (WP §490). To say that one quanta 'devours' another would be to say that it's the two quanta's 'difference' was cancelled. But Nietzsche is clear that "Individual power is by no means surrendered [...] the opponent has not been vanquished, incorporated, disintegrated" (WP §624).

In this respect, Grimm's constellation model offers a better explanation. The constellations never 'congeal' into a cohesive unit, but remain in loose associations, retaining their individual drives for more power. Like the organism, they are a

[224] See also WP §635: "we eliminate these adjuncts, nothing remains over but dynamic quanta, in a relation of tension to all other dynamic quanta: the essence of which resides in their relation to all other quanta, in their 'influence' upon the latter"

multiplicity whose individual drives happen to coincide with and promote those of its associated fellows. The 'power domains' thus only exist in so far as these associations continue- as long as the bonds of pleasure that draw them together (the increase of power they get from their association) are not countered by the differences pushing them apart. The differing quanta effects that make up the constellation remain compelled to their necessity, and these differing necessities must be kept in equilibrium, "if the power constellation is to maintain its integrity" (Grimm 162). This means that nowhere is there anything truly 'inner' in the sense that Moles argues for. The distinction arises only in the structure (since the quanta themselves have no 'self existence' to be external to), and even here, nothing is truly 'under control' or 'subdued. The quanta remain in competition with one another, and so the 'chance' that Moles locates 'outside' the constellation is also present 'within' it.

Imagine the allegory of a political union. Perhaps the admittance of a new member strains relations or resources to breaking point. Perhaps a state has simply been waiting for its opportunity to secede, or for a neighbour to be weakened. In each case, the prospect for the dissolution of the union comes from within, arising from changes in the dynamics of their interrelations. An empire is as likely to fall to internal divisions as it is to external threat: to call 'chance' that which diminishes a constellation and to locate it in some external 'other' offers an incomplete picture. The movements of the force world should be considered as *statecraft* rather than warfare, which is only a very limited aspect of that craft. In the same way that an invasion might be decided as much by internal strife weakening a defender's resistance, the greater force of one centre trying to pull in another is only one half of the equation. We might just as easily envisage a state breaking away to join another, compelled by the prospect of greater power. This movement would come down to the 'pleasure' of that state, rather than the overwhelming acquisitive desire of the other. This model is not available to Moles, because in his construction, forces in the physical world cannot *dissimulate*. There is thus no capacity to move past the 'warfare' analogy and develop a 'diplomacy' of forces – at least not until the emergence of the organic.

Self as 'Cyber Art'

For Moles, inorganic forces can confront each other only "nakedly", which he takes to mean 'in their fullness and without ambiguity': "Only in the atypical realm of organisms is there hiding and deception" (212). But when we consider that the way a quantum acts is down to its 'contingent character', to the way its memories have conditioned it to interpret sensation, this idea of 'nakedness' becomes far less clear-cut. Critically, the 'contingent' nature of this character should be firmly emphasised: Nothing is 'fixed' or 'essential'. Nietzsche insists that these characters are not simply the cumulative sum of all the quantum's prior memories, and while it seems he believes all memories to exert some degree of influence over a quantum - that no memory ever disappears entirely[225] - he is also clear that "it is just as impossible to speak of unerring memory as it is to speak of an absolutely purposive action produced by natural laws"[226]. The influence of memories over the reception of sensations varies, and the character that arises from them is subject to "*change*" through the development and interaction of memories; which, "depending on the nature of the attack [encounter] it [the quanta] stresses, re-enforces, and employs for the benefit of the whole"[227]. We are told that "this must be an *artistic power*. For it *creates*" by "*omitting, overlooking, failing to hear"*[228], and that "*memory* thrives on this activity and constantly practices it. *Misapprehension* is the primordial phenomenon"[229].

This 'omitting' and 'overlooking' seems to go against Moles' conception of 'naked' force encounters. Indeed it is hard to see how forces can encounter one another 'without hiding' when the very 'characters' that are responsible for their interactions are the result of this process of mediation. While this 'artistic forgetting' is more prevalent and complex in organic systems - and can even reach the level of wholesale distortions of

[225] See for e.g. [84], [147]
[226] [163]
[227] ibid
[228] [67]
[229] [217]

the sense world[230] - there is no reason to believe it is any less a factor in inorganic forces. Indeed earlier in his treaties, Moles cites §36 of *Beyond Good and Evil* in which Nietzsche conceives of the inorganic world as "a *preform* of life": a "kind of life of drives [...] with self-regulation, assimilation, nourishment, excretion, and metabolism"[231]. Given that 'memories' (as they are discussed in the force notes) are simply reverberations of sensation persisting in the force constellations themselves, we can easily conceive of the memory's 'artistic process' of creative forgetting and emphasising as a part of this primordial, inorganic 'self-regulation'[232].

If the quanta's memory were invariable, then their habitual character would be the mechanical accretion of its prior experiences. But given the capacity to 'artistically forget', we see that the necessity of the quanta – their habitual character that shapes their interpretation of sensations – is bound up with an element of contingency. We are told that necessity means "a force cannot be anything other than what it is" (WP §639). But 'what it is' is not essential and invariant, and while the quanta are bound by necessity to interpret according to their character, that character is itself the product of a contingent process of selective forgetting. We are faced with two significant problems here. The first is that this would appear to make necessity a hostage of chance. If contingency 'decides' the grounds of necessity, then randomness holds precedent over necessity. The second problem is that in framing this process as 'artistic selection', we seem to have 'smuggled' anthropomorphic bias back into the force world. If there is an artistic selection process, then what does the selecting? Does the existence of an artistic force "then presuppose the existence of a perceiving being?"[233] A kind of 'artistic agency'?

The best way to reach an answer to the former is through an investigation of the latter. Nietzsche's aesthetic traces the 'acting agent' to its origin in Apollo, whose realm is built upon the concept of 'self-identity': "[Apollo] knows only *one* law, the individual,

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[230] GS§316 for example points to the way that memories can trigger 'flashbacks' that serve as a kind of premonition- replacing one sensation with a completely different one on the grounds of a strongly recalled association: like when an animal feels the coming of a storm: "their *pains* are prophets for them […] they do not see bad weather as weather, but as an enemy whose hands they can already *feel*"

[231] Cited Moles pp.154-5.

[232] This is further backed up by a series of notes from 1885: see WP §642-644, 646, and esp. 658: "The organic functions translated back to the basic will, the will to power-and understood as offshoots".

[233] [143]

that is, respect for the limits of the individual, *moderation* in the Hellenic sense" (BT§2:31). The 'boundary stones' of self-identity are placed upon the unitary plain of the Dionysian realm, creating the world of individuation:

> for Apollo wants to bring individuals to rest precisely by drawing boundaries between them, boundaries which his demand for self-knowledge and moderation impress upon us again and again as the most sacred laws of the world (BT§?:58).

Like stones marking the boarders of kingdoms, the boundaries produced by Apollo divide what is *materially* undivided, and much like geopolitical boarders, they exist only as *idea*- an 'idea' that is easily swept away by the violence of Dionysus:

> all that until then was known as boundary, setting of limits, shows itself here as artificial illusion [...] in the self-forgetting of the Dionysian states the individual with his limits and proportions was lost (DW II:88).

But how are we to understand the illusory nature of Apollo? If this world is illusion in the pejorative sense, then how do we explain the (apparently oxymoronic) claim that "the god of beautiful illusion must be simultaneously the god of true insight [*der wahren Erkenntnis*]" (I:81)? Why is it that the god of a non-existent dream-fantasy should lead us to true insight, and not the god whose festivals dispel that dream?

Peter Sloterdijk offers an explanation of the Apollo/Dionysus divide that is productive for understanding this apparent paradox. Looking at the world of laws and social customs that are only able to arise out of a respect for limit and moderation, Sloterdijk proposes that we interpret the Apollonian in terms of a "cybernetic"; a sort of 'artificial augmented reality' that humans overlay onto the Dionysian world in order to exist in it *as* humans (as social, verbal, cumulative, knowing creatures). Rather than representing a mystical, metaphysical 'dualism'- a realm of deception between a transcendent reality and us - Apollo is

> nothing other than the necessity of imprinting upon the amorphous compulsion of Dionysian forces and the chaotic multiplicity of the individual a controlling form, which is ruled by the law of 'moderation', individuality, self-limitation, and rationality [... it is] the self-regulation of life in the 'intermediate worlds' of endurable homeostasis (Sloterdijk 1898 pp.80-1).

The Apollonian 'illusion' world is not 'real' because it does not exist in the physical world of undifferentiated energy; just as the information on a computer does not 'exist' in the world of atoms and electrons. But this does not mean that they have *no existence*, nor does it imply a metaphysical duality (in the sense that Nietzsche is concerned with)

between the atom-world and the cyber-world. If we return to the example of the geopolitical border, we may well say that this boundary has no 'material reality'- that it is an invisible line on a non-existent map: an 'illusion'. And indeed territories 'exist' only in the human's head- all boundary stones would lose their significance if humans were to disappear. We might well "boldly assert: outside my brain it has no reality". But that does not mean that these immaterial lines do not have as much reality as anything we might claim to be 'truly, materially real'.

The world of the cybernetic is an *interpretation* of the play of forces translated into the human head, and the dream-world it produces is that which the mind *idealises* the real to be, in both the philosophic and lay senses of the term. In it "we delight in the immediate understanding of *shape* [*Gestalt*]; all forms speak to us; there is nothing unimportant or superfluous" as we transform the undifferentiated matter of a chaotic world into the "universally intelligible" (DW I: 81). It is the world *filtered* to become comprehensible: "what calls itself reality in the context of institutional discourse[234] can be nothing other than a reality in place of reality, an Apollonian explanation, ritualization, institutionalisation of the foundations of the world (*Weltgrundes)* in accordance with the criteria of endurability and predictability." (Sloterdijk 1989 76). But by itself this is simply a discussion of human psychology: of the *need* for one particular species to inhabit a world of boundaries and demarcations. Left to this, it would seem to *feed* the pejorative reading of illusion, re-enforcing the image of a poor, simple creature oblivious to the 'Truth' that its dreams hide from it. But Apollo is not exclusively a *human* god- both he and Dionysus stand equally as 'voices that speak from the heart of nature'. Grimm reminds us that this schematising, interpretative process is not exclusive to consciousness- nor it to be understood as an entirely 'mental' phenomenon. Plants, for example, engage in a process of *discriminating* and *ordering* in every part of their 'life-expression': the ivy reaches and pulls in order to grow, seeks out favourable conditions and shrinks from unfavourable ones (Grimm 74). It thus exists in its own 'cybernetic' of valuations, ordered according to its needs, existing wholly without anything like a mind or a consciousness to 'project' or 'house' it.

[234] Here meaning the world ordered into systems of social, conceptual, and linguistic convention

When understood in the context of Nietzsche's critique of the organism, we see that not only does this 'ordering process' not require a *conscious agent*, but that the -as it were- 'material agent' is also only a *result* of this process, and not its *originator*. The idea that the human cybernetic is the 'creation' of the mind denies the fact that the human *itself* exists only as

> the crossroads; she is alive only to the extent that she is a meeting point between the Dionysian and the Apollonian, i.e., that she occupies the position wherein reality, in its incapacity to be represented, encounters the institutional 'reality in the place of reality' (Sloterdijk 1989 76).

The organism is an 'idea' of the mind, one that is created by positing a boundary demarcating what 'belongs' to the organism, and what does not. Just as the human 'posits' this boundary, she is herself a boundary *posited* by (generated within the field of) the Apollonian. In forwarding his claim that the world artist must exist as a "noumenal perceiver to produce the phenomenal world", Hill reasons that "it could not be that the agent of the construction, and the act of constructing, belonged only to the world of appearances and were themselves constructions"[235]. However, this formulation commits the error of assuming that an 'act' must follow in from an 'actor', something that Nietzsche's revised theory of causation argues firmly against. To claim that the 'effect' - 'act' - must arise from a cause – 'agent' – results from an "arbitrary division and dismemberment" of what is, in reality, the 'pure act' of the 'event': "Cause and effect: there is probably never such a duality; in truth a continuum faces us, from which we isolate a few pieces" (GS §112:113). One of these pieces we call the 'actor', which we then claim to have 'given rise' to the effect. But in truth, both are bound together as 'enactments' of the event.

In the terms laid out by Hill, we have here a vision of the phenomenal as the result of an 'act' which is also responsible for enacting the so-called 'agent' of that act. This applies as much to the constellations of quanta as it does to organic 'systems' (which are just the exceedingly complex result a multiplicity of force events). Just like a human, just like a plant, a power centre exists only in so far as it *enacts* its existence, as it

> edits, arranges, schematises and simplifies the chaos which surrounds it. Each individual interprets a world for himself by picking out those elements of his chaos of impressions

[235] Ralph Walker, cited Hill 98-9.

> which are of concern to him, and by simplifying, generalising and structuring them in a manner most conducive to his welfare (Grimm 72).

And, just as with the 'human individual', this process of artistic 'editing' begins with the most primordial of artistic processes; the artistic creation of the 'self'. After telling us that there is no 'inner and outer' in the force world, Nietzsche then introduces a pregnant metaphor: "all art is based upon the *mirror* of the eyes"[236]. All form, structure, arrangement is the result of 'measure', an 'ordering' by relative 'qualities' that are themselves "measured according to 'us'"[237]. Structure presupposes a 'perspective' from which to interpret relations into existence, but that perspective is as much the result of this interpretive process: "images in the human eyes! This governs the entire nature of the human being: from the *eye*! Subject!"[238]. The 'eye', the perspective of the 'interpreting agent', is an artistically generated 'mirror' that not only allows for the emergence of (relational) qualities in the 'outside' it reflects (through providing a point against which to measure these relations) but also 'defines' the agent to which the perspective belongs.

Translated into the force schema, this insight means that the 'constellations' that constitute that world's 'discrete perspectives' are the result of the same 'creative action' that gives rise to its interpretation of other constellations. Its 'identity' is enacted purely in the event, which simultaneously erects the 'boundary' of the constellation (what is a 'part' of it and what 'belongs' to what is being confronted), its 'nature' (how it 'interprets itself' into existence through the artistic selection of memories) and engenders the qualities of the 'other' it is encountering (against that created 'self-ness'). Understood in this way, the 'illusion' of self-ness loses its mendacious connotations. Indeed, we now understand what Nietzsche meant when he declared "all life is founded on [...] art, illusion, optic, the necessity of perspective and of error" (AC §5:9). The myth that *Birth* recounts of Apollo's victory over the Titans reminds us that a world of measure, of proportion, indeed a world in which 'push' and 'pull' are even *meaningful* is "only possible where proportion, the boundary, becomes *visible*. In order to stay within the boundaries, one must know them: therefore, the apollonian reminder; "know thyself'" (DW§2:87). The illusion of qualities and of a self-ness against which to measure them

[236] [144]
[237] [156]
[238] [66]

holds no correspondence in the 'material' manifestation of forces. But that manifestation is nothing more than their 'effects', which are made possible only by this illusion.

As Grimm points out, the fact that Apollo 'falsifies' something about the world "is not meant to be a pejorative. [...] our erroneous judgements about the world are not to be thought of as 'mistakes' since there is no 'true' (ie unchanging) world about which we could be mistaken" (70). Since there are no 'things' in the world, and even the 'material composition' of the world is 'matter interpreting itself into existence', then the idea of a "Truth" to set against the 'falsehood' of our interpretive understanding becomes utterly meaningless: "perspectival falsification is not an interpretation *of* some underlying reality which continues to exist regardless of how we happen to interpret. The world *is* our interpretation and nothing else" (86). In addition to explaining the apparent but illusory nature of the enacting agency, this understanding also explains how Apollo can be the 'god of true insight' as well as of illusion. Since "all knowing is a process of reflecting in quite specific forms, in forms that do not exist from the outset"[239] we see that 'knowledge' comes under the remit of the god whose 'power' generates these forms. In this understanding, we have the first glimpse of the new conception of knowledge that Nietzsche's Free Spirit works seek to establish: knowledge based in understanding the aesthetic process that shapes the movements of our dynamic world.

Conclusion: Towards a New Knowledge

Through the Dionysian insight, we come to realise that the apparent 'agent' of the interpretive/creative act is in fact only one of that act's 'effects'. The 'self' is not responsible for 'thinking' the world into existence, "but is itself posited or created through a more fundamental act of thinking"; "thinking not only constructs, but is constructed" (Grimm pp.164-5). In this way, the 'conscious' human agent and its 'aesthetic actions' of world-creation are just another form of the aesthetically creative process that 'interprets' the world into existence: "mind, consciousness, the thinking

[239] [133]

ego etc. are themselves not anything different to the world, but aspects of it, and without any special ontological cognitive status" (154). The naturalist absorption of the human back into the 'nature-word' of forces is completed, as and with it is ended any idea of "the moral autonomy of the subject and the superstition of free will" (Sloterdijk 1989 81). But this subject is not 'dispelled' – merely "decentred": "released from its fictional central position in the moral cosmos" (82). The question of if 'artistic action' presupposes an artistic agency has been resolved. Or has it? Having 'decentred' the subject, it still seems beholden on us to show that what it is decentred 'in favour of' is not just another 'agency'. It has been a recurrent concern of this study to show that whatever 'orders' the world it cannot be reduced to a "pantheism", a world that is "in every moment *logically* necessary"[240] for if it was, then this 'logic' would come to take the place of god as an 'identity' preceding existence. However we must, on the other hand, consider this dictate against the problems raised in allowing contingency precedent over necessity.

Both of these issues find their resolution in the aesthetic. We should recall once more the formulation of the aeon that creates without willing. The 'struggle of the many' bearing within it 'law and justice', the tension between "necessity and random play, oppositional tension and harmony" - all "must pair to *create* the work of art" (PTA §7:61). Nietzsche's aesthetic is above all a 'process of creation', one which is *itself responsible* for creation. We should recall Adorno's image of art as the playing out of the work's own 'inner necessity', and append this understanding to the Heraclitean vision of lawfulness as the immanent enactment of necessity. The 'artistic power' of the world gives rise to formations – to quanta characters, to constellations, to organic and inorganic matter – purely through the enactment of immanent necessity. As the world-artist builds, it "connects, joins and forms according to inner laws", and the aeon 'itself' should be considered as nothing more than this lawfulness enacting itself into existence. Just as with the work of art, there is an 'ordering' (*κόσμος*)[241] that prevents the fall into chaos and allows for the semblance of structure. But this 'ordering' is not undertaken according to the rigid 'identity' orientated logic of reason: rather, it manifests a form of

[240] WP §55

[241] 'kosmos' – See Kahn 2001 pp.22-3, 132-3 for commentary on Heraclitus' 'cosmos as ordering'

reason that resists this fall into rigidity; "the aim of aesthetic rationality [...] is to divest itself, in opposition to all imposed order, of both hopeless natural necessity and chaotic contingency" (Adorno 150).

The task of a 'new knowledge of necessity' thus becomes an understanding of this rationality, of the ways that the 'world-process' manifests our protean world of becoming. Traditional 'conceptual' rationality – the rationality of 'the sciences' and 'logic' – aims to grasp the 'identity' of the world. But an insight into the 'truth' of necessity renders this project untenable. Having established this as part of his early aesthetic project, Nietzsche went on to develop the Free Spirit works as both an elaboration on, and exercise in, a different approach to knowledge: one in line with the "dynamic knowing" that Heraclitus is claimed to have erected against "*contemplative knowledge" (*PP §10:71) and the 'aesthetic wisdom' Nietzsche saw in the Early Pre-Socratics.

Chapter 4: Knowledge and Aesthetics in the Free Spirit

> We, however, want to *become who we are* – human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves! To that end, we must become the best students and discoverers of everything lawful and necessary in the world: we must become *physicists* in order to be creators in this sense – while hitherto all valuations and ideals have been built upon *ignorance* of physics or in contradiction to it. So, long live physics! And even more, long live what *compels* us to it – our honesty! (GS §335:189).

In a recent collection of essays on Nietzsche's Free Spirit works, Duncan Large offers an overview of the scholarship surrounding this period (as well as studies concerned with Nietzsche's aesthetics more broadly)[242] to support the following characterisation: "the standard view of the aesthetics of the Free Spirit trilogy is that, effectively, it doesn't have one" (69). The broadly accepted narrative holds that Nietzsche, motivated by 'embarrassment' for his early writings and their 'slavish devotion' to Wagner and Schopenhauer, conceived of the Free Spirit as "an 'overcoming of art', for the duration […] at least, until the re-assertion of the aesthetic paradigm with the work of art that is *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* and a rebirth of interest in the Dionysian aesthetic (now very differently conceived from *Birth*)" (70). In almost all of the studies that Large cites, the first work of the trilogy, *Human all too Human,* is seen as a point of undeniable rupture: a clear declaration on Nietzsche's part that he had thrown away aesthetics in the same motion that cast off his professorial robes and Wagner's Treibshen circle. And indeed, this view point seems well founded. There is no denying that *Human* takes a deeply critical and adversarial stance on artists and their works. The task the piece sets itself of 'liberating' humanity from the "blissful and blinding errors that stem from metaphysical and artistic ages" (§3:17) would seem to render Nietzsche's stance on the matter unambiguous. And any lingering doubts would appear settled by the means that Nietzsche proposes to achieve this task: the development of a "genuine science, *as the imitation of nature in concepts*" (§38:47).

[242] See Large pp.69-72

With *Human* as its opening volley, it is easy to see why scholarship on the role of the aesthetic is so sparse when it comes to the Free Spirit works. The acerbic critique of artists we find in the book, and its crowning of science as the great ally of philosophy would seem to show conclusively that the 'aesthetic values' praised in the early works have been dethroned. The creative 'aesthetic' relation to the world praised in *Birth* and "On Truth" seems to have been cast aside in favor of 'knowledge'. The fact that we find, near the end of "St Januarius", an aphorism entitled "*Long Live Physics*" shows that this commitment is as strong in the closing pages of the trilogy as it was in its opening, as it was at its mid-point when *Dawn* heaped ire upon those who "don't know what it means to have the insatiable longing for knowledge rule over [them] as a law" (§270:179) and praises them who "discover that our life is *consecrated* to the pursuit of knowledge" (§195:139). But is it right to read this turn towards 'knowledge' as a wholesale rejection of the aesthetic?

The dismissal of 'artistic and metaphysical ages' would seem to be an explicit rejection of the 'artist's metaphysic' – but as was established in chapter 2, much of what is assumed in the critical literature about this theory is miscast: including the idea that it is a 'metaphysic' in the sense that Nietzsche wishes to oppose. And in chapter 3, we saw that the 'physics' that he came to embrace in *Human* was derived from this aesthetic conception of the world. Moreover, it was argued that this world relies – in ways that we must now further examine – upon something expressly 'aesthetic' about its motions to ground two of its essential attributes: its 'lawfulness without law' and its 'artistry without an artist'. If we look at "*Long Live Physics*", we can see that these commitments are very much still a part of Nietzsche's image of that subject. The aphorism rejects "universal laws", heralds physics as a means to 'creation' and emphasises the need to 'give laws to ourselves' in order to 'create ourselves'. In this chapter, we will examine the Free Spirit project not as a 'rupture' in Nietzsche's relation with the aesthetic but as a *Volta*, a poetical turn of descent and opposition that develops a flow of thought instead of invalidating and surpassing it. Far from throwing away the artistic in favour of the scientific, the 'subjective' for the 'objective', the Free Spirit is a process of reconciling and bringing back into productive harmony a view that had grown one-sided and unbalanced in the name of a new form of knowledge.

Nietzsche envisages this new knowledge as a practice, framed in allegorical terms as a 'seafaring quest'. The inseparability of this knowledge from its practice shows itself in the 'style' that Nietzsche employs as means to his own quest. Large's characterisation of the disjunction between the Free Spirit and 'the artwork that is Zarathustra' overlooks all that is poetic, rhetorical, and literary about the trilogy itself. A principal concern of this chapter will be to examine the way Nietzsche envisaged the 'quest for knowledge' through its practice in these writings, and in their culmination *Thus spoke Zarathustra*. But before we can do this, we must examine the nature of the so-called 'scientific turn' and show how it helped to develop, rather than overturn, the early writing's aesthetic philosophy. In doing this, we will finally narrow in on the 'practice' of the aesthetic that is so central to Nietzsche's thought, answering questions left hanging in the previous chapter and laying the groundwork for an understanding of the 'experimental' style of the Free Spirit.

§4.1 Alas, All Too Human

Besides Julian Young, whose reading of *Human* was argued against in the previous chapter, the other notable commentator to forcefully argue that this work represents a wholesale rejection of the aesthetic is Philip Pothen. In his study, *Nietzsche and the Fate of Art*, Pothen joins Young in arguing that *Human* serves to denounce the 'mystical, irrational metaphysic' that was the bedrock of Nietzsche's early 'Schopenhaurian' aesthetic[243]. But where Young reads the work as an attempt to replace a metaphysic of irrational capriciousness with one of 'intelligibility' – in which the 'thing-in-itself' "can be known about, quite directly, by human beings" (Ridley 2007 37) – Pothen forwards a diametrically opposed explanation for the 'turn to science'. Where Young understood the aesthetic to be too closely aligned with an arbitrary and capricious world of groundless flux, Pothen holds that art deforms the experience of flux through its inherent tendency towards stability, order, and permanence:

> Artists and their works [...] fail to portray anything other than a reality severely circumscribed by limitations imposed by the very nature of the production of works,

[243] See Pothen §1-2: esp. pp.50-55

> which like language and the prejudices upon which language is based, reveal merely a captured moment rather than the flux of genuine experience" (Pothen 54).

So, for one critic the scientific aims for stability and predictability, and for the other it seeks to put experience back in flow. But despite their antithetical readings of both the work's commitments, and its principal coordinates - the artist and the scientist – they can be seen to overlap on one critical point. In both interpretations, the aesthetic is denounced in the name of a more 'objective' view of reality.

The focus on 'objectivity' marks an undeniable difference between *Human* and works like "On Truth" or "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life"; essays that firmly emphasise not only the folly, but the impossibility of seeking after an 'objectively True' perspective on the world. By the standards of these early works, everything in our world that claims 'objectivity' is, in fact, nothing more than

> A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, anthropomorphisms, in short the sum of human relations, which have been subjected to poetic and rhetorical intensification, translation, and decoration, and which, after they have been in use for a long time, strike people as firmly established, canonical, and binding; truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions" (TL 146).

When contextualised in light of §3.3 of this study and its discussion of illusion, we can see why 'scientific optimism' and its promise for "the prospect of discovering the law-governed nature of the whole solar system" (BT §15:84) were so derided by Nietzsche. 'Objective Truth', the 'stable rock' upon which reason claims to build its universally valid and correct perspective, is a lie that hides the real nature of truth: that it belongs entirely to the realm of illusion. Once more it should be emphasised that this is not to be understood pejoratively: it simply means that everything that we can have knowledge 'about' exists entirely relatively and referentially. It does not have 'Being', undeniable existence in and of itself, but is 'interpreted' into existence as a part of the dynamic play of force relations. And so the scientific claim for 'objectivity' is just a mask and a dangerous pretence, disguising the fact that 'objective Truths' are just interpretations like everything else- "[containing] nothing that is 'true in itself', really and in a generally valid sense, regardless of mankind" (TL 147).

Both "On Truth" and "Uses and Disadvantages" are centrally concerned with this rejection of 'historic' and 'scientific' dispositions. Since an 'objective fact' is just a subjective interpretation that has forgotten it is one (or that mendaciously pretends not

to be one) there is no reason to privilege established ways of construing our relations to either our surroundings or our past over new and daring ones. Where ease and security encourages us to follow well-trodden interpretive pathways, "that fundamental human drive [to create] which cannot be left out of consideration for even a second without also leaving out human beings" is not satisfied with the passive reception of old interpretations: the caged beast grows restless, "imprisoned" in the "fortress" it built for its own safety (TL pp.150-1). Where meekness leads some to remain in 'captivity', away from "fearful powers which constantly press in on him and which confront scientific truth with 'truths' of quite another kind" (150), The artist and the philosopher shun that 'cold' and 'sterile' life of easeful security for an existence of 'free creation' "guided, not by concepts but by intuition" (152). In sharp contrast to this advocacy for a life lived in hot, impassioned, delirious intensity, *Human* calls for the "quenching and cooling" of an age grown too hot and spiritual[244]. And as a means to that cooling, it champions the development of a 'science of concepts'. How are we to interpret this shift?

Our examination of Young's reading of *Human* in chapter 3 should make it clear that it is nonsensical to see the work as arguing for the objective validity of conceptual formulation. Concepts claim to directly name objects in the material world, and Nietzsche's theory of physics is unequivocal in its stance that all such ideas of objective correspondence are not only impossible but also meaningless. Pothen's interpretation agrees with this and frames the scientific quest for objectivity in terms of an elimination of subjective bias from our understanding of the world. It is impossible to firmly and objectively 'grasp' the world in flux but is possible to work towards eliminating those prejudices that encourage us to distort our relation to that world. §9 of *Human* tells us that a belief in metaphysical worlds has been able to persist because these beliefs remain *"valuable, terrible, pleasurable"* as a result of the same things that "engendered" them in the first place: "passion, error, and self-deception; the worst of all methods of knowledge, not the best of all, have taught us to believe in them" (20). Our passions carry us away and lead us to believe things are a certain way, because we 'passionately feel' that they are that way:

> We have Christianity, the philosophers, poets, and musicians to thank for an overabundance of deeply moving sensations: but to keep them from overgrowing us, we

[244] HAH I §38:47. See also §56, 162, 244.

> have to conjure up the spirit of science which makes us on the whole somewhat colder and more sceptical, and in particular, cools down the scorching stream of a faith in final, definitive truths (HAH I §244:167-8).

Art, alongside religion, is a choleric that enflames the passions and clouds our judgements. The goal of science is to let us see past this and view the world more clearly.

This reading has much that is valuable about it for understanding the role of science. But it also succumbs to a dangerous error that is closely bound up with precisely the problem Pothen diagnoses in the perspective of the artist. He claims that Nietzsche rejects the artist's insight into the world because the 'products' of the artist are nothing but 'reflections' of the artist. The Scientist, on the other hand, "seek[s] knowledge of the world *from* the world without recourse to fictional embellishments and with no motive beyond the need to understand the world and to convey that understanding" (Pothen 55). In claiming that science is the practice of attaining knowledge 'about the world from the world' Pothen removes the 'interpreter' from the process of interpretation, and holds that knowledge is an understanding of the world 'in itself', without the distorting 'fictional embellishments' that we bring to that 'in-itself'. But as the theory of forces makes clear, "there is no world apart from interpretations of it: the world is an interpretive process" (Grimm 72). To claim that we can know the world free from the 'distortions' of perspective is to deny that

> Knowledge is only possible as a reflection and by measuring *oneself* according to *one* standard (sensation). We *know* what the world is: absolute and unconditional knowledge is the desire to know without knowledge (CW 11 19[146]:47-8)

In seeking to remove the 'interpreter' from the process of knowledge, we deny the wholly referential nature of the world we seek to understand. And to reject wholesale the so-called 'embellishments' of interpretation is to presuppose that there is a 'correct' interpretation hidden underneath them. In truth however, Nietzsche's theory of 'dynamic knowledge' is predicated precisely on the notion that "perspectival falsification is not an interpretation *of* some underlying reality which continues to exist regardless of how we happen to interpret. The world *is* our interpretation and nothing else" (Grimm 86).

A group of interconnected aphorisms from the first chapter of *Human* shows quite clearly that Nietzsche has not moved away from this understanding in that work. After an aphorism on our bad mental habits which highlights the obfuscating role of

the feelings – our tendency to take a pleasurable outcome to say something about the value of an act (HAH I §30) – and another that opines that the illogical is so firmly bound up with "everything that lends value to life that we cannot remove it without thereby doing irremediable damage" (§31:39) we are presented with a further two aphorisms that reaffirm the premise of Nietzsche's force theory: that all life is based in perspectival interpretation. §32 reminds us that all differentiation relies on measuring according to a standard; that this standard – the stable, self-same 'self' – is an arbitrary illusion; and that aversion and attraction are nothing but relative appraisals. §33 then goes on to reiterate that life is grounded in overlooking and emphasising, while §34 starkly reiterates the definition of knowledge from the notebook fragment cited above: "Knowledge can allow only pleasure and pain, utility and harm to persist as motives" (41). Clearly Nietzsche is not advocating for the sort of 'blank slate' objectivity that Pothen appears to be arguing for. And a closer examination of the work's attitude to art also seems to call into question the idea that Nietzsche regarded it as something to be 'purged' from humanity in the name of a more scientific future.

Human's fourth chapter is primarily concerned with art and artists, and is indeed centrally occupied with attacking artists for their role in keeping humanity tethered to the sentimental feelings it had poured into its metaphysics: "even when the Free Spirit has divested [itself] of everything metaphysical, the highest effects of art easily bring forth a sympathetic resonance from a metaphysical string, though long silenced or even broken" (HAH I §153:117). Young's study also overlaps with Pothen's in this regard, highlighting the role of art in encouraging humans to value feeling over intellect. He traces the privileged role afforded to 'genius' and 'instinct' in the early writings to a "Schopenhaurian reverence for the transcendence of rationality" (Young 58), and reads the fourth chapter of *Human* as an explicit rejection of this 'mystical pseudo-rationality'. Young closely mirror's Pothen's arguments on the matter when he says that art

> Enables us to enjoy religious sentiment without the need to subscribe to any conceptual content – a point not only admitted but emphasised as constituting its central value by, in particular, Kant. Art in a secular age provides, as it were, a catacomb in which the religious habit of mind can continue to exist (Young 65)

As stated before, both critics are – to an extent – correct in this assessment. But this view does not pay enough attention to the qualifier 'in a secular age' that formed part of Young's summation. The aphorism that he cites as the basis for this critique (HAH I

§150) makes it clear that this is an affliction to which art is *prone*, "when religions decline" (116). At such times, art "takes over a multitude of feelings and moods created by religion, takes them to heart, and becomes itself deeper, more animated, so that it can communicate exultation and enthusiasm, which it was previously unable to do".

The problem then is not with art per-se, so much as with its applications and the temptations and afflictions that it is prone to. And if we look to the name of the chapter that deals with aesthetic topics in the work, we get an even clearer picture of what the problem might be: *"Aus der Seele der Künstler und Schriftsteller"*; Arts religious deformation arises '*from* the souls of artists'. In the 1886 introductions to both volumes of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche discusses the two works as a convalescent's 'remedy', written a means to rid himself of certain poisons through withdrawal and abstention. Critics such as Michael Ure[245] and Keith Ansell Pearson[246] have highlighted the 'therapeutic' and 'diagnostic' element of the Free Spirit works, and as the introduction to the second volume (which we shall discuss shortly) makes clear, one of the most pressing maladies Nietzsche felt he had to overcome was the 'romantic artist' in his soul – that which had made him so prone to the affliction of "pessimism [...] the cancerous ill of old idealists and habitual liars" (HAH I 10). Part of this convalesce, it will be argued, is to diagnose and treat the illness of the 'artists soul', not so that the art might be done away with, but so it might be 'saved' from its misuse at the hands of vain and deceptive 'old lairs'. Viewed in this light, the critique of art offered in *Human* becomes an extension of the project that the "Attempt" identifies in *Birth*: that of "[looking] at art through the optic of life". But here, that view is reversed, and instead of "viewing science through the optic of art" (AC §2:6), it is art's turn to fall under the scrutiny of science.

[245] *Nietzsche's Therapy: Self-Cultivation in the Middle Period Works*, Lexington Books, 2008

[246] See for e.g. "Beyond Compassion: On Nietzsche's Moral Therapy in *Dawn*" *Continental Review of Philosophy*, vol. 44, no.2, 179-204, "In Search of Authenticity and Personality" *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 2000, vol.20, 5-33 "True to the Earth: Nietzsche's Epicurean Care of Self and World" *Nietzsche's Therapeutic Teachings*, ed. H. Hutter, E. Friedland, Bloomsbury, 2013, 97-116

Nietzsche Contra Wagner

In calling for a revised look at the status of aesthetics in the Free Spirit works, Duncan Large follows Young's example[247] in drawing a line between the first and second volumes of *Human.* In doing so, he follows in the footsteps of that critical tradition he wishes to go against, by choosing to skirt around the difficulties posed by the first volume of that work. However, this may well be a case of 'the better half of valor'. Arguing that the first volume of *Human* is anything but an outright denunciation of the aesthetic seems like a hopeless undertaking, especially given the way that the work's chapter on art ends: with a pair of aphorisms declaring the "*Twilight of art"* – after which we will "view the artist as a magnificent relic" (HAH I §223:152) – and heralding "the scientific human being [as] a further development of the artistic one" (§222:152). Art, it seems is destined to die out. And though Ridley is correct to say that "even in its alleged dotage, art may have its uses" (2007 46), it seems from the general tenor of the work that art's most helpful act would be to assist in its own euthanasia. However, the claim that the scientific human is a 'further development' of the artistic one should give us pause for thought. At the very least it seems to argue against Pothen and Young's impression that Nietzsche forwards science as an 'antipode' to the aesthetic. Indeed, it seems that Nietzsche is going out of his way to assert lineage between the two: the 'scientist' as the 'heir' to the artist.

To understand the nature of this line of decent, it is necessary to look at the criticisms that *Human* levels at art and artists. The broad sweep of this has already been touched on: that art is complicit in enabling humanities 'religion' habit. But this generalized criticism can be broken down into two elements that feed into and exacerbate one another. The first of these is a belief in the 'genius', and the pre-eminence of 'inspiration' and 'improvisation; topics that are recurrent touchstones throughout "From the souls of artists"[248]. The idea that great art comes from "great, superior, fertile spirits" owes its lineage to the "religious superstition that those spirits

[247] See Young pp.73-5
[248] These themes are addressed in §145-6, 155-165,170-2, 212, 221-2 among others

are of superhuman origin" (HAH I §164:125). The 'cult of revelation' is appropriated and the artist becomes a seer of the mysteries. She is attributed with 'prophetic insight';

> [an] immediate vision into the essence of the world, through a hole in the cloak of appearance, as it were, and [...] that they can communicate something definitive and decisive about the human race and the world by means of this miraculous prophetic vision, without the toil and rigor of science (HAH I §164:125).

This quasi-religious belief in a privileged insight 'gifted' to an elect few keeps alive the superstitious mindset and accustoms us to write off as blasé and mundane the more honest insights reached through 'merely human' means.

It appears to be a problem with art *per se* that it encourages this sort of mystical thinking. In the art chapter's opening aphorism, Nietzsche notes that before great works of art like the Paestum, we are prone to "*almost* feel as if a god had playfully built his dwelling one morning [...] as if a soul had been suddenly, magically transformed into a stone and now wants to speak from within" (HAH I §145:114). This observation, combined with the aphorism's sardonic title - "*What is perfect cannot have come to be*" – harkens back to Nietzsche's observations on the aesthetic nature of the organism, and his critique of Kant's 'intrinsic perfection'[249]. We saw there how the analogy of the artwork assists the science of biology, recalling to us that the 'Truth' of organic form is just another of the aesthetic constructs we give form to in the world around us. But the emphasis now seems firmly on the obfuscatory element of our aesthetic sense: that which confounds and seduces us into forgetting that what we are looking at is a work of human artifice. Why this transition? The answer partially lies in the other element of the artistic that the work takes issue with; its privileging of passion, feeling, and 'effect'.

Human sees Nietzsche turn on the enchanting, transporting effect of art. It is portrayed as a dangerous and regressive narcotic, under whose influence the artist "more and more comes to worship sudden stimulations, believes in gods and demons [...] becomes changeable in his moods" (§159:120). This image of a twitching, hallucinatory 'enervation addict' is presented alongside descriptions of audiences whose ears and eyes have grown dulled from overstimulation and who "learn to grab with ever more satisfaction for what is intrinsically ugly and disgusting [...] that is, what has a vulgar sensuousness" (§217:145). But more significant than the detrimental effect it has

[249] see §3.1 p.134

on our senses – "the sensory organs themselves become dull and weak, the symbolic more and more takes the place of what exists" – is the tendency it helps perpetuate in us of taking the 'strength' of an impression for the 'validity' of an impression. As §15 reminds us, the fact that we can only relate to the world through sensation means that we are accustomed to take more powerful impressions to be more 'real' than subtler ones. This is true for pain and fear, but also for 'spiritual' feelings: 'deeper', more 'profound' feelings are often held to be 'truer', when really "a strong belief demonstrates only its strength, not the truth of what is believed" (§15:26)[250]. The goal of a 'scientific culture' is to combat this faith in the pre-eminence of intuition and feeling – to 'cool' the passions that cloud and distort our judgments and teach us to be ordered and methodical in our beliefs.

Esteem for grand, intoxicating effects feeds belief in the genius – in the 'supernatural insight' of those who can profoundly affect us through their work – and is, in turn, fed by the nature of the art object. The 'complete' nature of the work of art, its existence as a unified whole in which everything is 'sublime and perfect' and 'nothing could possibly be changed' serves "*in majorem artis gloriam*"[251] (§171). It engenders in us the impression that it leapt, fully formed from the artist's 'divine imagination':

> Everything finished, perfected, is viewed with amazement [...] nobody looking at the work of the artist can see how it *came to be*; that is his advantage [...] the perfected art of representation turns aside all thought about becoming; it rules tyrannically as perfection, here and now" (HAH I §162 pp.123-4)

Artists have become adept at hiding the 'chisel marks' of their process and have both fueled and fed upon a culture that praises "the greatest possible *effect*" (§162:126). Pothen sees this emphasis on the finished totality in art as something incurable, arising from the very nature of artistic representation. A life of creating fixed, static 'images' that profess to capture something 'real' and 'essential' about their subjects enforces the belief in permanence and stability – that there is something 'essential' there that can be captured and held. Pothen sees this as arising first in the concept of the artist as 'sovereign creator': of an 'I' that is the 'agent' of these creations. And "if we imagine ourselves as self-identical entities, then it is not surprising that we imagine others the

[250] see also HAH I §161
[251] "for the greater glory of art" (HAH I 334)

same", ultimately arriving by "but a short step [...] at the fictions of art in general": that the world and its objects have 'identity' and a fixed 'character' (Pothen pp.51-4).

Of course, it is not only artists who make the mistake of assuming stable self-identity. But Nietzsche does seem to see art, with its emphasis on impassioned portraits that capture the 'soul' or 'idea' of their subjects and its cult of the great individual creator, as critical to preserving and proliferating this delusion. We see this in Nietzsche's decision to frame his discussion of "*Appearance and thing in itself*" in terms of a sort of philosophic art gallery:

> Philosophers are given to placing themselves in front of life and experience - in front of what they call the world of appearance - as in front of a painting that has been unrolled once and for all and shows the same incidents unalterably fixed: they think that one has to interpret these incidents correctly in order to draw any conclusion about the entity that produced the painting (HAH I §16:26).

Because we view the 'painting' as an 'art-object' – something fixed that we 'stand before' and 'contemplate', something with determinate features to be examined and artifice that we take to be indicative of a 'creator' - we have developed a warped impression of existence. However, Nietzsche's answer to this is not that we cease to understand the world as a work of art, but that we become more informed art critics. We must come to realise "that the painting -what we human beings now call life and experience - has gradually *come to be*, indeed, is still wholly *becoming*, and therefore should not be considered as a fixed quantity" (HAH I §16:26). Moreover, this realisation is intimately bound up with the Dionysian aesthetic perspective that collapses the difference between spectator and artwork, or more pertinently, between artwork and 'artist'. Nietzsche reminds us that it is only through our interpretation of it that "this world has gradually *become* so wonderfully bright, terrible, profoundly meaningful, soulful, and has taken on color-but we have been the colorists: the human intellect has made appearances appear and carried its erroneous views over into things" (28). We do not 'spectate' the painting, but rather have an active role in affording it form and colouration.

We should here recall the epistemic formulation offered in the force-world notes: the stupid being stands before the painting, and it exists for him only in so far as he is

an artist, who caries forms around in his head[252]. The interconnectedness of observer/creator/observed outlined in the early aesthetic writings is still clearly an important part of Nietzsche's philosophic vision. The aphorism "*Delusion of the contemplative ones"* from "St. Januarius" makes this quite clear. The 'thinker', the one who mentally engages with the world instead of just 'drifting' through it, passively 'existing' is stalked by

> A *delusion* [that] remains his constant companion: he thinks himself placed as spectator and listener before the great visual and acoustic play that is life; he calls his nature contemplative and thereby overlooks the fact that he is also the actual poet and ongoing author of life (GS §301:171).

Humans, as "thinking-sensing ones, really and continually *make* something that is not yet there: the whole perpetually growing world of valuations, colours, weights, perspectives, scales, affirmations, and negations" and wherever 'qualities' appear in the world, it is because "*we* were the giver and granters" of the perspectives that engendered them (GS §301:171). "Only we have created the world that concerns human beings!". This realisation is the greatest achievement of knowledge, but also its most difficult to keep hold and make use of; "and when we catch it for a moment we have forgotten it the next". But it is nevertheless critical to understand that knowledge about the world cannot be considered a passive, objective process of observation and absorption.

Pothen's vision of the scientist as taking 'knowledge of the world, without distortion and embellishment' seems to misunderstand the reality of Nietzschean knowledge. As Grimm puts it, "we are not patrons in an epistemological movie house. Reality and our knowledge with regard to it are *processes* in which we are actively engaged, not separate realms of being which we passively observe and comment upon" (148). But it also seems that Nietzsche has, by the time of *Human*, come to see art's capacity to use illusion to *reveal* illusion - to break the spell of 'identity' through conjuring gods onto the stage in the form of "a solemn, stiff, masked puppet" (GS§80:80) – as severely compromised. Art, according to *Human*, would rather revel in its ability to befuddle and spellbind.

In the later works of the Free Spirit, we see a less uncompromising stance towards art in this regard. An aphorism from book two of *Gay Science*, entitled "*Art and*

[252] See §3.2 p.136

Nature" sees Nietzsche return to his early estimation of tragic drama and his praise for its alienating, anti-natural effect. He contrasts the anti-naturalism of the tragedy - where "the vulgar charm of illusion is supposed to give way to a higher charm" – with "the beautiful *unnaturalness*" of modern opera (§GS 80:80). The latter is portrayed as a mutated offspring of the former, which has the effect of solidifying rather than effacing the gap between the 'unnatural' affectedness of art and the 'unmediated' nature world (81). This historical perspective is, however, missing from *Human*, which sees the Hellenic artist as a drunken, primal child revelling in intoxication, spreading it like a disease to other cultures[253]. Art is based in deception and can only perpetuate deception – never reveal it. Clearly there is a sharp disconnect between this and the *Gay Science* aphorism, which characterises Hellenic art as driven by "industriousness" and "sensitivity" – "certainly not the aim of overwhelming the spectator with emotions" – and which therefore "[did] everything to counteract the elemental effect of images that arouse fear and compassion" (80). In this respect we see Nietzsche offering the likes of Sophocles as 'coolers' of emotion, as quiet, industrious workers towards an art that "deprived passion itself of its deep background and dictated to it a law". Instead of encouraging and profiting from a 'saturnalia' of uncontrolled emotion, ancient art served to *educate* the emotions.

It may seem that this possibility is strictly precluded in *Human*, with its understanding that art can only enflame passion and teach it to gorge itself on vulgar excess. But a closer look at the work shows that this is not strictly the case. In the opening aphorism of "From the Souls of Artists" we see Nietzsche not only diagnose the problems of art, but also identify a cause:

> The artist knows that his work achieves its full effect only if it arouses the belief in an improvisation, in the seemingly miraculous suddenness with which it came into being; and so he helps this illusion along [...] as a means of deceiving and thereby attuning the soul of the spectator or listener so that it believes in the sudden springing forth of perfection (HAH I §145:114).

Having identified this cause, he then proposes a remedy: "[a] science of art [...] to contradict this illusion as distinctly as possible and to point out the erroneous reasoning

[253] See for e.g. HAH I §154, 170, 195

and self-indulgence that lead the intellect into the artist's net" (114). What we find, in this 'science of art', is a sort of scientific education for the aesthetic sense.

A Scientific artistry of self

The whole of "From the Souls of Artists" serves as an exercise in the science of art, critically examining the artist's pretentions and their effects in the world of art objects. But if we are looking for a programmatic distillation of this science, its aims and methods, we should look to a 'triptych' of aphorisms on the problem of genius: §162, 163, and 164. In the first of these, *"The cult of genius, from vanity"* Nietzsche offers a psychology of faith in genius and inspiration. Belief in this cult is argued to rest on a pact of mutual vanity between the artist – whose ego is swelled by adoration for her 'supernatural insight' – and an audience who wish to be deceived – likewise for the sake of their egos. For, "to call someone 'divine' means 'here we do not need to compete'": if greatness comes from genius and genius is 'gifted' only to an elect few, then we are absolved of responsibility for our own lack of greatness (§162:123). In diagnosing this prejudice on behalf of both artists and audiences, the science of art strives to demystify artistic creation and prepare the way for a more honest understanding of its process.

Once we have understood that that it is a combination of our intense feelings and our pride that attributes to art a special status, we come to appreciate that

> Apart from those insinuations of our vanity, the activity of the genius [is not] something fundamentally different from the activity of the inventor in mechanics, of the astronomer or the historical scholar, of the master tactician. All these activities can be explained if we imagine people whose thinking is active in a single direction, who use everything as material, who are always eagerly watching their inner life and that of others, who glimpse models and incitements everywhere, who do not become weary of seeking new combinations of their technical resources (HAH I §162:123).

The work of the artist is stripped of its special status, a levelling that is further re-enforced in the subsequent aphorism *"The seriousness of craft"*. Here we are told that all the great artists of history produced as they did, not because of "natural gifts or innate talents", but because "they all had that diligent earnestness of the artisan" (§163:124). The rest of the aphorism then gives advice on how to cultivate one's artistic powers through the rigorous and earnest practice of one's 'craft', before we move on to the third

aphorism with its warnings about the *"Danger and gain in the cult of genius"*. We are here reminded that while the artist gains prestige from the belief in genius, it becomes incredibly damaging once she (inevitably) buys into it herself.

When an artist comes to believe that talent is an innate supernatural gift, "he ceases to criticize himself, [and] one pinion after another finally falls from his plumage: that superstition digs at the roots of his strength" (§164:125). The myth of innate, inspired artistic ability instills complacency and leads to the artist slowly abandoning those practices and qualities that made them great at their craft. Such a reflexive, uncritical belief in the pre-eminence of one's 'inherent instincts' seems to mark the difference between the artist and the scientist, and Pothen sees this lack of critical reflection as inherent to art: "scientists can be said to have a knowledge *about* their knowledge that is specifically denied the artist" (Pothen 55). But Nietzsche appears to argue that it would be the task of a science of art to offer a means to precisely this knowledge; or perhaps to lead the artist *back* to this knowledge. By revealing the vanity at the heart of their belief in inherent ability, science shows the artist the truth: that it was not talent but diligence and self-criticism that gave rise to their abilities. Science gives back to the artists the honesty and clarity to "gain insight into their strength and whence it came, [...] what purely human qualities have flowed together in them". This leads to a strengthening of those qualities that Nietzsche argues gave rise to the great artists of history; attributes like courage, dauntlessness and "resolute attentiveness" (§164:126).

It is no coincidence that Nietzsche also sees these as the attributes of the philosopher (HAH I §618) and the scientist (§37). For, stripped of its pretentions, it seems the artist is not much different to these two. All great people in each field proceed through an esteem for "small, unpretentious truths" – with even the great artists *becoming* great "because they took more pleasure in making small, incidental things well than in the effect of some dazzling whole" (§163:124). When art is made 'honest' again – encouraged to look at itself for what it is, rather than what contorting psychological demands make of it – it will come to realise that its strength and greatest achievements flow from the same source as all 'higher culture'. It is this culture, with its "esteem [for] the small, unpretentious truths found by rigorous methods" that *Human* is concerned to promote (§3:17). In moving towards this culture, the old aesthetic values

"with their measuring stick for the beautiful and the sublime" will be effaced; humanity will develop an "eye" for "the charm of the simplest form" to replace our current passion for "the most sublime construction" (pp.17-18). Nietzsche is clear that this will be of help to artists as well, since it will serve to efface the culture "the greatest possible effects" that he sees as damaging to the creative process. Self-reflection is discouraged in the artist by this culture, which has "at all times admired and envied precisely that strength in them that enabled them to deprive other people of their will and to sweep them away with the delusion that supernatural guides were leading the way" (§164:126). To do away with such an estimation for grand spiritual delusions would allow the artist to concentrate on that which she truly values – the intricacies of her craft – while weeding out the megalomaniacal tendencies that separate the 'grand artist' from the aesthetic artisan.

By the light of our new science of art, it becomes clear that "all the great artists were great workers, tireless not only in inventing, but also in rejecting, sifting, reshaping, ordering" (§155:119). We come to appreciate that "the imagination of a good artist or thinker continually produces good, mediocre, and bad things", but that what truly sets the great artist apart from others is a capacity that, "rejects, selects, ties together" these ideas (118). Pothen interprets this as Nietzsche claiming that "as in Kant's and Hegel's accounts, [...] it is reason as much as invention that is responsible for the greatest [productions]" (46). But it is notable that Nietzsche does not ascribe this 'sifting, editing' process to reason: rather it is "the *power of judgement,* highly sharpened and practiced" that is responsible for shaping and refining in art, poetry, and philosophy (HAH I §155:118). This is a critical distinction and one that casts the role of science in a very different light. Moreover, it throws into focus just what Nietzsche means when he calls the scientist a 'development' of the artistic human.

In *Tragic Age*, Nietzsche makes much of the etymological root of philosophy. He points to the designation *'sophós'*[254] as indicating that "the peculiar art of the philosopher" is based in "a sharp savouring and selecting, a meaningful discrimination" (PTA §3:43) – "taste" as "we speak of [it] in the arts" (PP §2:9). *Sophíā* is thus contrasted

[254] "The Greek word designating 'sage' is etymologically related to *sapia*, I taste, *sapiens*, he who tastes, *sisyphas*, the man of keenest taste" (PTA §3:43)

with "*ἐπιστήμη", (epistḗmē)* the scientific accumulation of "anything that is worth knowing" (CW 11 19[86]:32)[255]. But rather than indicating a division between science and philosophy, Nietzsche envisaged a pact between philosophy and the "low level of empiric insight" (PTA §3:39) available to the ancients:

> Philosophical thinking is, specifically, of the same sort as scientific thinking, only it directs itself towards great things and possibilities [...] philosophy maintains a bond with the drive to knowledge, and therein lies its significance for culture. It is a legislating of greatness, a bestowal of titles [...] [it says] 'this is great' and in this way humanity is elevated (PP §2:pp.8-9, n.6)

Science is portrayed as a blindly lumbering beast in need of guidance, and it is the philosopher who provides this. As a close Kin to the poets, "the philosopher seeks to hear within himself the echoes of the world symphony and to re-project them in the form of concepts" (PTA §4:44). The thinker is a 'mirror on the world' who "searches out the tones of the world to test their resonances" (PP§2:9): their manifestation as sensations. The 'genius' of the philosopher then lies in their ability to take these sensations and 'compose them' into a vision of the "collective sound" that is existence. The thinker's 'feelings' for the world become a macrocosm for the world itself[256].

Pothen (55) and Salim Kemal (pp.273-5) are right to note that the critique of the genius we find in *Human* appears written in direct opposition to this construction. Clearly, the idea that grand imaginative leaps based in nothing but a faith on innate talent should not relied upon to steer the ship of knowledge. Nevertheless, science, in and of itself, cannot steer that ship either. As the next section of this chapter will seek to show, Nietzsche's epistemology still rests in an understanding that cannot permit of 'Law based' sciences, and as such, it cannot 'direct' itself. Science remains *epistḗmē,* - the accumulation of data - and it still requires structuring and forming into something that is not simply fragmented 'facticity'. Because there are no 'natural laws' - no eternal, predetermined 'correct' way for everything to fit together, which science must simply arrive at – science is still directionless. However, what science gives, to the philosopher as to the artist, is the tools for introspection and understanding how certain outcomes

[255] CW 11 19[86]:32. See also PTA §39-44, PP§2:8-9, esp. n.6
[256] PTA §3:44

were arrived at. Nietzsche could be speaking directly of Anaximander[257] when he says that metaphysical condemnations of life arise

> due to a series of errors in reasoning [...] it was the fault of the mirror if their nature appeared to them so gloomy and hateful, and that mirror was their work, the very imperfect work of human imagination and judgment (HAH I §133:102)

The Pre-Socratic artist-philosophers felt themselves able to act as 'mirrors of the world' on the grounds of a "certain self-possession, an ability to maintain themselves, coldly, as mirrors" (PTA §3:44). But as the critique of genius makes clear, this belief was ill founded. Just as "a certain false psychology, a certain kind of fantasizing in the interpretation of motives and events, is the necessary prerequisite for becoming a Christian" (HAH I §135:104), we can trace the emergence of the philosopher's false judgements to "a feeling of self-contempt due to certain errors, that is, due to a false, unscientific interpretation of his actions and sensation" (§134:103). It is because of this that we now require science to give us insight into how we construct our interpretations of the world:

> Humanity cannot continue to be spared the gruesome sight of the psychological dissecting table and its knives and forceps. For what rules here is the science that inquires about the origin and history of the so-called moral sensations and that as it advances has to pose and to solve complicated sociological problems - the older philosophy is not at all familiar with these problems [...] if it is certain that the superficiality of psychological observation has laid the most dangerous snares for human judgment (HAH I §37:45)

Ruth Abbey, in her 2015 overview of the Free Spirit notes that despite "making allusions to or comparisons with natural science", the vision of 'science' forwarded "during the middle period is more a combination of history and psychology than anything resembling the natural sciences" (17). However, given the nature of the force-world that ground Nietzsche's physics, it is easy to see why he understood this psychology to be an extension of the natural sciences.

If the outcome of force interactions are not fixed and inherent, but rather arise from the interrelation of systems, each determined by their own 'internal politics', then beyond the fundamental recognition of this fact, traditional physics (conceived mechanically) has nothing more to contribute. Nietzsche's force physic then becomes, at this point, a sort of 'force psychology': an attempt to understand why an event was

[257] See §1.1 pp.15-20. This is also applicable to Parmenides (§1.2 p.29-30)

'interpreted' into existence the way it was. We should understand this with an eye to an aphorism from *Gay Science*:

> Let us introduce the subtlety and rigour of mathematics into all sciences to the extent to which that is at all possible; not in the belief that we will come to know things this way, but in order to ascertain our human relation to things. Mathematics is only the means to general and final knowledge of humanity (GS §246).

It is by the light of this demand that we should understand *Human*'s call for a "chemistry" of concepts: a series of rigorous, honest experiments[258] into the way we interpret our sensations and form our concepts (HAH I §1:15). We can see Nietzsche offering near identical advice to aspiring artist:

> make a hundred or more outlines for novels, none longer than two pages, yet of such clarity that every word in them is necessary; write down anecdotes daily until you learn to find their most pregnant, effective form; be indefatigable in collecting and depicting human types and characters; above all, tell and listen to stories as often as possible, keeping a sharp eye and ear upon how they affect others who are present; travel like a landscape painter and costume designer; [...] reflect upon the motives of human actions, scorn no instructive hints about this, and be a collector of such things day and night (HAH I §163:124).

The work of art, like the concept, is a construct of our artifice. But by ensuring that this artifice is grounded in the reality of sensations and effects, instead of arising from a concatenation of erroneous reasoning and prejudicial conflations, we can arrive at what is 'necessary' in in these constructs.

Under this model, knowledge is conceived of less as the accumulation and collection of facts – dead artifacts cast off by the world of becoming as it endlessly 'sheds' its forms to become something new. Instead, it is a store of information about the way we interpret and process becoming. Knowledge gives us no insight into anything 'in-itself', but into the way that we 'give form to' the stream of becoming. We see this reflected in the force-note's presentation of what the 'progress of knowledge' and an 'objective' viewpoint would mean. Any understanding of the world attained by our senses "is only a *reflection*" in the mirror of our 'self-ness', but "one that keeps getting clearer" (CW 11 19[158]:51). In our attempts to "adequately" understand our phenomenal world in terms of the sensations it imparts upon us, "we see an effort to make the mirror ever more adequate: science takes over where the natural process leaves off – in this way, things are reflected ever more clearly: gradual liberation from what is all too

[258] See also GS §335

anthropomorphic". The ancient philosophers' belief in their self-knowledge and possession clouded their judgement and their ability to discern the difference between mirror, and reflection. Now, with the aid of scientific rigour, the 'natural' process of constructing images and impressions of the world has a means of improving the process of interpretation. Yet for all the rigours of science, there is no indication that Nietzsche believes that 'knowledge' leads us 'True' or universally valid concepts. Instead, its role is to point out the missteps we take in interpreting our sensations into concepts – a process that is, for Nietzsche, undertaken not by rationality, but by judgement. Science helps to improve and refine what remains an essentially aesthetic process.

§4.2: Knowledge against Genius

Salim Kemal interprets *Human* as representing a diametric shift in Nietzsche's conception of genius. He sees the work as Nietzsche's shift from an emphasis on the 'elitist' status of art, to a more egalitarian viewpoint: where before, only a privileged few were able to truly 'create', creative invention is now the common property of all humanity. The critique of genius in *Human* is seen as an explicit disavowal of the "artist's metaphysic" and its model of artistic production. Both the philosophers of *Tragic Age* and the artists of *Birth* and "The Greek City State" are depicted as having special status afforded to them by "a metaphysics of mysterious presences in a supra-human world from where, by some arcane process, these geniuses bring their rarefied insights into our reach" (Kemal 286).

This understanding is based on the idea that "beauty, the end state of aesthetic activity" as that which justified existence (272). In the absence of True meaning and order, the beautiful 'semblance' of order gives value to life because it gives pleasure, and "pleasure is the end in itself in this [aesthetic] world". It is the genius' task to 'intuit' beauty and thus provide evidence (albeit fabricated evidence) for the 'lesser creatures' that the world is not "a morass with no inherent meaning". Under this interpretation, *Human* replaces the imperative towards the creation of beauty – the justifying ends of existence – and instead values the act of creation *itself*, lauding works that "[promote] the continuing and diverse activity of human agency" (Kemal 273).

Kemal's reading of *Human* is astute, and elements of his reading of the early works are also well observed. He is absolutely right to note that *Human* was on guard against the way "[creativity] thwarts itself by inventing new and insightful ways of preventing its own development [...] [when] exercised in the service of a need to remain the same" (272). This, to his eye, is the role of critical self-reflection and HAH I §3 appears to back this up: it is the aim of the 'Higher culture' to break the cycle whereby old forms are endlessly recycled – lazily, perfunctorily, and badly. His argument that even in the early works, art was heralded as a means to 'self-creation' is critical for understanding the continuity between these works and the Free Spirit period. The 'self-generative' element of the force-constellations presented in the early works was discussed at length in §3.3 of this study (and will be discussed further across the course of this section). However, the misreading of the early aesthetic just described stunts this insight – and the insightfulness of the article as a whole. Our readings of the Dionysus myth (see §1.2 and §1.3) clearly shows that Nietzsche did not regard beauty as a stable or suitable grounding for either a robust culture, or a justification of existence (see also the discussion of Anaxagoras in §2.1, 2.2). Similarly, the idea that Nietzsche forwards a hedonistic justification of life was argued against extensively in chapters 1 and 2. Together, these ideas do a great deal of damage to the critical insights that the article offers, and lead to Kemal instituting a divide where one does not exist. Because of this, he fails to see that the aesthetic project he attributes to the Free Spirit works is a development, not a refutation, of the early aesthetic writings.

To understand the nature of this continuity, and the misunderstanding that Kemal's article falls into, we can point to Nietzsche's treatment of artistic creation in "The Dionysian Worldview". We are told that the "image-making arts" aim at the communication of "the form floating before [the artist's] mind as authentic *telos*" (DW II:87). The 'goal' of the work – the beautiful form 'intuited' by the artist – is apparently the 'instigating cause' of the work, arrived at through 'mystical' means. It seems as though this vision 'appears' to the artist, and she then embodies it as a means of communicating and disseminating her privileged gaze into 'the beautiful'. However, a closer look reveals that this is only one-half (and perhaps the lesser half) of a process of creation. Against the previous definition – which simply outlines the 'plastic' work of the artist, we find that "real art is the ability to create images, no matter if this is fore-

creation [*Vor-Schaffen*] or after-creation [*Nach-Schaffen*]". Ira Allen's recent translation of the essay reads this *Vor-Schaffen* as "making up"[259] and this translation, more than Crawford's earlier one, brings with it the motion inherent in the German verb form. Read in this way, *Vorschaffen* might mean to 'bring forth' an image, while *Nachschaffen* would mean to replicate an already existing one. This is why Nietzsche diminishes the work of art itself as 'mere media', as "ways to artistic creation, not arts in themselves [...] only artificial means" (DW II:87). Instead, it seems that the real value of the art object is not the communication of an 'idea': rather the 'social meaning' of the artist is "as the one who, through artistic means, forces others to art".

We could read this by Kemal's model as the artist 'disseminating' forms for others to copy, but this is not what Nietzsche appears to mean here. Instead, the point of a work is not to share the artist's (specific) vision, but for the recipient to be "transposed" into the "dream situation" in which the image was first created. We are not 'forced' to create art 'objects' – rather, when confronted with a piece of marble, we are called to the artistic process whereby our mind interprets this piece of stone to be a figure. Nietzsche describes the way that a storyteller can give rise to images in our head by "[narrating] how that character manifests its life in movement, tone, word, action; he forces us to trace back a multitude of effects to their causes; he forces us to an artistic composition". This is not the artist proliferating her own 'genius' images. Rather, she is 'spreading' genius to others. She imposes upon her audience the 'necessity' of art, of image creation: an ability "common to all humans".

We can see an evident link here with the effect that art is supposed to have on the cognitive faculties, as discussed in the second half of "On Truth". It is the fundamental supposition of that essay that the drive to form sense experience into ordered images and concepts – the drive to create 'metaphors' for sensation – is the fundamental human activity (TL 146, 150). We practice 'art', in the '*Vor-Schaffen* sense of 'calling forth' images in every moment of our lives, as sense information streams into the mind and is 'composed' into images. 'Science', here meaning the formalisation of images into concepts, is framed as little more than the habitualisation of these interpretations: the fact that, because we have previously interpreted something a

[259] "The Dionysian Vision of the World", trans. I.J Allen, Univocal Press, 2016, 40

certain way means we take this to be 'correct' (149). It is therefore art's task to remind us that there is nothing essentially 'True' about any of these constructs – that they are our artistic creations.

Art reveals the arbitrary nature of this process, "smashes this framework, jumbles it up and ironically reassembles it, pairing the most unalike things and separating those that are most alike" (152). Just as in the Dionysian experience of the theatre, art serves to remind us that the boundaries between things are constructs of the 'illusion world': of the Apollonian cybernetic. But where in that case it was the boundary between audience and artwork that was dissolved, now we come to realise that in looking upon art – or any object – we are not merely spectators, but artists. The very process of cognising our world – of transferring sense data into mental images – resembles the work of the poet, who, through narrative allusion, leads us to 'compose' lives and worlds in our imaginations[260].

The question now is whether *Human* continues to work with this construction. Kemal argues yes; or, rather, he argues that this conception of creation only arises in *Human* (Kemal pp.268-285). However, we need not rest on his authority: HAH §3 clearly states that we are still dealing with a Heraclitean world without set conceptual boundaries, and §12 and 13 discuss the 'artwork' of dreams in a way profoundly reminiscent of "On Truth" (see TL pp.144-5):

> The brain produces a host of impressions of lights and colors, probably as a sort of playful afterimage and echo of all those effects of light that press upon it during the day. But the understanding (in combination with the imagination) immediately reworks this play of colors, in itself formless, into distinct figures, forms, landscapes, animated groups (HAH I §13:24)

Just as in "On Truth", Nietzsche here foregrounds the groundless nature of the process by which we take formless sense-impression and turn it into the forms of objects and concepts: "How arbitrarily these borders are drawn, how one-sided the preference for this or that property of a thing!" (TL 144). Nietzsche does go from here to contrast the logic of dreams to that of the waking mind – "so sober, so careful, so sceptical in regards to hypothesis" (HAH I §13:23) – but critically does not attribute to the waking mind any

[260] This concept is discussed at length by Nehamas, esp. pp.91-5

special faculty[261]. It is simply that, when awake, we are more 'cool' and reflective, we check assumptions against memories, and above all, we take our time with our mental formulations.

This marks the great difference between *Human* and "On Truth". In the earlier essay, Nietzsche makes it clear that habit is the enemy of innovation. To this end, we are encouraged to break apart old concepts and reform them into new ones. We should rely for this on our 'instinctual' artistic capacities: Nietzsche here differentiates between the person of reason – the one who clings to her conceptual frameworks for safety – and the person of intuition. This latter pays no heed to the 'laws' contrived by reason for the 'proper' interpretation of things. She relies instead upon her 'genius', her innate, instinctual ability to create images. She lives in rapid, near epileptic vibrancy, "a constant stream of brightness [...] and release" (TL 153), exercising the creative power that is "hardly even tamed by the process whereby a regular and rigid new world is built from its own sublimated products" (151). However, in *Human*, Nietzsche has come to recognise that this automatic, instinctual process can just as much harm innovation as spur it:

> Habitual, rapid associations of feelings and thoughts are formed, which finally, when they follow after one another with lightning speed, are no longer even sensed as complexes, but rather as *unities* [...] in truth, they are streams with a hundred sources and tributaries (HAH I §14:25)

The demand that we 'cool' our aesthetic-creative processes of interpretation originates in just this problem. As Kemal points out, the instinctual genius is just as likely to invent new ways to keep repeating old patterns, as she is to find new ways of interpreting the world. The first step on this road is to slow down and think critically about the way we put our world-images together.

Although *Human* opposes the formulation offered in "On Truth", we should not take this as an indication that it wholeheartedly favors its opposite. "On Truth's" formulation of the person of reason as one who wishes to use knowledge to insulate themselves against "the chief calamities of life by providing for the future" (TL 152) is incompatible with the sort of science that Nietzsche advocates for. We cannot use

[261] "[dream] is continually thrusting images upon the mind, imitating the way that visual impressions are produced during the day" (HAH I §13:24-5)

concepts to 'map out' and "rule over life": to render it stable, safe, and predictable. Rather, we should understand the role of science in the work along the biographical lines put forward in the introductions to the two volumes of *Human*. The introductions speak of the works as a form of "convalescence" in which science helped to structure a "*discaplina voluntatis"* (HAH II 5). They are portrayed as a time in which Nietzsche "sought shelter somewhere to recuperate from myself" (HAH I 5) as part of "a long war [...] I waged at that time against the pessimism of weariness with life" (HAH II 9). We see Nietzsche admitting that the 'heroic affirmation' of life's suffering that he had embodied in Zarathustra and proclaimed in the ending of "On Truth" had failed him. Indeed, he cites the ethos of unbridled experimentation forwarded in the latter work as driving him to a form of nihilistic "scepticism and dissolution" – "*into the deepening of all previous pessimism* [I] already believed 'in nothing any more'" (HAH II 4).

Against this despair, he claims to have set himself "the task of defending life against pain and breaking down all the inferences that tend to grow [...] out of pain, disillusionment, annoyance, isolation":

> I waged a wearingly patient campaign with myself against the unscientific basic tendency of every Romantic pessimism to puff up and interpret individual personal experiences into general judgements, indeed, into world-condemnation... in short, it was time I turned my gaze *around* (HAH II 8).

We see here that Nietzsche regarded himself as having fallen victim to precisely the failure of judgement we saw manifest in the Pre-Socratics: he has forgotten Heraclitus' injunction not to 'make a morality of it'. Left free to interpret life according to his states of mood, he found himself following Anaximander, allowing his feelings of despair to take the role of a hermeneutic key in his interpretations of life. The advocacy of science becomes as a sort of 'regrouping': an attempt on Nietzsche's part to do precisely what he advises to aspiring artists; stop trusting your habitual, instinctual paths of world formation; concentrate on perfecting your 'small, unpretentious truths', arrived at through secure and tested methods; polish your stories and aphorisms until you learn what is 'necessary' in them. This is what 'knowledge' means for the Nietzsche of the middle period works: a bank of experiences and practices in which we learn how to create new values. Not wildly and erratically, according to some 'innate' talent – because genius is a lie. Instead, 'science takes over where nature ceases' - not in order that it

might lead the understanding, but that it might 'train' the understanding in the art of interpreting life.

How to build a world

It is at this stage in the study that we too must pause and re-group. The final section of this chapter (and this study) will look at the way Nietzsche's aesthetic 'experimentation' unfolded across the three books of the Free Spirit, and ended up in the experimental prose poem *Thus spoke Zarathustra*. But first, we must gather together all that has been discussed so far and conclusively arrive at an understanding of what 'aesthetic' means in the works under discussion.

Kemal marks a transition in the meaning of 'art' at the inauguration of the Free Spirit project – a broadening of what is to be considered the remit of aesthetics:

> Aesthetic genius must now satisfy a new consideration [...] art serves as a model for construction, but instead of understanding only works of fine art as created objects, he now thinks of all values as if they were art. These constructions all generate new values, providing relations between elements to signify new features [...] and novel issues that can be considered in other works (Kemal 272)

A similar approach is taken by Nehamas in his seminal and much cited work *Life As Literature*[262], which maintains that Nietzsche

> Looks at the world in general as if it were a sort of artwork; in particular, he looks at it as if it were a literary text. And he arrives at many of his views of the world and the things within it [...] by generalizing to them ideas and principles that apply almost intuitively to the literary situation, to the creation and interpretation of literary texts and characters (Nehamas 3)[263]

Where Nehamas justifies characterising this process as aesthetic by appeal to elements that structure literary works, tracing them as principals that Nietzsche uses to organise his worlds, Kemal appears to regard the aesthetic dimension as simply an analogy, illustrative of the mediated, creatively constructed nature of our mental architectonics. Neither of these approaches are inherently wrong, but both also appear to miss something that is far more central to Nietzsche's conception of the aesthetic –

[262] Michael Ure's work *Nietzsche's Therapy* also explores this idea, and is heavily indebted to Nehamas' study.
[263] Nehamas pays little attention to *Birth* in his work, and, like Kemal, traces this conception back to *Human* (117)

something that goes back to its roots in the Heraclitean conception of *kosmos* and the image of the 'world-artist'.

If we look once more at "On Truth" and its conception of the way we construct our world-images, we see a modified version of the Kantian model of cognition. In Kant's system of empirical cognition, the imagination is responsible for reconstructing sense data according to laws provided by the understanding. These are derived a-priori by reason and used to govern the imaginations schematising activity. For Nietzsche however, this system is reversed, and the concepts – the apparent 'laws' that are supposed to guide the imagination in its reconstruction of sense data – are themselves nothing but the ossified remnants of this process. Concepts are simply the worn afterimages[264] of the imaginations constructive activity that have persisted as 'memory', existing "only by virtue of the fact that a mass of images, which originally flowed in a hot, liquid stream from the primal power of the human imagination, has become hard and rigid". The "artistic translation of a nervous stimulus into images is, if not the mother, then at least the grandmother of each and every concept" (TL pp.147-8). This then raises the question of how the mind organises its sense impressions, and Nietzsche's answer is that they are 'aesthetic' which, in Kantian terms, means that they are the 'purposive yet purposeless' play acts of the imagination: that which arises when the imagination is left free to construct in 'free play'[265].

The conception of free play allows for the creation of mental representations that are not determined by any set conceptual law, yet are nevertheless not random, arbitrary, or incomprehensible to our understanding (as would be the case with, say, a demented or schizophrenic experience – one without the order or cohesion to stand as a viable mental image). Its play is without 'law', yet remains 'lawful': "the imagination, left to itself, would freely project in harmony with the general *conformity to law of the understanding"* (CJ§22:71). For Kant, this is possible because the imagination's usual activity of producing according to conceptual laws leaves it with a 'general feeling for lawfulness' – a residual impression of how law governed cognition takes place that can stand in to order its creations when no specific law is provided. For Nietzsche however,

[264] "coins which, having lost their stamp, are regarded as metal and no longer coins" (TL 146)
[265] For discussion of Kant and the aesthetic free play, see §3.1

this is cannot be the case: if all concepts arise *after* the ordering process, then they cannot be said to have informed the construction that gave rise to them.

In this regard "On Truth" taps into a significant problem with the Kantian critical project- one that Heidegger claims Kant himself was aware of, but did all that he could to avoid facing up to[266]. By introducing the conception of *play* to his model of the mind, Kant made of the imagination a 'rogue faculty' capable of creating *autonomously,* "free from the rule of understanding" (Kukla pp.11-12). This eventuality introduces a weakness into the division of powers on which the whole of Kant's model is based, and opens up the possibility that *all* products of the imagination might, in fact, be aesthetic: "Kant has now apparently ceded crucial *responsibility* for successful, objectively valid experience away from the understanding, and into only contingently trustworthy hands" (20). We have, in effect, the imagination both *producing* and *checking* its own work. If our world-images are

> *formed* by aesthetic activity by the time it even makes it to the understanding, and if we have no argument for the objective validity of the principles by which it does this, then it's not clear why we should think that this forming is proceeding in a way that is truly account able to the sensible world, rather than based on merely subjective standards (Kukla 17).

The question that we are left to face, in this example, is how we can judge if a mental construction adheres to objectively valid principals of construction when those principals are derived only from the constructions themselves. Can we tell if a machine is doing what it is supposed to if we can *only decide on what it is supposed to be doing* by looking at its productions?

For Nietzsche, the question of objective (correspondent) validity is not an issue (TL pp.147-150). However, the question of why there is 'lawfulness' in these ungoverned creations needs to be explained. Our mental representations are 'contingent', in so far as they could be constructed in any number of ways. Nevertheless, they must also exhibit lawful necessity: they are 'orderings', not the scrambled, broken messes of the severely deranged. What then are the 'rules' that govern the way we put together our

[266] See *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Martin Heidegger, Bloomington UP, 1990, pp.110-15: A similar argument is forwarded by John McCumber: See "Unearthing Wonder: A 'Post-Kantian' Paradigm in Kant's *Critique of Judgement"*, *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Philosophy*, ed. R. Kukla, Cambridge UP, 2006, pp.266- 290

mental images: that which we are supposed to gain 'knowledge' of? It seems that these must have some form of 'necessity' in themselves – some set of defining possibilities that we are working towards, not necessarily a 'grasp of', but a *fluency in*. This imperative is reflected in Nehamas' study, which takes the 'literary' as the skeleton of fixed necessity around which the contingencies of events are brought into orbit. He forwards "the abstract view that one should strive to become a united, consistent and unique whole, but the actual content of that whole remains radically indeterminate" (Ure 38). In this, Nehamas' theory runs up against various problems, not least that it presupposes the existence of a 'sovereign creator' – an 'I' that conducts the "narrative appropriation of 'all that I have done' into a coherent whole" (Ure 38). For Keith Ansell-Pearson, this is the great stumbling block of Nehamas' theory, which devolves into

> a classic, archetypal account of the artist of genius, the genius who is in control, who is master of his own destiny, and who is able to construct for himself a coherent identity in the absence of a stable 'metaphysical' self (Ansell-Pearson 1994 145)

This is not, however, an inherent problem with the aesthetic analogy. As Magnus Et.al point out, this issue instead arises from a failure to appreciate the unique contribution that Nietzsche's theory of aesthetics made to literature.

Nietzsche's Case notes that the great strengths of Nehamas' study are undermined by the "highly abstracted version of 'the literary work'" that he operates from:

> There is a sense in which Nehamas' very choice of the term 'aestheticism' betrays a desire to stay within the idealising realm of aesthetics and to avoid crossing over into the domain of literary criticism, where virtually all recent theories (many inspired by Nietzsche) project a far more fragmented and problematic image of the text (Magnus et.al, 135).

The primary issue with this as far as *Case* is concerned is that the greatest strength of Nehamas' theory – the insight that "literary texts can be interpreted equally well in vastly different and deeply incompatible ways" (Nehamas 3) – is degenerated into a form of hermeneutics. In "the formalised hypostatisation of the literary text as a discrete object of interpretation" Nehamas renders the world as an 'art-object' that we 'apply' our interpretations to: "literature is the necessary digression by means of which we are returned once again to the world as a discrete object of our knowledge" (Magnus et.al 135). The "condition of textualisation" (134) provided by the formal features of the novel – character, narrative, the pathos imparted by satisfying story or thematic arcs etc. –

provide the lens through which we can bring into order the world under our observation. But as *Case* points out, Nietzsche expressly wishes us not to look at the world "securely from without (as if it were a sort of artwork) but rather assuredly from within an unfolding text, whose alienness must find a way to make our own" (135).

This 'within-ness' speaks to the quality that Nietzsche identified in his image of the world-artist, who is both 'contemplatively above' and 'actively within' its work. It also speaks to why Nietzsche is justified – against Nehamas' reading – in calling his aesthetic process one of knowledge: how knowledge escapes the orbit of (purely solipsistic) 'self-knowledge'[267]. Against the 'hermeneutic' model we find in Nehamas – the world as an 'object' which we study and assign meaning to - we should view the interpretive process as one of 'poetics', in the sense outlined by Johnathan Culler[268]. To Culler, hermeneutics rests on the assumption that a text inherently has a meaning – or a 'field' of meaning – and it is the interpreter's task to pick out and define this meaning through examination of features, translation into various interpretive languages etc (pp.4-5). Poetics, on the other hand, rests in the assumption that a work is not something that 'has' meaning, but is instead a 'space' for meaning to 'generate'. A lyric, for example, 'calls us to art' in the way described by Nietzsche – providing a 'pregnant' set of relations from which meaning emerges as a reciprocal relation between the work and its reader. Poetry relies on certain formal tropes, but is ultimately a form of address in which meaning is not 'communicated' from an artist to her audience. Rather, the reader participates in the play of meaning creation through their own experiences, combined with their knowledge of the way that the formal tropes work to 'incite' meaning and feeling.

By this reciprocal model of interpretation, the reading subject joins with the work in a 'collaboration' that gives rise to meaning. The work never 'contains' meaning in itself, but is the space in which meaning emerges through a mediation that takes place within the subject – the meeting of stylistic tradition, formal features etc. (none of which contain anything more than the incitement to, and possibility of, meaning),

[267] This characterisation comes from Magnus et.al (134) and finds correspondence in Nehamas (pp.45-7). Ure is also of the opinion that "Nehamas's model fails to see how Nietzsche conceives self-fashioning not as a narrowly private, individualistic project, but as a means of refashioning and modulating the affects that shape the self's relationships with others" (47)

[268] Johnathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric*, Harvard Up, 2015

and that which the reader brings to the text. And so where hermeneutics seeks to 'close in on meaning', narrowing the multiplicities of possible readings down into an 'interpretation', poetics is an engagement with the process of meaning. It not only resists the 'closing down' of avenues of alternate meaning, but operates precisely through the 'opening' of meaning - the way that the process of giving rise to meaning generates ever new 'nodes' for the process of interpretation to work with.

Nietzsche identifies precisely this quality in the literary style of Heraclitus, a quality that renders his work 'immortal'. "Like the Delphic god" his 'Sibylline' speech – cryptic, fragmentary, contradictory – "neither enunciates nor conceals" but presents a place where meaning "can force its way through the millenniums of the future" (PTA §8)[269]. They reveal the essence of meaning – that it is a living process, rather than a static object – through the confusion of 'mere communication' and the active resistance to "historical men" who believe that knowledge is the 'collecting' ("*sammelnden"*) and 'questioning' (*"fragenden")* of mere facticity. More than this however, they remain 'alive' by resisting the completion and totalisation that would render them as 'art–objects' – self-enclosed 'atoms' of meaning. Each new context in which they are received will bring to them new life, in the way that Nietzsche describes in §126 of *Assorted Opinions and Maxims*:

> should we deny to those who come later the right to animate the older works as their own souls see fit? No, for these works can continue to live only if we give our souls to them: it is our blood that first lets them speak to us. A truly "historical" speech would speak in a ghostly way to ghosts. We honour the great artists of the past less by the barren awe that leaves every word, every note lying where it was placed than by active e orts at helping them come back to life again and again [...] the living are right, as our Schiller says (HAH II §126 pp.56-7)

Heraclitus' fragments stand as the essence of what Nietzsche valued in the aesthetic. They live, not as artworks (objects of artistry) but as art-works; deliberately fragmentary 'events' that embody and enact the 'becoming' of those 'artistic powers that flow from nature itself'.

[269] Cf CW 11 19[76]:28, HAH II §19:18

Art's Becoming what it is

In contrast to Kemal's interpretation, the Free Spirit does not see a sudden collapse of interest in the 'art-object' in favour of a model of artistic analogy: ideas and individuals suddenly coming to be viewed, in a nebulous and fairly ill-defined way, as 'like art'. Rather, we see a re-orientation back towards the fundamental insight of the early aesthetic – the idea that all things (individuals, organisms, discrete objects of our experience) exist only as 'borderless, duration-less, quality-less events' in a creative process: 'quanta' of 'art-working' in a great 'art-work'. This understanding serves to offer a counter to the problem of 'heroic agency' that both Ure and Ansell-Pearson level at Nehamas[270]. This is a persistent problem of so called 'Aestheticist' theories; "that of specifying the identity of the inventor: he must, it seems, invent himself" (Havas 121). It was this problem that lead Hill to posit the world-artist as 'noumenal perceiver' – "it could not be that the agent of the construction, and the act of constructing, belonged only to the world of appearances and were themselves constructions. One's bootstraps have only finite strength"[271]- and that appears to ground Kemal's interpretation of art as simply 'an agent ordered work of artistry'. Nehamas' problems in this area both arses from, and feeds into, the problem of the ambiguity he reads in Nietzsche's presentation of self-formation.

Nehamas' work continually strikes up against a version of the subject-object issue, which he formulates in terms of a "paradoxical interplay between creation and discovery, knowledge and action, literature and life" (168). The issue he identifies is that "Despite his constant attacks on the notion that there are antecedent existing things and truths waiting to be discovered, despite his almost inordinate emphasis on the idea of creating", we are nevertheless told that we should be "becoming who we are": as if this were the 'discovery' of a truly existent 'self' (174). The answer he gives to this is similar to the one that we arrived at when discussing the 'illusion of self-ness' in reference to the force world: we must 'posit' a fictional self that can then act as the locus and agent of the process. However, this formulation does not seem to answer the

[270] Ruth Abbey similarly reproaches the aestheticism element in the notion of 'self-creation' for re-introducing troublesome ideas of autonomy and free will back into Nietzsche thought (31-2)
[271] Ralph Walker on Kant, cited Hill pp.98-9

'bootstrap' objection offered above, and leaves us dealing with "a complicated, almost compromising relationship. Our creations eventually become our truths, and our truths circumscribe our creation". We are still left, however, with the question of where this process started: who, or what, posits the initial 'self-ness'? The Answer that we gave in our examination of the force-world was that the play of forces somehow posits the self out of its play: out of the intrinsically aesthetic character of this world and its process.

Nehamas' theory privileges the 'textualising' element provided by the literary as a mediating structure of organisation. Through its structuring elements it provides a framework by which we can 'make of the world' a text, imparting the organisation, coherence, meaningfulness, narrative motion etc. inherent to novels and the like onto the disordered 'content' of our world. The 'self' is the 'writer' who imparts order on this structure, but it is, as it were, a 'de-centred subject' – one that only emerges through the mediation of these rules. And this is, on a certain level, what we do find here. In this regard, Nehamas identifies in Nietzsche what Jürgen Habermas called the move to "post metaphysical thinking" in which "world-constituting capacities are transferred from transcendental subjectivity to grammatical structures"[272]. Language (or the 'literary language' of written works for Nehamas) provides structuring that can allow for the emergence of subject-hood under its ordering, delineating auspices. But as Sloterdijk observes, the Dionysian realisation serves to precisely undermine the veracity of such an ordering hermeneutic 'skeleton' (1989 pp.80-82). The observation that language structures our thinking found in "On Truth" is not an indication that it thereby represents something 'essential' or 'irreducible' to the way that the human comes to be. It is not the necessary pole around which the vine of humanity grows: rather, it is the point of the essay that we have simply uncritically accepted it to be necessary. By Sloterdijk's reading of Nietzsche's 'decentring' move, it is precisely by 'dethroning' the constituting power of language and custom that we come to a more 'authentic' version of self-ness:

> "Whereas the centred subject is the effect of a grammatical system that harasses to death the living consciousness between 'Thou shalt' and 'I want,' the decentred subject would

[272] *Nachmetaphysisches Denken* cited Bowie 185. As Jochen Schulte-Sasse notes, Habermas (in *Postmoderne)* identified Nietzsche as a destructive example of this tendency, and viewed his 'decentred' subject as an engine of social disintegration (see Sloterdijk 1989 x-xi)

> perhaps be the first to have the right to say in reference to itself: I am" (Sloterdijk 1989 82).

The 'freedom of choice' inherent in Nehamas' 'heroic' application of narrative order to chaos is, for Solterdijk, a part of what keeps us bound to inauthenticity:

> only a decentring of the subject, which bids a respectful adieu to the fiction of autonomy, could lead to a legitimate constitution of subjectivity – beyond ego and will. What seems at first a bitter expulsion from the centre could be viewed on second glance as an adventurous enrichment – if it is correct that, in becoming conscious of having been decentred, the subject is anyway only giving up what it never possessed – its autonomy – and is gaining what it would have to lose to the illusion of autonomy: the play of its body and its dialogic-ecstatic status (Sloterdijk 1989 82)

It is precisely in abandoning the 'self-ness' constituted for us by the 'thou shalt' which orders the grammatical subject that we arrive at a 'real' vision of what 'self-ness' means: existing as "a great force within the play of subjective forces". The myth of the autonomous, 'sovereign' individual that things like literature and grammar foist upon us are a part of the problem, and it is for this reason that Pothen argues passionately against Nehamas enthroning the work of art as a model for self-creation[273]. Rather, we should re-locate the 'source' of the de-centred subject in the 'dialogic-ecstatic' play of the force-world. Self-ness is constituted by this interplay. In this respect, Havas' reading comes closer to the mark than Nehamas':

> I submit that what Nietzsche had in mind when he talks, for example, of giving one's life 'style' is that one should overcome the resistance to recognising the life one actually has. What has been 'invented' here, therefore, is a kind of self-recognition [...] becoming what we are is a matter of properly understanding what we have become (Havas 121)

This interpretation, left in the way it is formulated by Havas, seems to lead us back to a model of 'discover' of the sort puzzled over by Nehamas. But when we place it within the context of the aesthetic we have laid out here, then we see that this is not necessarily the case.

It is here that our previous discussion of Adorno's theory of the aesthetic[274] comes back into play. For Adorno criticises Hegel's interpretation of art on much the same ground that we have had recourse to criticise Nehamas'. The relationship identified by

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[273] Pothen §2, esp. pp.51-5. Pothen's interpretation is also based on an inadequate understanding of what 'aesthetic' means to Nietzsche (as we have been learning) and so in making use of this pertinent critique we should also see that it does not, necessarily, lead to the conclusions that Pothen follows it to- Nietzsche's declaration of the 'death of art'

[274] See §3.1 p.118-20

this latter - form mediates content, while content mediates form – fails in Adorno's eyes in that it falls into a privileging of 'form' (the 'organisational structuring' of a work): "form becomes that by which the appearing determines itself and content remains what is self-determining" (191). This necessarily leads to the division between content and the 'forming force' we saw in Nehamas: it perpetuates "the primitive notion that content or material is formed or "worked over" by the aesthetic subject", and therefore "the work becomes something objective, that is, Other" (Adorno 356). For Adorno, as for Nietzsche, this fails to respect the actual order of the relation between form and content: "form that befalls content is itself sedimented content" (191). Just as in Nietzsche's epistemology, the 'formal concept' that supposedly 'informs' the process is, in fact, a result of the process. Adorno suggest that while we must still recognise the difference of form and content – of that which orders and that which is ordered – we must do so in a way that does not make them distinct and subject the one to the other. Rather, we should recognise content as the 'becoming' of the work of art through its own process of determination – its unfolding as the document of a creative act. He contextualises this in terms of Schoenberg's characterisation of music as "the history of a theme": content is the 'material' of art (the theme) but more than this it is "that whereby it is organised, and that whereby it is transformed" (356) – "content is everything that transpires in time" (194).

Under this model, form too becomes an aspect of content, simply one that has 'stepped back' and now takes on a shaping role in content's self-becoming: "as this stepping back, art is knowledge" (194)[275]. Form arises from the interactions of content and is re-used to shape content: but all the while remains a part of the 'field' of content, of the material that art engages with in its creative becoming. This is an insight that Kemal grasps at in his assessment: "[mental] constructions all generate new values, providing relations between elements to signify new features [...] that can be considered also in other works" (273). Art is as much the artistic play with ordering forms as it is the ordering of play by forms. In much the same way, Adorno sees the role of the 'sovereign artist' diminished to just another part of art's self-becoming play. The

[275] "Empathically, art is knowledge, though not knowledge of objects. Only he understands an artwork who grasps it as a nexus of truth, that necessarily involves its relation to untruth; its own as well as that which is external to it" (Adorno 341)

'intention' of the artist is nothing more than a minimal, mediating 'taste' that facilitates the continuation of play. Artistic 'choice' is simply "everything that artists must encounter about which they must make a choice" (Adorno 194), not the 'agency' that gives rise to choice: "The intervening individual subject is scarcely more than a limiting value, something minimal required by the artwork for its crystallization" (220). The self, far from being the 'organ' that gives rise to art, is nothing more than a delineation of perspective- the means by which the 'internal' relations of the work of art are established and through which they flow.

There is a sense, then, by which Adorno views the work of art as 'giving birth' to itself – through the inner mechanisms of contradiction and relation that is its content. Adorno is clear, however, that this process should not be seen as "degeneration [of content] to a positivistic given" (194): the content of a work does not play itself out 'mechanically', as the determinate interactions of substances with basic properties. Its unfolding is 'necessary' but not 'law-bound' and is, at each moment, something wholly contingent. To illustrate this process in practice, we can turn to a beautiful description of the artistic process offered by Henri Matisse, in his *Notes of a Painter*:

> If I put a black dot on a sheet of white paper, the dot will be visible no matter how far away I hold it: it is a clear notation. But beside this dot I place another one, and then a third, and already there is confusion. In order for the first dot to maintain its value I must enlarge it as I put other marks on the paper [...] Let me put a green near the red, and make the floor yellow; and again there will be relationships between the green or yellow and the white of the canvas which will satisfy me. But these different tones mutually weaken one another. It is necessary that the various marks I use be balanced so that they do not destroy each other. To do this I must organize my ideas; the relationships between the tones must be such that it will sustain and not destroy them. A new combination of colours will succeed the first and render the totality of my representation. I am forced to transpose until finally my picture may seem completely changed [...] the red has succeeded the green as the dominant colour. I cannot copy nature; I must interpret [...] from the relationship I have found in all the tones there must result a living harmony of colours (Matisse 40)

We see from this how from the most basic multiplicity – three dots – confusion arises. From the moment that multiplicity and difference are introduced into the painting, the referential interplay of colours feed and contextualise relations, giving birth to new constellations that radically change the painting. His 'vision' of the work is quickly overtaken as the process, through the necessity of its internal relations, takes on a life of its own. Yet all the time this remains wholly contingent and referential. Matisse is

clear as to what drives this process is the meeting of the painting's necessity and his own 'taste'. There is nothing 'mechanically' stopping him from forcing a work to go another way. Yet his 'painters eye' and the 'joy' that the act of balancing engenders, forbids him to mutilate the 'spirit' of the work as it emerges (Matisse pp.39-42).

Gardeners and Sailors

In light of this description of the artistic process, we can adapt Havas' theory of 'self-recognition' to one that no longer takes as its object a discrete object/identity that we are 'discovering'. The image of the gardener that we find in *Dawn* offers an instructive illustration, since it emphasises the 'living' nature of the work. In Nietzsche's garden of the soul, (D §560:277) it is our task to tend and prune, cultivate and discourage the various plants that grow there. We may choose to 'impose' a design upon the garden - as it were, in the French or English or Dutch or Chinese style– or one can allow the garden to grow wild: "let the plants, in keeping with the natural advantages and disadvantages of their habitat, grow up and fight it out among themselves". "This we are free to do"; but Nietzsche also offers advice to us to *be* gardeners, even if our 'style' of gardening is this hands off approach. D §382 shows the importance of active knowledge in this process: "out of our damp dreary days [...] conclusions spring up like mushrooms: one morning they were there, we know not where they came from, and stare at us, peevish and grey" (210). "Woe to the thinker [...] that is only the earth for the plants that grow in him!" We may only be the 'tender' of this living artwork, but it is beholden on us to examine that which we find living in our garden, to understand what unfavourable conditions gave rise to it, to not just be the passive soil from which anything – even that which would bring rot and decay to the rest of the garden – might spring up and take over.

§87 of *Gay Science* offers an alternative angle on this matter in its critique of the 'vanity of artists', who

> often do not know what they can do best because they are too vain and have set their minds on something prouder than these small plants seem to be that are new, strange, and beautiful and really capable of growing to perfection on their soil (GS §87:87)

In what seems to be a thinly veiled allusion to the 'miniaturist' Wagner, we are offered the image of a creator who 'thinks himself' a master of grand works, "great walls and bold frescoes" – a master of grand effects (GS §87:88). But "his *spirit* has a different taste and disposition and likes best of all to sit quietly in the corners of collapsed houses", where "he paints his real masterpieces"; perfectly sculpted visions of "some very small and microscopic features of the soul". But this master is 'ashamed' of that talent, and works forever to make plants grow that will not, while hiding away those that flourish in him. In this regard, knowledge becomes the stripping away of self-deceptions that prevent us from realising 'who we are'. The difference we see Nietzsche highlight here is one between the 'taste' of the "*spirit*", and the 'desires' of the "*character*", a problem that further discourages us from interpreting the art-work of the self as a product of willed volition: a "kind of Baudelairean-inspired idea of unrestricted, open-ended self-invention"[276]. We cannot simply 'dictate' our willed 'character', imposing an order upon its multiplicity that it cannot accept.

The notion that simple thoughts can change one's personality and approach to the world denies that these thoughts are the product of that personality: that "opinions along with proofs, refutations, and the whole intellectual masquerade are only symptoms [of taste] and certainly *not* what they are so often taken to be, its causes" (GS §39 pp.55-6). Embodied existence, the 'dialogic' life of the forces that comprise our materiality, precede and shape thought. As, again, do the pressures placed on the 'grammatical' subject by various social powers (themselves only complex, all-too-human elements of that play of forces). We must accept that "[our] judgement, 'that is right' has a prehistory in your drives, inclinations, aversions, experiences, and what you have failed to experience" (GS §335:187). The first step we must take, accordingly, is to "have the courage to own up to [our] *physis* and to heed its demands down to its subtlest tones" (§39:56). From there, we must then examine why we take certain approaches to life – why, in the analogy of the garden, we value certain plants and shun others. The idea that a certain element of our personalities is something we 'ought' to exclude "shows that you haven't yet discovered yourself or created for yourself an ideal of your very own" (GS §335:189). The critical element of 'becoming what one is' is the honesty

[276] Keith Ansell-Pearson, "Editor's Afterward" *Dawn*, Stanford UP, 403

to live up to and apply the artistic 'taste' that arises in us, and to purify that taste through reflection on what belongs truly and wholly to 'us', and what we have allowed others (or our expectations of others) to dictate to us.

By returning to the analogy of the painter, we can see how this honesty feeds into the 'becoming' of the work of art. When faced with a choice, the painter can either do what must 'honestly' be done, or she can stick the illusion of her 'artistic autonomy' and the abstract vision of an 'ought' for the way the painting should be. Matisse is clear that it is not simply 'authenticity' that is at stake here: the painting itself will become something other than 'art' if its limbs are broken and forced into conformity with something that it is not. Knowledge allows us to more genuinely and fruitfully 'become what we are', to immerse ourselves in the processes of becoming, and to experience our creative relationship with existence, as something that is both artist and artwork.

Conclusion: Towards New Aesthetic Horizons

Nietzsche's 1886 Introductions to the two volumes of *Human All Too Human* speak of the works as a period of 'convalescence' in which Nietzsche. Yet this was only a temporary stop, one that allowed Nietzsche to regain confidence in his philosophic ability (HAH II 9). The knowledge of self we see emerging as a priority in the works of the Free Spirit are necessarily a means to knowledge of the world, to the continual honest interpretation of life undistorted by the traps that we set ourselves, by the distortions and blemishes that disfigure the reflecting 'mirror' that is our self-ness. As Nietzsche puts it in the aphorism *Whither do we Travel*, self-knowledge is sought because under the right conditions "self-knowledge will become universal knowledge [...] self-determination and self-education could, in the freest and most farsighted spirits, one day become universal determination with regard to all future humanity" (HAH II §223). The point of this knowing of self is not simply to 'fortify oneself', to build a temple of heroic pretentions and thus 'make oneself beautiful'. Emphasis on aesthetic improvement is central to *The Gay Science*, with aphorisms like *One Thing is Needful* advocating for a 'beatification' of the self (GS §290). But we should understand this only as a means to what that aphorism casts as the most 'needful' thing: "that a human being

should attain satisfaction with himself - be it through this or that poetry or art; only then is a human being at all tolerable to behold!" (162). For "as long as you are in any way ashamed of yourselves, you do not yet belong amongst us!" (§106:106). The goal of an 'art of the self' clearly has pregnant Eudaimonic elements to it. But the anti-hedonist basis of Nietzsche's philosophy means that we must always preserve a focus on the worth of knowledge for its own sake, and the subjugation of comfort and ease to the 'sanctified' quest for knowledge. The search for a beautiful self is a part of the search for a world we can affirm and is born of "a genuinely deep desire to rise beyond, at least look beyond, the ugliness and clumsiness" that keeps us from that. (§105:103). It is an indication that we wish to 'dance'.

Across the course of this study, I have sought to demonstrate a line of continuity that marks Nietzsche's early aesthetic writings as a critical key by which to understand the idea of knowledge in the middle period writings. Through an examination of *The Birth of Tragedy* and its companion works, I argued that Nietzsche began his philosophic career with a declaration of naturalistic affirmation, against metaphysics and life denial. Through a reading of these works and their aesthetic outlook, I sought to lay the ground works for showing how Nietzsche's conception of science grew up enmeshed with his interest in aesthetics to such a degree that any attempt to read them in antithesis to one another damages and deforms our understanding of them both. In forwarding this view, it became necessary to engage with and to seek to dispel the orthodox narrative that divides Nietzsche's corpus between the 'pessimistic metaphysics' of his aesthetic philosophy, and the affirmative scientism of the Free Spirit. My contribution to exploring where this new approach might lead was regrettably limited by the scope of this thesis, which chose to focus its efforts on challenging this restrictive and overly simplified epochal understanding of Nietzsche's relationship to aesthetics. Against such a 'hermeneutic reading', I hoped to offer an interpretation that would open up the scholarship to the idea of looking past the monolithic 'break' that *Human, All Too Human* has come to represent. My brief engagement with the predominant alternative to this vision has, I hope, gestured towards the possibilities that might be opened up through reading the Free Spirit's science as an outgrowth of *Birth's* aesthetics. It is my belief that this approach will prove fertile ground for future scholarship, providing a framework to work through problems that have emerged for

scholarship out of, I believe, the damage done by the narratives and divisions that I have sought to argue against in this thesis.

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