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WRITTEN AND PAINTED THOUGHTS:

NIETZSCHE'S
AESTHETIC TURN

(Attempts and Temptations to Postmodern Thought)

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION
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IN
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation finds its point of departure in the closing section of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, a passage in which the author turns and addresses what he has just written with the question: "Alas, what are you after all, my written and painted thoughts?" This question calls into question the status of the philosopher's text, and thus poses, it might be said, the very problem of postmodern thought—it is directed after all, to "the philosophers of the future." After a consideration of this question, of this coupling of writing and painting, a consideration that leads from the texts of Nietzsche to Derrida and Plato, the dissertation takes up an attempt to think through one possible response to Nietzsche's parting question—that these written and painted thoughts are best taken as art rather than truth.

After a consideration of Nietzsche's *aestheticism*—this turn from truth to art—its antecedents and possible legacy, I then address the controversy surrounding this aestheticist or post-aestheticist turn. Does the turn from truth to art lead out of or only further into nihilism, the crisis of modernity? The dissertation undertakes an extended reflection on Nietzsche's emphasis that art is the countermovement to nihilism. The focus of this reading then turns on Heidegger's *Nietzsche*, and then also on Derrida's reading of this reading. I take up the suggestion that the development of Nietzsche's thought might be considered as a "more and more radical meditation" on the startling line from Nietzsche's late notebooks: "We have art lest we perish of the truth." For Heidegger this line indicates a "raging discordance between art and truth," a discordance which must be resolved,
according to Heidegger, if the countermovement to nihilism is to be successful.

The main body of the dissertation then takes up a confrontation with this radically
developing meditation through the periods of Nietzsche's career. I examine a
number of texts, from *The Birth of Tragedy* to the last writings in 1888, in order to
think through in just what sense Nietzsche may have been developing the thought
that we have art lest we perish of the truth.
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ABBREVIATIONS

Collected German Editions of Nietzsche's Work.

*KGW* Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Citations are by volume number and page number.

*KSA* Werke, Kritische Studienausgabe. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Citations are by volume number and page number.

Individual Works by Nietzsche (listed by date of composition).

*BT* The Birth of Tragedy (Die Geburt der Tragödie), 1872.


*TL* "On Truth and Lie in an Extramoral Sense" (Ueber Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne), 1873.

*HAH* Human, All Too Human (Menschliches, Allzumenschliches), 1878.

*D* Dawn of Morning (Morgenröte), 1881.

*GS* The Gay Science (Die fröhliche Wissenschaft), 1882.

*Z* Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Also sprach Zarathustra), 1883/84/85.

*BGE* Beyond Good and Evil (Jenseits von Gut und Böse), 1886.

*GM* On the Genealogy of Morals (Zur Genealogie der Moral), 1887.

*TI* Twilight of the Idols (Götzen-Dämmerung), 1888.

*A* The Antichrist(ian) (Der Antichrist), 1888.

*EH* Ecce Homo (Ecce Homo), 1888.

*WP* The Will to Power (Der Wille zur Macht), a selection from Nietzsche's notebooks of the 1880s.
PREFACE

Sometime just before the final collapse into madness on 3 January 1889 Nietzsche completes the writing of Ecce Homo—that strange "autobiography" that recounts his life as a writer. The extreme hyperbole in the language of the text, exemplified by such chapter titles as "Why I Am So Wise," "Why I Am So Clever," "Why I Write Such Good Books," and "Why I Am a Destiny," would only seem to confirm the onrush of madness. With the caveat that it is against his habits and the pride of his instincts—but not without that characteristic hyperbole—Nietzsche opens the preface screaming this warning:

> Seeing that before long I must confront humanity with the most difficult demand ever made of it, it seems indispensable to me to say who I am. Really, one should know it, for I have not left myself "without testimony." But the disproportion between the greatness of my task and the smallness of my contemporaries has found expression in the fact that one has neither heard nor even seen me. I live on my own credit; it is perhaps a mere prejudice that I live. I only need to speak with one of the "educated" who come to the Upper Engadine for the summer, and I am convinced that I do not live. Under these circumstances I have a duty against which my habits, even more the pride of my instincts, revolt at bottom—namely, to say: Hear me! For I am such and such a person. Above all, do not mistake me for someone else! (EH P: 1)

And yet we know how tragically he was mistaken—even if we are no longer sure what it means to say he was mistaken, no longer sure we can say who Nietzsche is.

Nietzsche comes on the scene of postmodern thought like Dionysus, in The Bacchae, entering Thebes. The tragic play begins with Dionysus announcing his identity. He has come to "reveal himself" to Pentheus and all of Thebes as "the god I really am." And yet Dionysus comes with his divine form exchanged for that
of a mortal. That is, he comes masked. His identity is that of a masked god. Through the enigmatic mask his identity is both manifested and disguised.²

Nietzsche comes as the masked philosopher. His writings are full with the play of masks and veiled in their enigma. It would be quite safe to say that no other philosopher ever put what he had to say in the mouths of so many different characters, consciously addressing his readers in different voices and tones and with different glances, as if he is always on stage, wearing a constantly changing series of masks. This presents a considerable challenge to the reader: one knows one can never, even when he appears to be most in straight face, take what he has to say at face value. One understands why the duty he feels at the outset of Ecce Homo is so opposed to his habits and instincts. One then wonders all the more so how one can heed his warning. How is one to hear Nietzsche and to hear him in such a way as to avoid mistaking him for someone else if he is always masked?

Everything profound loves a mask; the profoundest things of all even have a hatred of image and parable. Could it not be that antithesis is the one proper disguise for the modesty of a god to stride forth in? A questionable question: it would be odd if some mystic had not ventured something to that effect. There are occurrences of such a delicate nature that one does well to cover them up with some rudeness to conceal them; there are actions of love and extravagant generosity after which nothing is more advisable than to take a stick and give any eyewitness a sound thrashing [...]. A man whose sense of shame has some profundity encounters his destinies and delicate decisions, too, on paths which few ever reach and of whose mere existence his closest intimates must not know: his mortal danger is concealed from their eyes, and so is his regained sureness of life. Such a concealed man who instinctively needs speech for silence and for burial in silence an who is inexhaustible in his evasion of communication, wants and sees to it that a mask of him roams in his place through the hearts and heads of his friends. And supposing he did not want it, he would still realize some day that in spite of that a mask of him is there— and that this is well. Every profound spirit needs a mask: even more, around every profound spirit a mask is growing continually, owing to the constantly false, namely shallow, interpretation of every word, every step, every sign of life he gives. (BGE 40)
The specter of Nietzsche’s masks continues to gaze hauntingly upon the scene of postmodern thought. For in confronting the enigma of the masked philosopher one faces most acutely the problem of interpretation at issue in the controversy concerning postmodern discourse. Nietzsche’s mask play contrasts starkly against the more straight-faced philosophical discourse in which one wants above all to make oneself clear so as to leave no doubt about what one is saying, and about who one is. Reading Nietzsche is obviously much more problematic if one knows that one cannot take him at face value. Why then the constant masquerade if Nietzsche really wanted, in the end, to be understood? He supposes that even if one did not want to roam about masked, a mask, if one is at all profound, is continually growing. One might get the impression that the mask grows because interpretation does not go deep enough; and thus, if one does not remain at the surface, if one is somehow able to tear away the mask of shallow interpretations, if one is at all profound, one may find Nietzsche without masks. And yet elsewhere, in places that must surface again and again throughout this dissertation, Nietzsche seems to suggest that interpretation cannot penetrate the surface. The very desire to penetrate the surface, to reveal a truth without veils, shall ever remain frustrated. The play of masks in Nietzsche’s texts, a play of revealing and concealing, raises questions that challenge the very possibility of interpretation, the possibility of ever being able to know if one has mistaken Nietzsche for someone else.³
Nietzsche has come to be considered a sort of postmodern prophet. The masks that are his texts and certain of the masks of Nietzsche that are interpretations of these texts—principally Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche and Derrida's of Nietzsche and Heidegger's *Nietzsche*—chart a certain trajectory of thought most often referred to as postmodern. The postmodern debate between "hermeneutics" and "deconstruction" inevitably seems to turn on the differences in Heidegger and Derrida's approach to Nietzsche's masks. What then, in concealing, do Nietzsche's masks reveal of Nietzsche's philosophy and the trajectory of the postmodern?

That Dionysus appears only through the mask does disclose something of the identity of the god. As for Nietzsche, insofar as the mask is a metaphor for the philosopher's text, it discloses something of a Nietzschean conception of interpretation, of the very possibility of disclosure itself. The mask might then be considered a metaphor for Nietzsche's *perspectivism*, which might be said to be the view that reality never presents itself unmasked. But if reality is never unmasked, if there are no facts outside of interpretation, no true face that could serve as a neutral ground for evaluating competing interpretations, how are interpretations to be justified? What kind of discourse is philosophy if the philosopher's text is a mask?

The mask, for Nietzsche, is, of course, an artistic metaphor, a metaphor drawn from art, indeed, from tragedy—from the appearance of Dionysus on the Greek stage. The enigmatic mask is crucial to Nietzsche's early interrogation of
tragedy, an important feature of his characterization of both the Apollinian and Dionysian and thus also that mysterious progeny of their strange coupling. The mask, then, is a symbol of tragedy. Insofar as the development of Nietzsche's thinking about art is bound up with his encounter with the mask of tragedy, the mask is an important metaphor for understanding Nietzsche's turn toward art or aestheticism. The metaphor of the mask might then suggest how closely related Nietzsche's perspectivism is to his aestheticism, and thus how closely his mature thought may be traced back to The Birth of Tragedy and the famous line that "it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified" (BT 5). One could say that in considering the philosopher's text a mask, Nietzsche considers the philosopher's text as an aesthetic phenomenon, and thus it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that interpretation is justified. The discourse of philosophy is thus submitted to a kind of transfiguration: a turn from an epistemologically centered form of discourse to something of an aesthetic discourse. Although, insofar as Nietzsche's aestheticism breaks with traditional aesthetics, it might be better to consider it a "post-aestheticism." This turn from an epistemological discourse to a post-aesthetics, the turn from truth to art, might be considered the postmodern turn.

Not only does Nietzsche come on the scene in a manner similar to Dionysus' appearance on the Greek stage, the consequence of his arrival might be likened to that of the strange god who brought madness and destruction. At least one can say that the controversy surrounding Nietzsche and postmodern
philosophy echoes something of the debate concerning the interpretation of the Bacchae. For some, Euripides' last drama is a final condemnation of the cult of Dionysus and a defense of the emerging rationalism—a reading which would be in accord with Nietzsche's position in The Birth of Tragedy that Euripides, as a mask of Socrates, is responsible for the banishment of Dionysus from the stage and thus the death of tragedy. The tragedy of The Bacchae, of the madness that befell the women of Thebes resulting in the dismemberment of Pentheus at their hands, is then a warning of what can happen if the irruptive influence of Dionysian mania is allowed to penetrate into the community. For others, the drama is the epiphany of Dionysus, an indication of Euripides' conversion at the end of his career. The women of Thebes are driven to madness and Pentheus is torn to pieces because they have all been unable to recognize Dionysus. The madness that lead to Pentheus' destruction is the result of Pentheus' own kind of madness, the madness of a community that refuses to recognize the Dionysian, the madness of a community torn apart by its own denial and repression. Here The Bacchae testifies to the need for a community to open within itself a place for Dionysus, to open up the space of tragedy, the scene of rapturous ecstasy, of carnival and masquerade. Nietzsche is, then, again like Dionysus in that the philosophical debate concerning the mad philosopher, if he is to be taken seriously as a philosopher at all, turns on whether his thought is to be strongly resisted, or whether in his thinking there is something vitally important that needs to be
heard. But we are back to the question of how it is that Nietzsche can be heard at all. Who is Nietzsche? Dionysus? What is tragedy? All are masks.

One of the more haunting characterizations of the modern/postmodern scene is the opening of *Gravity's Rainbow*, a scene of general crisis and a pervasive uncertainty whether or not things are leading toward a resolution of the crisis or only a further knotting into. The trajectory of the modern/postmodern is like that of the rocket Pilot watches in the distance. If modernism is undeniably a period defined by crisis, a feeling of imminent catastrophe, postmodernism is perhaps most characterized by undecidability. Does the post-modern come after the crisis of modernity has been overcome? Or is postmodernism only an acceleration of modernism, really only a form of late-modernism—perhaps the fall after the point of no return?

The name of Nietzsche is inscribed all along this trajectory. Nietzsche is, at once, both high priest of modernism and postmodern prophet. For it is Nietzsche's turn toward art that launches the trajectory of the modern and postmodern. It is a trajectory having its point of departure in Romanticism, its flight through the spaces of modernism, and its problematic destination in the question of the postmodern. This is not merely a matter of the shifts and changes in the development of Nietzsche's career as a writer. It is not simply a matter of charting the movement from a youthful romanticism to a late postmodernism. The same text, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, for example, or even *The Birth of Tragedy*, can
be read as essentially romantic, as a manifesto of modernism, and yet also as already postmodern.

The high expectations Nietzsche held out for art, the anticipation of a "philosophy of the future" drawn from the resources of art, is a consistent theme throughout his writings and certainly has a precedent in Romanticism. And yet, in emphasizing the new as a radical break with the past, with tradition—a rupture within history—Nietzsche is a very modern figure. The command to break the old tablets and create the new that he puts in the mouth of Zarathustra might be said to set the agenda for modernism. Moreover, Nietzsche also anticipates modernism, especially in the arts where his influence on artists and theorists would be difficult to overestimate, in foretelling of the crisis that would accompany this radical break, a crisis to which he would append the name of nihilism. In the closing section of Ecce Homo Nietzsche acknowledges his fate in telling us who he is:

I know my fate. One day my name will be associated with the memory of something tremendous—a crisis without equal on earth, the most profound collision of conscience, a decision that was conjured up against everything that had been believed, demanded, hallowed so far. I am no man, I am dynamite.

(EH "Why I am a Destiny," 1)

It may be easy to brush this off as madness, but there is a sense in which Nietzsche is dynamite. In the century that has passed since he made this announcement of his identity Nietzsche has virtually exploded into fragments, into a multiplicity of masks—into so many Nietzsches. This dissemination of masks is a
consequence of the post-aestheticism that leads Nietzsche to consider the text as a mask and to thus address his readers wearing a constantly shifting series of masks. Every reading, since interpretation is no longer a matter of revealing the true face, of reproducing an original, produces another mask. Of course, for some, this is the very reason that the name of Nietzsche has become associated with the most terrible memory, and thus the reason why his perspectivism or post-aestheticism should be rejected.

Although Nietzsche foretells of the tremendous crisis to come he writes from the perspective of the other side, from the perspective of one looking back. If the emphasis in the modern is on the present as a break from the past, Nietzsche writes as the posthumous philosopher, the one who writes from the perspective of that which comes after the present, the perspective of the philosophers of the future, the perspective of the postmodern. That Nietzsche can be regarded as both high priest of modernism and postmodern prophet might be explained by the fact that the problem of the "post" is already contained in the problem of the "modern." The very notion of the post-modern involves the very problem of modernism, the problem of a break with the past, the problem of beginnings and endings, the problem of history. The turn from truth to art, or post-aestheticism, is decisive, for Heidegger, in Nietzsche's attempt at twisting free from that history, that since Nietzsche and Heidegger, one would call the history of metaphysics—even if the turn from truth to art makes the designation of this history, and its singularity, most problematic.
In asking the question of whether Nietzsche’s turn from truth to art results in the consummation or the overcoming of nihilism, of whether, in this turn, his thinking remains entangled in or somehow twists free of metaphysics, Heidegger’s *Nietzsche* poses the problem for postmodern thought. Insofar as he seeks to answer this question, Heidegger seeks, in a sense, to unmask Nietzsche. Derrida’s response to Heidegger’s reading frustrates the Heideggerian quest by entertaining the notion that this question must always remain undecideable—that Nietzsche can never be unmasked. Against Heidegger, Derrida would let the dissemination of Nietzsche’s masks proliferate.

This dissertation attempts to address the controversy over interpretation by confronting the enigma of Nietzsche’s masks. As the metaphor of the mask is linked to Nietzsche’s aestheticism (or post-aestheticism), the dissertation attempts to take up his temptation of the philosophers of the future to take up a discourse based on art rather than truth. The collapse of the boundary between philosophy and art, more specifically between philosophy and literature, is a trait by which “postmodern” philosophy is usually described. One might even say that the many features that have been attributed to postmodern thought, the anti-foundationalism, antiessentialism, antirealism, suspicion of metanarratives, the rejection of canonical descriptions and final vocabularies, can be traced back to the aestheticist, or post-aestheticist trajectory opened up by Nietzsche. Except, of course, that one of the traits of postmodern thought is the difficulty of saying anything that consists of such generalities and assertions. It might be said that the
general problem of postmodern thought concerns how anything at all can be said. So let it be said that one response to this problem is to take up Nietzsche’s temptation to take the writings of a philosopher as art and not truth. Such a temptation would perhaps be something like Ariadne’s thread leading into the labyrinth of the postmodern.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Attempts and Temptations to a Philosophy of the Future

Alas, what are you after all, my written and painted thoughts! It was not long ago that you were still so colorful, young, and malicious, full of thorns and secret spices—you made me sneeze and laugh—and now? You have already taken off your novelty, and some of you are ready, I fear, to become truths: they already look so immortal, so pathetically decent, so dull! And has it ever been different? What things do we copy, writing and painting, we mandarins with Chinese brushes, we immortalizers of things that can be written—what are the only things we are able to paint? Alas, always only what is on the verge of withering and losing its fragrance! Alas, always only storms that are passing, exhausted, and feelings that are autumnal and yellow! Alas, always only birds that grew weary of flying and flew astray and now can be caught by hand—by our hand! We immortalize what cannot live and fly much longer—only weary and mellow things! And it is only your afternoon, you, my written and painted thoughts, for which alone I have colors, many colors perhaps, many motley caresses and fityl yellows and browns and greens and reds: but nobody will guess from that how you looked in your morning, you sudden sparks and wonders of my solitude, you my old beloved—wicked thoughts! (Beyond Good and Evil 296)

Thus Nietzsche closes Beyond Good and Evil. What are they after all, Nietzsche’s written and painted thoughts? While this is surely the question in the problem of the interpretation of Nietzsche, it is undoubtedly also a crucial question in the ongoing debate concerning the nature of philosophy in the controversy surrounding postmodern thought. For at stake in Nietzsche’s parting remarks is the status of the philosophical text. What are they after all, the writings of a philosopher? Nietzsche’s writings are provocative and very often deeply troubling. Yet perhaps nothing in his writings is so troubling to philosophers as the writing itself. Turning, here at the end of this Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft (Prelude, or more literally, Foreplay to a Philosophy of the Future) to address his own writing, Nietzsche raises the issue of writing, and in so doing questions what
it is to be a philosopher. It would be safe to say that no one in the Western
tradition before Nietzsche so completely rethinks the notion of what it is to be a
philosopher, and thus, so radically raises the question of how it is that one writes
as a philosopher—and thus also, forces so radical a rethinking of how it is that one
reads the writings of a philosopher.

This bit of playfulness (the foreplay to a future philosophy) contains some
of what might be the most "dangerous" and "wicked" thoughts Nietzsche ever
published—thoughts which apparently advocate "slavery in some sense or other" or
even "the sacrifice of untold human beings" for the further advancement of
humanity (BGE 257, 258). Yet, parting with this address to what he has just
written, Nietzsche warns his readers. Although in their colorful youth these
thoughts may have been malicious, thorny provocations, they induced at most a
sneeze and a laugh. But now, as he completes the writing and closes the book, he
fears that some of his written and painted thoughts are ready to become truths.

Considering the history of the interpretation of Nietzsche, and especially of
the political consequences extracted from his "truths," that fear is certainly
understandable. However, what is most unsettling for philosophers trying to make
sense of Nietzsche is that this fear does not simply betray an attitude toward a few
of his more dangerously "wicked" thoughts, but is rather an expression of his
attempt to undermine the very concept of truth. Indeed, the first section of
Beyond Good and Evil begins with a questioning of philosophy's most cherished
assumption:
The will to truth which will still tempt us to many a venture, that famous truthfulness of which all philosophers so far have spoken with respect—what questions has this will to truth not laid before us! What strange, wicked, questionable questions! That is a long story even now—and yet it seems as if it had scarcely begun. Is it any wonder that we should finally become suspicious, lose patience, and turn away impatiently? that we should finally learn from this Sphinx to ask questions, too? Who is it really that puts questions to us here? What in us really wants "truth"?

Indeed we came to a long halt at the question about the cause of this will—until we finally came to a complete stop before a still more basic question. We asked about the value of this will. Suppose we want truth: why not rather untruth? and uncertainty? even ignorance? (BGE 1)

How can a lover of wisdom not want truth? Even more, how can a philosopher prefer untruth rather than truth, the uncertain over the certain, and ignorance instead of knowledge? Surely Nietzsche must here be writing ironically and not really seriously questioning the value of truth? Surely this denial of truth can only be an example of the hyperbole characteristic of so much of his writing? How seriously is one to take these strange, wicked, questionable questions? What leads Nietzsche, anyway, to question the value of truth, to seemingly call into question the very possibility of the love of wisdom?

In closing his prelude to a philosophy of the future Nietzsche laments that something vital is lost when his written and painted thoughts become truths. He laments an impending death. Already, he notes, his thoughts, written and painted, have lost something of their novelty, their colorfulness, their provocativeness, their secret spices. As truths they may gain immortality, but at the cost of becoming pathetically decent and dull. Perhaps most lamentable of all, no longer would they make one laugh. By the time they become truths they will be as dead as the moon. The embalmers will have to be summoned. As truths his written and
painted thoughts face *mummification*. In *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche comments on the "Egypticism" of philosophers, their "hatred of the very idea of becoming":

They think that they show their *respect* for a subject when they de-historicize it, *sub specie aeterni*—when they turn it into a mummy. All that philosophers have handled for thousands of years have been concept-mummies; nothing real escaped their grasp alive. When these honorable idolaters of concepts worship something, they kill it and stuff it; they threaten the life of everything they worship. (*TI* III, 1).

There is no life in the texts of these philosophers. And yet, how is it that things will be any different with Nietzsche's writings? Does he even think that they can be any different? The lament at the end of this prelude to a philosophy of the future is more than a concern for some of his written and painted thoughts. Something about writing, or about language itself, determines that it has always been this way, perhaps always will be this way—perhaps philosophers can never be more than mandarins with Chinese brushes. Nothing alive survives the passage from thought to inscription. All that can be captured in writing are birds weary of flying, storms already spent—only what is afternoon, what is withered and faded and ready to go under like the sun.

Nietzsche's lament echoes with a number of images and associations that recall a certain chain of significations that have determined the understanding of philosophy and of the philosopher's text in the West since Plato, and thus, on the one hand, might seem to suggest that things could not be any different with Nietzsche's writings. In other words, Nietzsche's parting words might seem to lament that there can be no break from these previous philosophers, from this
"Egypticism"—another name for "Platonism," that problematic unfolding referred to as the history of metaphysics. In drawing the connection between writing and a certain kind of death, and especially this link between writing and painting, Nietzsche's lament recalls the condemnation of writing that Derrida is well known for having identified, in a sense, with that history, and for having traced back to a certain Egyptian "myth" retold in the "back room" of "Plato's pharmacy." In that "myth of Theuth," writing is rejected by the king, the god of gods, the father, because it substitutes dead repetition for living memory, dead discourse for living speech, and is thus not the remedy it is presented to be, but rather a poison, a poisoned present that would implant forgetfulness in the soul. After recalling this myth, Socrates, the pharmacist in the back room of the pharmacy, draws this analogy between writing and painting:

You know, Phaedrus, that's the strange thing about writing, which makes it truly analogous to painting. The painter's products stand before us as though they were alive, but if you question them, they maintain a most majestic silence. It is the same with written words; they seem to talk to you as though they were intelligent, but if you ask them anything about what they say, from a desire to be instructed, they go on telling you just the same thing forever.

Writing and painting are linked in the Phaedrus not only through the play of the pharmakon but also by their stubborn muteness, their mask of silence that prevents them for answering for themselves with the proper living word. Painting, Derrida notes, is here called zōgraphia, and is thus explicitly a drawing of the living. Similarly, writing was supposed to paint the living word. Both, however, cannot properly represent the living, they are, as Derrida puts it, "mere figurines,
masks, simulacra." Writing and painting are death masks. They are silent, unable to respond with the living voice. For Socrates this inability to answer for itself, to defend itself from misreading, is the trouble with writing:

And once a thing is put in writing, the composition, whatever it may be, drifts all over the place, getting into the hands not only of those who understand it, but equally of those who have no business with it; it doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the wrong. And when it is ill-treated and unfairly abused it always needs its parent to come to its help, being unable to defend or help itself.12

Derrida's aim in recounting Plato's condemnation of writing and painting is, at least in part, to show how Plato's discourse, here and in the myth of Theuth, is constrained by a system of hierarchical oppositions: speech/writing, life/death, father/son, legitimate son/orphan-bastard, soul/body, inside/outside, good/evil, seriousness/play, day/night, sun/moon, truth/art, and so on. Plato's condemnation of writing and painting is thus, not so much attributed to an author, Plato, but is determined by this system that holds in opposition art and truth. Writing and painting are both forms of art, or tekhnē. Both, also, are forms of mimēsis and are thus, according to the famous condemnation of art in the Republic, "three removes from the king and the truth."13 The distance between art and truth inscribed in the Republic is the distance between the sensible and intelligible, the sensuous and the supersensuous, the distance that separates myth and logic, rhetoric and dialectic, philosophy and art in the history of metaphysics.

Thus, on the one hand, Nietzsche's lament that nothing alive survives the passage from thought to inscription seems to suggest that things could not be any
different with his writings. In drawing together writing and painting with autumn and afternoon and that which is passing, exhausted, on the verge of withering and losing its fragrance, Nietzsche seems to follow Plato, or rather, seems to be caught up in the same chain that constrains Plato to link writing and painting with death.\textsuperscript{14} And yet, even as it relies upon it and is even caught up in it, Nietzsche's lament concerning his written and painted thoughts twists and contorts this chain. For now it is truth that is linked with death. Subverting the Platonic order, Nietzsche's lament is not at all a condemnation of writing or painting, but rather a lament for the passing of his written and painted thoughts into truth, into death.

Or, perhaps it is not even a lament at all. Perhaps Nietzsche's parting address to what he has just written is rather another provocation, a warning to the reader not to take what is written as truth, and a temptation to take his philosophy as nothing other than written and painted thoughts, in other words—as art. Perhaps then what is written will have a little life. (If truth is linked with death, art, as we shall see, will be given life). It is through this twisting of the chain of Platonic oppositions, art/truth, life/death, that Nietzsche attempts to distance himself from the "Egypticism" of previous philosophers. In any case, this temptation to take philosophy as art rather than truth is perhaps the most characteristic feature of Nietzsche's anticipation of a "philosophy of the future."

Indeed, it is this temptation, this turn from truth to art, a move that some refer to as Nietzsche's \textit{aesthetics}m that is generally regarded as having inaugurated the trajectory of postmodern thought.\textsuperscript{15}
In suggesting this turn from truth to art Nietzsche's parting address to his written and painted thoughts challenges the prevailing conception of philosophy and thus revives, one might say, the quarrel, already ancient in Plato, between philosophy and poetry.\textsuperscript{16} Since Plato, who would make kings of philosophers and exiles of artists, philosophers in the West generally have thought of themselves as occupying a higher, more exalted role in culture than that reserved for artists. While the philosopher is dedicated to the serious task of obtaining true knowledge, the artist, consigned to the realm of appearance, a realm of lies and illusions, can only play with fictions. According to the famous condemnation of art in the \textit{Republic}, if art is to be at all accepted into the community, it must be submitted to the authority of reason. Without the guidance of reason the artist is a danger to the \textit{polis}. Rather than leading toward true knowledge, the tragic poet and the painter alike possess a dangerous seductive power that nourishes and arouses the feelings and passions, impairing reason, leading away from truth. Charged with a serious task, philosophy, for the most part of the history of metaphysics, is aligned with the sciences rather than the arts. With Descartes' quest for certainty and the adoption of scientific method, modern philosophy became ever more closely tied to the rise of science, ever more rigorous in its concern with foundations and justifications. The conception of philosophy as rigorous science dictates everything from the subject of valid philosophical inquiry to the very style in which philosophy is written. As a countermovement to the heavy seriousness of the traditional philosophic discourse, Nietzsche's written and
painted thoughts embarks upon a "philosophy of the future" characterized by play, by a certain lightness, laughter, and dance—a fröhliche Wissenschaft.

_Nietzsche's Aestheticism_

The countermovement begins for Nietzsche, perhaps, even in his first work. The narration of the story of the birth and death of tragedy might be considered his first attempt at distancing himself from Platonism, his first attempt at reciting the fable of what he would later call "The History of an Error." In recounting the contest between the tragic poets and Socrates, Nietzsche revives the ancient quarrel, this time with a decisive turn in favor of art. _The Birth of Tragedy_ invests the greatest hope for the future in art. In the original preface Nietzsche writes that he is convinced that "art represents the highest task and truly metaphysical activity of this life." This highest task is then suggested in the line—important enough to have been stated twice in the original text—that "it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified" (_BT_ 5, 24).

Such high expectations of art have a precedent in Romanticism and in Schopenhauer. Nietzsche's denigration, in the 1886 "Attempt at a Self-Criticism," of the youthful romanticism and Schopenhauerian language of his first work might lead one to think that the development in his thinking, the shift in his thought that is generally thought to occur after _The Birth of Tragedy_, after distancing himself from Schopenhauer and Wagner, might involve less of an emphasis on art.
Yet in that "Self-Criticism" Nietzsche explicitly ties his later critique of morality to the aesthetic interpretation and justification of the world to which his first book was devoted. This would suggest that whatever turn or break occurs in Nietzsche's thought after The Birth of Tragedy, the development of his mature thought is never far from his thinking on art.

Before proceeding with this initial sketch of Nietzsche's aesthetic turn, it will be necessary, in order to mark his departure from his predecessors, to review what he shares with his Romanticist forebears. In his review of the precedents to Nietzsche's aestheticism, Allan Megill has noted that Nietzsche shares with the early German Romantics, particularly those in the Schlegel circle, "a similar cult of the mythical, manifesting itself in the search for a 'new mythology,' a similar divinization of art, a similar scorn of philistinism, a similar predilection for a fragmentary or aphoristic style, a similar desire for an 'aesthetic revolution' based on a recovery of the Greek spirit, a similar search for an 'aesthetic thinking,' and a similar anticipation of a 'philosophy of the future' that would somehow draw on the resources of art." What Nietzsche has in common with these Romantics is an aesthetic sensibility or concern that is part of a Kantian legacy. Kant is then the figure that provides the link between the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and the postmodern trajectory opened up by Nietzsche. In The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche even suggests that Kant, along with Schopenhauer, inaugurated a "tragic culture" by undermining, although unwittingly, the optimistic logic of the Enlightenment. What Kant wanted to do, of course, was to solve the problem created by the
contradiction between the Enlightenment project of founding an objective science of nature while at the same time preserving a belief in morality and freedom. It was a problem of solving the dichotomy between subject and object, between a science of unfree objects and a morality that depended upon the notion of a free subject. In Nietzsche's view, what Kant had done was to expose the failure of the Enlightenment project, the project of "doing for the human world what Newton had done for the natural world." Kant, however, at least according to many of his readers, had solved the problem in the third critique, *The Critique of Judgment*, in proposing the autonomy of aesthetic judgment as a mediator between the theoretical and the practical, between the realms of nature and freedom. Although Kant explicitly denies a realm of being distinct from nature and freedom, he was read, especially by his Romanticist heirs, as proposing the existence of an autonomous realm of the aesthetic. In addition to this independent realm of the aesthetic Kant also suggests, at least to the Romanticists, a higher role for art. Even though he explicitly denies that art has any "truth value," since it is a matter of disinterested pleasure and not of knowledge, the third critique suggests that art provides an access to that which cannot be grasped by concepts, that which cannot be "made intelligible by language."

Schiller was the first to take up Kant's suggestion of a higher role for art. One of the first theorists of modern alienation, Schiller proposed that the cure for this alienation lies in art. Schiller's influence on Nietzsche is immediately recognizable in the central place the drives (*Triebe*) have for both thinkers. For
Schiller, the Kantian problem becomes the problem of achieving a harmonization between the two fundamental drives of man: the sensuous drive (*sinnliche Trieb*) and the formal drive (*Formtrieb*). Schiller proposes a third drive, the "play" drive (*Spieltrieb*) which harmonizes the sensuous and formal drives. It is in art that this play drive emerges, and thus, it is in art, in contemplating the beautiful, that the sensuous and formal drives are brought together. Schiller maintains, however, the Kantian distinction between the aesthetic and nonaesthetic. In another sense in which Schiller provides an important precedent to Nietzsche, art is treated explicitly as *Schein*, a matter of semblance or illusion. However, Schiller treats art as *Schein* in order to preserve the autonomy of truth, and it is this that distinguishes Schiller from the aestheticist trajectory initiated by Nietzsche.

It would not be long, however, before other thinkers would consider art as a source of truth, and thus to suggest that philosophy should become aesthetic. In his *System of Transcendental Idealism*, Schelling calls for philosophy to make an aesthetic turn. For Schelling nature and the work of art are both essentially aesthetic. This anticipates the famous proclamation in Nietzsche's notebooks that the world is "a work of art that gives birth to itself." Since only art can make objective what the philosopher represents in thought, according to Schelling, philosophy, after completing its task of representation, must return to "the universal ocean of poetry from which it started out."

This appeal to the culmination of philosophy in poetry is what connects Schelling to the German Romantics. Schlegel thus speaks of a "progressive
universal poetry" that would unite philosophy and poetry. It is this collapse of the boundary between philosophy and poetry, or philosophy and literature, which draws together Nietzsche and his "philosophers of the future" with Romanticism.

One of the more distinctive features of Nietzsche's "style" is the "colorfulness" of his written and painted thoughts—his use of polysemantic metaphors rather than concepts. For a number of years this aspect of Nietzsche's writings led to the perception, which Heidegger's reading endeavored to change, that Nietzsche was not to be taken seriously as a philosopher. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in particular, with its rich imagery and metaphorical language—it is painted as much as written, contrasts so starkly in style from a traditional philosophical text that many of Nietzsche's detractors, who would maintain the separation between philosophy and art, consign it to the realm of literature and deny altogether its philosophical import. On the other hand, for those that endeavored to read Nietzsche as a philosopher, his use of metaphor was often considered a poetic embellishment to the thought, which, in order to be revealed, must be stripped of its rhetorical raiment. Not until the recent French interpretations has there been any attempt to regard Nietzsche's use of metaphor as philosophically significant. Eric Blondel, to take one example, suggests that "Nietzsche's use of metaphor is demanded by a specifically philosophic necessity, and that his discourse is intrinsically metaphorical, precisely because his thought is *meta-phorical.***

The purport of this French interpretation calls attention to the question of style in Nietzsche's writing—or rather, styles, since, as Derrida remarks: "If there is
going to be style there can only be more than one." Nietzsche's texts are immediately distinguishable from traditional philosophical texts not only by their colorful metaphorical language but also by the varied palette of styles employed. One of the reasons for his success as a writer, Nietzsche tells us, is that he has "many stylistic possibilities—the most multifarious art of style that has ever been at the disposal of one man" (EH, "Why I Write Such Good Books," 4). By contrast, traditional philosophical discourse is marked by a certain constancy of style (following Derrida—a lack of attention to style), holding fast to the scholarly text as the proper style for philosophy. Painted in a variety of styles Nietzsche challenges the traditional philosophical discourse by suggesting that there is no style "proper" to philosophy. In the wake of the French readings, it is no longer adequate to consider Nietzsche's use of many styles as merely an exercise in style—it is rather a stylistic strategy that puts into question the very distinction between style and content, between the content of the thought and the manner of presentation. It is a feature of Nietzsche's aestheticism that, as Alexander Nehamas has put it, "results from his effort to bring style into the center of his own thought."

Nietzsche's use of many stylistic possibilities, as Nehamas' work endeavors to demonstrate, might then be considered a strategy of his perspectivism. One might think, then, of Nietzsche's aestheticism as a corollary of perspectivism, of the view that every view is only one view among many possible views, that every interpretation is only one among many possible interpretations. In trying out a
number of stylistic possibilities Nietzsche's multifarious art of style draws attention to the point that the narrative voice is situated within a particular perspective. One could draw the connection between his perspectivism and aestheticism, after all, in that the term "perspectivism" itself, Nietzsche allows, "is borrowed from "an expression painters use" (BGE 2). To develop the analogy, Nietzsche thinks of "perspective" already from the point of view of modern painting, already from the perspective in which the Cartesian plane of representation is broken, where it is no longer possible to paint from the perspective that would pretend to be no perspective at all.

Thought together with his perspectivism, Nietzsche's aesthetic turn marks a departure from Romanticism and thus from "aestheticism" as it is usually understood. In contrast to the romanticist retreat from the "real world" into the isolation of the aesthetic, Nietzsche's aestheticism moves in the opposite direction. It is, as Megill puts it, "an attempt to expand the notion of the aesthetic to embrace the whole of reality." Whereas usually one makes a distinction between the perception of a "mere thing" and a work of art—art being richer in meanings insofar as the meaning of the work is in part the responsibility of the interpreter—Nietzsche collapses the distinction between art and philosophy by insisting that all interpretation is aesthetic. From the viewpoint of his perspectivism, the "world" itself is a "work of art" in the sense that it becomes, "infinite' for us all over again, inasmuch as we cannot reject the possibility that it may include infinite interpretations" (GS 374). Nietzsche's turn toward art departs
from prior aesthetics also in that he thinks of art not from the point of view of the spectator, or of the work of art, but from the perspective of the artist.

Finally, the distance between Nietzsche and his Romanticist predecessors is most obvious if one considers the glaring contrast between their expectations in making an aesthetic turn. An important motif of Romanticism, it has been suggested, is that of a "circuitous journey," a "move from alienation, through spiritual crisis, to a redemptive reintegration with the cosmos and with our own possibilities."36 The aesthetic turn in Romanticism is thus a return, a passage through crisis and back to some hoped for comforting unity. If Romanticism developed out of the failure of the Enlightenment, out of a loss of faith in reason, the celebration of the genius of the artist and the inspiration of art was as a means of attaining the same goal towards which the Enlightenment thinkers had placed their faith in reason. The Romanticist expectation of art, in short, was the hope of gaining access to knowledge. In regarding art as a source of truth, Romanticism involved something of a reversal of the Platonic opposition between art and truth, but it was not a break—not even an attempt at a break—from Platonism. Nietzsche's turn to art, by contrast, was conceived specifically as an attempt to break from Platonism. In Nietzsche's aestheticism—or rather what might be called, in order to mark the difference from Romanticism, a "post-aestheticism"—there is no hope for a return to some unity. There is no circuitous journey that ends in a return home. Nietzsche's circuitous journey, the eternal return, may even be viewed, as Megill suggests, as a parody of Romanticist hope.37
Finally, Nietzsche aesthetic turn, as his parting address to his written and painted thoughts suggests, is an attempt to decidedly break from Platonism by turning philosophy away from truth toward art.

This interpretation of Nietzsche as an aestheticist or post-aestheticist philosopher is, of course, not the only Nietzsche that can be discerned from his texts. Nevertheless, the Nietzsche that would tempt us to take his written and painted thoughts—and, indeed, the writings of any philosopher—as art and not truth, is the most interesting, most original, and certainly most controversial Nietzsche. The controversy surrounding this post-aestheticist, or post-modern Nietzsche, centers around the question of whether this aesthetic turn turns out of or only further into the crisis of modernity. Many commentators find this Nietzsche, and the postmodern trajectory of thought inaugurated by this Nietzsche, to only deepen this crisis, to end, after all, in nihilism. As is well known, in the working notes to his uncompleted final project Nietzsche explicitly characterizes art as initiating the "countermovement" to nihilism (WP 794). Art is here affirmed as "the great means of making life possible, the great seduction to life, the great stimulant of life. . . . the only superior counterforce to all will to denial of life, as that which is . . . antinihilist par excellence" (WP 853). Richard Schacht, in summing up his treatment of Nietzsche’s thinking about art, comments that "of all the points he seeks to make none is of greater interest and importance than his contention that art is the clue and key to the possibility of discovering a way beyond nihilism."
This dissertation is an attempt to take up this clue and will thus endeavor to trace the development of Nietzsche's thinking about art in order to think through the problem of whether or not this postaesthetic or postmodern turn is a key to a way beyond nihilism. This project of attempting to determine whether or not nihilism is overcome in Nietzsche's thinking on art is, of course, Heidegger's project, at least in the first volume of his vast and influential reading of Nietzsche. My project thus works out of a Heideggerian problematic. Like Nietzsche, Heidegger regarded the problem of overcoming nihilism to be synonymous with the problem of overcoming Platonism. For Heidegger, the countermovement to nihilism cannot be a simple reversal, but must be, on the contrary, a "twisting free" of the Platonic order that maintains the distance between art and truth. Thus, if nihilism is to be overcome in reviving the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry, Nietzsche cannot simply reverse the opposition between Socrates and the tragic poets, between philosophy and art. The twisting free must involve not a reversal but a dismantling of the hierarchy—a crossing of philosophy and art. Even in The Birth of Tragedy, unfolding the story of the contest between Socrates and the tragic poets, Nietzsche hints of such a crossing. After levelling an unprecedented attack on the revered Socrates, Nietzsche admits that one thing gives him pause—the dream Socrates relates to his friends during those last days, a dream in which he is exhorted to practice music. This leads Nietzsche to wonder "whether there is necessarily only an antipodal relation between Socratism and art, and whether the birth of an 'artistic Socrates'
is altogether a contradiction in terms" (BT 14). In a letter from the time he was writing *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche further hints at the gestation of a transfigured philosophy: "Knowledge, art, and philosophy (*Wissenschaft Kunst und Philosophie*) are now growing together so much in me that I shall in any case give birth to a centaur one day." Another hint of this crossing of philosophy and art is found in a remark Heidegger cites from the notebooks of this period: "My philosophy an inverted Platonism: the further removed from true being, the purer, the more beautiful, the better it is. Living in *Schein* as goal." Heidegger finds in this remark "an astonishing preview in the thinker of his entire later philosophical position." Would living in *Schein* involve a reversal of the Platonic opposition, or would it entail a crossing of art and truth? One could say that Nietzsche devoted the remainder of his career to birthing this centaur thereby becoming an "artistic Socrates."

Nevertheless, for Heidegger, even though Nietzsche labors at nothing else in his last creative years than this overturning of Platonism, the astonishing preview in the early note is still only a preview. The final twisting free of Platonism does not take place until, if it takes place at all, the final year of Nietzsche's creative life—not until just before the collapse. The site of this final attempt at the overturning of Platonism is Nietzsche's famous renarration of the history of metaphysics, the "History of an Error" in *Twilight of the Idols*, in which the history of Platonism is turned into a fable once told, the story of "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable." Is the preview only a preview because the
twisting free must abandon the goal of living in *Schein*, or might the preview be a preview insofar as the twisting free leads to living in *Schein*? The decisive factor in Heidegger’s reading, as to whether Nietzsche is successful in overcoming nihilism and twisting free of metaphysics, turns on the problem of the "raging discordance between art and truth" that resounds throughout Nietzsche’s writings.

*The Raging Discordance Between Art and Truth*

Heidegger finds, in a late note, from the period in which Nietzsche is thinking through to the end the "History of an Error," this startling confession:

> Very early in life I took the question of the relation of *art* to *truth* seriously: even now I stand in holy dread in the face of this discordance. My first book was devoted to it. *The Birth of Tragedy* believes in art on the background of another belief—that it *is not possible to live with truth*, that the "will to truth" is already a symptom of degeneration.

Even though Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche is marked by a constant oscillation, it is, for Heidegger, as if Nietzsche reveals here the key to his writings. Even as he is engaged in twisting free of metaphysics, Nietzsche reveals that he still stands in holy dread before the discordance between art and truth. It would not be surprising that the discordance is at the heart of *The Birth of Tragedy*, but that he remains standing before this discordance, even during the writing of *Twilight of the Idols*, indicates at least a continuity between the astonishing preview and the final attempt at the overturning of Platonism. What is dreadful is that it is not possible to live with truth, that the "will to truth" is a symptom of decline.
For Heidegger, the statement initially sounds perverse. But then, as he goes on to point out, the strangeness dissipates as one realizes that by "will to truth" Nietzsche means "the will to the 'true world' in the sense of Plato and Christianity, the will to suprasensuousness, to being in itself." Thus, since art belongs to this world, the sensuous world, "art is worth more than truth" (WP 853). Finally, Heidegger calls attention to the remark, which Erich Heller has described as "at once crystalline and tumultuous, brilliant and violent":

> For a philosopher to say 'the good and the beautiful are one' is infamy; if he goes on to add, 'also the true', one ought to thrash him. Truth is ugly. We possess art lest we perish of the truth."

The discordance between art and truth never rages more severely. For Heller, what makes this so unsettling is that, although it has been said before that we cannot live with the whole truth, most notably by Plato in the cave parable, because truth "is unattainable or not meant for the treasury of man," no one has before said, "surely not with Nietzsche's aphoristic vehemence" that truth would kill "because of its devastating ugliness." Heidegger assures us that the ugliness is that "truth" here refers to the suprasensuous; we thus have art so not to perish from such suprasensuous 'truth'.

What does it indicate then—the decisive question for Heidegger—that there remains for Nietzsche, even as he labors at nothing else than the overturning of Platonism, a discordance between art and truth that would arouse dread? It would seem that if "truth" refers to the suprasensuous, a twisting free of Platonism would
leave behind the dreadful discordance. Or, at least, if truth and art were to remain in discordance, it would not be one that arouses dread. That the discordance continues to rage, and that it continues to arouse dread, even at the time of Nietzsche's final attempt to twist free, would seem to indicate that the final attempt is continuous with the preview in that it falls, after all, back into that from which it came.

But does the discordance between art and truth continue to rage and to arouse dread for Nietzsche up until the end? On this decisive question Heidegger relies heavily, as is characteristic of his reading of Nietzsche, on a note from the unpublished Nachlass. Even though Heidegger's own view of interpretation puts in question the very notion of such an "unmasking," his strategy in this reading seems to be motivated by the belief that in the private notes one finds the masked philosopher off stage, with the masks withdrawn. For Heidegger, it is only in the notes that one can encounter Nietzsche's "proper" philosophy: "What Nietzsche himself published during his creative life was always foreground. . . . His philosophy proper was left behind as posthumous, unpublished work."47 Heidegger's textual strategy has, not surprisingly, engendered no small controversy.48 Nevertheless, however one responds to this strategy, Heidegger's reading sets up the parameters of the contemporary debate concerning the interpretation of Nietzsche. Does the discordance between art and truth rage throughout Nietzsche's writings, from the youthful Birth of Tragedy and on through the last attempt at twisting free from "The History of an Error"? Jacques
Taminiaux, for one, answers in the affirmative in suggesting that the development of Nietzsche's thought, from *The Birth of Tragedy* to the last writings, might be regarded as "a more and more radical meditation" on the thought that we have art lest we perish of the truth.\(^{49}\)

The problem of charting the development of Nietzsche's thought, of marking the different phases of his career, is just as problematic as the issue of deciding how much importance to assign to the unpublished writings. Although many readers mark three phases in Nietzsche's career—early, middle, and late, there is considerable disagreement about where to mark and how to characterize these phases. The standard view, which may be attributed to Walter Kaufmann's interpretation, charts a development from an early "aesthetic" phase beginning with *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), through a middle "positivistic" phase culminating in *The Gay Science* (1882), to the late or "mature" thought which first comes to expression with the publication of the first two books of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883).\(^{50}\) Other readings—Heidegger's *Nietzsche* could be read this way—find the "mature" thought to come later, and thus mark a fourth culminating phase in the fateful last year of 1888.\(^{51}\) Much debate, moreover, revolves around the relation between the "early" and "mature" writings—around the question of how important a confrontation with the early thought is to an understanding of the mature thought.

This dissertation pursues Taminiaux's suggestion concerning the development of Nietzsche's thought. It thus attempts to take up and follow, at
least provisionally this more and more radical meditation on the thought that we have art lest we perish of the truth. It attempts both to examine, from *The Birth of Tragedy* to the last writings, in just what sense a discordance rages between art and truth, and finally, also to address the Heideggerian question of just what this discordance indicates concerning Nietzsche's attempt to initiate a countermovement to nihilism and the history of metaphysics. Chapter 2 sets out with a consideration of Nietzsche's "prophecy" of the "crisis of modernity" and then leaps to the end, so to speak, to a preliminary consideration of "The History of an Error," of Heidegger's reading of this critically important text, and then, of Derrida's reading of Heidegger's reading.

Chapter 3 then begins a chronological reading of the developing meditation on the raging discordance with an examination of *The Birth of Tragedy*. What intrigued the young Nietzsche about the Greeks of the tragic age was that they seemed not to despair of life even when they had knowledge of the terrible truth about existence, a truth conveyed in their folk wisdom. Early in *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche recounts the tale in which the terrible truth is imparted to humankind by the wise Silenus, companion of Dionysus. Finally forced to reveal this ugly truth, Silenus, in shrill laughter, discloses:

"Oh, wretched ephemeral race, children of chance and misery, why do you compel me to tell you what it would be most expedient for you not to hear? What is best of all is utterly beyond your reach: not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. But the second best for you is—to die soon." (*BT* 3).
Such knowledge of truth, in contrast to the Socratic equation of knowledge and happiness, leads to nausea and denial of life. Such a truth is truly abysmal. How, Nietzsche wondered, had these Greeks managed to affirm life despite this terrible pessimism, when they had not the metaphysical comfort of Platonic metaphysics or Christian morality? The secret of the culture of the tragic age, Nietzsche had then boldly asserted, was its art—Attic tragedy, "a saving sorceress expert at healing" (B7 7).

The discordance between art and truth resounds in the antagonism between Apollinian and Dionysian art which gave birth to tragedy. Apollinian art is conceived as a kind of veil or mask, an illusion that is necessary to overcome the nausea experienced after Dionysian insight into the abysmal truth. Lest we perish, we have art as mask in order to veil the ugly truth. But such illusions, by themselves, can be as harmful as that which they serve to veil. The highest goal of art is attained only "when Dionysus speaks the language of Apollo; and Apollo, finally, the language of Dionysus" (B7 21). When Dionysus dons the enigmatic mask of Apollo, tragedy is born from the mysterious coupling of the two artistic drives. Art is then the saving sorceress in serving as a sort of healing mask or "transfiguring mirror," which, "reversing the wisdom of Silenus" seduces the Greeks of the tragic age to affirm life in spite of its tragic dimensions (B7 3). But what happens with the discordance between art and truth in the strange coupling of Apollo and Dionysus?

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The discordance might also be heard in the opposition between Socrates and the tragic poets. Socrates, as the murderer of tragedy, is responsible for delivering the death blow to what was highest in Greek culture. With the illusion of theoretical optimism, the belief that existence is not abysmal but fathomable through reason, that knowledge of truth yields virtue and happiness, Socrates took the life out of tragedy. The discordance would seem to rage on in Nietzsche's attempt to induce a rebirth of tragedy, which would come to pass only after science (Socratism) "suffers shipwreck" at its limits (BT 15). Would this newborn tragedy again reverse the opposition between Socrates and the tragic poets, between philosophy and art, art and science? Would the discordance between art and truth continue to rage in the music-practicing Socrates? This reading of The Birth of Tragedy finds its point of departure in the suggestive and critically important reading by John Sallis in which Nietzsche's first born turns out, indeed, to be an astonishing preview of the last attempt at twisting free.52

For those who regard The Birth of Tragedy as being too entrenched in metaphysical language to be much of a preview of Nietzsche's mature thought, the essay "On Truth and Lie in the Extra-Moral Sense," written at about the same time but never published, is often pointed to as evidence that even in the early writings Nietzsche's later views were developing. Relatively obscure among Nietzsche's writings until the recent French interpretations (Derrida's most notably) the essay is now well-known for suggesting that truths are illusions, nothing more than worn out, forgotten, dead metaphors:
What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically enhanced, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins. (TL 84)

Chapter 4 takes up a reading of this essay and thus also considers the debate as to whether the essay is an important preview of the mature thought or just an indication of a youthful position Nietzsche would later abandon. On the one hand, the essay is thought to contain Nietzsche's most extended treatment of the problem of truth and knowledge. In putting forth a critique of traditional theories of truth and knowledge it is considered a preview of the later perspectivist account of knowledge in which the model of knowledge as representation (Vorstellung) is replaced by a view of knowledge as dissimulation (Verstellung). The essay has been most influential, however, in drawing attention to the problem of language as the source of that critique. In suggesting that all language is metaphorical the essay is thought to involve a rejection of both the correspondence theory of truth and a referential theory of meaning, leaving no access to a "reality" outside of language. This metaphorical account of language undermines the traditional philosophical discourse and has thus been of great influence upon those who have taken up Nietzsche's temptation to take his written and painted thoughts as art and not truth.

After this consideration of the early writings, Chapter 5 then takes up the question concerning to what extent these writings provide a preview of the mature
thought. Much of the controversy surrounding the interpretation of Nietzsche's later philosophy concerns just how seriously perspectivism involves the denial of truth, and thus to just what extent the mature thought resounds with the discordance between art and truth. Interpreters have been able to find evidence in his scattered and often fragmentary remarks in support of varying construals of perspectivism. In what some call a "weaker" version of the hypothesis, perspectivism is the rather tame view, basically an optical metaphor for knowledge and consistent with empiricism, that every seeing is a seeing from a particular perspective. Yet in this version it still makes sense to speak of a common referent, a common object or world, which competing views are perspectives of; and thus, by widening and focusing our perspectives it still makes sense to speak of getting closer to truth. The "stronger" version of perspectivism, however, and the one which has made Nietzsche such an important figure in postmodern discourse, asserts that it no longer makes sense to speak of a world apart from our interpretations of it. There is then no neutral standpoint outside of interpretation to evaluate competing interpretations. The "world" becomes "infinite" in being constituted by interpretations, constructed out of the struggle to live, a product of will to power. If the world is a work of art constructed out of perspectival interpretations, the philosopher is necessarily an artist, an active participant in the continuous remaking of the "world."

What makes this interpretation of perspectivism most radical is the notion that the "creation" of the artist necessarily involves a certain falsification and thus
the denial of truth. The classical source for this idea in Nietzsche is the passage from which his prelude to a philosophy of the future gets its title:

The falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment; in this respect our new language may sound strangest. The question is to what extent it is life-promoting, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-cultivating. And we are fundamentally inclined to claim that the falsest judgments (which include the synthetic judgments a priori) are the most indispensable for us; that without accepting the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live—that renouncing false judgments would mean renouncing life and a denial of life. To recognize untruth as a condition of life—that certainly means resisting accustomed value feelings in a dangerous way; and a philosophy that risks this would by that token alone place itself beyond good and evil. (BGE 4)

Rather than being established on a foundation of truth, knowledge is instead founded on the will to ignorance:

In what strange simplification and falsification man lives! One can never cease wondering once one has acquired eyes for this marvel! How we have made everything around us clear and free and easy and simple! how we have been able to give our senses a passport to everything superficial, our thoughts a divine desire for wanton leaps and wrong inferences! how from the beginning we have contrived to retain our ignorance in order to enjoy an almost inconceivable freedom, lack of scruple and caution, heartiness, and gaiety of life—in order to enjoy life! And only on this now solid, granite foundation of ignorance could knowledge rise so far—the will to knowledge on the foundation of a far more powerful will: the will to ignorance, to the uncertain, to the untrue! Not as its opposite, but—as its refinement! (BGE 24)

In this prelude to a philosophy of the future, the philosopher is an artist, and art is a refinement of the will to ignorance. In the notebooks Nietzsche explicitly connects the denial of truth and the necessity of artistic falsification to his perspectivism, and then identifies this radical perspectivism as a common thread throughout his writings:
That the value of the world lies in our interpretation (—that other interpretations than merely human ones are perhaps somewhere possible—); That previous interpretations have been perspective valuations by virtue of which we can survive in life, i.e., in the will to power, for the growth of power; that every elevation of man brings with it the overcoming of narrower interpretations; that every strengthening and increase of power opens up new perspectives and means believing in new horizons—this idea permeates my writings. The world with which we are concerned is false, i.e., is not a fact but a fable and approximation on the basis of a meager sum of observations; it is "in flux," as something in a state of becoming, as a falsehood always changing but never getting near the truth: for—there is no "truth." (WP 616)

In the "Self-Criticism" attached to The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche links his earlier turn toward art and the later perspectivism. However disagreeable the work seems to him sixteen years later, Nietzsche writes that he "has not become a stranger to the task" which The Birth of Tragedy had first dared to attempt (§2). His "purely aesthetic interpretation and justification of the world" is contrasted with the "moral" interpretation which:

relegates art, every art, to the realm of lies; with its absolute standards, beginning with the truthfulness of God, it negates, judges, and damns art. Behind this mode of thought and valuation, which must be hostile to art if it is at all genuine, I never failed to sense a hostility to life—a furious, vengeful antipathy to life itself: for all life is based on semblance, art, deception, points of view, and the necessity of perspectives and error. (§5)

Perspectivism is here tied to the notion of art as dissimulation. The world with which we are concerned is thus a mask. It is not that this world lies beneath the mask, veiled in such a way that it could somehow be unveiled. There is no peeling away of the mask of interpretations that could reveal an uninterpreted world. The world is always already an interpreted world.
This radical perspectivism and denial of truth forces Nietzsche's readers to confront, as Nehamas has shown, a number of paradoxes. First there is the paradox of perspectivism itself—usually referred to as the problem of self-reference. Does Nietzsche intend to state a truth when he says that there is no truth? If perspectivism with its consequent denial of truth is itself only a perspective and thus possibly false, then how can it be said that there is no truth that is not merely a perspectival truth? Nietzsche's perspectivism and denial of truth seems mired in hopeless self-contradiction.

More serious, however, is the problem of what to make of the rest of Nietzsche's philosophy apart from his perspectivism and the assault on the concept of truth. Given his denial of truth, is Nietzsche merely a negative, destructive critic or does he have views of his own to put forth? Certainly he is a philosopher like other philosophers in that he has teachings to give, teachings other than the denial of truth, but what weight can these teachings carry given his denial of truth? Much of Nietzsche's importance lies in his critique of morality, his attempt at a revaluation of all values. Yet, how can his challenge to traditional values be taken seriously if his claims are not in some sense taken to be true? If all truths are illusions, what weight is there to his claim that morality rests on error? What is one to make of the Nietzschean "doctrines" of will to power, eternal recurrence, and the Übermensch? What are these teachings if they are not in some sense intended as truths?56
Perhaps most seriously there is the dilemma perspectivism poses for the problem of the interpretation of Nietzsche. If one can never pull away the mask of interpretation, if one can never unmask Nietzsche in such a way as to reveal his true "proper" philosophy beneath his many written and painted thoughts, his teachings become, as he well understood, dangerous. At the outset of *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche screams a warning to the reader not to mistake him for someone else. But if there is no truth, there can be no truth of Nietzsche either. If all our interpretations are in a sense falsifications, in what sense can Nietzsche be mistaken for someone else? Even if Nietzsche abhorred the political developments taking place within the second Reich, the strident nationalism, rabid anti-semitism and unbridled power politics, is not his perspectivism and its inherent denial of truth philosophically irresponsible for allowing the kind of interpretation of his writings that supported the nationalism, anti-semitism, and power politics of the third Reich?\textsuperscript{57} If Nietzsche's perspectivism cannot be rescued from its apparent denial of truth, does it not then lead only deeper into the crisis of modernity, deeper into nihilism?

The various responses to the problematic posed by Nietzsche's perspectivism suggests a sort of schematic of four different strategies in reading in Nietzsche, four different responses to the problem of the raging discordance between art and truth.\textsuperscript{58} Either, appealing to the tamer version of perspectivism, one explains away the denial of truth, concluding that Nietzsche is, after all, a lover of truth as are all true philosophers; or one concludes that the discordance
between art and truth rages on in Nietzsche's writings up until the end. Two different strategies of explaining away the denial of truth, and thus resolving the discordance, and two different responses to the unresolved discordance make up the four positions.

Kaufmann's reading can be thought of as paradigmatic of one response. In this reading Nietzsche remains committed, despite the apparent denial of truth, to the existence and the value of truth. Kaufmann attempts to explain away Nietzsche's apparent denial of truth by arguing that Nietzsche denied truth only in a "metaphysical" sense, that is, in terms of correspondence to the suprasensuous and transcendent, in terms of correspondence to an eternal world of Platonic Forms or the Kantian thing-in-itself. Thus, Nietzsche is not a nihilist or a metaphysician for he accepts truth only as correspondence to the sensuous, empirical world. The will to power and eternal recurrence are truths in this sense. Thus, for Kaufmann, Nietzsche does have a teaching to give, one that centers on the themes of will to power and the notion of self-overcoming. Kaufmann thus puts forth the tamer version of perspectivism, overlooking some of the passages where Nietzsche calls for the necessity of artistic falsification. In much the same way, although Kaufmann did much to dispel the myths surrounding the Nazi interpretation of Nietzsche, he basically discounts Nietzsche as having any teaching to give concerning politics and thus overlooks many of the troubling political passages in Nietzsche. Wilcox follows Kaufmann in assuming that Nietzsche accepts some empirical truths, and thus his interpretation can be
considered a version of this approach. Yet, he acknowledges that Nietzsche’s
denial of truth is more than an objection to metaphysical truth in Plato’s or Kant’s
sense. He finds a deeper source of Nietzsche’s critique of truth, an origin within
language itself—that concepts always falsify reality. It seems that Wilcox
acknowledges the necessity of artistic falsification and thus the radicalness of
Nietzsche’s perspectivism, but then it is hard to explain how he could accept truth
as correspondence to an empirical world any more than a transcendent,
suprasensuous one.61

Another strategy in denying that Nietzsche was an enemy of truth is to
suggest that he only rejected the correspondence theory of truth, and that he
accepted truth in another sense, in terms of a pragmatic or coherence theory.
Danto, for example, attributes to Nietzsche a pragmatic theory of truth on the
basis of his insistence that the worth of a theory be determined on the basis of
whether or not it "facilitates life."62 Yet Danto interprets the will to power and
eternal recurrence as metaphysical doctrines and makes no attempt to reconcile
this interpretation with Nietzsche’s critique of metaphysics.63 Danto’s
interpretation of Nietzsche as a pragmatist has often drawn criticism.64 Still, even
if Nietzsche never quite articulated a pragmatic "theory of truth" one might
conclude that his perspectivism implies a pragmatic approach to truth. In giving
up the quest for certainty and the "spectator theory of knowledge," pragmatists
like Dewey conceive knowledge as an artistically creative remaking of the world
rather than the discovery of an unchanging truth—a position which would seem to
link the pragmatists to Nietzsche in breaking from the "Egypticism" of previous philosophers. There is thus no neutral standpoint, for James or Dewey, from which to evaluate competing interpretations. Pragmatists even use language that is sometimes similar to Nietzsche's perspectivism. Dewey views all knowledge as a product of selection, in which some things are pulled forward from the background of experience and others left behind in concealment. If the pragmatists like James and Dewey are read as rethinking the concept of truth in such a way that there is no discordance between art and truth, reading Nietzsche as moving toward such a pragmatic approach to truth and knowledge would seem to entail a resolution of the discordance.

Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, spanning the course of several decades and marking a turning in Heidegger's own career, is noted for its complexity and resistance to simplification. Although there are several important later essays, the principle text is the massive *Nietzsche*, which, as Ernst Behler has recently commented, "presents the most comprehensive, self-enclosed interpretation of Nietzsche yet produced"—even if it "cannot be reduced to individual statements." Nevertheless one can consider Heidegger's *Nietzsche* as marking out a singular response to the problem of the discordance between art and truth. That Heidegger finds the discordance raging even as Nietzsche attempts the final overturning of metaphysics is the very reason for his judgment that Nietzsche, rather than twisting free, is the last metaphysician, and that, rather than overcoming nihilism, he is the consummate nihilist. However, this is not, for
Heidegger, a reason not to take Nietzsche seriously as a philosopher. The way beyond nihilism must go through Nietzsche. Nietzsche’s philosophy, for Heidegger, is an answer to what he understands to be the fundamental question of philosophy—the Question of Being. The unfolding history of Being, recorded in the numerous attempts to answer this question in the tradition of Western thought, moves necessarily to Nietzsche and draws there to a close.

For Heidegger, Nietzsche thinks but one thought, that of the will to power. However, this thought, according to Heidegger, is not to be found in any of Nietzsche’s writings, but can only be discerned when the seemingly irreconcilable thoughts of will to power and eternal recurrence are thought together as a single thought. This thought, Nietzsche’s "proper" thought, is considered by Heidegger as Nietzsche’s answer to the question of Being. Yet in thinking the will to power as art in such a way that there remains a discordance between art and truth that arouses dread, Nietzsche completes the subjectivism of modern metaphysics. Thus, rather than attempting to resolve the discordance within Nietzsche, Heidegger turns to that discordance, and the consequent denial of truth, as the reason for pointing the way beyond Nietzsche. Heidegger’s own attempt at opening up a new path of thinking beyond metaphysics and beyond nihilism involves an attempt at resolving the discordance between art and truth—in thinking of art as the happening or event (Ereignis) of truth.

The Heideggerian interpretation of Nietzsche is a dark reading. The central thought of Nietzsche is tied inescapably to the subjugation of the earth. That the
reading which produced *Nietzsche* takes place during the years from 1936-1946 is not without significance. As Behler notes: "The rapid, catastrophic collapse of Hitler's Reich, the articulation of the will to power as the basic thought of Nietzsche's philosophy, and the conclusion of Western metaphysics in Heidegger's history of Being converged at this point in a unique and unsettling way."66

The final response in this consideration of responses to the discordance between art and truth would be that marked out by those who have taken up his invitation to take his written and painted thoughts as art and not truth. These "new Nietzscheans" take up a form of discourse, playful, non-argumentative, often erotic, that refuses to be subsumed under the name of the pursuit, possession, and teaching of truth by which philosophy has more traditionally always been known. Derrida, most notable among them, whose work is particularly known for its outrageous playfulness, asserts at the outset of a reading of Nietzsche: "I do not teach truth as such . . ."67

Derrida's response to Heidegger's *Nietzsche* occupies a critically important position in this context. Derrida might be considered as agreeing with Heidegger that the discordance continues in Nietzsche until the end, but then questioning whether this results in any experience of dread. Heidegger's conclusion, it will be recalled, relies decisively on an unpublished note, as if Heidegger found there Nietzsche with the masks laid aside. This, it should be noted, is the context of Derrida's famous insistence that all of Nietzsche's writings, published and unpublished, are on par with the fragment "I have forgotten my umbrella"
inscribed in the margins of Nietzsche’s notes. It is something of a joke then on Derrida’s part. If Heidegger is going to place so much weight on this unpublished note, Derrida makes this insistence look ridiculous. Yet Derrida’s ploy is more than a joke in being a strategem of his larger point that Nietzsche can never be unmasked. For Derrida, the very attempt to unmask Nietzsche, to establish Nietzsche’s philosophy "proper," his true philosophy, the truth of Nietzsche behind the masks, is a symptom of the ascetic ideal, and that which binds one to metaphysics, perpetuating the history of nihilism. It is thus the very notion of truth that is ugly, against which art is needed "lest we perish." And yet it this response to the raging discordance between art and truth—a response which might be characterized as taking up Nietzsche’s temptation to take his written and painted thoughts as art and not truth, that leads philosophy, at least according to many commentators, to suffer shipwreck in the dark, shadowy waters of nihilism.
CHAPTER 2
THE CRISIS OF MODERNITY

The Advent of Nihilism

What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: the advent of nihilism. This history can be related even now; for necessity itself is at work here. This future speaks even now in a hundred signs, this destiny announces itself everywhere; for this music of the future all ears are cocked even now. For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect. (WP P 2)

Nihilism is the crisis announced by Nietzsche in that apocalyptic tone so characteristic of his late writings, a destiny which will have been the history of the future. Leaving aside for the moment any judgment as to the tone of this announcement or the question of this history's necessity and whether this announcement, its tone and necessity, may have helped precipitate the crisis it prophecies, it would be difficult to deny that the last century has unfolded much as Nietzsche had anticipated. Indeed, everywhere in a hundred signs the confrontation with nihilism announced here has characterized what has come to be understood as the crisis of modernity. Recall the apocalyptic vision of modernity in the first stanza of perhaps the most famous of modernist poems:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Swept up in a singular way with the worst of our century, with the blood-dimmed tide, the name of Nietzsche will no doubt always resound with the nihilistic tenor of Yeats's disquiet voice. This will have been unavoidable, no doubt, if the history Nietzsche foretold rushes on headlong like a river. Still, even as Nietzsche writes of this approaching torrent, he also informs us:

He that speaks here, conversely, has done nothing so far but reflect: as a philosopher and a hermit by instinct, who has found his advantage in standing aside and outside, in patience, in procrastination, in staying behind; as a daring and an (at)tempting spirit (Versucher-Geist) that has already lost its way once in every labyrinth of the future; as a soothsayer-bird spirit who looks back when relating what will come; as the first perfect nihilist of Europe who, however, has even now lived through the whole of nihilism, to the end, leaving it behind, outside himself. (WP P 3)

Nietzsche tells us that the one who speaks here has already left nihilism behind. If the nihilism Nietzsche foretells defines modernity, in being the first perfect nihilist he will have been the first post-modern. Nevertheless, how, one might well ask, can Nietzsche speak as one who looks back on what is to come? How can he stand aside and outside of this history in order to warn of its advent? How can he have done nothing but reflect if the movement of this current flows on with such relentless necessity as to leave no room for self-reflection? A determination as to whether or not nihilism is actually overcome and left behind in Nietzsche's thought, in the turn toward art, becomes most problematic in consideration of these paradoxial questions. It would seem that in order to make such a determination one would have to become, like Nietzsche's Versucher-Geist,
lost in every labyrinth of the future, already a spirit of a bird of prophecy who can stand aside, outside, and beyond the raging current.

Although the word "nihilism" never appears in the text of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, the work Nietzsche regarded as his most important, it is clear that the confrontation with nihilism pervades the entire work, and it is here that the crisis is given its most succinct expression. Specifically this expression comes not from the mouth of Zarathustra but through the voices of the various "higher humans" (höhere Menschen)—those for whom Zarathustra is tempted to come down from his solitude and "save" with his teaching of overcoming. Nihilism is announced in the soothsayer's prophecy of a doctrine of weariness: "All is empty, all is the same, all has been!" (Z II, 19); in the voice of one of the two kings speaking on behalf of all the higher humans as they welcome Zarathustra to his cave: "Life is no longer worth while, all is the same, all is in vain . . . " (Z IV, 11); and in the voice of Zarathustra's shadow (another of the higher humans): "Nothing is true, all is permitted" (Z IV, 14).

The Prologue to Zarathustra contains a vivid image of the crisis of nihilism. The image is that of a tightrope walker crossing over an abyss. The figure of a man begins to make a perilous crossing along a tightrope as Zarathustra begins to speak to the people of that overcoming that he will name Übermensch: "The human is a rope, tied between beast and Übermensch—a rope over an abyss. A dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and stopping." Though not yet named, the figure on the tightrope is a
prefatory image of the higher human. This is a figure in transition between two points, between the human as animal rationale—the human being as understood within modern metaphysics, shortly to be named the "last human" (letzte Mensch)—and this yet undetermined figure of the Übermensch. For Heidegger, insofar as Nietzsche's thinking falls short of the overcoming of nihilism and does not quite twist free of metaphysics, but only brings this history to its completion, the Übermensch is the consummation of modern "man." If the Übermensch, however, has left behind metaphysics and the accompanying nihilism, then it is a figure for a humanity that is post-modern—one might say, the post-human. In the imagery of Zarathustra, the overcoming of nihilism is the dangerous crossing over an abyss. It involves both a going across (Übergang) and a going under (Untergang). The interpretation of this crossing, and its double movement, is decisive in any determination of the success or failure of Nietzsche's project.

The best-known announcement of the crisis of nihilism is that pronouncement of the death of God that Nietzsche puts in the mouth of a madman. When this madman jumps into the midst of those assembled in the marketplace, he does not just say that God is dead; he says instead: "We have killed him—you and I. All of us are his murderers" (GS 125). What does Nietzsche mean by implicating everyone in this deed? Heidegger concludes that "the phrase 'God is dead' is not an atheistic proclamation: it is a formula for the fundamental experience of an event (Ereignis) in Occidental history." For Heidegger, what the madman asserts is thus not a mere sign of unbelief. The "death of God" is then a
name for the consequence of the unfolding of a history, the history of the West, the history of metaphysics. As the result of the death of God "nihilism" is thus a term for the unfolding of that history, a term, then, for the history of philosophy, another name for what Nietzsche called Platonism. What is disclosed in the proclamation of the death of God is the decline of the metaphysical world-view, the devaluation of the values that formerly provided the ground, the anchoring centerpoint of Western culture. As this madman tells it, there could be no more colossal deed. The ground below modern "man" has fallen away. It is as if everything were now set loose, adrift in the darkest abyss:

But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when he unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? (GS 125)

Echoing the madman's proclamation that it is "we" who are responsible for the death of God, in the notebooks Nietzsche says that "the highest values devaluate themselves" (WP 2). Recall that it is the will to truth which turns on itself and begins to ask "why not untruth?" Nihilism is then the self-undoing of metaphysics, unfolding with a certain inner necessity. It is the event in which the highest values devaluate themselves. Nietzsche's project of overturning Platonism is thus, for Heidegger, intimately tied to the overcoming of nihilism. Nietzsche's project is thus the result of his inquiry into the history of philosophy as the history of the devaluation of the highest values.
In a note entitled "Decline of Cosmological Values" (Hinfall der kosmologischen Werte) Nietzsche proceeds to outline the progression of "nihilism as a psychological state" that occurs when the highest values—the belief in purpose, unity, being, and truth—turn upon themselves (WP 12). In the progression of nihilism as a psychological state Nietzsche distinguishes three stages. The first arises when one begins to have doubts concerning the purpose of becoming. When one believes that becoming has a purpose, that all events are heading towards some goal, and that this purpose concerns one personally—that one is, in a sense, the center of becoming—it is possible to find meaning in life and thus to find life worth living. The first stage of nihilism as a psychological state arises when one finds this belief to have been an illusion:

Nihilism as a psychological state will have to be reached, first, when we have sought a "meaning" in all events that is not there: so the seeker eventually becomes discouraged. . . . This meaning could have been: the "fulfillment" of some highest ethical canon in all events, the moral world order; or the growth of love and harmony in the intercourse of beings; or the gradual approximation of a state of universal happiness; or even the development toward a state of universal annihilation—any goal at least constitutes some meaning. What all these notions have in common is that something is to be achieved through the process—and now one realizes that becoming aims at nothing and achieves nothing. . . . (man no longer the collaborator, let alone the center, of becoming).

The second stage begins with doubts concerning the existence of some grand unity or totality within becoming in which the individual could immerse oneself, finding in this belongingness to the whole one's self-worth.

Nihilism as a psychological state is reached, secondly, when one has posited a totality, a systematization, indeed any organization in all events, and underneath all events. . . . Some sort of unity, some form of 'monism': this faith suffices to give
man a deep feeling of standing in the context of, and being dependent on, some whole that is infinitely superior to him, and he sees himself as a mode of the deity. . . . At bottom, man has lost the faith in his own value when no infinitely valuable whole works through him; i.e., he conceived such a whole in order to be able to believe in his own value."

Both of the first two stages have to do with doubts concerning "this world," the ephemeral world of becoming. The third and last form thus arises upon the insight that all attempts to find a purpose and a unity in this world are in vain. Here, Nietzsche writes, when the world of becoming is found lacking a final escape remains: "to pass sentence on this whole world of becoming as a deception and to invent a world beyond it, a true world." Now there follows that murderous deed when the highest values turn upon themselves. The weapon that brought about this deed is here revealed as psychological insight:

But as soon as man finds out how that world is fabricated solely from psychological needs, and how he has absolutely no right to it, the last form of nihilism comes into being: it includes disbelief in any metaphysical world and forbids itself any belief in a true world. Having reached this standpoint, one grants the reality of becoming as the only reality, forbids oneself every kind of clandestine access to afterworlds and false divinities—but cannot endure this world though one does not want to deny it.

Here nihilism begins to manifest itself as a great weariness—no longer able to flee from this world, and yet lacking the strength to affirm it. The nihilism foretold in the announcement of the death of God thus results from the psychological insight that the highest values have a human origin. This insight, of course, is just what the radical version of Nietzsche's perspectivism asserts. This leads then to the most extreme form of nihilism:
What is a belief? How does it originate? Every belief is a considering-something-true.

The most extreme form of nihilism would be the view that every belief, every considering-something true, is necessarily false because there simply is no true world. Thus: a perspectival appearance whose origin lies in us (in so far as we continually need a narrower, abbreviated, simplified world).

—That it is the measure of strength to what extent we can admit to ourselves, without perishing, the merely apparent character, the necessity of lies.

To this extent, nihilism, as the denial of a truthful world, of being, might be a divine way of thinking. (WP 15)

This most extreme form of nihilism seems to be the form expressed by Zarathustra’s shadow. It would seem, then, that if the raging discordance between art and truth is not resolved, that if the turn to art necessarily involves a denial of truth, then the temptation to take the writings of a philosopher as art and not truth, is the shadow’s temptation. How could this be a divine way of thinking?

Here it is necessary, finally, to turn to Nietzsche’s narration of the "History of an Error," for the overcoming of nihilism in Nietzsche can only be understood in terms of the overturning of Platonism.

*The History of an Error*

It is in the chapter preceding the narration of this history that Nietzsche discusses the "Egypticism" of philosophers. The underlying assumption of these mummy makers is the predilection for being over becoming, the denial of whatever has life, whatever arises and passes away. As Nietzsche sums up the guiding thought of these metaphysicians: "Death, change, old age, as well as procreation and growth, are to their minds objections—even refutations. Whatever has being does not become; whatever becomes does not have being" (*TI* I, 1). This predilection is
what leads to the final form of nihilism as a psychological state. Finding the world of becoming an objection, the mummy makers take the final escape in condemning the world of becoming as a deception, as the "merely apparent" world, and inventing a true world. Nietzsche, the psychologist-philosopher, interprets such metaphysical thinking as a symptom of decline, of nihilism.

In the final section of the chapter, just before the narration of how the "true world" becomes a fable, Nietzsche "condenses" a "new insight" into four theses (TI III, 6). The first two propositions characterize the depreciation of the world of becoming and the invention of a true world as a fable:

*First Proposition.* The reasons for which "this" world has been characterized as apparent (scheinbar) are the very reasons which indicate its reality; any other kind of reality is absolutely indemonstrable.

*Second Proposition.* The criteria which have been bestowed on the "true being" of things are the criteria of not-being, of naught; the "true world" has been constructed out of contradiction to the actual world: indeed an apparent world, insofar as it is merely a moral-optical illusion.

The sections leading up to the assertion of this "new insight" leave no doubt as to which world Nietzsche is referring to as "this" world. The reasons for which this world has been characterized as merely apparent, the same reasons which indicate its reality, are the testimony of the senses. This world, the world of becoming, of death, change, old age, procreation and growth, would then be the empirical world—the world that would be considered the "true world" if testimony of the sense were accepted. Leading up to this, Nietzsche asserts that the senses do not lie; it is only "what we make of their testimony, that alone introduces lies; for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence"
(TI III, 2). This would explain why Nietzsche asserts that the criteria bestowed on the "true being" of things, i.e., unity, substance, etc., are the criteria of not-being.

The propositions hardly seem to assert any antirealism. To the contrary, Nietzsche seems to be asserting that "this" world, the world open to the testimony of the senses—the empirical world—is the real, actual world. Nietzsche does not flatly deny any other reality, he only asserts that such a world is absolutely indemonstrable—indeed, indemonstrable for there can be no "evidence" in the testimony of the senses for a suprasensuous world. This might only seem to corroborate the thesis that by this point Nietzsche no longer denies truth, that he would have no more reason to believe that "truths are illusions," that he has abandoned the "falsification thesis," the notion that the edifice of knowledge is built on art as the refinement of the will to ignorance.\textsuperscript{74}

The last two propositions then tie the invention of this fable to nihilism:

\textit{Third Proposition.} To invent fables about a world "other" than this one has no meaning at all, unless an instinct of slander, detraction, and suspicion against life has gained the upper hand in us: in that case, we avenge ourselves against life with a phantasmagoria of "another," a "better" life.

\textit{Fourth Proposition.} Any distinction between a "true" and an "apparent" ("scheinbare") world—whether in the Christian manner or in the manner of Kant... is only a suggestion of decadence, a symptom of the \textit{decline of life}.\textsuperscript{48}

In the schema outlined in the notebooks, in the "Decline of Cosmological Values," the invention of the true world, the distinction between a "true" and "apparent" world, is that which leads to, that which immediately precedes, the final form of nihilism. The final form, and the most extreme form of nihilism, is thus that which
accompanies the insight that the invention of a "true" world is a fable—an invention fabricated solely from psychological needs.

Now, finally—the story of how the "true world" became a fable. Even though Sallis writes that this story has been so often retold "that it can no longer simply be told," another retelling cannot here be further postponed. The "history of an error" is reduced to six stages, beginning with the establishment of Plato's doctrine:

1. The true world—attainable for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man; he lives in it, he is it.
   (The oldest form of the idea, relatively sensible, simple, and persuasive.
A circumlocution for the sentence, "I, Plato, am the truth.")

Nietzsche leaves no doubt that this history begins with Plato. For Heidegger, however, the parenthetical remark indicates that Plato's "true world" is not yet Platonic. It is not yet merely a promise, an unattainable ideal. The true world is not yet posited as beyond "this" world, but is attainable, here and now, if only for the wise, the virtuous. Though virtue consists in repudiation of the sensuous, the suprasensuous and sensuous are not yet consigned to separate realms of a "true" and "apparent" world. The suprasensuous is the idea not merely an unattainable "ideal." For Heidegger, Nietzsche thus sets Plato apart from Platonism. The emergence of Platonism begins with the progress of the idea, when it becomes Christian:

2. The true world—unattainable for now, but promised for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man ("for the sinner who repents").
Here, obviously, something insidious begins. According to Heidegger, it is here that the distinction between a "true" and "apparent" world is first made. In contrast to stage one where the true world is attainable, where the virtuous lives in it, through contemplation of the idea, the suprasensuous is now promised as the "beyond." For Heidegger, thus begins the oblivion of Being, where true Being is no longer present to human existence. The realm of the sensuous is thus denigrated—"earth becomes the 'earthly' and the "true world now becomes even truer, by being displaced even farther beyond and away from this world." If Platonism begins with the Christianizing of Plato's idea, the third stage involves a further progression of the idea, perpetuating the distinction between a "true" and an "apparent" world, but now in the manner of Kant:

3. The true world—unattainable, indemonstrable, unpromisable; but the very thought of it—a consolation, an obligation, an imperative. (At bottom, the old sun, but seen through mist and skepticism. The idea has become elusive, pale, Nordic, Königsbergian.)

The parenthetical remark easily identifies this stage as the Kantian contribution to history of Platonism. It is the same old sun—Plato's metaphor for the suprasensuous, for the true world—but now it is no longer shining so brightly. As Heidegger remarks, "in contrast to the simple clarity by which Plato dwelled in direct contact with the suprasensuous, as discernible Being," the true world is now viewed with the eyes of a skeptic. The suprasensuous becomes a postulate of
practical reason. While outside the realm of possible experience, and thus unknowable and inaccessible through science, its existence is necessary in order to ground the lawfulness of reason. Thus, according to Heidegger, Nietzsche also recognizes the essential difference between Plato and Kant.

If the first three stages are relatively easily attributed to Plato, Christianity, and Kant, the last three stages are the subject of considerable disagreement. The debate concerns just at what stage Nietzsche's own philosophy first comes on the scene. While some readers take the position that Nietzsche's own philosophy comes later, at the fifth or even the final stage, others read the final three stages as each marking a development in Nietzsche's own thinking. In any case, the fourth stage clearly marks the onset of doubt concerning the existence of the true world, and thus would suggest the beginning of the final form of nihilism:

4. The true world—unattainable? At any rate, unattained. And being unattained, also unknown. Consequently, not consoling, redeeming, or obligating: how could something unknown obligate us?
   (Gray morning. The first yawn of reason. The cockcrow of positivism.)

The parenthetical remark identifies this as the stage of positivism. But which gray morning is it? Bernd Magnus takes the remark to be an indirect reference to Comte. For Heidegger, it is "the age following the dominance of German Idealism," the age in which "the Kantian system is unmasked and exploded with help of its own chief principle: the theoretical unknowability of the suprasensuous." For Clark, this stage marks Nietzsche's early positivistic phase, usually thought of as the period from Human, All Too Human to The Gay Science.
Here the true world is not yet denied but found to be of no cognitive significance. For Heidegger, however, Nietzsche's early positivism arrives at stage five:

5. The "true" world—an idea which is no longer good for anything, not even obligating—an idea which has become useless and superfluous—consequently, a refuted idea: let us abolish it!
(Bright day; breakfast; return of bon sens and cheerfulness; Plato's embarrassed blush; pandemonium of all free spirits.)

God is now dead, the epoch of quotation marks begins. Now the idea is refuted, the true world becomes only the so called "true world." Platonism has been overcome to the extent that Plato has been found out—the true world has been abolished.

Magnus reads this stage as representing "the prevailing nineteenth century philosophic landscape after positivism and its vulgarized worship of science and technology had come to dominate Europe." For Heidegger, however, this marks Nietzsche's early positivism, his "first path into philosophy," the stage from Human, All Too Human to The Gay Science. In contrast to Magnus and Heidegger, Clark reads this stage as marking the period from The Gay Science to Beyond Good and Evil, the stage marked by the denial of truth and the apex of Nietzsche's affirmation of the "falsification thesis." In her account, although the "true world" is abolished, the empirical world is still regarded as merely apparent, as illusory.

Following the account of nihilism in the notebooks this stage would already come after the final form of nihilism as a psychological state. There the
abolishment of the true world is experienced as a great weariness. The death of
God, it might also be recalled, plunges one into the darkest night. Here it is
already bright day, and the abolishment of the "true world" is experienced with
good cheer. Still, it is not quite noon, and thus there remains the final stage:

6. The true world—we have abolished: what world has remained? The apparent
one (scheinbare) perhaps? But no! With the true world we have also abolished the
apparent one!

(Noon; moment of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high
point of humanity; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.)

Clearly this is an apex, the end of the history of an error. Yet everything
hangs here on what occurs at the end of this history. What world remains after
the abolishment of both the true and the apparent world? For Heidegger, this
step takes Nietzsche "for the first time into the brilliance of full daylight, where all
shadows dwindle;" it is the final stage which "shows that, and how, he must
advance beyond himself and beyond sheer abolition of the suprasensuous." The
stage clearly marks and end, but also a beginning. The "INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA"
seems to clearly announce, as Heidegger reports, the onset of the final stage of
Nietzsche's own philosophy.

According to Heidegger each of the stages marks a new type of humanity.
The overturning and twisting free of Platonism implies a metamorphosis of
humankind. A new beginning is marked by the appearance of Zarathustra who
confronts human beings with a momentous decision. This is the highpoint of
humanity. With abolition of "true world"—with the death of God—human beings
will either succumb to nihilism, becoming "the last human," or humankind will
overcome that by which their humanity has been understood, overcoming themselves as human beings have existed hitherto, becoming Übermensch—post-human. For Heidegger, this is merely Nietzsche's designation for the type of being who has overcome the relation between human being and Being hitherto determined by Platonism in one or another of its forms. Heidegger then comes to a paradox. On the one hand "the end first becomes visible as an end on the basis of the new beginning"; and yet the identity of the Übermenschen "first becomes clear when the last human is perceived as such."87

What then is the countermovement to nihilism? What happens at the end of the history of an error when the apparent world is abolished along with the true? For Heidegger, Nietzsche cannot mean that everything collapses into vacuous nothing. Rather, in grounding art on embodying life Nietzsche affirms the sensuous. What is abolished is then the view that the sensuous is merely apparent. The way first opens, then, for the affirmation of the sensuous:

What is needed is neither abolition of the sensuous nor abolition of the nonsensuous. On the contrary, what must be cast aside is the misinterpretation, the deprecation, of the sensuous, as well as the extravagant elevation of the suprasensuous. A path must be cleared for a new interpretation of the sensuous on the basis of a new hierarchy of the sensuous and nonsensuous. The new hierarchy does not simply wish to reverse matters within the old structural order, now reversing the sensuous and scorning the nonsensuous. It does not wish to put what was at the very bottom on the very top. A new hierarchy and a new valuation mean that the ordering structure must be changed. To that extent, overturning Platonism must become a twisting free (Herausdrehung) of it.88

As to whether Nietzsche twisted free, or whether anyone can, Heidegger only states that those necessary critical questions can only be posed after

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reflecting "in accordance with the thought Nietzsche most intrinsically willed." Here Heidegger obviously refers to what elsewhere he refers to as Nietzsche's fundamental thought, his philosophy "proper," the thought that can only be discerned in thinking the unity of will to power and eternal recurrence. Everything hangs, for Heidegger's interpretation, on the interpretation of the will to power as art, and the new interpretation of the sensuous that this thought implies. With the death of God, now art, as Heidegger reads Nietzsche, becomes man's "highest metaphysical activity:"

Art as will to semblance (Schein) is the supreme configuration of will to power. But the latter, as the basic character of beings, as the essence of reality, is in itself that Being which wills itself by willing to be Becoming. In that way Nietzsche in will to power attempts (versucht) to think the original unity of the ancient opposition of Being and Becoming. Being as permanence, is to let Becoming be a Becoming. The origin of the thought of "eternal recurrence" is thereby indicated.

Here Heidegger's lecture on "The Will to Power as Art" comes to a close, along with his reading of "The History of an Error." If in this reading Heidegger is somewhat ambivalent as to whether nihilism is overcome in Nietzsche's thinking, his conclusion elsewhere is decisive:

We have said, however, that Nietzsche's metaphysics is nihilism proper. This implies not only that Nietzsche's nihilism does not overcome nihilism but also that it can never overcome it. For it is precisely in the positing of new values from the will to power, by which and through which Nietzsche believes he will overcome nihilism, that nihilism proper first proclaims that there is nothing to Being itself, which has now become a value. As a result, Nietzsche experiences the historical movement of nihilism as a history of the devaluation of the highest values hitherto. On the same basis, he represents overcoming as revaluation and carries it through, not only in a new valuation but also in such a way that he experiences will to power as the principle of the new—and ultimately of all—valuation. Value thinking is now elevated into a principle. Being itself, as a matter of principle, is not admitted as Being. According to its own principle, in this metaphysics there is
nothing to Being. How can what is worthy of thought be given here with Being itself, namely, Being as—Being? How could an overcoming of nihilism occur here, or even make itself felt? Consequently, Nietzsche's metaphysics is not an overcoming of nihilism. It is the ultimate entanglement in nihilism.²¹

Since Nietzsche's thought of art as the supreme configuration of will to power is still caught up in this value thinking, it is, for Heidegger, still caught up in metaphysics and the history of an error. Since the truth of Being still eludes thought, since the discordance between art and truth rages even in the new interpretation of the sensuous, Heidegger concludes that the way must be opened beyond Nietzsche.

*Between Eves*

Derrida ends "The Ends of Man," a 1968 address on "the question of man" in contemporary French thought, by summing up or reassembling three "very general rubrics" that characterize the movement that articulates this French thought.²² The third rubric falls under the heading "The difference between the higher man and the superman." Not only does Derrida here wish to both register the "rigorous recourse" to Nietzsche in contemporary France and remark this division announced by Nietzsche between the higher man (*höhere Mensch*) and the superman (*Übermensch*), it also seems he wants to add somewhat of a postscript—a parting shot perhaps, which, to be sure, taking the form of a question, or series of questions, would act as a spur, pointedly prodding and spurring further interrogation—to a critique he has mounted against Heidegger in the last section of this essay:
Must one read Nietzsche, with Heidegger, as the last of the great metaphysicians? Or, on the contrary, are we to take the question of the truth of Being as the last sleeping shudder of the higher man? Are we to understand the eve as the guard mounted around the house or as the awakening to the day that is coming, at whose eve are we?

Derrida reads Nietzsche, against Heidegger, as a thinker who had already left behind the question of the truth of Being, a thinker who had left behind the Heideggerian quest for the proper name. "There will be no unique name, even if it were the name of Being. And we must think this without nostalgia, that is, outside of the myth of a purely maternal or paternal language, a lost native country of thought. On the contrary, we must affirm this, in the sense in which Nietzsche puts affirmation into play, in a certain laughter and a certain step of the dance." Derrida puts this affirmation into play in his reading of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche's "The History of an Error." Derrida's response to Heidegger's reading begins by pointing out that Heidegger, in recounting this history, has avoided (skirted) the issue of woman. Even though Heidegger cites the sequence in the second epoch, he passes over in his commentary the only words Nietzsche has highlighted: sie wird Weib, "it becomes female."

Derrida is careful to note that what he is up to is not necessarily counter to Heidegger's approach; nevertheless, he seeks to decipher this "inscription of the woman." Derrida begins by noting that in Nietzsche's narration "truth has not always been woman, nor is the woman always truth." Nevertheless, together they both have a history, and form a history. Together they would constitute the history of Platonism that begins when truth becomes merely promised, and thus the
object of the philosopher's desire. Earlier, before turning to Heidegger, "The History of an Error," and this inscription of woman, Derrida had drawn together the complicity in Nietzsche's thought between the themes of art, life, veiling dissimulation and truth in concluding: "It is impossible to dissociate the questions of art, style and truth from the question of the woman." Among the remarks Derrida draws together the opening to the preface to Nietzsche's prelude/foreplay to a philosophy of the future stands out:

> Supposing truth is a woman—what then? Are there not grounds for the suspicion that all philosophers, insofar, as they were dogmatists, have had little understanding of women? That the gruesome seriousness, the clumsy obtrusiveness with which they have usually approached truth so far have been awkward and very improper methods for winning a woman?

Nietzsche's responds that if truth is a woman then philosophers are like love-sick suitors standing around all depressed, since "what is certain is that she has not allowed herself to be won." They do not know how to approach her, this woman-truth. They have erred in "standing truth on her head and denying perspective, the basic condition of all life" (BGE P).

In another preface written that same year and attached to The Gay Science Nietzsche also broaches the question of the sickness of philosophers—or nihilism as the problem of life—and here the figure of woman again appears: "Yet one should not jump to the conclusion that this necessarily makes one gloomy. Even love of life is still possible, only one loves differently. It is the love of a woman that causes doubts in us" (GS P, 3). One guesses that Nietzsche could only be

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referring to the woman-truth who leaves philosophers standing so dispirited and
depressed. One might surmise that for Nietzsche the history of philosophy, as the
history of metaphysics, is a history of lovesickness. Overcoming nihilism and
twisting free of metaphysics might still be possible, but only if "one loves
differently." What would this involve, then, the overcoming of the lovesickness of
philosophers? What would it mean to be a lover of wisdom? Derrida draws out
the implications of Nietzsche's supposition that truth is a woman for the discourse
of philosophy, the discourse founded on the love of truth:

Out of the depths, endless and unfathomable, she engulfs and distorts all vestige
of essentiality, of identity, of property. And the philosophical discourse, blinded,
founders on these shoals and is hurled down these depthless depths to its ruin.
There is no such thing as the truth of woman, but it is because of that abyssal
divergence of the truth, because of that untruth is "truth." Woman is but one
name for that untruth of truth. 99

There are those, of course, would try to rescue this discourse from these
foudering shoals. Maudemarie Clark would even use Nietzsche in this salvage
operation. The denial of truth that is implied in the supposition that truth is a
woman, and the turn to art as the refinement of the will to ignorance would not
be a part of the sixth and last stage of "The History of an Error." In Clark's
account the sixth stage indicates Nietzsche's overcoming of nihilism through the
abandonement of his earlier denial of truth. In her view the most extreme form of
nihilism (WP 15) would clearly belong to stage five. However, once the apparent
world is abolished along with the true world, there would be no basis for claiming
that the knowledge gained from the testimony of the senses is merely apparent
and thus illusory. There would be no more reason for the affirmation of art as illusion, falsification, and untruth. The world that remains after the abolishment of the true and apparent worlds is the empirical world and there would be no more reason to deny that our best theories can be considered as corresponding to this world. Clark's interpretation differs from Heidegger's also in claiming that this final development in Nietzsche's thought does not come at the very end, almost at the last moment, as it were, before Nietzsche's collapse, but rather emerges gradually during the "Zarathustra" period, but finally, clearly, by 1887. The perspectivism that emerges in On the Genealogy of Morals has then left behind the notion of artistic falsification that plagued earlier formulations. Moreover, she finds the analysis of the ascetic ideal in this work to attribute this ideal not to the pursuit of truth but rather to his own earlier denial of truth. On her account, the mature Nietzsche, the Nietzsche of 1887-1888, will have already left behind Derrida and other "postmoderns" who, with laughter and a step of the dance, take up philosophy as a fröhliche Wissenschaft.

Clark's argument that Nietzsche eventually abandons the denial of truth would certainly seem to be supported by the many occasions in the last works where Nietzsche does refer to his "truths." Her claim that Nietzsche's critique of morality depends upon overcoming the earlier denial of truth would seem to be easily confirmed in The AntiChrist and Ecce Homo where his "truth" is opposed to the "lie of millenia" that is Christianity. And, after all, one might well question how Nietzsche can still deny truth and yet refer to the history of metaphysics as
"The History of an Error." Still, in spite of this textual evidence, with Nietzsche, the masked philosopher, there is plenty of reason to pause. According to Clark's interpretation it would seem that Nietzsche would have, in his most mature position, finally put to rest the mask play so evident in the earlier works. But how, it must be asked, can one be sure that the voice speaking in these last works, the voice opposing the lie of millennia with new truths, is not also masked?

In that temptation to a philosophy of the future, Nietzsche does directly address the issue of the relationship between the philosophers of the future and truth:

Are these coming philosophers new friends of "truth"? That is probable enough, for all philosophers so far have loved their truths. But they will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman—which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations. "My judgment is my judgment": no one else is easily entitled to it—that is what such a philosopher of the future may perhaps say of himself. . . . (BGE 43)

Such perspectival and personal truths would not do what philosophers have always wanted of their truths—to provide a neutral standpoint that would command agreement among rational human beings. Would such a "truth" satisfy what Clark wants in order to ground the discourse of philosophy upon rational argument, saving it from the foundering shoals into which Derrida and the other postmoderns might sail? Or would such truths imply the "untruth of truth"? And would Nietzsche then have abandoned this view of truth in the last works? When he opposes his truths to the lie of millennia does he think of his "truths" any
different than he does here? How is one to take these "truths" of Nietzsche's philosophers of the future?

Just before this passage Nietzsche offers another characterization of the philosophers of the future:

A new species of philosophers is coming up: I venture to baptize them with a name that is not free of danger. As I unriddle them, insofar as they allow themselves to be unriddled—for it belongs to their nature to want to remain riddles at some point—these philosophers of the future may have a right—it might also be a wrong—to be called (at)tempers (Versucher). This name itself is in the end a mere attempt (Versuch) and, if you will, a temptation (Versuchung).

(BGE 42)

One might recall that it is as a Versucher-Geist lost in a labyrinth of the future that Nietzsche speaks as one looking back upon the onrushing torrent of nihilism. The play on the word Versucher is one of Nietzsche's favorite word plays. Interestingly enough, the interpretation of the significance of this play in Nietzsche emerged as perhaps the most pivotal issue in one of the more important debates concerning postmodern thought—the 1981 Paris "encounter" between Gadamer and Derrida, the leading proponents of hermeneutics and deconstruction. In his initial address to Derrida, Gadamer makes the following most curious remark: "What I find missing in the French followers of Nietzsche is a grasp of the significance of das Versucherische of Nietzsche's thought." To begin with the remark is interesting for the difficulty in translation. Since versuchen can mean both to attempt and to tempt, is Gadamer's allegation that the French Nietzscheans don't get the tentative, experimental, questioning character of Nietzsche's thought or the tempting, seductive character, or does Gadamer intend the remark in the
double sense of Nietzsche's play? The remark is most curious, however, because it seems an open question, a question to which this dissertation will have to return again and again, as to just who the remark might most apply to—the French and other postmoderns who take Nietzsche's written and painted thoughts as art and not truth, or those who find in Nietzsche a late return to a belief in truth, or even to Gadamer, whose interpretive strategy, following Heidegger, is marked by an attempt at a resolution of the discordance between art and truth. Or perhaps even to Heidegger? Curiously, Heidegger does call attention to this trait of Nietzsche's philosophers of the future. "Those who posit the uppermost values, the creators, the new philosophers at the forefront, must according to Nietzsche be experimenters (Versuchende); they must tread paths and break trails in the knowledge that they do not have the truth." And yet, Heidegger draws the following conclusion:

But from such knowledge it does not at all follow that they have to view their concepts as mere betting chips that can be exchanged at any time for any currency. What does follow is just the opposite: the solidity and binding quality of thought must undergo a grounding in the things themselves in a way that prior philosophy does not know. Only in this way is it possible for a basic position to assert itself over against others, so that the resultant strife will be actual strife and thus the actual origin of truth. The new thinkers must be (at)tempters (Die neuen Denker müssen Versuchende sein). That means they must put beings themselves to the test, tempt them with questions concerning their Being and truth. So, when Nietzsche writes in the subtitle to his work, "attempt" at a revaluation of all values ("Versuch" einer Umwertung aller Werte), the turn of phrase is not meant to express modesty and to suggest that what follows is still incomplete; it does not mean an "essay" in the literary sense; rather, in an utterly clearminded way, it means the basic attitude of the new inquiry that grows out of the countermovement against nihilism.
But just what is this new attitude, this new inquiry that grows out of the countermovement? Despite the tendency for Heidegger to at least seem that he wants to unmask Nietzsche, he even cites, just after this recognition of the philosophers of the future as Versuchende, another note from the Nachlass in which Nietzsche remarks on the necessity of masks (WP 988). Would not this necessity of masks preclude a determination of Nietzsche's philosophy "proper" as Heidegger is so intent on determining? Would not a recognition of this necessity imply that the question of the truth of Being be left behind? What, after all, is the significance of das Versuchersche of Nietzsche's thought?

Would Nietzsche's philosophers of the future still love truth? Does Nietzsche have truths to teach that would be more than attempts and temptations? How is one to take Nietzsche's teachings, the "doctrines" of will to power, eternal recurrence, the Übermensch? What about the "truths" that are opposed to the "lie of millennia" in the last works? What happens at the end of "The History of an Error?" After the abolishment of the opposition between the "true" and "apparent" worlds is the discordance between art and truth thereby abolished?

Just before the narration of "The History of an Error," at the end of the fourth proposition asserting that any distinction between a "true" and "apparent" (scheinbare) world is a symptom of the decline of life, of nihilism, Nietzsche concludes with this remark (omitted, by the way, in Clark's text):
That the artist esteems appearance higher than reality is no objection to this proposition. For "appearance" ("der Schein") in this case means reality once more, only by way of selection, reinforcement, and correction. The tragic artist is no pessimist: he is precisely the one who says Yes to everything questionable, even to the terrible—he is Dionysian. (TI III, 6)

In order to think through the end of "The History of an Error" it will be necessary to think through what Nietzsche refers to here as the tragic artist—as the Dionysian. The "truths" Nietzsche claims to teach in the late writings, the "truths" opposed to the lie of millennia are "Dionysian truths." Even though, to be sure, the concept of the Dionysian may not mean in the late writings what it does in The Birth of Tragedy, in order to think through the Dionysian in the late works, it seems indispensible to think through Nietzsche's early thinking of tragedy.
CHAPTER 3
THE MASK OF TRAGEDY

An Impossible Book

To say it once more: today I find it an impossible book: . . . What found expression here was anyway—this was admitted with as much curiosity as antipathy—a strange voice, the disciple of a still "unknown God," one who concealed himself for the time being under the scholar's hood, under the gravity and dialectical ill humor of the German, even under the bad manners of the Wagnerian. Here was a spirit with strange, still nameless needs, a memory bursting with questions, experiences, concealed things after which the name of Dionysus was added as one more question mark. What spoke here—as was admitted, not without suspicion—was something like a mystical, almost maenadic soul that stammered with difficulty, a feat of the will, as in a strange tongue, almost undecided whether it should communicate or conceal itself. It should have sung, this "new soul"—and not spoken! (BT "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" 3)

This is what Nietzsche writes, fifteen years later, of The Birth of Tragedy, his first born. "Too bad," he continues, "that what I had to say then, I did not dare say it as a poet." For not speaking as a poet, what he had to say was compromised from the outset. Not having found the proper voice, this "new soul" stammered with difficulty. Twice in this "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" ("Versuch einer Selbstkritik") Nietzsche emphasizes that The Birth of Tragedy is "an impossible book." It was an impossibility forged even in the very first sentence. Instead of with the voice of a lyric poet The Birth of Tragedy begins with the voice of a scholar announcing an advance in aesthetic science (ästhetische Wissenschaft)—"once we perceive not merely by logical insight, but with the immediate certainty of vision that the continuous development of art is bound up with the Apollinian and Dionysian duality" (BT 1). This scholar seeks to disclose for all with clearest certainty a theory of art based on an account of the birth of tragedy—that "metaphysical
miracle" of the coupling of the Apollinian art of sculpture and the Dionysian art of music, which had existed prior to this coupling in "monstrous opposition" (ungeheurer Gegensatz). The monstrosity of this opposition would seem to make this coupling and thus the book impossible enough: tragedy, a female figure "at once Antigone and Cassandra" is delivered from the "mysterious union" of Apollo and Dionysus (BT 4). Who would be the mother of tragedy?106

More than the strange account of the tragedy's birth, it is Nietzsche's account of the death of tragedy at the hands of Socrates which makes The Birth of Tragedy an impossible book. By proposing to reveal the origin of tragedy, to provide an answer to the question "what is tragedy?" The Birth of Tragedy puts the Socratic question to art; and yet the story it has to tell pivots on the opposition between Socrates and the tragic poets, between Socratism and art. If Socratism and tragedy are so opposed how is a theoretical account of art possible? Does not tragedy die by the very posing of this question? One thing is certain, Socratism will never be able to capture her alive; she is lifeless in the hands of the theoretical man. Thus, the task the book sets out on, to disclose for all the origin of tragedy, revealing her true identity, is fated to fail. The opposition between Socrates and the tragic poets, as Sallis remarks, "will both structure the book and perpetually threaten it from within by putting into question the very space of its writing."107

The Birth of Tragedy is impossible because in it Nietzsche's writing turns on itself, turns at just the place where dialectic recoils at its boundaries and bites
its own tail, where science at its limit suffers shipwreck and turns into art (BT 15). Whereas the young scholar began on the side of science proposing a theory of art, in narrating a new myth concerning the birth and death of tragedy his writing slowly slides across the opposition in the direction of art. But, as Nietzsche later understood, it did not go far enough. The almost maenadic soul that should have sung concealed itself (herself?) instead under the scholar's hood. What this soul had to say was undermined by its very saying. Perhaps Nietzsche would have been better off if, instead of attempting a theory of tragedy, he had turned to writing a tragedy of his own. One might say that this is where Nietzsche did later turn in writing *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The final section of book four of *The Gay Science* is a draft of the opening section of Zarathustra's Prologue and introduces that book with the title—"Incipit tragoedia" (GS 342).

If it is the death of tragedy that makes *The Birth of Tragedy* an impossible book, it is the question of tragedy's rebirth that marks the book's importance in the debate concerning postmodern thought. What happens to Socratism at that limit where it turns into art and tragedy again emerges reborn? Where does this turning lead? Not, to be sure, to a mere inversion of the opposition between Socrates and tragedy, science and art, but to that image of the music-practicing Socrates, an artistic Socrates, the tragic philosopher. *The Birth of Tragedy* might then be understood as Nietzsche's first account of the history of metaphysics, his first attempt at thinking that turn at the end of metaphysics, and thus as the first attempt at that centauric literature—philosophy as art—which so marks
postmodern discourse. What is it then in Nietzsche's early thinking of tragedy that is the germ for his later thought? In the later writings Nietzsche seldom speaks of tragedy—despite that important introduction to *Zarathustra*, referring to the radical thinking at the limit simply as *Dionysian*. What did the young Nietzsche see in tragedy? What did the later Nietzsche mean by the *Dionysian*? This attempt at inquiring into Nietzsche's thought will naturally be complicated by the same circumstances that made *The Birth of Tragedy* an impossible book.

Turning on itself, over the opposition between art and science, myth and logic, that structures it, *The Birth of Tragedy* could not help but engender controversy. It was attacked immediately for its tone, its style, its logic, its lack of scholarship—the accuracy of Nietzsche's account of Greek antiquity, his portrayal of Apollo and Dionysus questioned. Instead of classical scholarship, Nietzsche seemed to be engaged in the task of narrating a new myth. Yet the most serious charge against the book was that it was taken as a threat to the very tradition of Western rationality. Much the same charge is leveled today against the aestheticist turn in Nietzsche's mature thought, exemplified most in *Zarathustra*, in which Nietzsche does not produce arguments for his doctrines but seems merely to preach a new myth. It is interesting then, that in the Self-Criticism, written about the same time as *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche acknowledges that *The Birth of Tragedy* was:

badly written, ponderous, embarrassing, image-mad and image-confused, sentimental, in places saccharine to the point of effeminacy, uneven in tempo, without the will to logical cleanliness, very convinced and therefore disdainful of
proof, mistrustful even of the propriety of proof, a book for initiates, "music" for those dedicated to music, those who are closely related to begin with on the basis of common and rare aesthetic experiences, "music" meant as a sign of recognition for close relatives in artebus. (BT SC 3)

Some, of course, might say the same of the dithyrambic image rich tone poem Zarathustra. What is the difference in the tone of voice of Zarathustra and The Birth of Tragedy?

The Birth of Tragedy begins with the task of deciphering "the profound secret teachings" of the Greeks' "view of art" which are disclosed "not in concepts (Begriffen) but in the intensely clear figures (Gestalten) of their gods" (BT 1). Although the work involves a certain insight into the Greek view of art, it was certainly not a work of classical scholarship. For what was it that Nietzsche sought to understand in the figures of Apollo and Dionysus? His concern, at least as he later understood it, as indicated in his comments in the Self-Criticism as well as in the "review" of the book in Ecce Homo, was with neither the world of Greek antiquity nor art, but rather with a modern problem, the problem of the relationship between what has been referred to as "the complementary idiots of Modernity"—science and aesthetics. "What is the significance of science," Nietzsche asks in the Self-Criticism, "viewed as a symptom of life? . . . Is the resolve to be so scientific about everything perhaps a kind of fear of, an escape from, pessimism? A subtle last resort against—truth?" (BT SC 1). He asserts that what he had got hold of then was a new problem, the problem of science itself, science for the first time considered as questionable. The task of The Birth of
Tragedy was "to look at science in the perspective of the artist, and art in that of life" (BT SC 2). And the gravest question Nietzsche now considered The Birth of Tragedy to address was "what, seen in the perspective of life, is the significance of morality?" (BT SC 4).

Looking at science from the perspective of the artist would make questionable the task of disclosing to the modern world the world of the Greeks of the tragic age and their profound secrets concerning art. After discarding the scholar's hood, Nietzsche viewed his early reading of Greek antiquity instead as a means of access to a rethinking of the aesthetic culture of modernity and to a perspective from which a critique of morality could be attempted. The figures of Apollo and Dionysus were masks behind which lay not so much the distant world of the Greeks of the tragic age, but something much closer. Here, Nietzsche's comments in Ecce Homo are revealing: "I had discovered the only parable (Gleichnis) and parallel in history for my own innermost experience—and thus became the first to comprehend the wonderful phenomenon of the Dionysian" (EH BT 2). The final words of that strange autobiography, perhaps Nietzsche's last testament penned just before the collapse, indicate best what he saw in that Greek mask—"Have I been understood? — Dionysus versus the Crucified. . . ."

What, then, is Dionysian? In the "Self-Criticism" Nietzsche claims that The Birth of Tragedy contains an answer. Yet he qualifies that by stating that the one "who knows"—the quotation marks perhaps calling into question this knowledge—is talking as an initiate and disciple of his god. "Now," his italics emphasizing the
break, he acknowledges that he "should perhaps speak more cautiously and less eloquently about such difficult psychological questions as that concerning the origin of tragedy among the Greeks" (BT SC 4). Two points stand out in this acknowledgment. The first might be taken as a preliminary answer to the question concerning what happens when Socratism at its limit once again confronts art—when the Socratic question is posed to the Dionysian. For Nietzsche, the Socratic question gives way to the psychological and genealogical: the question "what is?" is replaced with "why?," "who?" or "what need lay at the root of this phenomenon?" In Ecce Homo Nietzsche points to "two decisive innovations" of The Birth of Tragedy—both the Dionysian and Socratism are subjected to a psychological and genealogical analysis:

first, its understanding of the Dionysian phenomena among the Greeks: for the first time, a psychological analysis of this phenomenon is offered, and it is considered as one root of the whole of Greek art. Secondly, there is the understanding of Socratism: Socrates is recognized for the first time as instrument of Greek disintegration, as a typical decadent. "Rationality" against instinct. "Rationality" at any price as a dangerous force that undermines life. (EH BT 1)

The second point of Nietzsche's acknowledgement is that he will now speak "more cautiously and less eloquently." What does this change in tone signify? The difference between the book, which started out announcing an advance in aesthetic science, and the later criticism is that the latter is acknowledged at the outset to be a Versuch, a mere attempt and temptation.

Nietzsche begins his psychological/genealogical analysis by questioning whether the Greek craving for the beautiful was rooted in pain. "Supposing this
were true," he continues, speaking explicitly hypothetically, "should we then have to explain the origin of the opposite craving, which developed earlier in time, the craving for the ugly; the good, severe will of the older Greeks to pessimism, to the tragic myth, to the image of everything underlying existence that is frightful, evil, a riddle, destructive, fatal?" (BT SC 4). In the rest of the passage Nietzsche continues his psychoanalysis of the origin of tragedy in that questioning, versuchertische tone that so marks his later writings: "What, then, would be the origin of tragedy? Perhaps joy, strength, overflowing health, overgreat fullness?" But then, from another direction, he asks about the significance of the Dionysian madness from which tragedy developed. "Is madness perhaps not necessarily the symptom of degeneration, decline, and the final stage of culture? Are there perhaps—a question for psychiatrists—neuroses of health?" All these questions and those that follow concerning the characteristics of tragedy, such as the satyr chorus, which he had earlier pursued with the youthful fervor of one speaking to fellow initiates, those already convinced, those "related to begin with on the basis of common and rare aesthetic experiences," are now pursued psychologically and experimentally. They are provocations one is not so much expected to agree with, perhaps even to be treated with ironic resistance, but which, nonetheless, one is invited, tempted, perhaps even dared, to take up as an experiment in thinking—especially concerning what was most controversial in The Birth of Tragedy, the relationship between tragic pessimism and Socratic optimism.
Should the Greeks, precisely in the abundance of their youth, have had the will to the tragic and have been pessimists? Should it have been madness, to use one of Plato's phrases, that brought the greatest blessing upon Greece? On the other hand, conversely, could it be that the Greeks became more and more optimistic, superficial, and histrionic precisely in the period of dissolution and weakness—more and more ardent for logic and logicizing the world and thus more "cheerful" and "scientific"? How now? Could it be possible that, in spite of all "modern ideas" and the prejudices of a democratic taste, the triumph of optimism, the gradual prevalence of rationality, practical and theoretical utilitarianism, no less than democracy itself which developed at the same time, might all have been symptoms of a decline of strength, of impending old age, and of physiological weariness? These, and not pessimism? (BT SC 4)

It would be a mistake, then, to consider The Birth of Tragedy a work of classical scholarship purporting to reveal the truth of tragedy, or to make present the world of Greek antiquity—which is not to say that the work tells nothing of tragedy or of the Greeks of the tragic age. Similarly, the present reading might be mistaken if it proposed to reveal, to make present, what Nietzsche really thought, the truth of Nietzsche, in his early thinking on tragedy—which is not to say that nothing can be said concerning what was thought in this confrontation with the mask of tragedy. This reading dares instead to confront the mask of Nietzsche's first born text as a means of access to the question of what happens to the discourse of philosophy at the end of "The History of an Error"—assuming that The Birth of Tragedy can be read as Nietzsche's first attempt at twisting free of this error. Is The Birth of Tragedy so entrenched in Schopenhauerian language, so entangled in metaphysics, that it can afford no preview of Nietzsche's late thought? Or might a confrontation with Nietzsche's early thought of tragedy disclose something of the late thought of the Dionysian tragic artist? If so, would
Nietzsche's early thinking of tragedy, as Sallis suggests, already turn at the limit, already commence the twisting free?

In order to mark in what way Nietzsche's early thought might already depart from Schopenhauer, it is appropriate to recall briefly in what ways *The Birth of Tragedy* first arose from the soil of Schopenhauer's philosophy. It was recalled earlier that Nietzsche shared with Schopenhauer a "metaphysics of art," a belief in art as "the highest task and truly metaphysical activity of this life." For Schopenhauer, the last of the great German Idealists, the turn toward art was a means of subverting the doctrine of his Idealist predecessors. Whereas these predecessors sought to complete the project of the Enlightenment, conceived by Descartes, of attaining knowledge of truth through reason, Schopenhauer was convinced, as Taminiaux has put it, "that the prestige of reason in whatever field, philosophy, natural sciences, political theory, theory of historical progress, is sheer deception." For Schopenhauer the rational order by which the world as representation (*Vorstellung*) is structured is only a semblance, a veil of *māyā*. The hidden reality, the thing-in-itself, i.e., the Will, cannot be unveiled by reason. The knowledge obtained in science, since it approaches phenomena interestedly, through reason, is knowledge only of the world as representation. Science knows only the world as phenomenon, its truths are illusions. Only through art, through disinterested contemplation, can the Will be perceived beneath the veil of phenomena. Art is thus a higher knowledge than science. Art contemplates phenomena in their essences (*Ideas*) as objectifications of the Will. The fine arts
mirror the world as Will. Music, most especially, is understood by Schopenhauer as a copy of the Will itself. Through music the contradictory essence of the Will is disclosed.¹¹⁴

One could easily read *The Birth of Tragedy*, its exalted expectations of art, its critique of reason and science, its belief in music, as massively, inextricably, bound to Schopenhauer and metaphysics. The dualism at the core of *The Birth of Tragedy*, the antagonism between the Dionysian and Apollinian, might be read as only an echo of Schopenhauer's dualism between Will and Representation. Apollo thus would symbolize what Schopenhauer called the world as representation, whereas the Dionysian symbolizes the Will itself beyond representation.¹¹⁵ The most obvious departure from Schopenhauer in Nietzsche's text, as Taminiaux suggests, is that Schopenhauer could never have said: "we have art lest we perish of the truth." Instead, Schopenhauer would have said "we have art in order to learn how to die, once we have overcome the deceptive order of representation, and contemplated the absurdity of the will."¹¹⁶ The "crystalline and tumultuous" remark from Nietzsche's late notebooks could be applied to his first book.

Even if Nietzsche departs from Schopenhauer in drawing different conclusions concerning art, concerning the effect of tragedy, does this difference entail a different trajectory of thought, one that would twist free of the "History of an Error"? Or would the "crystalline and tumultuous" remark and the denial of truth that seems implicit in the remark, still remain enframed by a Schopenhauerian conception of knowledge and truth? Does the claim that "truths are
illusions" thus only further tie Nietzsche to Schopenhauer? Would he have had to finally abandon this claim, and the rhetoric of art as falsification, in order to be finally done with Schopenhauer and with metaphysics? What is disclosed in The Birth of Tragedy concerning that turn at the limit where Socratism turns into art?

It might be appropriate to begin with what, from the perspective of the Self-Criticism, Nietzsche regarded as the central thought experiment of The Birth of Tragedy: to look at science from the perspective of the artist, and art from the perspective of life. To look at art from the perspective of life means first of all that art is not to be viewed as an isolated aesthetic sphere of existence, but is bound up inseparably with life. The Apollinian and Dionysian are to be thought of as proto-artistic forces, as both art-states (Kunstzuständen) and art-drives (Kunsttriebe) of nature, of life itself, before they are to be thought of as compulsions of artists in the narrower sense. Already this constitutes a break with Schopenhauer, for whom the Will is not artistic. For Nietzsche, art as a human activity confirms and affirms an artistic activity in the Will itself. This is why, later, the will to power can be explicated as fundamentally artistic. This is also why, in The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche suggests we consider the Apollinian and Dionysian analogously in terms of the "physiological phenomena" of dream (Traum) and intoxication (Rausch) (BT 1). The Apollinian and Dionysian are, first of all, "energies in which nature's art drives (Kunsttriebe) are satisfied . . . first in the image world of dreams (Bilderwelt des Traumes) . . . then as intoxicated reality (rauschvolle Wirklichkeit)" (BT 2).
One could say that Nietzsche does not abandon the classical conception of art as mimesis. For, he continues, "with reference to these immediate art-states of nature, every artist is an 'imitator,' that is to say, either an Apollinian artist in dreams (Traumkünstler), or a Dionysian artist in ecstasies (Rauschkünstler), or finally—as for example in Greek tragedy—at once artist in dreams and ecstasies" (BT 2). Nietzsche will even go so far as to say that even with respect to art, "we are not the artists. "The entire comedy of art is neither performed for our betterment or education nor are we the true creator of this art world" (BT 5).

"We," he goes on to say, "are merely images and artistic projections for the true creator," which could be none other than life (the Will) itself. This is the context in which Nietzsche first asserts that "it is only as aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified"—which allows him to say "that we have our highest dignity in our significance as works of art" (BT 5).

With respect to the narrower sense of art, Nietzsche may not abandon the classical conception of art as mimesis; nevertheless, his view of mimesis, already at the level of Apollinian art, erodes that classical conception. This leads to what is problematic in Nietzsche's conception of art. Though art is in a sense a mirror of nature, it is not an ordinary mirror. Nietzsche, here speaking of Apollinian art, writes: "The same drive (Trieb) which calls art into life, as the complement and consummation of existence, seducing one to a continuation of life, was also the cause of the Olympian world which the Hellenic 'will' made use of as a transfiguring mirror (verklärenden Spiegel)" (BT 3). Whatever is reflected is not
simply mirrored. What, then, is the mimetic structure of art for Nietzsche? The mimetic structure is one of a *supplement*. In a passage that will be necessary to return to throughout this exploration, Nietzsche discloses what might be said to be the essence of art—though in order to prevent art from perishing from the posing of the Socratic question, it will be necessary to hear in this disclosure the (at)tempting tone of that *Versucher* that is for Nietzsche the philosopher of the future:

That life is really so tragic would least of all explain the origin of an art form; if indeed art is not merely imitation of the reality of nature but rather a metaphysical supplement of the reality of nature, placed beside it for its overcoming. The tragic myth, too, insofar as it belongs to art at all, participates fully in this metaphysical intention of art to transfigure (*Verklärungsabsicht*). *(BT 24)*

How could art be a supplement to the reality of nature which also allows for the overcoming of nature? In order to address this question it will be necessary to first outline how an Apollinian artist "imitates" the Apollinian art-drive of nature, and then also how the Dionysian artist "mimics" life's Dionysian drive. Then it will be possible to take up the experiment of thinking of art as the saving supplement and countermovement to nihilism. This involves thinking of tragedy as a particular form of disclosure. What is disclosed in the mirror of art? What is thus transfigured by this mirror? One must begin by attending to the figures of Apollo and Dionysus.
In order to gain access to the secret teachings of the Greeks concerning Apollinian art, Nietzsche discloses in the opening section of the book a number of features of the figure of Apollo drawn from Apollinian art. Nevertheless, he did not find it necessary to include in that disclosure references to that art in which he had perceived those features, preferring instead to simply allude to those features of Apollo in which he had discerned something of those secret teachings. However, Sallis has supplemented Nietzsche's discourse on the Apollinian by finding in Apollinian art—in particular, Homer—a few names and deeds of Apollo, that help to illustrate and organize Nietzsche's discourse. First of all there is Apollo's proper name, which, as Nietzsche notes, etymologically justifies designating the "god of light" as the "shining one" (der "Scheinende"). From The Iliad and the Homeric Hymn to Apollo Sallis adds that Apollo is referred to as "far-shooting" and "far-darting." Apollo is one who always works from a distance and is engaged in preserving distance, setting boundaries between earth and sky, mortal human and immortal god. Finally, Sallis notes that Apollo is also referred to in The Iliad as "the healer." All these epithets of Apollo come into play in the story from The Iliad in which Apollo first beats back the charge of Diomedes, who boldly challenged the god by attacking Aeneas, who was under Apollo's protection. Shining Apollo saves Aeneas by fashioning from a distance an image, a double of Aeneas, which so resembles Aeneas that when projected in front of the Trojans and Achaens they are deceived into fighting it and not the real Aeneas,
thereby allowing his escape. Sallis notes especially Apollo's productive deed: the fashioning of an apparent, illusory image. Let us now turn to Nietzsche's discourse, to see how these names and deeds of Apollo, as handed down in Homer, make their way into Nietzsche's thinking of the Apollinian, first as proto-artistic energy of nature and then as art.

When Nietzsche names Apollo "the shining one" he also deems him to be the "ruler over the beautiful shining (schöne Schein) of the inner world of phantasy" (BT 1). Apollo is the ruler of the inner world where images shine forth in dreams in their radiant, sometimes illusory, semblance. The first glimpse into the proto-artistic Apollinian force is thus through the understanding of the dream as Schein. As an art-impulse of nature, the Apollinian is the drive to the fashioning of images, to the production of beautifully shining figures. As art-state of nature, the Apollinian is the state of absorption in these images and figures. Dreaming is thus a particularly appropriate analogy for the Apollinian in that it involves both the production of and absorption in images.

The dream state is one of heightened life. According to Nietzsche, "we delight in the immediate understanding of figure (Gestalt); all forms speak to us; there is nothing unimportant or superfluous" (BT 1). How is it, however, that one takes delight in the shining of dream images? How is it that the shining of the image is a beautiful shining even when, as Nietzsche remarks, "it is not only the agreeable and friendly images" but rather "the whole divine comedy of life,
including the inferno" that pass before the dreamer in the dream? As Sallis notes, "it is not as though the shining of an image may or may not be beautiful. Rather, the beautiful is determined precisely as shining, so that, whatever the image, to shine is to shine beautifully." Nevertheless, how is it that in the dream one can take delight in the shining of images of things that are in themselves horrible to behold? Nietzsche's response to this classical question is not unlike Aristotle's: the delight one takes in the contemplation of images is made possible by the spacing of mimēsis, the distance of image from original.

This distance, however, does not completely break the absorption in the image. Even when images of the inferno pass before the dreamer, they pass—here marking a distance from Plato—"not like mere shadows on a wall—for he lives and suffers with these scenes." (BT 1). The dreamer must be both absorbed and yet somehow distanced from the shining of the dream. This brings out a feature of Apollinian shining that allows the engagement with the image to have a certain contemplative distance. Even in the heightened state of the dream, when these figures shine forth most brilliantly, there is still, according to Nietzsche, the "shimmering sensation of its shining (durchschimmernde Empfindung ihres Scheins)" (BT 1). This "shimmering betrayal," as Sallis refers to it, betrays that the image is just that, image and not "original." Even when the dream is most intense there is that shimmering sensation that it is, after all, only a dream.
At this point in Nietzsche's text and almost as an aside, he draws a parallel between the dreamer and the philosopher, which already in the first few pages of the book, begins to mark a departure from Schopenhauer and from metaphysics:

Philosophical men even have a presentiment that the reality in which we live and have our being is also mere appearance (Schein), and that another, quite different reality lies beneath it. Schopenhauer actually indicates as the criterion of philosophical ability the occasional ability to view men and things as mere phantoms or dream images. Thus the aesthetically sensitive human stands in the same relation to the reality of dreams as the philosopher does to the reality of existence; he is a close and willing observer, for these images afford him an interpretation of life, and by reflecting on these processes he trains himself for life. (BT 1)

Unlike such philosophical men Nietzsche does not make the move from the reality of Schein to another deeper reality, he does not make the move from the shining of the image to an "original." What is most characteristic of Nietzsche's understanding of the Apollinian is that the shimmering that leads to the recognition of the dream as dream does not lead the dreamer to break from the dream to waking reality, but rather, to continue the dream. "And perhaps many will, like myself, recall how amid the dangers and terrors of dream they have occasionally said to themselves in self-encouragement, and not without success: 'It is a dream! I will dream on!'" (BT 1).

Nietzsche also refers to Apollo as "the soothsaying god." This connection serves to bring out what for Nietzsche is the healing power of the beautiful shining, whether in dreams, art, or in that art of divination in which the soothsayer interprets life. Art and the soothsaying faculty are both analogous to dreaming and are healing in the same manner as are dreams. The healing power
of dreams, and thus of art, and even of the soothsayer, is not in the disclosing of
the truth of waking reality, but rather in the beautifully shining forth of the image.
Apollinian images offer an interpretation of life. As an interpretation the image is
linked to an "original;" and yet, there is a curious inversion that already begins to
erode the classical conception of mimēsis. Whereas in the classical scheme the
original has a higher value than the image, for Nietzsche, it is the Apollinian
image that is more highly valued. Thus he writes that it is the "higher truth"
(höhere Wahrheit) and "perfection" of the dream states as opposed to the
"incompletely intelligible everyday world" which is "healing and helping in sleep
and dreams" (BT 1). It is this healing capacity of Apollinian shining that leads
Nietzsche at this point to accord the highest responsibility to the arts for making
"life possible and worth living," and thus, toward the goal of "living in Schein."

Nietzsche then, however, interjects that "our image of Apollo" must include
that "delicate boundary" (zarte Linie) that must not be crossed if the dream image
is not to have the "pathological effect" that would result from mistaking the
shining of the dream for "coarse reality" (BT 1). He speaks of the "measured
restraint" and "calm of the sculptor god" that enables him to remain within the
realm of shine, just as the dreamer, at the moment of the shimmering recognition
of the dream as dream, is able to continue dreaming. Even when angered, his eye
must remain "sunlike," that is, always "hallowed by the beautiful shining" (BT 1).
Here Nietzsche again turns to Schopenhauer, but in a manner that marks his
departure from him. He suggests that here we might apply to Apollo Schopenhauer's words concerning the one wrapped in the veil of māyā:

"Just as on a stormy sea that, unbounded in all directions, raises and drops mountainous waves, howling, a sailor sits in a boat and trusts in his frail bark: so in the midst of a world of torments the individual human being sits quietly, supported by and trusting in the principium individuationis."

Whereas for Schopenhauer these words were meant to describe the unfortunate state of the one wrapped in the veil of māyā, the one naively trusting in his individuality, the one who has not yet seen through the illusion and thus achieved the level of art, for Nietzsche these words are used to describe the calm repose of the sculptor god standing serenely within that shining veil. For Nietzsche, Apollo is "the glorious divine image of the principium individuationis, through whose gestures and eyes all the joy and wisdom of 'shining' (Scheines), together with its beauty, speak to us" (BT 1).

In dreams all human beings are artists, according to Nietzsche, insofar as they participate in the creation of "the beautiful shining of the dream worlds" (BT 1). It is this "beautiful shining" that allows Nietzsche to draw the connection between dreaming and Apollinian art. The beautiful shining of dreams is "the prerequisite of all imagistic art (bildenden Kunst), and . . . an important part of poetry as well" (BT 1). Apollo is thus "the god of all imagistic powers (bildnerische Kräfte)" and therefore "the sculptor god"—the one who with those powers, brings forth shining figures out of rough stone or soft clay (BT 1). Apollinian art should
not be thought, however, simply in terms of the paradigmatically Apollinian arts of sculpture and epic poetry, but rather, of any bringing forth of images, of any bringing forth that allows a figure to stand out against a ground. One might then say that Apollo is responsible for all figural disclosure, including Nietzsche's book, which seeks to disclose the Greeks' view of art through the figures of their gods. A gesture to Apollo is thus already made in the opening of *The Birth of Tragedy* which will send the book sliding away from theory toward art. Nietzsche's designation of Apollo as the "shining one" serves to indicate that this disclosure will always be marked by that ambiguity that is characteristic of the shining of dreams.

According to Nietzsche's scheme, all Apollinian art imitates in one way or another the proto-artistic Apollinian impulse and state. One would thus expect him to consider Apollinian art as akin to dreaming. Indeed, Nietzsche sees in Apollinian art a deeper connection to dreaming for the Greeks than for moderns, a connection which justifies "designating the dreaming Greeks as Homers and Homer as a dreaming Greek" (*BT* 2). What is the mimetic structure of Apollinian art, however, that it can be thought of as dreamlike? Working with the contemporaneous notes, Sallis pieces together three ways in which Apollinian art is imitative of Apollinian dreaming.

To begin with, the creative impulse in Apollinian art, the drive to the production and projection of images, and the state of the artist absorbed in these figures, either those brought forth from clay and stone, those delimited by line
and color, those brought forth in the words of the poet, or even those projected
against the silver screen, are like the dreamplay in which images are brought forth
and contemplated with such delight. Sallis suggests that Nietzsche even considered
the work of art but a detour leading others to the dreamlike vision of the artist. 124
The sculptor hammering away at his marble brings forth a figure so that others
may see the shining image of his dream. The epic poet, too, leads the listener to
the dreamlike condition that first produced his poem.

Not only is the Apollinian artist akin to the dreamer, projecting and
absorbed in his shining phantasy, the works of Apollinian art are like the images
of the dreamworld. The images of Apollinian art shine like dream images. One
takes delight in the higher truth and perfection that shines forth in the images of
Apollinian art just as one delights in the shining of dreams. If, as Nietzsche
remarks, referring to Lucretius' view, that "it was in dreams that the glorious
figures of the gods first appeared to the souls of men" (BT 1), it is in the images
of Apollinian art, in the sculptures and temples and epic poems of the Apollinian
Greeks, that these figures first shone forth to the eyes and ears of mortals.

The image from Apollinian art which Nietzsche first discusses is that of the
temple, the "artistic edifice of the Apollinian culture" (BT 3). Nietzsche proposes
to level this structure stone by stone in order to reveal—perhaps one might say
"deconstruct"—Apollinian culture. As Nietzsche describes this temple:

First of all we see the glorious Olympian figures of the gods, standing on the
gables of this structure. Their deeds, pictured in brilliant reliefs, adorn its friezes.
We must not be misled by the fact that Apollo stands side by side with the others
as an individual deity, without any claim to priority of rank. For the same impulse that embodied itself in Apollo gave birth to this entire Olympian world, and in this sense Apollo is its father. \((BT \, 3)\)

Apollo is the father of the Olympian world for it is the "shining one" that is the artistic image of the Apollinian impulse itself. Immediately following this description of the temple of Apollinian culture, Nietzsche poses the decisive question, the question which would deconstruct Apollinian culture by exposing its psychological roots: "What terrific need was it that could produce such an illustrious company of Olympian beings" \((BT \, 3)\)?

This question leads to the third way in which Apollinian art imitates nature. Like dream images, the images of Apollinian art offer an interpretation of life, they are imitations of life, of the everyday world. And yet, like dream images, the figures brought forth in Apollinian art, as Sallis indicates, "let a certain perfection shine forth in contrast to the imperfect everyday originals thus imagined."\(^{125}\) In Apollinian art Nietzsche sees a celebration and enhancement of life. "For there is nothing here that suggests asceticism, spirituality, or duty. We hear nothing but the accents of an exuberant, triumphant existence in which all things, whether good or evil, are deified" \((BT \, 3)\). One might easily stand bewildered "before this fantastic excess of life," especially considering—Nietzsche now turns to the decisive moment in his deconstruction of Apollinian culture—that wisdom of Silenus, which was older, much older than even the Olympian gods. Apollinian culture, now here symbolized by "the Olympian magic mountain" opens, revealing its roots:
The Greek knew and felt the terrors and horrors of existence. That he might endure this terror at all, he had to interpose between himself and life the radiant dreambirth of the Olympians. That overwhelming dismay in the face of the titanic powers of nature ... that entire philosophy of the sylvan god ... all this was again and again overcome by the Greeks with the aid of the artistic middleworld of the Olympians; or at any rate it was veiled and withdrawn from sight. It was in order to be able to live that the Greeks had to create these gods from a most profound need. (BT 3)

Apollinian art is mimetic of the reality of nature; but then, clearly not merely imitative. Not only do the shining images of Apollinian art enhance or perfect everyday life, but in that very shining these images also veil life—disclosed now in its deepest depth as manifestly tragic. Life, as Nietzsche understands it here and consistently throughout his writings, is that which in its depth is unfathomable, it is that which can be thought only as abyss. Apollinian art might then best be thought of as a projection of a shining into the abyss. This shining not only veils the abyss, it shines back like a mirror, a special sort of mirror, a "transfiguring mirror" which seduces one back from the abyss, the sight of which would incapacitate life, to the continuation of life. It is through this transfiguration that Apollinian art would be a "supplement to the reality of nature, placed beside it for its overcoming."

This basic ground of life, this abysmal ground, Nietzsche calls the Dionysian. Thus, in Nietzsche's analysis, the Apollinian must always have already been incited by the Dionysian. In Nietzsche's ordering of the history of Greek art, the two antagonists Apollo and Dionysus perpetually incite each other to new births. The Homeric world arose as an overcoming of the Silenean wisdom that spoke through the early folk myths. This world of Homer then gave way to a new
influx of the Dionysian, which was again overcome by the majestically rejecting austerity of Doric art. Finally through that metaphysical miracle tragedy was born from the coupling of the antagonists.

Before turning to the Dionysian and then to that miraculous birth, there is one more aspect of Nietzsche's thinking of the Apollinian to consider which again raises the question of the relation of The Birth of Tragedy to Schopenhauer and to the history of metaphysics. Reflecting again on the dreamer amidst the illusion (Illusion) of the dream, Nietzsche—seemingly having forgotten that shimmering betrayal—now says of the dreamer that "he must have completely forgotten the day and its ominous obtrusiveness" (BT 4). He then feels impelled to make a "metaphysical assumption," one that presupposes the metaphysical distinction as reconstituted by Schopenhauer between phenomenon and thing-in-itself. While in regard to our own existence we might find the waking state "infinitely preferable" to the dreaming states, Nietzsche maintains the opposite estimation of the value of dreams "in relation to that mysterious ground of our being of which we are the phenomena." He thus feels impelled to the assumption that "the truly existent primal unity, eternally suffering and contradictory, also needs the rapturous vision, the pleasurable shining (Schein), for its continuous redemption (Erlösung)." Thus, Nietzsche maintains that "we are completely wrapped up in this shining and composed of it." The world of empirical reality is then understood to be wholly an Apollinian projection. The dream, as well as the work of art, is Schein of Schein. There is thus a certain parallel here with classical mimesis, where the work of art,
as simulacrum of simulacrum, is thrice removed from truth. But here, the movement of mimesis, it must be remembered, is the reverse of the classical view. Instead of falling away from the original as an imperfect representation, Apollinian art involves a double projection, an enhancement, in which the value of the simulacrum is greater than that of the original. The mimetic relationship of art to nature is thus that of the supplement.

How close to Schopenhauer is Nietzsche here? The contrast is most evident in consideration of the character of redemption. Both thinkers agree that redemption is brought by art. But for Schopenhauer the redemption in art comes from tragic resignation, leading one to long to stop dreaming, to a "Buddhistic negation of all willing." For Nietzsche, however, the aesthetically sensitive human being, the one who does not make the move from the dream to waking reality, but instead, vows to dream on, to live in shine, finds in art, not tragic resignation, but the means whereby he "trains himself for life." The contrast between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer could not be drawn any sharper: redemption in shine leads to the affirmation of life. Thus, at the level of Apollinian art, "we have art lest we perish of the truth."

_Dionysus Masked_

As with the Apollinian, to discern something of the secret teachings of the Greeks concerning the Dionysian it is still a matter of attending to the figure of the god. And yet, except for one key reference, Nietzsche says very little concerning the
figure of Dionysus, especially in contrast to what he says about shining Apollo. Nevertheless, this is not surprising since things are all together different with the sylvan god. For the figure of Dionysus, as Sallis puts it, is withdrawn, or at least it can be drawn only "in such a manner that it can have no direct image." ¹²⁶ The figure of Dionysus might then be thought of as already exceeding a metaphysics of presence and identity. The figure of Dionysus would then resist the enclosure within the identity of a figure. If the Apollinian is the *principium individuationis*, that which allows for the drawing of a boundary that would enclose, and thus disclose, a figure, the Dionysian violates all boundaries, it leaves the Apollinian veil of *māyā* fluttering in tatters (*BT* 1). Insofar as it violates all boundaries, in what sense could there be an identity of Dionysus that could be disclosed in a figure? All figural disclosure, all manifestation of identity, is an Apollinian effect. Yet whatever figure is thus disclosed is torn to pieces by the Dionysian. The Dionysian would subvert all identity. This difference in aims explains why there is such a monstrous opposition between the two antagonists, and makes it all the more miraculous that there could be a coupling of these two artistic forces. Sallis proposes to think the Dionysian in terms of the *ek-static* movement of ecstasy, a movement of excess, in which all boundaries are crossed and exceeded. He thus suggests that one could call the Dionysian "difference itself, difference as such," except that the movement of ecstasy disrupts the "limits that would determine the *itself* and the *as such*." ¹²⁷ One might, he adds, even call it abyss—but not without
submitting this saying to an "abyssmal effect." It is thus not at all difficult to understand Nietzsche's reticence when it comes to the figure of Dionysus.

Despite all this it is still a matter of attending to the figure of the god as handed down in Greek art. If there is to be a figure of Dionysus that shines forth at all it would have to be through Apollo. "That he appears (erscheint) at all," Nietzsche emphasizes, "is the work of the dream-interpreter, Apollo" (BT 10.) Thus, it should not be surprising that the figure of Dionysus appears only after that miraculous coupling; it is on the stage, in Greek tragedy more than anywhere else, that the figure of Dionysus shines forth in Greek art. This appearance, however, is to be sure an enigmatic one. For of all the extant tragedies that have come down to us, there is only one in which Dionysus appears as himself: Thus Nietzsche says that, using Platonic terms, "the one truly real Dionysus appears in a variety of figures, in the mask;" and thus "all the celebrated figures of the Greek stage—Prometheus, Oedipus, etc—are masks of the original hero Dionysus" (BT 10). The one drama where Dionysus appears "as himself"—that key reference, the place where Nietzsche says "we see Dionysus"—is, ironically, The Bacchae of Euripides. Euripides, of course, is for Nietzsche, only a mask for Socrates, for the one responsible for driving Dionysus off the stage—resulting in the death of tragedy (BT 5).

What then can be discerned about the figure of Dionysus in The Bacchae? Dionysus comes on the scene to make his identity known, but in order to do this he comes masked. Dionysus is the masked god. The mask, as are all forms and
images, is an Apollinian shining. But as Dionysus is a figure withdrawn, a figure
that can have no direct image, the figure of Dionysus can only appear on the
stage of tragedy through an Apollinian shining. But how is it that Dionysus's
identity can somehow be manifest through the mask?

The drama of *The Bacchae* centers around the revelation of Dionysus’s
identity to Pentheus, who, for not recognizing the god, loses his own identity by
being torn to pieces by the Maenads. What is it that Pentheus cannot see? The
cue to this riddle, according to the myth, is that Dionysus himself was once torn
to pieces by the Titans. Nietzsche thus writes that "as a dismembered god,
Dionysus possesses a double nature (Doppelnatur)" (*BT* 10). This concealed
enigmatic double nature is revealed in *The Bacchae* through the various features
that make up Dionysus's disguise. He is a god masked beneath a human
appearance that, in its turn, is also ambiguous: a man who with his painted face
and long plaits looks like a woman; impeccably Greek yet he wears an Asiatic
robe claiming to be from far off Lydia. "Like wine, Dionysus is double: most
terrible yet infinitely sweet." These doublings reveal that the identity of
Dionysus is, as Sallis remarks, "a sundered identity, an identity to which belongs a
difference." The duality of re(union) and dismemberment is revealed through
the figure of the mask which thus "unmasks" him as the masked god: Dionysus is
the "one" whose "identity" exceeds identity, the "one" who cannot be made present
through a presence, but only through a certain absence.
The duality that marks the figure of Dionysus characterizes the artistic state and impulse designated as Dionysian. According to Nietzsche, we steal a glimpse into the Dionysian if we add to the terror experienced at the tearing of the Apollinian veil of individuality, the blissful rapture (*wonnevolle Verzückung*) that wells up from the innermost ground of the human being (*BT* 1). This duality of terror/rapture can be understood as analogous to the intoxication (*Rausch*) brought on by the narcotic draught that is so familiarly associated with the god of wine. Nietzsche describes the rapturous, sweet side of the Dionysian as one of harmony and reunion, between human beings and between the human world and nature:

Under the charm of the Dionysian not only is the union between man and man reaffirmed, but nature which has become alienated, hostile, or subjugated, celebrates once more her reconciliation with her lost son, man . . . Now, with the gospel of universal harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled, and fused with his neighbor, but as one with him. (*BT* 1)

And yet, Nietzsche reminds us that the revelry of the Dionysian celebrant involves "a curious blending and duality" of both the sweet and the terrible sides of the narcotic state:

as medicines remind us of deadly poisons—of the phenomenon that pain begets joy; that, from the breast, exaltation wrings sounds of agony. At the very climax of joy there sounds a cry of horror or a yearning lamentation for an irretrievable loss. In these Greek festivals . . . it is as if she (nature) were heaving a sigh at her dismemberment into individuals. (*BT* 2)

Whether it is terror or rapture that wells up in the breast of the Dionysian reveler the effect is that of the *pharmakon*, a disruption of the limit that would
delimit the individual, a violation of the *principium individuationis*. And yet, as Sallis emphasizes "everything will depend on how one interprets this disruption." This disruption constitutes the identity of the Dionysian, and yet disrupts the very operation of the concept of identity. How is one to think of the Dionysian, and thus tragedy, in such a way as to resist metaphysics, and in particular the assimilation of Nietzsche’s text to Schopenhauer’s metaphysics? Thinking of the Dionysian as both state and impulse of ecstasy, Sallis conceives the Dionysian in terms of a movement of excess or that ecstatic state in which one is impelled outside of oneself, where one becomes a being-outside-oneself.

This ecstasy, the movement from inside to outside, where the boundary between inside and outside which determines the inside and the outside is exceeded, produces a "strange logic." The movement of transgressing the limit does not invert the opposition between inside and outside but rather disrupts "the very operation of the opposition." Thus, the movement of transgression disrupts the very limit by which there can be a transgression. In order for there to be any transgression at all there must then be a redrawing of that line right at the limit of transgression. For Sallis this produces "an unending round of transgression, disruption, and reinstatement" which he finds expressed in the dual nature of Dionysus in the continuous round of reunion and dismemberment.

The logic of ecstasy determines that the opposition between the Apollinian and Dionysian cannot be thought of in terms of a simple binary opposition. If it were thought so, it would be all too easy to think of tragedy as the mere
synthesis—as an *Aufhebung*—of the contradiction between the Apollinian and Dionysian. Nietzsche does say of the Dionysian: "Contradiction, the bliss born of pain, spoke out from the heart of nature" (*BT* 4). And yet, as Sallis remarks, this is both more and less than contradiction: "a contradiction in which the opposites are held in their opposition rather than cancelling one another." The opposition between the Apollinian and Dionysian would then not merely be the opposition between the drawing of a line that discloses a figure and the withdrawing of that line. As ecstasy, the Dionysian would already involve a dual movement of transgression and disruption which necessitates reinscription. The opposition of Apollinian and Dionysian would not unfold in a dialectic, but "a logic of excess, of resounding excess, of shining excess." Nietzsche characterizes the Dionysian experience in which the Apollinian veil is rent as follows:

> And now let us imagine how into this world, built on shining (*Schein*) and moderation and artificially dammed up, there rang out in tones ever more alluring and magical ways the ecstatic sound (*der ekstatische Ton*) sound of the Dionysian festival; how in these all of nature's excess (*Übermass*) in pleasure, suffering, and knowledge became audible, even in piercing shrieks; ... The muses of the arts of "shining" (*"Schein"*) paled before an art that, in its intoxication (*Rausch*), spoke the truth. The wisdom of Silenus cried "Woe! woe!" to the serene Olympians. The individual, with all his limits and restraint succumbed to the self-oblivion (*Selbstvergessenheit*) of the Dionysian states, forgetting the Apollinian precepts. Excess revealed itself as truth (*Das Übermass enthielt sich als Wahrheit*). (*BT* 4)

Nietzsche's text would be drawn within the closure of metaphysics just at this point, if the Dionysian experience is thought to yield knowledge of truth, i.e., the thing-in-itself—the Will underlying the Apollinian veils of representation. Sallis resists such a metaphysical reading by thinking Dionysian excess as the ecstatic
movement that exceeds the limits that would determine something as true. The truth revealed in Dionysian ecstasy is not ground, but rather the dissolution of ground—one might call it abysmal truth. The abysmal truth disclosed in Dionysian ecstasy would seem to dislodge Nietzsche's thinking of tragedy from the metaphysical order of ground, sending it careening away from the metaphysical axis.

Still, there is much in Nietzsche's discussion of the Dionysian that has led most interpreters, beginning with Heidegger's reading, to regard The Birth of Tragedy as decisively determined by that metaphysical order of ground that was first thought in terms of the Platonic difference between the intelligible and sensible, and since Kant as the difference between thing-in-itself and appearance, which Schopenhauer rethought as Will and representation. When Nietzsche first introduces that charm of the Dionysian, the sweet harmony and reconciliation that wells up when the Apollinian veil of individuality is rent asunder, that veil, fluttering in tatters, flutters before "the mysterious primal one" (BT 1).

Furthermore, Nietzsche speaks of the Dionysian artist as one who has "surrendered his subjectivity in the Dionysian process" and thus "become completely one with the primal one" (BT 5). "Would not," Sallis asks, "the Dionysian state be one of virtual unification with the primal one, with the will itself? Would not the Dionysian be a movement toward the metaphysical center, toward the ground, and not, finally, at the limit, not at all toward the abyss?" There is no question that Nietzsche's language in discussing the Dionysian turns
away at times from the figure of ecstasy as Sallis draws and withdraws it, and
toward the metaphysical axis determined by Schopenhauer. The question is
whether or not this is only a matter of a borrowed vocabulary, something that in
the "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" Nietzsche clearly regretted.¹³⁹ For Sallis there is
no question that The Birth of Tragedy twisted free of Schopenhauer, just a
question of whether there is some "structural necessity" that links the twisting to a
reinscription of metaphysics.¹⁴⁰

The twisting free, according to Sallis, commences with the question of
Dionysian art. In the classical scheme of mimesis that Nietzsche began with,
Dionysian art would be mimetic of the natural Dionysian state and impulse. The
Dionysian artist would then have to be thought of as producing a mimetic double
of Dionysian ecstasy. This, however, leads to a "certain deformation" of that
classical scheme, which, according to Sallis, "cannot but produce a certain
dislocating effect in the language of Nietzsche's text, beginning to twist that text
free of the metaphysical axis by making its language slide in another direction,
toward the abyss."¹⁴¹

At that point where the Dionysian artist surrenders his subjectivity,
Nietzsche's text, however, seems to call into question the conclusion that it is
ecstasy that is doubled in Dionysian art:

First of all, as a Dionysian artist he has become completely one with the primal
one, its pain and contradiction, and he produces the copy of this primal one as
music, assuming that music has been correctly termed a repetition and a recast of
the world. (BT 5)
Here, it seems that it is "the primal one" that is doubled in Dionysian mimesis and not the figure of ecstasy. Would the primal one, then, be the name of an origin to which one would return in the ecstatic state of being-outside-oneself? Sallis contends that this primal one would not be the name of an origin, for it is a primal one in "its pain and contradiction." Here it is a matter of that contradiction that is both more and less than contradiction, a contradiction which holds joy and suffering, reunion and dismemberment together in their opposition. It is a matter of a contradiction which sunders the very unity with which the artist has supposedly fused. What Nietzsche refers to as "the primal one" cannot then have the metaphysical characteristic of unity. Thus, Sallis asserts that "there is no origin . . . the Dionysian has only an abysmal identity: the movement, the figure, of ecstasy."\textsuperscript{142}

Still, impelled outside himself into ecstasy, the Dionysian artist does undergo a certain loss of self. It would then be a mistake to describe the contrast between Apollinian and Dionysian art in terms of the opposition between the objective and subjective. Nietzsche writes that "the 'I' of the lyrist therefore sounds from the abyss of being (\textit{aus dem Abgrund des Seins}): its 'subjectivity,' in the sense of modern aestheticians, is a fiction" (this is the point at which Nietzsche refers to Dionysus as depicted in the \textit{Bacchae}) (\textit{BT} 5). A little further along, however, Nietzsche draws a contrast between the Apollinian artist and the Dionysian musician in which he clearly slips into that metaphysical language he would later regret. The contrast is between the plastic artist, absorbed in the
contemplation of images, who is protected from becoming fused with his figures by the mirror of the shining (Spiegel des Scheines), and the lyrist, "whose images are nothing but his very self and, as it were, only different projections of himself" (BT 5). The lyrist might say "I," but, Nietzsche continues, "this (I)ness (Ichheit) is not the same as that of the waking empirically real human being, but the only truly existent and eternal (I)ness resting at the ground of things (Grunde der Dinge)" (BT 5). These two references to the self of the lyrist indicate the twisting of Nietzsche's language when it comes to discussing the Dionysian. In order to resist the assimilation of Nietzsche's thinking to metaphysics it would be necessary to think this ground as abysmal ground. The self of the lyrist is already lost in Dionysian ecstasy, thrown into that movement of excess which transgresses and disrupts the limits that would determine a self. The Dionysian artist is not, then, a subject who would produce a copy of a proto-artistic Dionysian reality from which he stands apart.

The music that comes forth from this Dionysian abyss Nietzsche does refer to as a copy, a repetition and a recast. Nevertheless, Nietzsche also refers to this music as an imageless reshining (bildloser Wiedersein) and to the musician as one who is "without images, himself purely primordial pain and primordial resounding" (Urwiederklang) (BT 5). Thus, the mimesis that occurs in Dionysian music produces a resounding in which the Dionysian somehow is manifest without images. Dionysian music would then be an imageless manifestation of the Dionysian abyss. Still, Dionysian art, like all art, is not merely imitation of nature.
It thus still remains to be seen how Dionysian music can be thought of as "a supplement to the reality of nature placed beside it for its overcoming." Sallis turns to the decisive questions: "What, then, is the overcoming achieved by the Dionysian? How is it that the supplement not merely doubles nature but displaces it?"  

When the boundaries and limits that determine the everyday are exceeded and disrupted in Dionysian ecstasy "a chasm of oblivion" at first separates the worlds of everyday reality and the Dionysian (BT 7). As in the intoxicated or narcotic state, the rapture or "high" lifts one out of the world of the everyday. And yet, as with the drug-induced high, from Dionysian rapture there always follows a "coming down" in which, according to Nietzsche, one is overcome by nausea (Ekel). This nausea has a paralyzing effect, producing "an ascetic, will-negating mood." Here Nietzsche makes a famous comparison:

the Dionysian man resembles Hamlet: both have once looked truly into the essence of things, they have gained knowledge, and nausea inhibits action; for their action could not change anything in the eternal nature of things ... insight into the horrible truth outweighs any motive for action, both in Hamlet and in the Dionysian man." (BT 7)

Now, without the comfort of Apollinian veils, this is the moment when the Dionysian man understands the wisdom of Silenus, and also the moment of the saving supplement:

Here, when the danger to the will is greatest, art approaches as a saving sorceress, expert at healing. She alone knows how to turn these nauseous thoughts about the horror or absurdity of existence into notions with which one can live: these are the sublime as the artistic taming of the horrible, and the comic as the artistic
discharge of the nausea of the absurd. The satyr chorus of the dithyramb is the saving deed of Greek art. *(BT 7)*

Thus, for Nietzsche, the Greeks of the tragic age had art so as not to perish of the Dionysian truth. If there is a discordance here between art and truth, it does not imply a denial of truth. If this truth is conceived metaphysically, as a thing-in-itself, or as a presence that could be unveiled, made present, Nietzsche’s thinking of Dionysian music would easily be assimilated into Schopenhauer’s metaphysics, in which music discloses the horrible truth of the contradictory essence of the Will. Sallis resists such assimilation by thinking this Dionysian truth as an abysmal truth which already is in excess of metaphysics.¹⁴⁴

There is no question that Nietzsche’s thinking departs from Schopenhauer insofar as he thinks of art, not as leading to tragic resignation, but as that which makes life possible, once the Apollinian veils are torn and the horrible truth is known. How is it that tragedy approaches as the saving sorceress? How can music, through the satyr chorus, be the saving deed of Greek art? As Sallis’s reading suggests, it is a matter of crossing the mimesis of Dionysian music with a certain Apollinian mimesis. It is a matter, first of all, of bringing forth the figure of Dionysus, which Dionysian music cannot do without an Apollinian reshining. It is a matter, then, of the shining of the mask of tragedy.
The Birth and Death of Tragedy

Nietzsche considers a tragic figure, the figure of Oedipus, that most sorrowful figure of the Greek stage. According to Nietzsche, Sophocles understood Oedipus "as the noble human being who, is destined to error and misery in spite of his wisdom, but who eventually, through his monstrous suffering, spreads a magical power full of blessings that remains effective even beyond his passing" (BT 9). In *Oedipus Rex* Oedipus is renowned for his wisdom, which enabled him to solve riddle of the sphinx and save the city of Thebes. Yet this wisdom would not be able to keep him from falling into the utmost errancy, the violation of the natural order, the order which determines the very generation of individuals. For Nietzsche it is this very wisdom that propelled Oedipus unknowing into that errancy:

> It is this knowledge that I find expressed in that horrible triad of Oedipus' destinies: the same man who solves the riddle of nature—that double-specied (*doppelgearteten*) Sphinx—must also break the most sacred natural orders by murdering his father and marrying his mother. (BT 9).

Oedipus's wisdom is thus a Dionysian wisdom. Oedipus is the Dionysian man who gained insight into the horrible truth and is thus destined to monstrous suffering. Nevertheless, the figure that most intrigues Nietzsche is not the young king of *Oedipus Rex* but the old and blinded suffering man of *Oedipus at Colonus*. What strikes Nietzsche about this figure is the "superterrestrial serenity" and "infinite transfiguration" which descends upon him as from the gods. How is it that Oedipus's suffering is transfigured?
This question leads to the question of the essence of tragedy. Yet, as Sallis subtly notes, this question will have to be posed carefully if one is not to take sides with Socrates and thus not hear what would be sung in tragedy. The question "will have to be also unsaid from the moment it is posed," which requires a "certain writing under erasure." What can be said is "that tragedy is not what the aestheticians say it is."\textsuperscript{145} It is not, according to Nietzsche, "the struggle of the hero with fate" nor "the triumph of the moral world order" nor the catharsis of Aristotle (\textit{BT} 22). What is said—Sallis turns again to the crucial passage—is that tragedy, like all art for Nietzsche, is a supplement. But, this time Sallis marks that it is not simply said, Nietzsche's assertion is held in a "certain suspension": "That life is really so tragic would least of all explain the origin of an art form; \textit{if indeed} art is not merely imitation of the reality of nature but rather a metaphysical supplement of the reality of nature, placed beside it for its overcoming" (\textit{BT} 24, emphasis added). Sallis thus concludes: "Let it be said, then, in the same way—that is, also unsaid—that tragedy is a mimetic supplement of the reality of nature."\textsuperscript{146} Or, perhaps it would be permitted to add: what is said will have to be said in that (at)tempting tone Nietzsche later attributes to the philosophers of the future.

Nietzsche's analysis suggests that the origin of tragedy can be traced back to a crossing of the Dionysian resounding excess, which manifests without images the abyss, and a certain Apollinian reshining. It is "in and through this crossing," Sallis indicates, that "Apollinian images come to reflect music and the Dionysian
abyss manifest therein." This crossing, he continues "opens and structures the space of tragedy." This crossing was already in operation, according to Nietzsche, in ancient lyric poetry, of which the most important feature was the union of lyrist and musician. As already noted, the lyrist, as Dionysian artist, lets resound a music that is an imageless manifestation of the abyss. But when this Dionysian music is crossed with an Apollinian shining in lyric poetry, music becomes visible:

now, however, under the Apollinian dream inspiration, this music reveals itself to him as symbolic dream image (gleichnisartigen Traumbilde). That imageless and ungraspable reshining of primal pain in music with its redemption in shining (Schein), now produces a second mirroring as a specific symbol (Gleichnis) or example. (BT 5).

Lyric poetry might then be understood as a metaphor of Dionysian music. Through lyric poetry the imageless Dionysian resounding is enabled to shine forth in images.

Nietzsche also saw an earlier crossing of Dionysian mimesis with Apollinian mimesis in folk song, which brings out another feature that will be important in his thinking of tragedy. The folk song is regarded as "a musical mirror of the world, as the original melody, which seeks for itself a parallel dream phenomenon and expresses it in poetry" (BT 6). Nietzsche thus emphasizes the primacy of melody. Hence, in the poetry of the folk song, music does not imitate the images called up in language; rather it is language that is strained to its utmost so that it may imitate the music. Lyric poetry is thus "dependent on the spirit of music." Nietzsche goes so far as to say that music "does not need the image and the
concept, but merely endures them as accompaniments" (BT 6). Thus the poems of the lyrist can express nothing that does not already lie hidden in the music. The images called up in language mirror the music by presenting an example or symbol of that which is without images, that which is unpresentable, withdrawn from presence. This marks a certain operation of silence in Nietzsche's discourse, a silence made necessary by the limitations of language:

Language can never adequately render the cosmic symbolism of music because music stands in symbolic relation to the primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the primal one, and therefore symbolizes a sphere which is beyond and prior to all phenomena. Rather, all phenomena, compared with it, are merely symbols (Gleichnis); hence language, as the organ and symbol of phenomena, can never by any means disclose the innermost heart of music; language in its attempt to imitate it, can only be in superficial contact with music; while all the eloquence of lyric poetry cannot bring the deepest significance of the latter one step nearer to us. (BT 6).

It becomes clear why Nietzsche later felt he should have sung rather than spoken—or at least spoken as a poet. Nietzsche establishes here a hierarchy among the symbolic languages, in which music occupies the privileged position. The philosophical language of concepts is the least adequate, as concepts, mere metaphors of metaphors, are thrice removed from the Dionysian truth. Once again, insofar as Nietzsche speaks of a hidden nature of things which music is most suited to express, the language of his text slides back toward the metaphysical.

In directing the way through the labyrinth to the origin of tragedy, Nietzsche points first to the satyr chorus. The images that formerly came forth in the words of the poet now come to be presented as the scene played out on the
proscenium, while the poet, as Dionysian artist, now becomes the chorus. Thus, Sallis demarcates the space of tragedy as that "opened between scene and chorus." Following the structure of mimesis outlined in lyric poetry and the folk song, the scene in which images are projected is generated from the choral song. Nietzsche even considers the chorus the musical womb of tragedy (BT 8), rejecting the view of Schlegel who regarded the chorus as the "ideal spectator." For Nietzsche, the chorus had a far more generative role than that of a spectator. Tragedy becomes more than chorus when the scene comes forth from the musical womb. Delivered from this womb and presented on the stage are images which, as images, operate within an Apollinian mimesis. The monstrous crossing of Dionysian and Apollinian mimesis is thus enacted with the birthing of Apollinian images from the Dionysian womb. These images are, in turn, images of the Dionysian chorus itself. This is why the stage hero is none other than the enigmatic Dionysus, why all the celebrated figures of the Greek stage are masks of Dionysus. One might even say there is a double masking in play. The actor wearing the mask of the tragic hero is, in turn, a mask of Dionysus.

Nietzsche also discusses what might be called the (anti)metaphysical significance of what is delivered from the Dionysian womb. At first, he commends Schiller's insight that the chorus is "the living wall that tragedy constructs around itself in order to close itself off from the world of reality" (BT 7). This would be an essentially romantic insight, closing off the aesthetic in an isolated realm. What Nietzsche finds valuable, however, is not the isolation of an aesthetic realm from
reality, but rather the creation of a fictitious realm in which the question of the relationship between fiction and reality would be suspended.

It is indeed an "ideal" domain, as Schiller correctly perceived, in which the Greek satyr chorus, the chorus of primitive tragedy, was wont to dwell. . . . For this chorus the Greek built up the scaffolding of a fictitious natural state and on it placed fictitious natural beings. On this foundation tragedy developed and so, of course, it could dispense from the beginning with a painstaking portrayal of reality. (BT 7).

This realm, Nietzsche further notes, has the same reality as Olympus, that is, it has the same reality of all projection of Apollinian shining. Moreover, as with all Apollinian shining, this fictitious realm "represents reality more truthfully" (BT 8). The "sphere of poetry," Nietzsche continues, is not an isolated aesthetic realm, it "does not lie outside the world as fantastic impossibility;" but rather can be considered "the unvarnished expression of the truth." He draws then a contrast between this "truth" and the "lie of culture" in which the tension in his language, in twisting away from the axis of metaphysics, is conspicuous:

The contrast between this real truth of nature and the lie of culture that poses as if it were the only reality is similar to that between the eternal core of things, the thing-in-itself, and the whole world of shining (Erscheinungswelt): just as tragedy, with its metaphysical comfort, points to the eternal life of this core of existence which abides through the perpetual destruction (Untergänge) of the shining (Erscheinungen), the symbolism of the satyr chorus in its simile (Gleichnis) proclaims this primordial relationship between the thing-in-itself and shining. (BT 8).

Here, once again, there would be no question of a massive assimilation to Schopenhauer and metaphysics if "this real truth of nature" is thought as ground and not abyss. If this "truth" is recognized as abyss, the lie of culture is a lie
because it poses as the only reality, because it has not been recognized that "reality" is but a shining out from the abyss, a projection of Schein which has only an abysmal ground. If the "truth" entails a recognition of the reality of shine, the proclamation of the primordial relationship between Dionysian truth and Apollinian shining displaces the metaphysical opposition between "thing-in-itself" and "mere appearance, the "true world" and the apparent one."

Finally, it should also be mentioned, as Sallis points out, that "the chorus can give birth to tragedy, to the scene, only by being the site of another mimesis, a Dionysian mimesis." The chorus is the site of a self-transformation, the transformation into a satyr, a transformation that is mimetic of that Dionysian movement of excess that is ecstasy. Nietzsche calls it the "dramatic proto-phenomenon: "to see oneself transformed before one's own eyes and to begin to act as if one had actually entered into another body, another character" (BT 8).

Such magic transformation is the presupposition of all dramatic art. In this magic transformation the Dionysian reveler sees himself as a satyr, and as satyr, in turn, he sees the god, which means that in his metamorphosis he beholds another vision outside himself, as the Apollinian complement of his own state. With this new vision the drama is complete. (BT 8).

What is peculiar about this feature of tragedy, at least from a modern perspective, is that for the Greeks there was no opposition between the public and chorus. Thus, the tragedy is "a great sublime chorus of dancing and singing satyrs or of those who permit themselves to be represented by such satyrs" (BT 8).

In order to produce this "great sublime chorus" the figure of Dionysus had to at first become visible. Nietzsche notes that in the oldest period of tragedy
Dionysus was not actually present; he was in the chorus merely imagined, which is why tragedy was only "chorus" and not yet "drama." Tragic drama arose in the attempt to portray the god as real, "to represent the visionary figure together with its transfiguring frame as something visible for every eye" \((BT 8)\). The task of the chorus was to excite the listeners, to move them into that Dionysian excess, so that when "the tragic hero appeared on the stage, they did not see the awkwardly masked human being but rather a visionary figure, born as it were from their own ecstasy" \((BT 8)\). The task was to make Dionysus appear through the mask.

Tragedy brings forth from the choral womb a mimetic double, the mask of Dionysus. Through this second mirroring the figure of Dionysus shines, disclosing the abyss to those in Dionysian ecstasy. But how is this disclosure of the abyss such that the ecstatic revelers are not nauseated upon the return to everyday consciousness? How is the satyr chorus the saving deed of Greek art? How, in bringing forth the figure of Dionysus, does tragedy supplement the reality of nature—that is, the Dionysian abyss—in such a manner as to bring about an overcoming of the nausea experienced with the knowledge of the abysmal truth? Does the overcoming involve sealing off the abyss like, as Sallis asks, "an abandoned mine or cave?" Or, he continues, "does one come, in the moment of tragedy, to be suspended over the abyss? Does one come to stand, trembling, at its edge?" These questions move closer to that which, Sallis writes—under erasure—"might be called the essence of tragedy."\(^{151}\)
One might start by saying that tragic disclosure leaves one comforted. On the one hand, Nietzsche writes that the most immediate effect of Dionysian tragedy was the feeling of unity that follows in the wake of the nullification of the individual in the presence of the satyr chorus.

The metaphysical comfort—with which, I am suggesting even now, every true tragedy leaves us—that life is at the bottom of things, despite all the changes of appearances, indestructibly powerful and pleasurable—this comfort appears in incarnate clarity in the chorus of satyrs, a chorus of natural beings who live ineradicable, as it were, behind all civilization and remain eternally the same, despite the changes of generation and of the history of nations.

With this chorus the profound Hellene, uniquely susceptible to the tenderest and deepest suffering, comforts himself, having looked boldly right into the terrible destructiveness of so-called world history as well as the cruelty of nature, and being in danger of longing for a Buddhistic negation of the will. Art saves him, and through art—life. (BT 7)

Nietzsche later rejected emphatically the notion of metaphysical comfort (BT SC 7). Metaphysical comfort would follow from a sealing off of the abyss, withdrawing it from sight. Nevertheless, the tenor of this passage, despite the metaphysical language, contrasts sharply with the resignation, the "Buddhistic negation of will," which Schopenhauer regarded as the effect of tragedy. Nietzsche's insistence that life, despite its abysmal character, is "indestructibly powerful and pleasurable" points toward an affirmative valuation.

How can the disclosure of the abyss achieved in tragedy lead to such affirmation of life? The key is that the saving sorceress knows how to turn nauseous thoughts about the horror of existence into notions with which one can live: the sublime as the artistic taming of the horrible. How does tragedy disclose
the abyss as sublime? Sallis turns to one key sentence in order to decipher tragedy’s saving deed:

Tragedy is seated in the midst of this excess (Überflusses) of life, suffering and joy, in sublime ecstasy (Entzückung), listening to a distant melancholy song that tells of the mothers of being whose names are: delusion, will, woe. (BT 20)

This sentence connects up a number of points in Sallis’ analysis of Nietzsche’s discourse on tragedy. First there is the sublime ecstasy, that mimetic disclosure of the abyss as sublime, in which tragedy is seated. Tragedy is also seated in an excess of life, which Sallis interprets to be that abyss into which one is thrown in exceeding the bounds of individuality and everyday consciousness. Listening to a song, tragedy is born from music, from the Dionysian chorus which imitates, through music, the abyss.

Sallis focuses on two crucial indications. First, there is the description of the song as a distant one. Tragedy listens to the melancholy song from a distance. Secondly, there is the change in language, the substitution for Übermass, with its negative connotation of excessive, which earlier Nietzsche had used to describe Dionysian excess, with Überfluss, which has the positive aspect of superabundance. How in listening to the distant melancholy song does tragedy disclose life in its superabundance?

The distance refers to the function of Apollinian mimesis. It is an effect of the Apollinian mask. Nietzsche makes a curious analogy when he compares the shining of the Apollinian mask to the image spots that temporarily blind one upon
gazing at the sun, except that here the "sun" is the dark abyss, and the image spots are the bright shining images:

Conversely, the bright image projections (Lichbildersecheinungen) of the Sophoclean hero—in short the Apollinian aspect of the mask—are necessary effects of a glance into the inside and terrors of nature; as it were, luminous spots to cure eyes damaged by gruesome night. (BT 9).

A little further on, Nietzsche, referring still to Sophocles, remarks that "the poet's whole conception is nothing but precisely that bright image which healing nature projects before us after a glance into the abyss" (BT 9). Nietzsche's analogy suggests that what is healing in tragedy is the projection of Schein, of shining images. These images, however, would not be purely Apollinian veils which would cover over and seal off the abyss. They would, on the contrary, be recognized as artistic projections against an abysmal ground. These images, then, allow the abyss, that which cannot be made present, to become, in a sense, visible.¹⁵²

Nevertheless, it still remains to be asked, what is it that is transfigured in the disclosure of the abyss as sublime? Once more the crucial passage in which Nietzsche discloses the "essence" of art, this time with a decisive coda:

That life is really so tragic would least of all explain the origin of an art form; if indeed art is not merely imitation of the reality of nature but rather a metaphysical supplement of the reality of nature, placed beside it for its overcoming. The tragic myth, too, insofar as it belongs to art at all, participates fully in this metaphysical intention of art to transfigure. But what does it transfigure when it presents the world of shine (Erscheinungswelt) in the image of the suffering hero? Least of all the "reality" of this world of shine, for it says to us: "Look there! Look closely! This is your life, this is the hand on the clock of your existence." (BT 24)
It is the participants in the drama who are transfigured, all transformed into that great sublime chorus of dancing and singing satyrs. Through the mask of suffering Oedipus the abysmal mask of Dionysus shines forth, allowing the chorus, in its Dionysian ecstasy, a glance into the abyss. Yet, because of the peculiar feature of this strange mask with its transfiguring gaze, disclosing the abyss as the sublime, the ecstatic chorus is transformed into the transfigured figure of Oedipus. Life, at the bottom of things, remains tragic. The abyss remains abyss. As long as there is art, however, as long as there is the ecstasy that wells up and overflows in the creative drive toward the projection of Schein, then life is still worth living and can be joyously affirmed in its superabundance. This might explain how existence is justified as an aesthetic phenomenon such that "even the ugly and disharmonic are seen as part of an artistic game that the will in the eternal amplitude of pleasure plays with itself" (BT 24). Nietzsche’s thinking of tragedy suggests then one interpretation of the remark that "we have art lest we perish of the truth": as long as there is art, one can live with the (Dionysian) truth.

According to Nietzsche, tragedy died by suicide, when Euripides, himself only a mask of Socrates, drove first Dionysus and then Apollo from the stage. Greek tragedy was wrecked on the opposition between Dionysus and Socrates. The Bacchae, Nietzsche tells us, may have been Euripides’s recantation, but the temple of tragedy was already in ruins. Euripides had already struck the mortal blow in reconstituting tragedy on elements that lay outside the only two art drives:
"cool, practical thoughts—replacing Apollinian contemplation—and fiery affects—replacing Dionysian ecstasies (Entzückungen)" (BT 12). In submitting tragedy to the Socratic demand for intelligibility, Euripides was the poet of aesthetic Socratism, which, as the counterpart of the Socratic dictum that "knowledge is virtue" holds that "to be beautiful everything must be intelligible."

Whereas in tragedy there is an acknowledgement of the abysmal character of existence, an acceptance of unsurmountable contradictions, the theoretical optimism of Socratism denies such contradictions in declaring contradiction to be mere appearance. In adopting this theoretical optimism, the belief that reality in its ground is both good and intelligible, that existence is fathomable through reason, Euripides withdrew tragedy from the abyss. For, the "cyclops eye" of Socrates—despite his wisdom he would have been unable to unriddle the double-specied Sphinx—could not gaze into the Dionysian abyss.

The opposition between tragedy and Socratism allows another sense to Nietzsche's remark that "we have art lest we perish of the truth." In Socratism, truth understood as "unlimited uncovering" denies the enigmatic depth in life that tragedy affirms. If life is inherently contradictory and ambiguous, the will to truth in the sense conceived by theoretical optimism would be a denial of life, a will to death. This is the sense in which Taminiaux suggests that the further development of Nietzsche's thought amounts to progressively radical meditations on the discovery in The Birth of Tragedy that "we have art lest we perish of the truth."

Thus, if the Greeks of the tragic age had art in order not to perish as a result of
their knowledge of the Dionysian truth, Taminiaux concludes, "we, in the modern age, have art for not dying with the type of truth which was claimed by Socrates and Plato, transmitted to the Christian age of faith and metaphysics, and still preserved today in the modern age of science."  

The "naked truth" of Socratism is, for Nietzsche, a profound illusion. And yet the will to truth as unlimited uncovering uncovers its own illusion, and leads Socratism to its limit:

the unshakable faith that thought, using the thread of causality, can penetrate the deepest abysses of being (*Abgründe des Seins*), and that thought is capable not only of knowing being but even of correcting it. This sublime metaphysical illusion accompanies science as an instinct and leads science again and again to its limits at which it must turn into *art*. (*BT* 15)

The question to which this dissertation must now turn in the chapters that follow concerns just what happens at that limit. What is the relation between Socratism and the tragedy that is reborn? What is to be understood by the figure of the music-practicing Socrates?
CHAPTER 4
EVERY WORD A MASK

The Labyrinth

In the writings of a hermit one always hears something of the echo of desolate regions, something of the whispered tones and the furtive look of solitude; in his strongest words, even in his cry, there still vibrates a new and dangerous kind of silence—of burying something in silence. When a man has been sitting alone with his soul in confidential discord and discourse, year in and year out, day and night; when in his cave—it may be a labyrinth or a gold mine—he has become a cave bear or a treasure digger or a treasure guard and dragon; then even his concepts eventually acquire a peculiar twilight color, an odor just as much of depth as of must, something incommunicable and recalcitrant that blows at every passerby like a chill.

The hermit does not believe that any philosopher—assuming that every philosopher was first of all a hermit—ever expressed his real and ultimate opinions in books: does one not write books precisely to conceal what one harbors? Indeed, he will doubt whether a philosopher could possibly have "ultimate and real" opinions, whether behind every one of his caves there is not, must not be, another deeper cave—a more comprehensive, stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abysmally deep ground behind every ground, under every attempt to furnish "grounds." Every philosophy is a foreground philosophy—that is a hermit's judgment:

"There is something arbitrary in his stopping here to look back and look around, in his not digging deeper here but laying his spade aside; there is something suspicious about it." Every philosophy also conceals a philosophy; every opinion is also a hideout, every word also a mask. (BGE 289)

It seems almost impossible to respond to this with anything other than silence.

What, indeed, can be heard at all in the writings of a philosopher if every word is a mask concealing something buried in silence? The specter of Nietzsche's masks, the multiplicity of masks that he wears in his writings as well as the importance of the metaphor of masks in his understanding of language, continues to gaze hauntingly upon contemporary controversies concerning interpretation, from questions of literary criticism to metaphilosophical debates concerning rationality. Here, a hermit, one of Nietzsche's favorite personae, tells us that an interpreter must be a spelunker, an explorer of the labyrinthine caves of the philosopher's
texts. The reader who listens to this hermit must be suspicious of anything taken at face value; he must learn to see the surface ground as only a mask, as something which does not fully make itself present. The mask serves then as a warning not to stop at the surface, an invitation to look below the surface, to tear away the mask. But what is revealed in such unmasking if behind every one of the philosopher's caves there is yet another deeper cave? Crucial to understanding Nietzsche's metaphor of the mask is the realization that there is no true face behind the mask waiting to be made present by such unveiling. It is not as if the surface is denigrated as mere appearance concealing ultimate reality somewhere in the depths beneath the skin. If truth were understood as correspondence to what is ultimate and real, as jewels firmly embedded in the "ground," then in Nietzsche's cave a seeker of truth will only find continual deferment of his quest. No such jewels await discovery as even every ground gives way beneath the seeker's feet. There is no ground, no true face, no presence behind Nietzsche's masks to be revealed—what is "present" is only a mask, a mask with hollow, cavernous eyes, concealing only a certain absence, a vacuous cavern concealing ever deeper caves, a mask over a mask over a mask ....

How is one to read the writings of a hermit who writes precisely to conceal? In what sense is interpretation even possible if there is something incommunicable in what is written? More than anything else, it is this "hermit's judgment" that every word is a mask that makes Nietzsche the masked philosopher. One never knows how to take Nietzsche, even here, where one
wonders what has been concealed. Any interpreter attempting to make sense of Nietzsche must explain in what sense interpretation is at all possible if every philosopher is first of all a hermit dissimulating in masks.

This hermit's judgment certainly would suggest a radicalization of the notion of interpretation and the most radical version of perspectivism. This perspectivism entails that there can be no fidelity to an original text in interpretation because all texts signify in more than one way. Since every philosophy is a foreground, since there is something arbitrary in just where the treasure digger lays his spade, this notion of the text seems to suggest that the ways in which a text signifies is determined by the perspective of the reader. Not only does Nietzsche wear many masks in the sense that he speaks through various personae and writes in multifarious styles, he also seems to suggest here that, since interpretation is a matter selecting from a particular perspective, it is the reader who completes the writing, the reader who puts on the mask of signification. Thus, there can be no question of a correct interpretation, of an accurate representation—there can only be competing interpretations drawn from different perspectives. If every word is a mask reading and writing are caught up in a never ending masquerade. The text becomes a labyrinth from which there is no escape.

Nietzsche's hermit's judgment could be read as a prelude to Derrida's well-known and controversial inscription: *il n'y a pas de hors-texte* (There is nothing outside of the text). The recognition that every word is a mask could be
considered a metaphorical expression for the recognition of the metaphorical character, or what Paul De Man has referred to as the "figurality" or "rhetoricity" of language. 157

The recognition that every word is a mask would seem to suggest no alternative but to take up Nietzsche's temptation to take the writings of a philosopher as art and not truth. Derrida reads Nietzsche as the figure who radicalized "the concepts of interpretation, perspective, evaluation, difference," a figure who then "far from remaining simply (with Hegel and as Heidegger wished) within metaphysics, contributed a great deal to the liberation of the signifier from its dependence or derivation with respect to the logos and the related concept of truth or the primary signified."158

The notion that every word is a mask might be traced back to Nietzsche's early (1870-75) views on language, both in The Birth of Tragedy and the unpublished Philosophenbuch—especially its essay "On Truth and Lie in the Extramoral Sense."159 For De Man, the recognition of the rhetoricity of language, a central theme of the entire Philosophenbuch, leads to the "necessary subversion of truth."160 On this reading Nietzsche's early consideration of language leads to a critique of the traditional accounts of truth and knowledge, and thus already involves a deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence.

But then, since it may be traced back to these early writings, the question might arise as to whether the notion that every word is a mask, and its subversion of truth, is a carry-over from an early, immature position Nietzsche would later
abandon. Would the remark be merely another dispensable hyperbole, a rhetorical strategy useful in the deconstruction of metaphysics, but no longer necessary or even sensible once the opposition between the true and apparent worlds is abolished? Or, to the contrary, might the notion that every word is a mask proscribe a way in which texts must be read if one it to avoid being caught up in the fable of metaphysics?

One could begin to trace the notion that every word is a mask back to The Birth of Tragedy by recalling that what comes forth on the stage of Greek tragedy, through the coupling of Apollinian and Dionysian art forces, is not Dionysus but only a mask. If one were to revert to the Schopenhauerian language of the text and think of Dionysus as the hidden essence of nature, the Will behind the Apollinian veils of representation, it is clear that Dionysus is never made present, but rather comes forth only through a second Apollinian shining, a shining as symbol (Gleichnis) or as metaphor, that is, as mask. As Dionysus is the figure that disrupts all identity and coming to presence, there is no identity, no presence behind the mask that could be unmasked. If what comes forth in language is similarly such a mask, a metaphor that could no longer be referred to a proper, literal truth, there would be no access to anything behind the mask, there would be nothing outside the text.

Still there is much to suggest that it is precisely the treatment of language in The Birth of Tragedy where the text most recoils around the axis of a metaphysics of presence. As Michel Haar points out, Nietzsche's treatment of
language seems to repeat the most ancient alternative: words are either adequate to *nomos*, that is, to the conventions of human society, or they are adequate to *phusis*, to nature, or being (the view Socrates expresses in *The Cratylus*).\(^{161}\)

Nietzsche clearly denies that there is a natural relation between words and things, and thus seems to hold a basically nominalistic view that words are but signs arbitrarily chosen. Although he denies that language can provide any access to the hidden nature of things, he clearly (at his most Schopenhauerian) thinks that music can. In marking the limitations of language with respect to music, *The Birth of Tragedy* seems to be firmly drawn within the orbit of metaphysics, inextricably "logocentric" or, as De Man puts it, "melocentric."\(^{162}\) Whereas music, as the original melody of the world, stands in symbolic relation to the primal one, the hidden essence, language is only the symbol of phenomena, and as such, cannot disclose the innermost heart of music. *The Birth of Tragedy* thus inscribes a hierarchy among the symbolic languages in which music, as the privileged art, is the most suited to express the hidden nature of things. What is disclosed in tragedy is always more than can be put in the words of the poet. Since there is no natural relation between words and that which lies behind the veil of phenomena, language can only be considered metaphorical, and as such, inadequate for expressing the hidden essence, the Dionysian truth. This is why, since all we have left of the extant tragedies are the words of the poet, Nietzsche claims that the Dionysian wisdom in tragedy is lost to us (*BT* 17). All the eloquence of the words of the lyric poet, as mere Apollinian metaphors of Dionysian music, cannot
express the deepest significance of the music. The philosophical language of concepts, as metaphors of metaphors, is even further removed from truth, and is thus the most inadequate of the symbolic languages. Thus, as Haar states it, language is founded upon entropy; through the metaphorical transpositions upon which language is founded, there is an irreversible loss of force. This loss could explain why Nietzsche lamented that he should have sung rather than spoken. And then again, it could also explain his lament concerning his written and painted thoughts.

In establishing this hierarchy among the symbolic languages it would seem that Nietzsche has only reversed the Platonic order that determines the distance between science and art. It is for this reason that even those readings which find Nietzsche's mature thought turning at the limit of metaphysics find The Birth of Tragedy inextricably entangled in metaphysics. Kofman, for example, finds Nietzsche's generalization of metaphor in The Birth of Tragedy, where metaphor is considered to be inferior to music, to be bound up in the "closure of metaphysics." And yet, she also finds Nietzsche's treatment of metaphor, in which the conceptual language of philosophy is unmasked as metaphorical, replacing the opposition between metaphor and concept with a difference in degree, to inaugurating a new kind of philosophy that makes deliberate use of metaphor, a philosophy that risks being confused with poetry. Still, since Nietzsche continues, in her reading, to think of a hidden nature to things, something hidden behind the mask of metaphor, The Birth of Tragedy would not escape the closure.
De Man, on the other hand, submits *The Birth of Tragedy* to a rhetorical reading in which the text deconstructs its own melocentrism. As in Sallis' reading, the metaphysical assumption that there is a hidden nature to things is already called into question. If all truth is on the side of Dionysus, if music is capable of expressing the thing-in-itself behind the Apollinian veils, why the need for the Apollinian, for metaphorical appearance, for the projection of *Schein*? The thinking of the Dionysian as abysmal truth already displaces the opposition of truth and appearance, sending the text sliding toward the limit where Socratism turns into art. Metaphor would no longer be referred to a proper truth. The mask as metaphor of metaphor would no longer conceal a hidden reality. The mask might then be considered an enigmatic *undecidable*, a metaphorical inscription. The recognition that every word is a mask, a recognition of the figuraiity of language, in De Man's account, leads to the deconstruction of the hierarchical opposition between the literal, conceptual language of philosophy and the figural, metaphorical language of literature or poetry. The twisting free would begin with the recognition that every word is a mask.

In contrast to *The Birth of Tragedy* this recognition is considered, in De Man's reading, central to "On Truth and Lie." As with *The Birth of Tragedy*, the essay could be read as a means of access to the startling and unsettling remark *we have art lest we perish of the truth*. Whereas the book reaches this conclusion through a narration of the birth and death of tragedy that tells the story of the contest between Socrates and the tragic poets, the essay is thought to lead to this
conclusion through a recognition of the figurality of language. And yet the essay has also been described as the closest Nietzsche ever came to a sustained exposition of a "theory of knowledge." Nietzsche would seem to assume, then, a connection between a "theory of knowledge" and an account of language, an assumption that knowledge is implicitly linguistic (a view which would constitute a break from The Birth of Tragedy insofar as music is considered to provide access to knowledge of the hidden essence of things). This assumption enables Nietzsche to advance a critique of knowledge based on an account of language. One could say that it is this critique that has had the greatest influence on postmodern thought. Michel Foucault indicates this influence in contending that Nietzsche was "the first to reconcile the philosophical task with a radical reflection on language."

According to this analysis, at the origin of knowledge lies the artistic drive for metaphor formation. This drive is asserted in the essay to be the fundamental human drive. It might be considered so because it is, first of all, the fundamental drive of life or of nature. This would mark another link with The Birth of Tragedy insofar as the fundamental human drive is an artistic drive and an art-drive of life herself. What Nietzsche refers to in "On Truth and Lie" as the drive for metaphor formation might then be considered a preview of what he will later refer to as the will to power. This would also suggest why (one of the key insights of Heidegger's analysis) the will to power must be explicated in terms of art.
The controversial and seemingly paradoxical claim that "truths are illusions" is derived, according to the deconstructionist analysis, from the assertion that the origin of knowledge can be traced back to this fundamentally artistic drive toward the production of metaphor. Truths are illusions, first of all, because knowledge is a product of this fundamentally artistic drive, a drive not toward representation, but toward dissimulation—a projection of Schein. Truths are illusions then, insofar as it is recognized that there is no opposition between the literal and figural, insofar as it is recognized that all language is metaphorical, that "every word is a mask." The recognition of the metaphorical character of language necessitates the displacing of the representational model of language with a rhetorical model. This "shakes the linguistic foundations of philosophy" in undermining both the correspondence theory of truth and the referential theory of meaning. In affirming the necessity of this artistic dissimulation at the origin of language, the essay could then be considered a preview of the radical perspectivist account of knowledge that affirms the necessity of untruth as a condition of life.

Against this interpretation, Clark argues that "On Truth and Lie" does not anticipate Nietzsche's mature position. She finds the essay to indicate instead the extent to which Nietzsche was still holding on to the metaphysical presuppositions of The Birth of Tragedy. The importance of the essay is thus overestimated because it doesn't do the job the postmodern interpretation takes it to do. The attack on the concept of truth, in her view, does not depend on a theory of language, but rather on the very acceptance of what the radical interpretation takes the essay to
deny: the metaphysical correspondence theory of truth and representational theory of knowledge. From her point of view a denial of both truth and reference which severs the connection between language and reality is a "madness" which "leaves one without a basis for interpreting what anyone says or writes."

The wide divergence between these two approaches to the essay is perhaps understandable in that, here and throughout Nietzsche's later writings as well, two different conceptions of truth and knowledge are in play. Nietzsche often plays off these two conceptions against each other, sometimes using them both in the same sentence. To begin with, Nietzsche assumes, and thinks of science as presupposing, a literal correspondence theory of truth and representational model of knowledge. A number of passages from the Philosophenbuch characterize science, or what he had referred to in The Birth of Tragedy as Socratism, as being driven by an uncontrolled knowledge drive. Whereas the philosophers of the tragic age were masters of the knowledge drive, this mastery was lost after Socrates unleashed the drive for truth as unlimited uncovering, the drive for the naked truth (P 31). The critique of the uncontrolled knowledge drive is then a plea for decency or modesty: "The unselective knowledge drive (Erkenntnistrieb) resembles the indiscriminate sexual drive—signs of vulgarity! (P 21). In notes attached to "On Truth and Lie" a profound illusion is unveiled which turns this drive for truth against itself. It is revealed that "there is no drive toward knowledge and truth" after all, "but merely a drive toward belief in truth" (TL 180). Since there can be no pure knowledge, there could be no pure
knowledge drive. But when the drive toward belief in truth and pure knowledge finally recognizes that "truth cannot be recognized" then "everything which is knowable is illusion (Schein)" (TL 187). When the drive for truth uncovers its own illusion, when it uncovers the truth that truth cannot be unveiled, then skepticism results—the beginning of the final form of nihilism. In this context, the claim that "truths are illusions" is initially a response to and thus dependent upon the traditional model of truth and knowledge that Nietzsche takes science (Socratism) to be founded upon. If truth, understood by science, is determined as correct description of the thing-in-itself, then the knowledge claimed by science cannot be true, and is thus illusory. Likewise, the claim that knowledge is founded upon dissimulation, assumes a representational model of knowledge, but only in order to critique it. Nietzsche’s critique amounts to pointing out that what we take to be knowledge falls short of this standard of descriptive accuracy.

The general mood of these early notebooks, however, is that philosophy must move beyond this critique of knowledge and thus beyond skepticism. The way beyond this nihilism is through a turn to art, a turn back to philosophy as it was in the tragic age of the Greeks before Socrates unleashed the uncontrolled knowledge drive. In another passage from the Philosophenbuch the "philosopher of desperate knowledge" driven to "knowledge at any price" and thus absorbed in "blind science" is contrasted with a different sort of philosopher:

*The philosopher of tragic knowledge.* He masters the uncontrolled knowledge drive (den entfesselten Wissenstrieb), though not by means of a new metaphysics. He establishes no new faith. He considers it tragic that the ground of metaphysics
has been withdrawn, and he will never permit himself to be satisfied with the motley whirling game of the sciences. He cultivates a new life; he returns to art its rights. (P 36)

For Nietzsche this "tragic philosopher" has moved beyond skepticism. Through art philosophy returns to the mastery of the knowledge drive and science:

The mastery of science occurs now only by means of art. . . . How enormous is the task, and how worthy of it art is! It must create everything anew and, all by itself, it must give birth anew to life. The Greeks show us what art is capable of. If we did not have them, our faith would be chimerical. (P 39)

The constant theme of these notes and in the essay "On Truth and Lie" is that this mastery of life, this step beyond skepticism, involves the affirmation of art as illusion (both Illusion and Schein). Thus, the last philosopher "demonstrates the necessity of illusion (Illusion), of art, and of that art which rules over life" (P 38). Philosophy must "emphasize the relativity and anthropomorphic character of all knowledge, as well as the all pervasive ruling power of illusion (Illusion)" (P 41). The way beyond skepticism, Nietzsche asserts, "lies not in knowing, but in creating! Our greatness lies in the highest illusion (Schein)" (P 84).

Although Nietzsche begins in these early writings assuming the traditional models of truth and knowledge, gradually, as he turns toward a model of knowledge based on artistic creativity, he moves on to a model in which standards of adequate representation are irrelevant. Here knowledge is considered a creative, active process of continually refashioning a world and truths are "humanly constructed instruments designed to serve human purposes." The question here, in the reading of "On Truth and Lie" which follows, and in the rest
of Nietzsche's later writings, is to what extent does he need the denial of truth, the claim that the will to knowledge is a refinement of the will to ignorance, and the necessity of the illusion of art, as he moves toward the view of knowledge as a creative activity. Does the creative aspect in all knowing necessarily involve falsification? If there is no thing-in-itself, what is it that would be falsified if what is known is constituted by that very knowing?

_Truth and Lie_

Nietzsche begins "On Truth and Lie" by using a perspectivist metaphor in mocking the arrogance of the traditional view of knowledge. Humans are proud of their intellect; they believe that with it they have knowledge of truth, knowledge of the way the world is in itself. Moreover, they believe that only humanity with this intellect has such knowledge. According to Nietzsche the "invention" of such knowledge is "the most arrogant and mendacious minute of 'world history.'" Nietzsche counters by saying that from a larger than human perspective, the human intellect looks rather small, aimless and arbitrary. In this larger perspective, the pride and solemnity with which humans regard knowledge is no different from that of a gnat, flying through the air as if it were the center of the universe. Humans think they have knowledge of the world as it is in itself when all they really have is knowledge of an anthropomorphic world, the world as known from a human perspective.
Yet this deception is useful for detaining human beings awhile longer in existence. This need for deception echoes a particular theme in *The Birth of Tragedy*: there is truth, but she is ugly, terrible to behold, and thus a veil of illusion is necessary. Here the terrible truth is that we have knowledge only of the world from a human perspective, an anthropomorphic world; and the illusion is the belief that our knowledge is a reflection of the way the world actually is. In this sense our "truths" are necessary illusions. This leads Nietzsche to the notion of knowledge as dissimulation:

As a means for the preserving of the individual, the intellect unfolds its principle powers in dissimulation (*Verstellung*), which is the means by which weaker, less robust individuals preserve themselves—since they have been denied the chance to wage the battle for existence with horns or with the sharp teeth of beasts of prey. This art of dissimulation reaches its peak in man. Deception, flattering, lying, deluding, talking behind the back, putting up a false front, living in borrowed splendor, wearing a mask . . . is so much the rule and the law among men that there is almost nothing which is less comprehensible than how an honest and pure drive for truth could have arisen among them. They are deeply immersed in illusions and in dream images; their eyes merely glide over the surface of things and see "forms." Their senses nowhere lead to truth . . . (TL 80)

The play with masking, the connection to dreaming, the concern for the surface, all tie this art of dissimulation unmistakably to the projection of *Schein* in *The Birth of Tragedy*. The question is whether this art of dissimulation signals a departure from the notion of knowledge as representation or rather depends upon that traditional model. Is the rhetoric of dissimulation merely a hyperbole that may be dispensed with once the traditional model of knowledge is abandoned? On the one hand, Nietzsche clearly assumes the traditional notion of truth and knowledge. Since the senses nowhere lead to truth, to things-in-themselves, and
instead merely glide over the surface of things, the intellect is immersed in illusion. The intellect dissimulates or falsifies in that it nowhere leads to knowledge of the thing-in-itself.

On the other hand, Nietzsche introduces another, deeper sense of dissimulation. The intellect unfolds its principle powers in dissimulation because consciousness itself is only a surface phenomenon, only a mask. The greater part of the activity of the intellect takes place beneath the surface and remains hidden from consciousness. Nature herself conceals most things from the human intellect by locking it within a "deceptive consciousness." Nietzsche finds evidence of this deception both in the phenomena of dreams in which "man permits himself to be deceived every night" and in the fact that much of what goes on in the body is necessarily hidden from consciousness. Life itself is steeped in dissimulation for in order to live at all consciousness must be deceived. "And woe to that fatal curiosity which might one day have the power to peer out and down through a crack in the chamber of consciousness" (TL 80).

Nietzsche then turns to the question—a question to which he would continually return in the later writings: "where in the world," given the indispensability for life of this art of dissimulation, "could the drive for truth have come from" (TL 80)? For Nietzsche, the answer is that the will to truth arises as a need for peace, a need to exist socially, a need for some basis of agreement. Of course, if truth is the accurate representation of the thing-in-itself, then agreement would be guaranteed if only truth could be won. But even if there is no such truth
as would guarantee agreement among rational beings, there is still a need for peace. Thus we invent "truths." Or rather, we come to agree. Thus truths are conventions or peace treaties:

This peace treaty brings in its wake something which appears to be the first step toward acquiring that puzzling truth drive: to wit, *that* which shall count as "truth" from now on is established. That is to say, a uniformly valid and binding designation is invented for things, and this legislation of language likewise establishes the first laws of truth. For the contrast between truth and lie arises here for the first time. (*TL 81*)

Nietzsche attempts to demonstrate the conventionality of truth by illustrating the conventionality of language. The liar is someone who "misuses fixed conventions by means of arbitrary substitutions." He says, for example, "I am rich," when the proper designation for his condition would be "poor" (*TL 81*). Traditionally, of course, the *proper* designation is the one that adequately expresses the way things are. Nietzsche, however, questions this conception of language: "What about these linguistic conventions themselves? Are they perhaps products of knowledge themselves? Are designations congruent with things? Is language the adequate expression of all realities?" (*TL 81*). Nietzsche's response suggests that the subversion of truth begins with the recognition of the conventionality of language, the arbitrariness of signs. "The various languages placed side by side show that with words it is never a question of truth, never a question of adequacy of expression; otherwise, there would not be so many languages" (*TL 82*). Since there is no access to the things-in-themselves, no way to determine if language is the adequate expression of reality, Nietzsche suggests that
the proper designation is simply the one agreed upon. It is only by forgetting the conventionality of language, the completely arbitrary designation of signs, Nietzsche continues, that man comes to the audacious and arrogant belief that his knowledge consists of "truths" which are the accurate representation of things-in-themselves. Thus, Nietzsche concludes: "If he will not be satisfied with truth in the form of tautology, that is to say, if he will not be content with empty husks, then he will always exchange truths for illusions" (TL 81). That is, since there is no access to things-in-themselves, he will always accept illusions as truths.

Would the conventionality of language, the mere arbitrariness of signs, necessarily lead to the conclusion that truths are illusions? That we have so many languages, so many words for the same things, would hardly be enough to deny the connection between words and things. The conventionality of language may be a triviality of language from which nothing about truth follows. But then, the subversion of truth does not really begin with the recognition of the conventionality of language. Truths are illusions not simply because they are products of the need for agreement, but because these "peace treaties," or linguistic conventions, fail to meet the standards of adequate representation. How can it be determined, one might ask, that these "truths" fail to correspond if there is no access to the "thing-in-itself?" It would seem that if there were no access one could draw no conclusions as to whether our "truths" represent reality faithfully or are illusory. In any case, the claim that truths are illusions is clearly dependent upon the notion that Nietzsche attempts to subvert: that truths are the adequate
expression of "things-in-themselves." Thus, for Nietzsche, with words it is never a question of truth because "the 'thing-in-itself' (which is precisely what the pure truth, apart from any of its consequences, would be) is likewise something quite incomprehensible to the creator of language and something not in the least worth striving for" (TL 82). The "pure truth" is not worth striving for because language is not a neutral medium of expression, not an instrument of representation. With words the creator of language "only designates the relations of things to humans, and for expressing these relations he lays hold of the boldest metaphors" (TL 82).

This leads Nietzsche to the recognition of the figurality of language:

> It is this way with all of us concerning language: we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things—metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities (TL 82-83)

Thus, truths are illusions because they are nothing more than "a sum of human relations," nothing more than metaphors that are no longer recognized as metaphors, metaphors that are like coins which have been so over-used that their embossing has been effaced, and are thus no longer recognized as coins.

The recognition that with language all we possess are metaphors leads in Nietzsche's discourse to that limit where Socratism turn into art. For the recognition that "every word is a mask" would involve the unmasking of Socratism as itself founded on illusion. The recognition would dispel the illusion that language is like clear glass, a mere transparent window through which a world beyond the pane lies present before the undistorted vision of the philosopher. If
all language is metaphorical, it is rather like dark glass, which allows no penetration of its surface, and which reflects back obliquely the perspective of the viewer. Such a recognition, or confrontation with the mask, would dash the hopes of the "lover of truth" who sought to take possession of his beloved in knowing the world just as it is. Such a confrontation would dispel the illusion that the knower can look through language as if it were not there. It would dawn on the lover that knowledge cannot take place outside of language, and that language is rhetoric, that is to say, not a medium of representation at all, but a means by which a world is artfully constructed. For to recognize that all language is metaphorical is to recognize the artistic drive for metaphor formation at the origin of language and knowledge. If all language is metaphorical the discourse founded on the desire for truth unveiled founders in the wake of the unveiling of this truth: if there is truth, she cannot be unveiled. Language is her adornment.

In the wake of the recognition of the figurality of language philosophy could only proceed as a form of art. For it is in art that the necessity of veils is acknowledged, where illusions are accepted and acknowledged as illusions and not as truths. It is art that makes possible living in Schein. The recognition of the figurality of language thus leads to the turn from an epistemologically centered form of discourse to an (post)aesthetic discourse such as Nietzsche envisioned for a "philosophy of the future." At least this seems to be the general thrust of the postmodern readings.
For those that object to this postmodern turn, the source of their objection can be traced to the claim that all language is metaphorical. Clark, for example, finds this claim difficult to defend. If all language is metaphorical, "metaphor" loses its meaning. We thus need the "literal" for the "metaphorical" to have any sense. The creation and interpretation of metaphors is dependent on the ability to use language non-metaphorically. According to Clark, "I can use language metaphorically only if I use it literally as well." For Derrida, however, the concept of metaphor is itself a preeminently metaphysical concept. The opposition between the literal and the metaphorical or figural is one of the classical metaphysical oppositions, one of the oppositions which follow from the opposition between the "true world" and the world of Schein. Clark and others who object to Nietzsche's claim that all language is metaphorical, seem to understand this claim as a simple inversion of the classical opposition. The postmoderns understand it as a displacing or deconstruction of the opposition. Thus, the reading of "On Truth and Lie" turns critically upon how one interprets the claim that all language is metaphorical.

If Nietzsche's thinking does not take the form of a mere reversal, the opposition of the literal and metaphorical is replaced by a difference in degree. In the metaphysical scheme the metaphorical use of language is considered as a rhetorical embellishment or adornment of philosophical language. Since the use of metaphor always involves a certain loss of meaning, an expenditure without return, the use of the metaphorical is to be restricted and subjected to a rigorous
control. Philosophy must always be able to master its metaphorics, it must be able to unpack its metaphors, to refer what is said through metaphor to a literal expression in which the meaning of what is said can be grounded in a stable presence. But if the literal is already a form of the metaphorical, metaphors which through over-use have been drained of their sensuous force or life, then the dream at the heart of philosophy to master its metaphors, to ground knowledge on a non-metaphorical, literal truth, will always remain unrealizable. If the literal is already a form of the metaphorical then the hierarchy of philosophy over rhetoric cannot be maintained. "On Truth and Lie" is read by Derrida, De Man and others as already calling into question this dream at the heart of philosophy through the recognition that the difference between the literal and metaphorical is only a difference in degree. De Man thus draws the conclusion that "the key to Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics—which has, perhaps misleadingly, been described as a mere reversal of metaphysics or of Plato—lies in the rhetorical model of the trope or, if one prefers to call it that way, in literature as the language most explicitly grounded in rhetoric." One might sum this up in saying that language is rhetoric, and thus, knowledge, as Breazeale concludes, is "founded on operations which are usually dismissed as mere rhetorical tropes."

The process of metaphor formation involves a certain transference or transport, a carrying over, a carrying across or being carried away. Nietzsche's word Übertragen has almost the same etymological meaning as the Greek metaphor which is derived from a verb meaning "to carry over," "to carry across,"
or "to transfer." This movement of transference is not absent from the classical conception of metaphor inherited from Aristotle. To speak metaphorically involves a transference of names, whereas literal speech involves giving the thing a name that properly belongs to it. A name properly belongs if it correctly represents or adequately expresses the thing. This proper relation fixes literal meaning, grounding meaning in a stable origin. Thus the classical opposition between the literal and metaphorical is founded on the metaphysics of presence that underlies the representational model of knowledge. This model presupposes that knowledge is "the adequate expression of an object in a subject." The process of knowing must span the distance between "subject" and "object," "knower" and the "known." It can involve nothing that would stand in the way of, or occlude the sight of the knower. Knowledge is thus conceived as a pure reflection. For Nietzsche, however, if knowledge involves bridging the gap between "subject" and "object" then it bears a closer resemblance to the process of metaphor formation which assumes a "transference" between separate spheres. One could say, as Clark contends, that Nietzsche's use of metaphor here is dependent upon the very representational model of knowledge he is often taken to reject. But the the critique of metaphysics can only take place from within. Nietzsche may thus assume the representational model of knowledge in suggesting that knowledge is "metaphorical;" the issue, however, concerns what happens to this model, and thus to the discourse of philosophy, when the implications of this suggestion are followed out. The consequence Nietzsche draws suggests that the epistemological
discourse that results from the standard of adequation might be displaced by
something of an aesthetic discourse:

But in any case it seems to me that "the correct perception"—which would mean
"the adequate expression of an object in the subject"—is a contradictory
impossibility. For between two absolutely different spheres, as between subject
and object, there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression; there is, at
most, an aesthetic disposition. I mean, a suggestive transference, a stammering
translation into a completely foreign tongue—for which there is required, in any
case, a freely inventive intermediate sphere and mediating force. (TL 86)

The traditional discourse rests upon the assumption that the language of
philosophy can be stripped of rhetorical embellishment revealing the bare
argument expressed in the neutral, non-metaphorical language of concepts. But
for Nietzsche the concept is the result of a triple metaphorical transference. First,
at the level of perception, there is the "purely physiological" transformation of a
nerve stimulus to an image. Then, by a second translation or transformation, the
visual image is transferred into sound (as when a visual image is transported into
sound in saying "leaf"). Finally, the sound ("leaf"), by a third metaphorical
transference, is allowed to stand for an indefinite number of more or less similar
images. Thus, "every concept arises from the equation of unequal things" (TL 83).
We obtain the concept through a certain falsification in which similarities are
highlighted and differences are overlooked.

The point of Nietzsche's analysis is to recognize the artist at the origin of
language. Far from being a neutral medium of expression in which a world
completely independent of human interests and values is disclosed, language
would be the means by which a world is constructed out of those interests and
values through the forging of concepts (identities) from the chaos of sensations. If it is recognized that the conceptual language of philosophy is a product of the drive for metaphor formation, language can no longer be considered a transparent window. Nietzsche’s analysis of the process of metaphor formation in "On Truth and Lie" echoes somewhat the earlier discussion of Apollinian shining: it involves the production of figures, a projection of Schein. Language is not transparent, every word is a mask. In order to resist the assimilation of Nietzsche’s text into metaphysics this shining can no longer be considered in terms of the opposition between truth and appearance. If every word is a mask it is not a mask that could be seen through or pulled down in order to reveal a hidden reality. Because language is an anthropomorphic creation, because it is a projection of Schein, it cannot provide "correct" information about what lies "outside" language. The mask of language discloses only a human world.

In suggesting that with language we possess only metaphors which in no way correspond to original entities, Nietzsche denies the possibility of an extralinguistic reference which could stop the flow of meaning which occurs with metaphor. For De Man, this leads to "a full reversal of the established priorities which traditionally root the authority of language in its adequation to an extralinguistic referent or meaning, rather than in the intralinguistic resources of figures." This leads then to the liberation of the signifier that Derrida credits Nietzsche for having contributed a great deal. Czech president Vaclav Havel may
have best expressed this free play or flow of meaning which makes the word as mask so enigmatic:

... words are a mysterious, ambiguous, ambivalent, and perfidious phenomenon. They are capable of being rays of light in a realm of darkness... They are equally capable of being lethal arrows. Worst of all, at times they can be the one and the other. And even both at once. ... No word—at least not in the rather metaphorical sense I am employing the word "word" here—comprises only the meaning assigned to it by an etymological dictionary. The meaning of every word also reflects the person who utters it, the situation in which it is uttered, and the reason for its utterance. The selfsame word can, at one moment, radiate great hopes, at another, it can emit lethal rays. The selfsame word can be true an one moment and false the next, at one moment illuminating, at another, deceptive. On one occasion it can open up glorious horizons, on another, it can lay down the tracks to an entire archipelago of concentration camps. The selfsame word can at one time be the cornerstone of peace, while at another, machine-gun fire resounds in its every syllable.

Language is like a river in which we are always already immersed, and in which we are ever being carried away. Truths are, after all, metaphors, but metaphors that have become effaced, worn out, metaphors that have lost their metaphorical force: dead metaphors. We have art, then, because truth entails the death of metaphor, and thus the mummification of the text. To take what is said as truth amounts to a form of deception: a belief that there is a stable presence or meaning where there is only flow. In order to keep what is written and painted from perishing as truth one would have to release what is said into the river of metaphor, or rather, to recognize that what is said is always already carried away in this current and in a sense has a life of its own.

The implications of the recognition of the metaphorical character of language were to concern Nietzsche for the rest of his career. In On Truth and Lie Nietzsche turns from this recognition to an indictment of philosophy and
"scientific culture" for the forgetting of the artist, or rather, of the artistic drive for metaphor formation that lies at the origin of language and thus all knowledge.

The Edifice of Knowledge

It is only by forgetting the metaphorical origin of language, that the philosopher's text is accorded the status of truth in the first place. There is thus a double sense in which "truths are illusions." They are illusions insofar as all Schein is illusory, and they are illusions insofar as this illusion is forgotten. The forgetting of metaphor, and thus the "will to truth" (in the sense of correspondence to the "thing-in-itself") has, for Nietzsche, a moral origin: it is made necessary by a social obligation—the need to agree, to exist in a community. Nietzsche comes to the conclusion that all that is meant by being truthful is following linguistic conventions: "to lie with the herd and in a manner binding on everyone" (TL 84). A community requires a language in common. Thus, it is a social constraint which necessitates a recourse to only the most used up, effaced metaphors. This leads Nietzsche to the explication of "truth and lie in an extra-moral sense." If in a moral sense, to be truthful is to lie with the herd in employing the usual metaphors, in an extra-moral sense the one who lies (the one who recognizes that what is said is Schein) speaks the truth.

Nevertheless, Nietzsche hardly suggests that we could do without the edifice of knowledge, and thus the process of conceptualization, the illusion of our "truths." And yet the edifice of knowledge is no longer considered in terms of the
representation of a world that exists apart from a prior to the knower. The process of knowing is considered a means of constructing a human world, a means of facilitating life. The edifice of knowledge is constructed out of the "volatizing" or "dissolving" of the perceptual metaphors into "less colorful, cooler concepts" (TL 84). If metaphor always involves a transference, or transportation, a certain movement or flow, the process of conceptualization involves the congealing or hardening of metaphor. It is only thus that a rigid, stable world can be constructed. This process, by which man "places his behavior under the control of abstractions" is what determines man as rational and as separate from animals. The perceptual metaphors are individual, without equal; and thus they resist classification. Only when these metaphors are volatized into concepts can they become capable of classification, and thus structured according to some order of rank which would make possible a "new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, and clearly marked boundaries" (TL 84).

Nietzsche characterizes the edifice of knowledge with a series of architectural metaphors.185 The pyramidal structure suggest the order of rank, without which the chaos of the "vivid world of first impressions" could not be organized. But since the process of conceptualization involves the hardening, or to change metaphor, the death of metaphor, the edifice of knowledge is also like the "Roman columbarium." It is "catacombed with ordered spaces for its concepts." The edifice of knowledge is built on dead metaphors, concept mummies. The edifice of knowledge is also like the spider's web, and this for two reasons. First,
because the "mighty genius of construction" builds the "infinitely complicated
dome of concepts upon an unstable foundation, and, as it were, on running water"
(TL 85). The edifice of knowledge must be built on flowing water, that is to say,
on the river of metaphor, the river which always threatens to carry one away. Thus
the construction must be like a spider's web: delicate and strong. The edifice of
knowledge is also like a spider's web because the human "must raise himself far
above the bee." Whereas the bee builds with wax gathered from nature, the
human world is constructed with the web-like conceptual material which, as with
the spider's web, must be manufactured from within.

The "genius of construction" (the knower), Nietzsche acknowledges, is to be
greatly admired, "but not on account of his drive for truth or for pure knowledge
of things" (TL 85). One is not to be praised for discovering what one has only
made up. The implication is that he is to be admired for his artistic and
architectural achievement. For truths are "thoroughly anthropomorphic;" they
contain nothing which would be "true in itself" or "universally valid apart from
man" (TL 86). The investigator of truths seeks only to understand a human world.
Nietzsche will go so far as to say that the entire universe is thus like the "infinitely
fractured echo of one original sound—man" (TL 86). It is only by forgetting that
the original perceptual metaphors are metaphors that man could believe that he
has knowledge of things-in-themselves. Nietzsche seems to suggest the necessity of
this forgetting of the primitive world of metaphor: "only in believing that this sun,
this window, this table is truth in itself, in short, only by forgetting that he himself
is an *artistically creating* subject, does man live with any repose, security, and consistency* (TL 86).

Nietzsche’s entire text, however, seems directed toward recalling this forgetfulness, and thus towards recognizing the artist at the origin of knowledge—while acknowledging that it is the need for security which leads to the necessity of forgetting metaphor. Nietzsche thus turns to one more architectural metaphor. The edifice of knowledge that is constructed on this forgetfulness, provides security alright, but it is the security of "prison walls." Now knowledge is like prison walls one has constructed around oneself and then thrown away the key. If one ever tried to escape one’s "self-consciousness" would be destroyed. Yet, Nietzsche’s project seems directed toward just such an escape.

The edifice of knowledge constructed by science is built on the catacombs of metaphor. With this "columbarium of concepts, the graveyard of perceptions" the "entire empirical world, which is to say, the anthropomorphic world" is organized in order to provide what security is obtainable within the flux of becoming (TL 88). In order to live at all in this world of constant change the "man of action builds his life to reason and its concepts so that he will not be swept away and lost" (BT 88). Science is thus a means of providing shelter. And yet, this "monstrously towering framework" that is science is constructed on flowing water, that is, on concepts that are really only metaphors that are no longer recognized as metaphors. Thus, even if science proceeds constructing its shelter under the illusion that its "truths" actually correspond to the essence of
things and that its knowledge is thus established on firm foundations, the river of metaphor always threatens to tear apart the conceptual web and carry one away. But even if science should be aware of the river and thus cognizant of its contingent foundations, why should science not be able to proceed indefinitely constructing its towering bulwarks? Nietzsche's answer is that the drive to metaphor formation is even more fundamental than the drive for security:

The drive to formation of metaphors is the fundamental human drive, which one cannot for a single instant dispense with in thought, for one would thereby dispense with man himself. This drive is not truly vanquished and scarcely subdued by the fact that a regular and rigid new world is constructed as its prison from its own ephemeral products, the concepts. It seeks a new realm and another channel for its activity, and it finds this in myth and in art generally. (TL 88-89)

To put this in the language of Nietzsche's later writings, the empirical world, the world which science is continually shaping through its interpretations, is always interpretable otherwise. In Nietzsche's analysis here, it is myth and art which precede science in opening up new channels, providing different sites for science to erect its columbariums. In the traditional account of science, the need for continual renewal or paradigm shifts is thought to be the result of the need to get things right, to proceed by trial and error until the correct account is obtained.

But for Nietzsche there is no "correct" account for the world is always already an anthropomorphic world. The paradigm shifts that take place are the result of a fresh artistic "intuition" in which the world, the anthropomorphic world, is no longer what it once was. The result of such shifts is that the world of waking
reality (the empirical world) begins to seem much more like a dream (a projection of Schein—another echo of The Birth of Tragedy):

This drive continually confuses the conceptual categories and cells by bringing forward new transferences, metaphors, and metonymies. It continually manifests an ardent desire to refashion the world which presents itself to waking man, so that it will be as colorful, irregular, lacking in results and coherence, charming, and eternally new as the world of dreams. Indeed, it is only by means of the rigid and regular web of concepts that the waking man clearly sees that he is awake; and it precisely because of this that he sometimes thinks that he must be dreaming when this web of concepts is torn by art. (TL 89)

The drive to tear the conceptual webs spun by science is characterized by Nietzsche not as a drive to finally achieve the correct description, a drive to truth, but on the contrary, as a drive toward illusion. Thus, for a mythically inspired people—like the ancient Greeks, "all of nature swarms around man as if it were nothing but a masquerade of the gods, who were merely amusing themselves by deceiving men in all these shapes" (TL 89). The conceptual edifice of knowledge, itself an illusion formed on the basis of the forgetting of the primary world of metaphor, is continually constructed and deconstructed because of the artistic drive toward metaphor formation, a drive toward the projection of Schein, a drive toward illusion. As this is the fundamental human drive "man has invincible inclination to allow himself to be deceived" . . . he is "enchanted with happiness when the rhapsodist tells him epic fables as if they were true" (TL 89).

Nietzsche closes the essay with a couple of contrasts that echo the contrast posed between the "philosopher of desperate knowledge" and the "philosopher of tragic knowledge." In the first, the "needy man," for whom the edifice of
knowledge is a shelter and a means for preservation, is contrasted with the "liberated intellect" who is able to use the conceptual framework as "nothing but a scaffolding and toy" (TL 90). The liberated intellect plays with knowledge. The characterization of this free intellect suggests a preview of the "free spirit" of the later writings who takes up the versucherische play with knowledge. Here the free intellect in its play with knowledge "smashes this framework to pieces" then "puts it back together in ironic fashion" (TL 90). The liberated intellect is liberated in that it is no longer constrained to the prison of the established conceptual framework; it is thus guided not by concepts but by intuition. For these intuitions there is no word. One either grows silent, or "speaks only in forbidden metaphors and in unheard of combination of concepts" (TL 90). In order to enter into this play outside the established conceptual framework, one must let oneself be swept away in the river of metaphor.

In the contrast between the "intuitive man" who lets himself be swept away and the "rational man" who guides his life by abstractions, the rational and artistic are opposed. Both desire to rule over life; but the rational man attempts to rule by attending to his security and thus clings to the conceptual web, while the artist disregards these needs in "counting as real only that life which has been disguised as illusion (Schein) and beauty" (TL 90). For Nietzsche, it is only when the intuitive wins out against the rational that a culture can take shape. Then, "art's mastery over life can be established" (TL 90).
The writings in the *Philosophenbuch*, as well as *The Birth of Tragedy* which preceded it, seem as if they could have been written as meditations upon the scintillating remark from Nietzsche's last notebook that we have *art* lest we perish of the truth. The discordance between art and truth is all the more conspicuous in "On Truth and Lie" since art and truth, on first hand, do not seem to be in opposition. Insofar as truth is regarded as a product of the drive for metaphor formation, and thus as a projection of *Schein*, it is a form of art. The discordance begins, and we have art lest we perish of the truth, when it has been forgotten that truths are illusions (*Schein*). It might seem at first, however, that we have truth so as not to perish of art. For at first Nietzsche suggests the necessity of forgetting (thus we have truth) so as not to be swept away in the river of metaphor (lest we perish of art). But here, "truth" would be a form of art (illusion, *Schein*) and "art" a form of truth (the Dionysian truth that would lift the veil from the fundamental drive). Thus, once again, we have "art" (the illusion of our truths) lest we perish of truth (the knowledge of the artistic drive toward dissimulation at the origin of knowledge). But then, Nietzsche's text seems directed toward remembering what has been forgotten, and lifting the veil of illusion from the pure knowledge drive, revealing the artistic origin of knowledge. For the general conclusion of Nietzsche's early critique of science and the uncontrolled knowledge drive is that the towering columbariums that are the products of this drive are inevitably destructive of life—even if they are erected in order to provide some security in life. They are destructive insofar as they are built on the illusion that
knowledge actually represents the way things are apart from our human—all too human perspectives. In short, science is destructive of life if it is founded on the illusion that the edifice rests on a foundation of truth. Thus, again, it might seem as if we have truth (the unveiling) so as not to perish of art (the illusion of pure knowledge). But here the truth (the unveiling) is really art (the drive for metaphor formation that is unveiled), and art (the illusion) is taken as truth (by metaphysicians). Thus, once again, we have art (the drive for metaphor, the projection of Schein) lest we perish of the truth (dead metaphor). The play between truth and lie, or truth and art, in Nietzsche’s text is not a simple reversal. De Man characterizes the structure of this play, the crossing of truth/art/art/truth, which he finds in Nietzsche’s writings from the Philosophenbuch to the late notebooks, as an example of the cross-shaped reversal of properties rhetoricians refer to as the chiasmus. According to De Man, "the very process of deconstruction, as it functions in this text, is one more such reversal that repeats the selfsame rhetorical structure."

Finally, there is this note, another of the drafts attached to "On Truth and Lie" which might be considered another version of the "astonishing preview" of Nietzsche’s final attempt at twisting free of metaphysics and overcoming nihilism through art: "art treats illusion (Schein) as illusion (Schein); therefore it does not wish to deceive; it is true" (TL 184). What happens at the end of the "History of an Error" after the opposition between the "true world" and the scheinbare world is abolished? Would living in shine no longer involve illusion, does Schein lose its
illusory quality when it is treated as Schein? Is art no longer in discordance with
truth? If the philosophers of the future are to be lovers of truth, for Nietzsche, it
will be a truth that is recognized as Schein. But what is truth that is Schein
recognized as Schein? What are they, after all, Nietzsche's written and painted
thoughts?
CHAPTER 5
THE TRAGIC PHILOSOPHER

Art, Life, Woman

And as for our future, one will hardly find us again on the paths of those Egyptian youths who endanger temples by night, embrace statues, and want by all means to unveil, uncover, and put into a bright light whatever is kept concealed for good reasons. No, this bad taste, this will to truth, to "truth at any price," this youthful madness in the love of truth have lost their charm for us: for that we are too experienced, too serious, too merry, too burned, too profound ... We no longer believe that truth remains truth when the veils are withdrawn; we have lived too much to believe this. Today we consider it a matter of decency not to wish to see everything naked, or to be present at everything, or to understand and "know" everything.

"Is it true that God is present everywhere?" a little girl asked her mother; "I think that's indecent"—a hint for philosophers! One should have more respect for the modesty with which nature has hidden behind riddles and iridescent uncertainties. Perhaps truth is a woman who has reasons for not letting us see her reasons? Perhaps her name is—to speak Greek—Baubo?

Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearance (Schein), to believe in forms, tones, words, in the whole Olympus of appearances (Olymp des Scheins). Those Greeks were superficial—out of profundity. And is not this precisely what we are again coming back to, we daredevils of the spirit who have climbed the highest and most dangerous peak of present thought and looked around from up there—we who have looked down from there? Are we not, precisely in this respect, Greeks? Adorers of forms, of tones, of words? And therefore—artists?

Oh, those Greeks! In this closing to the preface to the second edition of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche looks backward in looking toward the future, back to the Greeks of the tragic age, and back to his early writings that foretold of a rebirth of tragedy, a centauric crossing of philosophy and art, the advent of a tragic philosopher who cultivates a new life in returning to art its rights. Those free spirits, daredevil attempters and tempters whom he envisions as the philosophers of the future, will be like those Greeks because they will be artists. They will be artists because they know how to live. They will have discovered the secret to life,
for they will no longer look beyond, above or beneath the surface of appearance—they will have learned to "live in shine," to adore in all forms, tones, and words, the shining of Schein. For they would no longer believe in a truth without veils, a truth that lies beneath the surface of appearance, a truth that would stand in opposition to the projection of Schein. They will be artists, then, because they will have recognized that truth is a woman, and they will have learned how to approach her, this woman-truth. That is, they will know that, like Dionysus, she is never unmasked. They will have left behind the Egypticism of philosophy, the desire for eternal lifeless truths, for truths that may be unveiled and made fully present for the appropriation of philosophers. Thus, they will have gotten over that youthful madness in the love of truth that Nietzsche had inscribed under the name of Socratism, and for which he had blamed the death of tragedy.

The resonance of the call for a "philosopher-artist" or "tragic philosopher" in the early writings, both in The Birth of Tragedy and the Philosophenbuch, in this 1886 summons to a philosophy of the future is quite audible. But what would such resonance indicate? Would the resonance be merely a lingering echo of an "artists metaphysics" that Nietzsche would eventually abandon as he attempts the final overturning of metaphysics? If Nietzsche had abandoned the "falsification thesis" along with its denial of truth in those late writings which counter the "lie of millennia" with new "truths," then it seems he would have left behind this vision of the philosophers of the future. Yet in those last days before his collapse Nietzsche
closes *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, a short collection of previously published material, with a reprise of this invocation to a philosophy of the future. There may indeed be a question of how much weight to ascribe to this reprise, but all the same, it should not be overlooked that—even as he is engaged, according to Heidegger, in the final attempt at twisting free of metaphysics—Nietzsche returns to this vision of the philosophers of the future. This resonance with the early writings, with the return to the Greeks of the tragic age and a tragic philosophy that refuses to look beyond the shining of *Schein*, might then suggest that one has not learned how to approach Nietzsche’s "truths" as long as one does not understand that he writes as an artist, as one who recognizes that his "truths" are nothing other than the projection of *Schein*. But then, in what sense would living in *Schein* still involve falsification and illusion and the denial of truth? In what sense would such a philosopher of the future still love truth? And what happens to the raging discordance between art and truth? Will the philosopher of the future still stand in holy dread before this discordance, and if so what would that indicate? These are the questions that need to be confronted in considering the development of Nietzsche’s thought, and in considering the question of whether or not Nietzsche’s countermovement succeeds in overcoming nihilism, the question of whether or not the countermovement twists free or only falls back into that which it would attempt to leave behind. These questions draw one further into the labyrinth.

Before proceeding further into this labyrinth, some further preliminary consideration of these questions might be permitted. Early in his confrontation
with the raging discordance between art and truth in Nietzsche, Heidegger characterizes Nietzsche's thinking as "perpetual reversal (ständiges Umkehren)." Thus, for Heidegger, we can think through the problem of the raging discordance only through this reversal: "Nietzsche's statement—truth is error, error truth—can be grasped only in terms of his fundamental position in opposition to all Western philosophy since Plato. There is really no question that the emphasis on art as falsification, illusion, the lie—all the dissimulating play with Schein—is a response to Platonism and its system of oppositions that begin with the opposition between truth and appearance. There is no question then that the turn towards art and the denial of truth depends upon the traditional conceptions of knowledge and truth that Nietzsche attempts to undermine. If "truth" is understood by the metaphysicians in terms of correspondence to the "true world," and knowledge is considered purely a matter of discovery with no role for the creativity of an artist, and art is consigned to the realm of Schein, a realm of lies and illusions, then Nietzsche, in order to overturn Platonism, will characterize the philosophers of the future as artists who have learned to live in Schein. The question here in Nietzsche's case, with the philosophers of the future, is whether the affirmation of art proceeds in the manner of a mere reversal. Once the philosophers of the future have left behind the Egypticism of the metaphysicians, once one has finally abandoned the metaphysical conceptions of truth and knowledge, what would be the point of affirming the necessity of falsification, the need for artistic dissimulation, for the denial of truth?
Of course, the philosophers of the future with whom Nietzsche so identifies
do not exactly deny truth. They only claim that they no longer believe "that truth
remains truth when the veils are withdrawn." They understand, then, that truth is
a woman. Once again, as with the rhetoric of artistic dissimulation, there is no
question that the supposition that truth is a woman is a response to and thus
dependent upon the traditional, metaphysical understanding of truth. The
supposition strikes at the heart of the philosophical discourse. What is it to be a
lover of wisdom? What is the relationship between the philosopher and the
beloved of philosophy? Beginning with the second epoch of "The History of an
Error" the relationship might be characterized as an unrequited love.

"Socratism"—for Nietzsche early and late—is a desire for the possession of a truth
without veils, a desire for unlimited uncovering, a desire to bring to full presence
under the bright light of the sun that which lies behind the veils of appearance.

With the possession of such truths the edifice of knowledge could be built on the
firmest foundation of certainty. Nature could be fathomed by reason. In the early
writings Nietzsche characterized the drive for knowledge of truth unveiled as a
vulgarity, and in The Birth of Tragedy this theoretical optimism was blamed for the
death of tragedy. In the 1886 prefaces Nietzsche continues to think of philosophy
and science as heirs of this Socratism; and he continues to criticize this
uncontrolled drive for the naked truth as an affront to feminine modesty. The
consequence of this vulgarity is the arrogance of science, the belief that knowledge
is an accurate reflection of the way things are apart from our human—all too human—perspectives.

But the drive for the truth unveiled undermines itself, it leads to a place where its optimism suffers shipwreck, it leads to skepticism—to the Kantian contribution to "The History of an Error." The drive for pure knowledge only uncovers its own illusion. Thus, as in the preface to Beyond Good and Evil, the suitors of truth are left standing around all dispirited and dejected. These dogmatic philosophers, those driven by the drive for "unlimited uncovering" are "awkward, bumbling oafs" because they "have been very inexpert about women."

The maladroitness of these love-sick suitors is manifest in their approach to truth: "standing truth on her head and denying perspective, the basic condition of all life" (BGE P). To think of a truth without veils, a truth independent of perspectives, is then not only an indecency, but a denial of life—for "there would be no life at all if not on the basis of perspective estimates and appearances" (BGE 34). We need art, living in shine, in order not to perish of the truth that would deny perspective and thus deny life. We need art in order not to perish of the destructive consequences of the arrogance of science, of the drive for "truth at any price."

And yet also, we need art in order not to perish of the skeptical consequences of the drive for truth unveiled, the nihilism that follows upon the realization that the woman-truth will not allow herself to be won.

There is an ambivalence, as Sarah Kofman has pointed out, in the attitude of the metaphysicians towards truth: "they wish to see and strip away all veils, but
they also fear to see." The reason they fear to see, however, is revealed in the
name Nietzsche alludes to in referring to the woman-truth. The
name—Baubo—further reveals the indecency of the drive for truth unveiled, and
furthermore indicates the link between the woman-truth and Dionysus. It is a
name for what the metaphysicians most fear: truth would be revealed not as a
presence but a certain absence, not ground but abyss. In contrast to the
theoretical optimism of Socratism, for Nietzsche, "reality," "nature," or "life" is
unfathomable, always hidden behind riddles and iridescent uncertainties. Life, like
truth, is also woman, and this, Nietzsche suggests, is perhaps "the most powerful
charm of life: it is covered by a veil interwoven with gold, a veil of beautiful
possibilities, sparkling with promise, resistance, bashfulness, mockery, pity, and
seduction. Yes, life is a woman" (GS 339).

This powerful charm of woman presents a deadly problem for the lover of
truth. The abysmal truth that life is a woman dashes the dream, the foolish hopes
of unveiling truth that lies at the heart of philosophy. Just after citing this passage,
Derrida draws this conclusion for the philosopher-knight:

But, on the other hand, the credulous and dogmatic philosopher who believes in
the truth that is woman, who believes in truth just as he believes in woman, this
philosopher has understood nothing. He has understood nothing of truth, nor
anything of woman. Because, indeed, if woman is truth, she at least knows that
there is no truth, that truth has no place here and that no one has a place for
truth. And she is woman precisely because she herself does not believe in truth
itself, because she does not believe in what she is, in what she is believed to be, in
what she thus is not. In its maneuvers distance strips the lady of her identity and
unseats the philosopher-knight.
In "The History of an Error" this leads from skepticism to the final stages of nihilism—where "life itself has become a problem" (GS P, 3). As in The Birth of Tragedy, the Dionysian insight into the abysmal truth, the truth of woman, can lead to nausea and the denial of life. This is then perhaps the most important sense in which "we have art lest we perish of the truth." The philosophers of the future are artists precisely because they have gained insight into the abysmal truth, because they have recognized life and truth as woman. In what sense, however, are the philosophers of the future artists? In what sense might we have art at all?

The drama of Zarathustra revolves around Zarathustra’s attempts to affirm life after having gained this Dionysian insight. When Zarathustra first looks into life’s eyes he finds himself sinking into the unfathomable (Z II, "The Dancing Song"). He has yet to find the means to say yes to life, to look into her eyes—to gaze into the unfathomable—without perishing. Zarathustra is not able to look again into her eyes until he has divined her secret, until he has been able to call up the thought of thoughts—the eternal recurrence. Only then Zarathustra is able to love life. In the review of The Birth of Tragedy in Ecce Homo the masked philosopher provides more testimony as to who he is by proclaiming the right to understand himself as the first tragic philosopher. To explain this Nietzsche refers to the end of Twilight of the Idols:

Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to life rejoicing over its own inexhaustibility even in the very sacrifice of its highest types—that is what I called Dionysian, that is what I guessed to be the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not in order to be liberated from terror and pity, not in order to purge oneself of a dangerous affect by its vehement
discharge—Aristotle understood it that way—but in order to be oneself the eternal joy of becoming, beyond all terror and pity—that joy which included even joy in destroying.

And herewith I again touch that point from which I once went forth: The Birth of Tragedy was my first revaluation of all values. Herewith I again stand on the soil out of which my intention, my ability grows—I, the last disciple of the philosopher Dionysus—I, the teacher of the eternal recurrence. (TI X, 5)

In contrast to the theoretical optimism of Socratism, which denies life in denying its abysmal depth, the tragic philosopher affirms life with the teaching of eternal recurrence. Nietzsche invested the greatest importance to this teaching, referring to it in Ecce Homo as the "highest formula of affirmation that is at all attainable" (EH "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," 1). But what sort of teaching is this strange doctrine? If the countermovement of nihilism is art, then perhaps this affirmation of eternal return should be thought together with Nietzsche's thinking on art.

For the Greeks of the tragic age, as well as for the philosophers of the future the secret to life is in stopping courageously at the surface, to adore the shining of Schein. Still, even if this vision of the philosophy of the future might be characterized as Nietzsche's "last testament," the question still remains as to whether this vision leads further into or out of nihilism. Does the turn to art only turn deeper into modernity's crisis, or is it precisely because Nietzsche already writes as such a philosopher of the future that he is able to look back from the perspective of a "post-modern" upon modernity and its crisis as the "first perfect nihilist" who has lived through the whole of nihilism and left it behind? And finally, it still remains to think through just what this vision of the philosophy of
the future is. How is the turn to art to be thought if it is not to be taken as a modernist aestheticism, or a mere reversal of Platonism? This question turns, of course, on what happens with the raging discordance between art and truth. What sort of discourse is a philosophy that has gotten over the youthful madness in the love of truth? In what sense would these artist-philosophers who have overcome the lovesickness of philosophy still love truth?

Nietzsche's vision of a philosophy of the future certainly suggests a radically different sort of discourse from what has traditionally been considered philosophical—at least since the death of tragedy and the beginning of Socratism. Most strikingly, there is the difference in style, a decisive difference in regards to the question of style. Traditionally, when philosophy is conceived as the unveiling of truth, and the discourse of philosophy takes the form of the unfolding of dialectic, style is mere surface. The philosopher, indeed, can dispense with style, insofar as the point is to get to the bottom of things, the argument, the chain of dialectic that would lead to the unveiling of truth. Even more, the philosopher should dispense with style, insofar as style is mere surface, and thus tends to obscure or veil, and hence falsify what is to be revealed in the depths. Style, then, veils truth. Style is a mask. The philosophical discourse should not involve the veiling dissimulation of the mask, but should aim at unmasking, at making things clear. The style of these dogmatic philosophers, the style which would dispense with the "question of style," the masculine style which seeks possession of the woman-truth, breaks down before the "enigmatic feminity of truth."

In contrast
to these bumbling oafs, Nietzsche's style(s), Derrida suggests, "uses its spur as a means of protection against the terrifying, blinding, mortal threat (of that) which presents itself, which obstinately thrusts itself into view: presence, then, the content, the thing itself, meaning, truth—unless it should not already be the abyss deflowered in all its unveiling of the difference." In stopping at the surface, however, Nietzsche's philosophers of the future no longer dispense with style. No longer would it be possible to separate style as mere surface, mere ornament, from the content of thought—for truth, Nietzsche suggests, cannot be unveiled, cannot be stripped of style. In looking forward to an artistic philosophy of the future Nietzsche anticipates the end of philosophy as a straightforward argumentative discourse aimed at the disclosure of truth. As projection of Schein, the discourse of this philosophy of the future would be marked by that ambiguous disclosure that is characteristic of all shining, of all dreaming.

What happens at the end of "The History of an Error?" Finally free of metaphysics, with a different conception of truth and knowledge, might Nietzsche have no more reason to fear his written and painted thoughts becoming truths? Twisting free of metaphysics, of the opposition between the "true world" and the world of Schein, might Nietzsche have no more need for art as a countermovement to nihilism, for art as the projection of Schein? How is it that Nietzsche can even characterize this history as an "error" without at least implicitly claiming to be "in truth"? Would it not indicate—when at the end of his career Nietzsche condemns Christianity as the "art of the holy lie" (A 44) for making "of
every truth a lie" (A 62)—that Nietzsche finally abandoned that vision of a
philosophy of the future as art, as projection of Schein, which had been so vital a
theme in his writings since the possibility was first raised of an artistic Socrates in
The Birth of Tragedy?

This new hybrid discourse involves a coupling of a drive for art and a drive
for truth that seems as monstrous as that crossing of the Apollinian and Dionysian
art-drives that produced Greek tragedy. This interpretation of Nietzsche's
philosophy of the future thus involves more of a continuity with or echo of The
Birth of Tragedy than Nietzsche's mature thought is generally thought to have.
Something of this new crossing and of the versucherische quality of Nietzsche's
"truths" is indicated in another of the 1886 prefaces, the one affixed to Human, All
Too Human.

In this preface Nietzsche offers a few tips to the reader about his writings.
None of them is to be trusted. All of them "contain snares and nets for unwary
birds." Here Nietzsche acknowledges that nothing is perhaps so characteristic of
his writings than "a persistent invitation to overturn habitual evaluations." Instead
of attempting to teach "truth" Nietzsche constantly strives for some perspective by
which to call into question the unquestioned. His writings are thus "a schooling in
suspicion" from which the reader often emerges "not a little tempted (versucht)
and emboldened . . . to play the advocate of the worst things." Nietzsche thus
plays the role not merely of a "devil's advocate" but an "indicter of God."
How this stance differs from that of the philosopher who claims to have truths to teach, or who, devoted to truth, aims to lead the reader through dialectic to a point of agreement. Such philosophers, one assumes, want to be trusted. They assume this trust in a mutual devotion to truth. One assumes upon the part of these authors a certain "good will" to want to be understood. When one reads the texts of these philosophers one is always trying to determine if one follows the argument, if one agrees with the author. One hardly ever questions whether or not the author really wants the assent of the reader. With Nietzsche’s experimental temptations it is never clear whether or not the author wants our assent. To begin with, if every word is a mask, and all interpretation an artistic projection, a projection of Schein, the very possibility of assent is called into question. If there is no thing-in-itself, no text that is not already a product of interpretation, no "true Nietzsche" behind his many masks, then one cannot read Nietzsche with the typical "good will" and trust with which one usually reads a philosopher. As attempts and temptations Nietzsche’s teachings need to be read with some degree of suspicion.

But must one give up completely the good will to understand one another? Must one question even the most unquestioned assumptions? A little further along in this preface Nietzsche acknowledges that such profound suspicion may not be healthy. Such suspicion leads into the desert of nihilism. In order to recover from the consequences of this suspicion, Nietzsche asserts the necessity of the convalescence granted by art:
where I could not find what I needed, I had to artificially to enforce (erzwingen), falsify (zurechtfälschen) and invent a suitable fiction for myself (zurechtstichten mussie) (—and what else have poets ever done? and to what end does art exist in the world at all?). What I again needed was... a blindness in concert with another without suspicion or question-marks, a pleasure in foregrounds, surfaces, things close and closest, in everything possessing color, skin, and appartmentality. Perhaps in this regard I might be reproached with having employed a certain amount of 'art', a certain amount of false-coinage... (HAB P 1)

Although he no longer refers to the drive toward the projection of such illusions as Apollinian, the Apollinian trait of art as veil is unmistakable.

Moreover, as with all Apollinian veils, there is a pathological or problematic aspect. Nietzsche admits that through this art he was blinded before Schopenhauer, deceived by Wagner's romanticism, by the Greeks, and the Germans and their future. One would think that now having recognized having been led astray in the past by this tendency to "invent fictions" that he might learn from this "error" and begin sticking to the "truth." But instead Nietzsche asserts the necessity of this artistic falsification:

Supposing, however, that all this were true and that I was reproached with it with good reason, what do you know, what could you know, of how much cunning in self-preservation, how much reason and higher safeguarding, is contained in such self-deception—or of how much falsity I shall require if I am to continue to permit myself the luxury of my truthfulness?... Enough, I am still living; and life is, after all, not a product of morality: it wants deception, it lives on deception... (HAB P 1)

Here, perhaps there is the beginning of a suggestion of a resolution of the discord between art and truth. Nietzsche's "truthfulness" requires falsification. The artistic projection of Schein no longer opposed to the drive for truth but somehow required by it.
At this point Nietzsche admits that the "free spirits" with whom he so often identifies in describing the philosophers of the future—"we free spirits"—are themselves the product of this artistic drive toward falsification. They were needed as "companions with whom one can laugh." (One is reminded of the near total solitude and lack of companions of Nietzsche's last years.) Nietzsche then describes the paths of these coming "free spirits" which leads into and out of nihilism. The first step requires the perilous questioning and profound suspicion that leads into the desert of nihilism:

Can all values not be turned round? and is good perhaps evil? and God only an invention and finesse of the Devil? Is everything perhaps in the last resort false? And if we are deceived, are we not for that very reason also deceivers? must we not be deceivers?—such thoughts as these lead and seduce him, even further away, even further down. (HAH P 3)

From here it is a long way from "the desert of these years of attempts and temptations (Versuchs-Jahre)" to the "superfluity (Überschuss) of formative, curative, molding and restorative powers which is precisely the sign of "great health." Among the signs of this great health Nietzsche describes a "freedom of the spirit" which "permits access to many and contradictory modes of thought."

Furthermore, from the perspective of this great health the years of attempts and temptations would not seem as a desert. To the contrary, the great health is a "superfluity which grants to the free spirit the dangerous privilege of living experimentally (auf den Versuch) and of being allowed to offer itself to adventure."

Finally, Nietzsche foresees the possibility of the free spirit unriddling "the riddle of the great liberation." Daring at last to ask aloud of this great liberation the free
spirit hears "something like an answer," an answer that commands the free spirit
to attain a certain self-mastery, a mastery over one's "For and Against," a control
over the positing of value. This mastery furthermore involves grasping "the sense
of perspective in every value judgement—the displacement, distortion and merely
apparent (scheinbare) teleology of horizons and whatever else pertains to
perspectivism" (HAH P 6).

This "experimental character" (or das Versucherische) of Nietzsche's thought
is often attributed to the "middle period" of Nietzsche's thought—the period,
roughly, from Human, All Too Human to The Gay Science. It is a period often
characterized by a turn away from the aesthetic concerns of the early period with
its sharp opposition between art (tragedy) and science (Socratism), to a
"positivistic" phase of "psychological observations and experiments" which seems to
betray a certain optimism in science. Attributed to this "middle period" the
experimental or "attempting and tempting" attitude might then be regarded as
something that the mature Nietzsche eventually abandoned, or at least, it might
be regarded as not being very significant to an understanding of the mature
thought. Kaufman's consideration of Versuch in terms of a "scientific experiment"
would only seem to support this view. Heidegger's assessment of this
Versucherische of Nietzsche's thought—that it "means the basic attitude of the new
inquiry that grows out of the countermovement against nihilism"—would suggest
that this "attitude" be taken more seriously, as something that must be thought
intimately together with the countermovement of art. 195
This "experimentalism" is a frequent theme of the paradigmatic middle period work *Dawn of Morning*. Giving up the belief in a "true" world beyond our perspective evaluations, as well as the belief in an immortal soul, has, for Nietzsche, the benefit of liberating our "knowledge" from a great burden. Formerly, under the yoke of these beliefs, there was tremendous pressure to "get it right"—and one didn't have much time, having only one life to determine between a fate of eternal reward or eternal punishment. Under the deadline which mortality imposed, knowledge became gravely serious. There wasn't the time for making experiments with our knowledge, constrained as it was by the requirement of proceeding only in sure, certain steps. After the "death of God," however, knowledge could proceed with a much more lighter step, we could afford to make experiments with our knowledge, we could afford the risk of error:

We have reconquered our courage for error, for experimentation (*Versuchung*), for accepting provisionally—none of it is so very important! and it is for precisely this reason that individuals and generations can now fix their eyes on tasks of a vastness that would to earlier ages have seemed madness and a trifling with Heaven and Hell. We may experiment (*experimentieren*) with ourselves! Yes, mankind now has a right to do that! (*D* 453)

The opening section, a passage entitled "The meaning of our cheerfulness," of Book Five of *The Gay Science* (a fairly late work which, coming in October 1886 after *Beyond Good and Evil*, can not easily be assimilated into any "middle period") indicates something of how this courage for error, for experimentation, may be important to the countermovement against nihilism. After the death of God, when "some sun seems to have set," when eveningtime announces the
approach of nihilism, Nietzsche raises the question of how he could have
announced "this monstrous logic of terror," and thus how he could be "the prophet
of a gloom and an eclipse of the sun whose like has probably never occurred on
earth." His response suggest that it is that Versucher spirit, that attempter and
tempter that would dare to leave the security of the solid earth for the danger of
the open sea:

Even we born guessers of riddles who are, as it were, waiting on the
mountains, posted between today and tomorrow, stretched in the contradiction
between today and tomorrow, we firstlings and premature births of the coming
century, to whom the shadows that must soon envelop Europe really should have
appeared by now—why is it that even we look forward to the approaching gloom
without any real sense of involvement and above all without any worry and fear
for ourselves? Are we perhaps still too much under the impression of the initial
consequences of this event—and these initial consequences, the consequences for
ourselves, are quite the opposite of what one might perhaps expect: They are not
at all sad and gloomy but rather like a new and scarcely describable kind of light,
happiness, relief, exhilaration, encouragement, dawn.

Indeed, we philosophers and "free spirits" feel, when we hear the news that
"the old god is dead," as if a new dawn shone on us; our heart overflows with
gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation. At long last the horizon appears
free to us again, even if it should not be bright; at long last our ships may venture
out again, venture out to face any danger; all the daring of the lover of knowledge
is permitted again; the sea, our sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet
been such an "open sea." (GS 343)

Now it is perhaps possible to venture forward through the development of
Nietzsche's thought in pursuit of the questions this dissertation set out to address.
Would Nietzsche's philosophers of the future, those who come after "The History
of an Error," after nihilism's long night—those upon whom this new dawn
shines—still stand in holy dread before the raging discordance between art and
truth? In what sense would these artist-philosophers of the future—those who have
overcome "this youthful madness in the love of truth," those who "no longer
believe that truth remains truth when the veils are withdrawn," those who know how to live in shine, in the shining of Schein—still love truth?

_Living in Shine_

Although Nietzsche no longer refers to it as "Apollinian," the theme of art as mask or veil, as a "cult of surfaces" (BGE 59), continues to figure prominently throughout his writings, but certainly most particularly in _The Gay Science_ and _Beyond Good and Evil_. The development of Nietzsche's thinking beyond the early writings seems to move only further in the direction of the dissimulation and masquerade characteristic of art. In _Human, All Too Human_ art is characterized as a veil which "makes the sight of life bearable" (HAH 151). The Homeric Greeks are again distinguished by their art through which they "deliberately and playfully embellish life with lies." Through this art of the lie these Greeks "knew that even misery could become a source of enjoyment" (HAH 154).

And yet, as in _The Birth of Tragedy_, the drive toward the projection of Apollinian illusions is not unproblematic. The dramatist is compared to the plastic artist, painter and sculptor, whose created characters are all surface and skin. And yet, seemingly to the detriment of art, it is this concern for surface and skin which distinguishes art from philosophy: "Plastic art wants to make characters visible on the outside; the art of speech employs the word to the same end, it delineates the character in sounds. Art begins from the natural _ignorance_ of mankind as to his interior... it does not exist for physicists or philosophers" (HAH 160). As
Nietzsche's thinking develops the concern for surface and skin becomes more and more a trait shared by the artist and philosopher.

In *The Gay Science* Nietzsche continues to experiment with the theme of art as a sort of "art of healing" (*Heilkunst*) (*GS* 84). The creation of beautiful illusions make the sight of life bearable by veiling reality or nature. In this sense art is portrayed as a "heroic unnaturalness" (*GS* 80). Echoing *The Birth of Tragedy* these healing veils of illusion are analogous to dreams. In an aphorism entitled "We artists" (*GS* 59), Nietzsche identifies with artists who know how to dream. This tendency to dream links the artist with the religious type, the "worshipers of God of former times." When confronted with the progress of science these religious men found it necessary to ignore nature: "these men of former times knew how to *dream* and did not find it necessary to go to sleep first." That is, they knew how to "live in shine." Nietzsche's critique of Christianity cannot then be made on the basis of the traditional opposition between truth and appearance. Nietzsche cannot present his views as "true" and Christianity as "false." Neither interpretation of the world can be considered true in the sense of adequately representing the world as it is apart from interpretation. Both interpretations have the same "reality" as dream, as projection of *Schein*. If the Christian interpretation is "false" it is only in the sense that it presents itself as correct description. Thus, even though they "know how to dream," they do not know *that* they dream. The crucial thing for Nietzsche here is that it is not as if we had the power to choose between dream and waking reality: "And we men of today still master this art all
too well, despite all of our good will toward the day and staying awake." There is no way out of the projection of Schein, no waking from the dream. It is the dream that overcomes us:

It is quite enough to love, to hate, to desire, simply to feel—and right away the spirit and power of the dream overcome us, and with our eyes open, coldly contemptuous of all danger, we climb up on the most hazardous paths to scale the roofs and spires of fantasy—without any sense of dizziness, as if we had been born to climb, we somnambulists of the day! We artists! We veilers of what is natural (Wir Verhehler der NAturlichkeit)! We are moonstruck and God-struck. We wander, still as death, unwearied, on heights that we do not see as heights but as plains, as our safety. (GS 59)

In recognizing this veiling of "what is natural" it might seem as though Nietzsche acknowledges that nature or reality exists independently of our interpretations, our shining projections. Yet there is no access to such an independently existing world. We have veiled it from ourselves through projections we are compelled to make in order to live. Compelled thus to dream we are all artists whether we like it or not.

Though it seems we have no control over whether or not to dream, we are able to shape the dream. Veiling dissimulation is in this respect an aspect of the process of turning existence into an aesthetic phenomenon, making things beautiful through the spacing of mimesis. Thus Nietzsche suggests, no doubt to the philosophers, "What one should learn from artists":

How can we make things beautiful, attractive, desirable for us when they are not? And I think that in themselves they never are. Here we could learn something from artists who are really continually trying to bring off such inventions and feats. Moving away from things until there is a good deal that one no longer sees and there is much that our eye has to add if we are still to see them at all; or seeing things around a corner and as cut out and framed; or to place them so that
they partially conceal each other and grant us only glimpses of perspectival views; or looking at them through tinted glass or in the light of the sunset; or giving them a surface and skin that is not fully transparent—all this we should learn from artists while being wiser than they are in other matters. For with them this subtle power usually comes to an end where art ends and life begins; but we want to be the poets of our life—first of all in the smallest, most everyday matters. (GS 299)

To be the poets of our lives involves treating life as the aesthetic spectacle that it is. Here again Nietzsche seems to tacitly acknowledge the existence of something independent of our perspectives, something that perspectives are perspectives of. What philosophers have to learn from artists is the art of transfiguration by which things are enhanced, made beautiful, through a shifting of perspectives. What philosophers have to learn is that all knowledge involves seeing things through different frames or perspectives. Such a perspectivism necessarily involves concealment, sometimes inadvertently through the process of selection, but sometimes intentionally, in order to make the sight of life bearable. To be the poets of our lives means extending beyond the realm of art, to the most everyday matters, the artistic process of veiling and embellishment through beautiful illusion, and through this process of dissimulation, enhancement and transfiguration.

It would be hard to miss in all of this the key themes that are carried over from the exposition of the Apollinian in The Birth of Tragedy. The spacing of mimesis—making things beautiful by seeing from a distance—that is operative in Nietzsche's earlier discussion of the Apollinian still comes into play here. Moreover, as in The Birth of Tragedy, the spacing of mimesis is not a falling away
from nature. The projection of Schein, or falsification that is involved in veiling, is an embellishment, an enhancement.

This power to transfigure is especially important with respect to the self. Thus, artists also "should win our gratitude" in that "they have taught us to esteem the hero that is concealed in everyday characters," and perhaps most importantly "the art of viewing ourselves as heroes—from a distance and, as it were, simplified and transfigured" (GS 78). Thus Nietzsche praises the "great and rare art" of "giving style to one's character" (GS 290). This rare art involves making a work of art out of the self:

It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. Here a large mass of second nature has been added; there a piece of original nature has been removed—both times through long practice and daily work at it. Here the ugly that could not be removed is concealed; there it has been reinterpreted and made sublime. . . . For one thing is needful: that a human being should attain satisfaction with himself, whether it be by means of this or that poetry and art; only then is a human being at all tolerable to behold. Whoever is dissatisfied with himself is continually ready for revenge, and we others will be his victims, only by having to endure his ugly sight. For the sight of what is ugly makes one sad and gloomy. (GS 290)

The process of giving style to one's character is like that of a sculptor of clay, adding and subtracting until one arrives at a satisfactory form. Again it seems that Nietzsche recognizes an "original nature;" it is just that it is "seen" only through particular perspectives. Even if knowledge of this "original nature" were possible we would not want it—even more, life would not be possible unless it were removed or concealed. For this "original nature" must be abysmal, it can have no form apart from its appearance. Truth as accurate description of nature

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has then no value. Nietzsche thus mocks the artist who "becomes serious about truth," and thus, despite being an artist, "has the most serious desire for the opposite of mere appearance (Scheinenden)" (GS 88). Thus "our ultimate gratitude to art" is in this "cult of the untrue":

If we had not welcomed the arts and invented this kind of cult of the untrue, then the realization of general untruth and mendaciousness that now comes to us through science—the realization that delusion and error are conditions of human knowledge and sensation—would be utterly unbearable. Honesty would lead to nausea and suicide. But now there is a counterforce against our honesty that helps us to avoid such consequences: art as the good will to appearance (Schein). We do not always keep our eyes from rounding off something and, as it were, finishing the poem; and then it is no longer eternal imperfection that we carry across the river of becoming—then we have the sense of carrying a goddess, and feel proud and childlike as we perform this service. As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still bearable for us, and art furnishes us with eyes and hands and above all the good conscience to be able to turn ourselves into such a phenomenon. At times we need a rest from ourselves by looking upon, by looking down upon, ourselves and, from an artistic distance, laughing over ourselves or weeping over ourselves. We must discover the hero no less than the fool in our passion for knowledge; we must occasionally find pleasure in our folly, or we cannot continue to find pleasure in our wisdom. (GS 107)

Living in shine involves seeing existence as an aesthetic phenomenon, that is, as necessarily veiled in perspectival appearances. To have the good will to the shining of appearance the philosophers of the future would not be so vulgar as to think of unveiling truth. But in what sense would living in shine require joining this "cult of the untrue," in what sense is it necessary to recognize untruth as a condition of life?

The questioning of the value of truth at the outset of Beyond Good and Evil proceeds in the manner of a versucherische experiment in thinking that is clearly acknowledged to be not without considerable risk. What leads Nietzsche to
the supposition that delusion and error are conditions of knowledge? Why should the philosophers of the future become artists and join this cult of the untrue? An important passage from The Gay Science points to the origin of knowledge as the reason for affirming the necessity of untruth as a condition of life. Knowledge is considered to have arisen out of years of experimentation and error; only very late in the development of knowledge did truth emerge as the "weakest form of knowledge." Nietzsche thus asserts that "the strength of knowledge does not depend on its degree of truth but on its age, on the degree to which it has been incorporated, on its character as a condition of life" (GS 110). It is clear that the reason Nietzsche considers truth the weakest form of knowledge is that he still considers truth in terms of the traditional correspondence theory. The strength of knowledge is not determined on the basis of a correspondence to an already completed, independently existing "reality," but rather upon its age, that is, upon how long it has served successfully in aiding the preservation of life. Even if knowledge could be found to correspond to a thing-in-itself, a world completely independent of all interpretation and perspective, this correspondence or "truth" would not be as valuable to us as that knowledge which makes life possible.

"Something might be true," Nietzsche suggests, "while being harmful and dangerous in the highest degree" (BGE 39). Thus, "the falseness of a judgment is not for us necessarily an objection to a judgment. . . The question is to what extent it is life-promoting, life-preserving, species preserving, perhaps even species-cultivating. . . To recognize untruth as the condition of life. . . (BGE 4).
That the strength of knowledge is measured in terms of its utility for life is the basis for considering Nietzsche as moving toward a pragmatic conception of knowledge. But even if Nietzsche regards the strength of knowledge to be a matter of its "value for life," he does not, at least at this stage, regard this as a standard for truth, and thus could hardly be said to have adopted a pragmatic theory of truth. Still, the question remains as to whether the emphasis on the falsification of art, the claim that untruth is a condition of life, is to be thought of as merely a strategy in the deconstruction of a metaphysical conception of truth, and thus something that can be abandoned once one has moved away from the correspondence ideal—or whether in abandoning the notion of the artist engaging in lies and illusion would only be to reinscribe at another level a return to metaphysics. Thus it remains to think through further the turn to art as the cult of surfaces, the insistence on the necessity of artistic falsification, the supposition that the will to knowledge is, not the opposite, but the refinement of the will to ignorance.

Returning to the passage in *The Gay Science* on the origin of knowledge: Nietzsche suggests that falsification enters the picture from a misapprehension of the nature of the knower. Thus, for example, the knowledge of the Eleatics originated out of error in that they had shut their eyes to themselves, they "had to deceive themselves about their own state: they had to attribute to themselves, fictiously, impersonality and changeless duration; they had to misapprehend the nature of the knower; they had to deny the role of the drives in knowledge; and
quite generally had to conceive of reason as a completely free and spontaneous activity" (GS 110). This might explain why the knowledge of the Eleatics arose out of error but it does not yet explain the necessity of falsification. For Nietzsche, it seems, was concerned to open our eyes to this sort of deception, to call attention to the drives at the origin of knowledge, and thus to the knower as artist, as anything but an impersonal, disinterested, dispassionate observer. If nothing else, Nietzsche seemed to want to remind philosophers of what they "should learn from artists": that seeing (knowing) is always a matter of selecting from and simplifying experience—seeing from the perspective of the artist, that is, seeing things perspectively, from a distance, or cut out and framed. Since Nietzsche was so concerned to call attention to the Eleatic self-deception, his insistence on the necessity of being deceived—on art, the good will toward Schein, the veil, the mask, cannot be simply the deception of thinking that the knower is not at all an artist but an impartial, disinterested observer.

All this is only to say that the recognition of the artist at the origin of knowledge would not dispel the necessity of falsification, but would rather, all the more, compel it. On what then, does the necessity of artistic falsification depend? Perhaps falsification enters the picture because seeing as an artist involves simplification and selection. Nietzsche seems to suggest as much in a passage that invites an analogy between reading and modern painting. Nietzsche's analogy suggests that reading, in which the reader "guesses" at the meaning after simplifying and selecting "five words out of twenty," is like seeing, in which a tree
is never seen "completely with reference to leaves, twigs, color, and form," but rather only partially and simplified, an "approximation of a tree"—like the trees in Van Gogh's "Landscape with Olive Trees" or "The Great Pine" of Cézanne. Thus, Nietzsche suggests that as philosophers "we do the same":

we make up the major part of the experience and can scarcely be forced not to contemplate some event as its "inventors." All this means: basically and from time immemorial we are—accustomed to lying. Or to put it more virtuously and hypocritically, in short, more pleasantly: one is much more of an artist than one knows. *(BGE 192)*

Nevertheless, it might be objected that selecting and simplifying do not amount to falsifying. Nehamas, for example, contends that "choosing, selecting, and simplifying do not amount to falsifying what is before us, unless we believe that there can be a representation of the world that depends on no selection at all, and that this representation constitutes the standard of accuracy. But Nietzsche’s perspectivism is a direct denial of this possibility. He is therefore not entitled to claim that we falsify the world just because we simplify it in order to deal with it."198 Thus, again, is Nietzsche’s insistence that as artists we are "accustomed to lying" only a reversal of Platonism where the artist is consigned to the realm of lies and illusion? If there is no thing-in-itself, what is it that would be falsified if what is known is constituted by that very knowing?

Another origin for falsification derives not from the nature of the knower but the character of existence, from the supposition that "life" or "nature" is a woman. If the nature of existence is abysmal, a chaos of becoming, then knowledge cannot be a matter of representing the world as it is, but rather a
matter of imposing order upon chaos, a matter of arranging or "creating" a "world" in which one can live. Echoing the discussion of the construction of the edifice of knowledge in "On Truth and Lie" Nietzsche continues to regard knowledge as an attempt to impose some stability and order upon a Heraclitean flux.

We have arranged for ourselves a world in which we can live—by positing bodies, lines, planes, causes and effects, motion and rest, form and content; without these articles of faith nobody could endure life. But that does not prove them. Life is no argument. The conditions of life might include error. (GS 121)

Again echoing the earlier writings, Nietzsche suggests the edifice of knowledge is built on false judgments that must be believed to be true. As an example Nietzsche mentions Kant's synthetic judgments a priori which, perhaps, "must be believed to be true, for the sake of the preservation of creatures like ourselves; though they might, of course, be false judgments for all that!" Of course, for Nietzsche, such judgments are, to say the least, quite dubious. Nietzsche is quite explicit: "synthetic judgments a priori should not "be possible" at all; we have no right to them; in our mouths they are nothing but false judgments. Only, of course, the belief in their truth is necessary, as a foreground belief and visual evidence belonging to the perspective optics of life" (BGE 11).

Still one might ask how is it that Nietzsche can regard all these beliefs as false? Would not such a conclusion presuppose a belief in truth, a belief that the character of existence is known? Isn't it because Nietzsche has fathomed the "truth" of existence—that life is a woman—that he can assert that such judgments are false? It would seem that Nietzsche could not assert the falsehood of such
judgments without reinscribing the metaphysical conception of knowledge as representation. But then, in order to resist this assimilation, it is enough to note the use of the conditional, the versucherische tone: "the conditions of life might include error," and the clear disclaimer to any universality—"in our mouths. . . ." Nietzsche cannot then argue that these judgments are false because they fail to correspond to the way the world really is. They are "false," on the contrary, precisely insofar as they are thought to so correspond.

But this still would not explain the necessity of falsification. For Nietzsche wants to open our eyes to the "deceptions" of metaphysics. Just as he wants to awaken us to the nature of the knower, to the role of the drives in knowledge, he wants us to see the error in synthetic judgments a priori, as well as a host of other metaphysical errors: the belief in the subject, cause and effect, the will, Being. . . . Falsification arises not then in the positing of lines and planes, in the arrangement through simplification and selection—in the projection of Schein by which a world is disclosed—but in the "delusion" that these "lines and planes" are not Schein but actually the way the world is in-itself. But if the belief in these metaphysical errors is all that is meant by falsification then the claim that untruth is a necessary condition of life would be no more than a dispensable hyperbole. Once we have become more modest and dispensed with the arrogance of the belief that our knowledge corresponds to things-in-themselves we would have no more reason for the illusion of certainty for our truths.
What emerges is a picture of knowledge that is largely consistent with the view discussed in "On Truth and Lie." Knowledge is built on error insofar as it is built on "metaphor." The development of knowledge is a continual process of forging new metaphors, projections of Schein, such as the belief in the subject, and free will, and lines and planes, and synthetic judgments a priori which are necessary for certain forms of life for a certain time but which must continually be torn asunder as the conditions of life demand—and are never replaced by anything that is other than projection of Schein. Is the rhetoric of falsification thus merely a strategy to deflate the arrogant claims of knowledge that would terminate inquiry, and thus a means for remaining "eternal children?" It seems that it must be more than that. For Nietzsche would open our eyes to the deceptions of metaphysics, but at the same time, and as part of this awakening, point out the necessity of deception in knowledge. There must be a deeper sense of falsification than the error of believing that knowledge is grounded on foundations of certainty. Falsification must be more than a self-deception as to the nature of the knower and the known. If it is to be more than a dispensable hyperbole, more than a device for remaining "eternal children," falsification must enter the picture even after we have awakened to these deceptions, after we have recognized that knowledge is a product of the drives.

A deeper sense of falsification emerges from beneath the self-deception that the knower is not an artist; it emerges from the recognition that knowledge is a product of the drives, that there is an artist at the origin of knowledge and
language. This sense of falsification may become more palpable in drawing a contrast between Nietzsche and Dewey. Both recognize the philosopher as an artist insofar as knowledge is considered to be an active remaking of a "world" through a continual reshaping of experience—a knowing that is guided by a process of simplification and selection, a knowing that is thus not without interest. For Dewey, one of the chief philosophical virtues is that the interests which guide this simplification and selection must be made known. It is not that Nietzsche doesn't share this virtue—the genealogy is directed toward the question "who wants this "truth?"—it's just that for Nietzsche this question seems infinitely more complicated and problematic. The problem, for Nietzsche, is that the artist at the origin of knowledge and language is unknown. Thus the famous lines which open On the Genealogy of Morals: "We are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge—and with good reason. We have never sought ourselves—how could it happen that we should ever find ourselves?" (GM P 1).

Perhaps one could say that it is the unknown depths that commits the philosopher of the future to the "cult of surfaces." In the Book V of The Gay Science the necessity of falsification is traced back to the "problem of consciousness." From where, and for what purpose, may consciousness have arisen in the first place? Nietzsche proposes the hypothesis that consciousness arose "only under pressure of the need for communication." The development of consciousness could then be attributed to a social, moral problem. Only after generations of distress through which human beings were forced to communicate
in order to get along, did it become first necessary to come to "know" oneself in order to express one's needs, what one wants from the other. A totally solitary, amoral being would have no need to develop consciousness. Consciousness is thus "only a net of communication between human beings." Furthermore, Nietzsche suggests that consciousness is only a surface and that the greater part of thinking takes place beneath the surface, without consciousness and therefore unknown. Consequently, "the thinking that rises to consciousness is only the smallest part—the most superficial and worst part." The very fact of consciousness, Nietzsche suggests, would already involve falsification. Moreover, since it is only this conscious thinking that "takes the form of words, which is to say signs of communication" then it would only follow that every word is also a surface, only a mask. Nietzsche draws the following conclusion:

This is the essence of phenomenalism and perspectivism as I understand them: Owing to the nature of animal consciousness, the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface-and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner; whatever becomes conscious becomes by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd signal; all becoming conscious involves a great and thorough corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization. Ultimately, the growth of consciousness becomes a danger; and anyone who lives among the most conscious Europeans even knows that it is a disease. (GS 354)

As a surface phenomenon, consciousness is a mask. For Nietzsche, the greater and more important part of thinking takes place below the surface. To recognize the artist at the origin of knowledge is thus to acknowledge the role of the drives; to recognize the role of the drives is to recognize that the artist at the
origin of knowledge is a masked artist; it is to recognize the artist as the will to power.

*The Tragic Artist*

In the last writings, just as he is engaged in what, according to Heidegger, would be a final attempt at twisting free of metaphysics and overcoming nihilism, in that last year in which, as Heidegger has written, "everything about him radiates an excessive brilliance and in which therefore at the same time a terrible boundlessness (dass Masslose) advances out of the distance," Nietzsche celebrates the tragic artist, the Dionysian, as the one capable of a great affirmation, the one who says Yes to life. This affirmation requires facing up to life "even in its strangest and hardest problems." It might seem as though the tragic artist would have to abandon the cult of surfaces, and in facing up to life, face up to truth as well. Despite whatever differences, in the late writings there is surely an echo of *The Birth of Tragedy* in the thought of the tragic artist: in saying Yes to life must not the Dionysian tragic artist tear through Apollinian veils? Does Nietzsche, in these late writings abandon the belief in the necessity of untruth, falsification, as a condition of life? Already, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, in the passage that claims that "something might be true while being harmful and dangerous in the highest degree," it is further stated that "the strength of a spirit should be measured according to how much of the 'truth' one could still barely endure—or to put it more clearly, to what degree one would require it to be thinned down, shrouded, sweetened, blunted, falsified" (*BGE* 39). Is not then the tragic artist the one with
the greatest strength of spirit, the one who faces hard truths, and thus the one who can face life without falsification? A number of passages in the last writings would seem to confirm such an interpretation, and thus might confirm the view that Nietzsche abandoned the earlier denial of truth. At the end of the first section of the first essay of the Genealogy Nietzsche does say "such truths do exist." In The Antichrist and in Ecce Homo it does appear that the critique of morality is made in the name of truth. Far from interpreting the will to truth as a symptom of the ascetic ideal, of decadent will to power, Nietzsche seems to count the service of truth as a virtue:

At every step one has to wrestle for truth; one has had to surrender for it almost everything to which the heart, to which our love, our trust in life, cling otherwise. That requires greatness of soul: the service of truth is the hardest service. (A 50)

Moreover, in that text a favorable view of science is contrasted with the falsification of religion and morality (A 47). The theologian is disparaged for an "incapacity for philology," which is characterized as "the art of reading well—of reading facts without falsifying them by interpretation" (A 52). Finally, in Ecce Homo Nietzsche claims to be "the first to discover the truth by being the first to experience lies as lies" (EH "Why I am a Destiny," 1). Zarathustra is then portrayed as "more truthful than any other thinker." It is not just that Zarathustra is truthful, but that he is more so than any other:

His doctrine, and his alone, posits truthfulness as the highest virtue; this means the opposite of the cowardice of the "idealist" who flees from reality; Zarathustra has more intestinal fortitude than all other thinkers taken together. To speak the truth and to shoot well with arrows, that is Persian virtue. —Am I understood?—
The self-overcoming of morality, out of truthfulness... (EH "Why I am a Destiny," 3)

Would not this truthfulness of Zarathustra confirm the view that here the earlier denial of truth is abandoned, and that Twilight and The Antichrist in particular exhibit nothing but "a uniform and unambiguous respect for facts, the senses, and science"? If not, if Nietzsche has not abandoned the view that there is no truth about any "thing-in-itself, no truth which is not a perspectival interpretation, simplification and falsification, is there not then a fundamental contradiction in Nietzsche's thought, a contradiction between the affirmation of art as living in shine on the one hand, and the assertion that the strength of spirit should be measure according to how much truth one could stand?

Since Derrida's reading, can any reading of Nietzsche which fails to take into consideration the problem of style, of Nietzsche's multifarious art of style, be considered an example of the "art of reading well?" In order to apply to Nietzsche's texts a rigorous philology it would be necessary to consider the style(s) employed in each of these texts, to consider, then, the "voice" with which Nietzsche speaks of this truthfulness of Zarathustra. If one were to consider the question of style, Nietzsche's late devotion to truth—to "facts, the senses, and science," seems anything but unambiguous.

For, to begin with, if the question of style were taken into account, anything Nietzsche "says" in the texts of the last year must be heard as polemical, as taking place in the context a war against Christian morality and Platonism—the
"History of an Error." The preface to *Twilight* announces a "great declaration of war," a war in which Nietzsche found it necessary to raise his voice, and which required philosophizing with a hammer—but handled as with a tuning fork, sounding out idols. *The Antichrist*, intended apparently as the first book of the *Revaluation of all Values*, is perhaps the most obviously polemical. *Ecce Homo*, its last line—"Have I been understood? —Dionysus versus the Crucified..." is surely the autobiography of this "antichrist(ian)." Surely this polemical context must be taken into account. In this context it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that these late declarations of truth are not also part of a masquerade. Is it not merely another hyperbole, so characteristic of the last writings, when Nietzsche opposes his "truths" to the "lie of millennia?" Might these declarations have to be taken ironically? The question arises as to whether it is only in this opposition to Christianity that Nietzsche finds a new respect for "facts, the senses, and science."

Is there really such a major break, or about-face, in the development of Nietzsche's thought, from a youthful, nihilistic denial of truth to a mature enlistment in the service of truth? Or was it not in the service of truth all along that Nietzsche first called into question the value of truth? When Nietzsche opposes his Dionysian "truths" to the "lie of millennia" has he come out of the desert of nihilism to a return to a belief in truth? What sort of "truths" are these Dionysian "truths" that Nietzsche opposes to the "lie of millennia" in these last works? In turning at the end to the "service of truth," to the truthfulness of Zarathustra, has Nietzsche abandoned the goal, so important in the earlier
writings, of living in shine? Would he no longer count himself among those artists he identifies with in GS 59 ("We Artists"), those artists for whom there is no waking from the dream, and for whom, it would seem, a critique of Christianity could not be made in the name of "truth?" Do the late writings mark a departure from the earlier vision of the philosophy of the future? In opposing his "truths" to the "lie of millennia" has Nietzsche left behind the "new species of philosophers" he saw coming (BGE 42 and 43), or is it precisely only insofar as one grasps the at(tempting) character of this philosophy of the future that one can "read well" these late writings?

There is something about these Dionysian truths affirmed by the tragic artist that suggests in the late writings more of a continuity with and development from the earlier writings. Nietzsche writes in Ecce Homo "the truth speaks out of me," but then immediately adds "—But my truth is terrible" (EH "Why I am a Destiny," 1). A central insight of The Birth of Tragedy continues to echo in Ecce Homo: "Is Hamlet understood? Not doubt, certainty is what drives one insane. —But one must be profound, an abyss, a philosopher to feel that way. —We are all afraid of truth" (EH "Why I am so Clever," 4). The Dionysian artist still resembles Hamlet. Both have "once looked truly into the essence of things," both have gained "insight into the horrible truth" (BT 7). The truth the tragic artist must face would not provide a ground that would render life fathomable. The tragic artist is the one who is able, like Zarathustra at the end of the second "Dancing Song," to look into the terrible boundlessness, into the unfathomable, into life's eyes, to
gaze then into the abyss without perishing. Does the Dionysian tragic artist of Nietzsche's late writings ever waver from the thought that "we have art lest we perish of the truth?" Just before narrating "The History of an Error," Nietzsche finds living in shine (where "the artist esteems Schein higher than reality") no objection to the proposition that any distinction between a "true" and "apparent" world is a symptom of the decline of life. For, as Nietzsche explains, "'appearance' ('der Schein') in this case means reality once more, only by way of selection, reinforcement, and correction." Thus, even as he is engaged in what might be characterized as a final attempt at overcoming nihilism in twisting free of metaphysics, it is still art, as in _The Birth of Tragedy_, that is thought as the countermovement. It is the Dionysian tragic artist "who says Yes to everything questionable, even to the terrible" (_TI_ III, 6).

In affirming life, the tragic artist is the one who recognizes the perspectival character of existence, the one who understands truth as woman, who knows that truth does not remain truth when the veils are withdrawn. The tragic artist, in stopping courageously at the surface—in the sheen of Schein—affirms the enigmatic depths of existence. The tragic artist recognizes life to be a masquerade. From the period in which Nietzsche announces that "everything profound loves masks" (_BGE_ 40) this note might be attributed to such a tragic artist:

We sit ourselves down on the street where life rolls by in a drunken procession of masks . . . doesn't it seem as if we know something that makes us afraid? With which we don't want to be alone. A knowledge of something that makes us tremble, whose whispering makes us pale? . . . it seems as if we fear the hand of
life, and that it must shatter us, and we take refuge in life's sheen (Schein). (KSA 12:3[33])

From the perspective of perspectivism life is a masquerade for there is no truth to be unmasked. This is to say that there is no truth that is not already the product of interpretation, no truth that would provide a neutral authority for judging between competing interpretations. The world that is known is an already interpreted world. Another note from this period offers this account of perspectivism:

Against positivism, which halts at the phenomena—"There are only facts"—I would say: No, facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact "in itself": perhaps it is folly to want to do such a thing.

"Everything is subjective," you say; but even this is interpretation. The "subject" is not something given, it is something added and invented and projected behind what there is.—Finally, is it necessary to posit an interpreter behind the interpretation? Even this is invention, hypothesis.

In so far as the word "knowledge" has any meaning, the world is knowable; but it is interpretable otherwise, it has no meaning behind it, but countless meanings.—"Perspectivism." (WP 481)

The world, life, the text, whatever it is that is the object of interpretation becomes, from the perspective of perspectivism, unfathomable insofar as it is recognized that it is interpretable otherwise. From this perspective the world becomes "infinite:"

How far the perspective character of existence extends or indeed whether existence has any other character than this; whether existence without interpretation, without "sense," does not become "nonsense"; whether, on the other hand, all existence is not essentially actively engaged in interpretation—that cannot be decided even by the most industrious and most scrupulously conscientious analysis and self-examination of the intellect; for in the course of this analysis the human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself in its own perspectives, and only in these. We cannot look around our own corner: it is a hopeless curiosity that wants to know what other kinds of intellects and perspectives there might be . . . But I
should think that today we are at least far from the ridiculous immodesty that
would be involved in decreeing from our corner that perspectives are permitted
only from this corner. Rather has the world become "infinite" for us all over again,
inasmuch as we cannot reject the possibility that it may include infinite
interpretations. (GS 374)

Would not this infinite regress of interpretations turn interpretation into a never
ending masquerade, a confrontation, then, with a terrible boundlessness.

According to Clark this radical perspectivism in the Book V of The Gay Science
gives way to a more mature version in the Genealogy. Whereas the earlier version
seems to lose the world in the multiplicity of interpretations, the mature version
recognizes that there is something that is viewed from a multiplicity of perspectives
and of which there are multiple interpretations. For Clark, the metaphor of
perspectivism in this mature version allows Nietzsche to set "an independently
existing thing over against the perspectives of it without thereby committing him
to the existence of a thing-in-itself."

Henceforth, my dear philosophers, let us be on guard against the dangerous
old conceptual fiction that posited a "pure, wil-less, painless, timeless knowing
subject;" let us guard against the snares of such contradictory concepts as "pure
reason," "absolute spirituality," "knowledge in itself": these always demand that we
should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no
particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which
alone seeing becomes seeing something, are supposed to be lacking; these always
demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is only a perspective
"knowing"; and the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the more eyes,
different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our
"concept" of this thing, our "objectivity," be. But to eliminate the will altogether, to
suspend each and every affect, supposing we were capable of this—what would
that mean but to castrate the intellect? (GM III 12).

Even granting that there is something independent of our perspectives, it
seems pointless to think about it since there is only a perspective "knowing."
Nietzsche's critique, here and in the remainder of this essay, suggests that the will to truth is an expression of the ascetic ideal, a symptom of nihilism. Although the object of Nietzsche's critique is clearly the representational model of knowledge and the "metaphysical correspondence theory of truth" (correspondence to the thing-in-itself), a suspicion lingers here that it may also apply to Clark's attempt to find here a basis for attributing to Nietzsche a return to a belief in truth in the sense of correspondence to the empirical world.

To begin with, it is hardly clear that Nietzsche renounces completely the need for some sense of falsification. Positivism, for example, is criticized for its "general renunciation of all interpretation (of forcing (Vergewaltigen), adjusting (Zurechtschieben), abbreviating (Abkürzen), omitting (Weglassen), padding (Ausstopfen), inventing (Ausdichten), falsifying (Umfälschen), and whatever else is of the essence of interpreting)... (GM III 24). He remains critical of a positivistic sense of science, and thus, of those who want to place philosophy on a "strictly scientific basis." Moreover, there hardly seems to be an unambiguous defense of "facts" in the writings of the final year:

Nature, estimated artistically, is no model. It exaggerates, it distorts, it leaves gaps. Nature is chance. To study "from nature" seems to me to be a bad sign: it betrays submission, weakness, fatalism; this lying in the dust before petit faits is unworthy of a whole artist. To see what is—that is the mark of another kind of spirit, the anti-artistic, the factual. One must know who one is. (TI IX, 7)

Furthermore, it hardly seems, as Clark contends, that Nietzsche has turned around to criticize his earlier "falsification thesis" as an expression of the ascetic ideal. The
Art—to say it in advance, for I shall some day return to this subject at greater length—art, in which precisely the lie is sanctified and the will to deception (Wille zur Täuschung) has a good conscience, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science: this was instinctively sensed by Plato, the greatest enemy of art Europe has yet produced. (GM III 25)

In the final section, the ascetic ideal is characterized as "this longing to get away from all appearance (Schein), change, becoming, death, wishing, from longing itself." This unwillingness to live in shine is "a will to nothingness, an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental presuppositions of life." The sign of the ascetic ideal is a heavy seriousness. Against this seriousness, Nietzsche suggests that "the only real enemy capable of harming the ascetic ideal: the comedians of this ideal" (GM III 27).

In what might be considered another preview of the final attempt at twisting free metaphysics, Nietzsche offers a little joke which concerns what happens at the end of the "History of an Error":

Forgive me the joke of this gloomy grinace and trope; for I myself have learned long ago to think differently, to estimate differently with regard to deceiving and being deceived, and I keep in reserve at least a couple of jostles for the blind rage with which the philosophers resist being deceived. Why not? It is no more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than mere appearance (Schein); it is even the worst proved assumption there is in the world. Let at least this much be admitted: there would be no life at all if not on the basis of perspective estimates and appearances (Scheinbarkeiten); and if, with the virtuous enthusiasm and clumsiness of some philosophers, one wanted to abolish the "apparent (scheinbare) world" altogether—well suppose you could do that, at least nothing would be left of your "truth" either. Indeed, what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of "true" and "false"? Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness (Scheinbarkeit) and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and shades of appearance (Scheins)—different "values," to use the language of painters? Why couldn't the world that concerns us—be a fiction? (BGE 34)
The Masked Philosopher

In recognizing the "fictionality" of the world—in recognizing that there is no originary text, no world apart from interpretation, no "view from nowhere" but only perspectival views, no "truth" apart from the shining of appearance—the philosophers of the future that Nietzsche envisions on the horizon know the secret to life in living in shine. They know that life rolls by in a procession of masks. The interpretation of the world, or of any "text" becomes an incessant deciphering, a never ending confrontation with masks, a masquerade. Would such a view of interpretation lead only deeper into nihilism? We come again to the warning at the outset of Ecce Homo. If Nietzsche can never be unmasked, how is it possible to ever know if one has mistaken him for someone else?

Derrida responds to Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche by affirming, against Heidegger, the dissemination of the multiplicity of Nietzsche's masks. In the essay that served as his response to Gadamer in the "Paris exchange" Derrida focuses on the problem of the name and the signature. In asking the question of the signature Derrida is questioning the very notion of "text" within hermeneutics. The problem of the name, the signature, becomes important for Derrida, since Heidegger, in the preface to his Nietzsche states "Nietzsche—the name of the thinker here names the cause (Sache) of his thinking." The German Sache, Derrida points out, does not mean cause in the sense that the name brings about the effect that is this thought. Sache refers to the matter of the thinking. The proper name "Nietzsche" names the name of his thinking. Derrida then proposes
to ask the question whether this name should be singular, naming the essential
unitary thought of the thinker, as with Heidegger, or whether one should take:

a new approach to the problematic of the name, at the risk of seeing the name
dismembered and multiplied in masks and similitudes. We know what Nietzsche
risked in this respect. The name would be constituted on the far side of the "life"
of the thinker, from the vantage point of the future of the world, from an
affirmation of the "eternal recurrence."\textsuperscript{212}

Nietzsche risked this dismemberment in employing his multifarious styles of
writing. It has been pointed out by recent commentators, and Derrida makes use
of it here, that Heidegger's attempt to attach a single signature, to find the single
thought, to draw under one name, the name of "Nietzsche," the various works of
this master of masks was, at least in part, motivated by an attempt to save
Nietzsche from the misappropriation by Nazis (many think he should have been
more concerned about himself). For Derrida, this is, despite whatever noble
intention, a fatal mistake.\textsuperscript{213} Derrida's response to this saving gesture is twofold:

But who ever has said that a person bears a single name? Certainly not
Nietzsche. And likewise, who has said or decided that there is something like a
Western metaphysics, something which would be capable of being gathered up
under this name and this name only? What is it—the oneness of a name, the
assembled unity of Western metaphysics? Is it anything more or less than the
desire (a word effaced in Heidegger's Nietzsche citation) for a proper name, for a
single, unique name and a thinkable genealogy? Next to Kierkegaard, was not
Nietzsche one of the few great thinkers who multiplied his names and played with
signatures, identities, and masks?\textsuperscript{214}

Derrida thus affirms Nietzsche as the masked philosopher. The attempt to unmask
Nietzsche, to try to save him from misinterpretation by drawing everything he
wrote under a single name is doomed to failure:
These are the preliminary remarks that I wanted to suggest for a future reading of Heidegger's Nietzsche—for this ambiguous life-saving act, in the course of which one stretches out the net for the tightrope walker, the one who runs the greatest risk overhead on the narrow rope, only insofar as one has made sure that he—unmasked and protected by the unity of his name, which in turn will be sealed by the unity of metaphysics—will not be taking any risks. In other words: he was dead before he landed in the net.  

Still, even for Derrida, just because there is no one face behind the multifarious masks, no "proper name," no truth that could serve as a neutral standard, a legislative authority, by which competing interpretations can be evaluated, does not mean that all interpretations are the same or of equal worth. Interpretations can no longer be evaluated according to a standard of correctness, they can no longer evaluated as to "truth" and "falsity." Nevertheless, in order to mark differences in interpretation and avoid the nihilistic conclusion that "all is the same," it is only necessary to assume "lighter and darker shadows and shades of Schein." Once reference to an origin, to the same, is denied, interpretations can be evaluated according to their difference in "values." For Nietzsche, it is differences in "the value for life" which is decisive. However, since there is no neutral authority, it is recognized that the "value for life" is also an interpretation, also only a perspectival view. This is why "judgments, judgments of value, concerning life, for it or against it, can, in the end, never be true: they have value only as symptoms, they are worthy of consideration only as symptoms; in themselves such judgments are stupidities" (TI II, 2).  

Thus, in place of the hermeneutical operation which seeks to determine in one form or another the truth of an interpretation, Nietzsche substitutes the
genealogical inquiry, the incessant deciphering of masks. Instead of asking of any interpretation whether or not it is true, the genealogist asks "who wants it to be true?" Genealogy is concerned with deciphering the forces in power that produce an interpretation—the hidden psychology of interpreting drives. The genealogist seeks to unmask the artist at the origin of knowledge. For Nietzsche, since the knower is not a disinterested, dispassionate, subject, there is nothing impersonal in the philosopher: "and above all, his morality bears decided and decisive witness to who he is—that is, in what order of rank the innermost drives of his nature stand in relation to each other" (BGE 6). This is why a genealogy of morals is a deciphering of the hidden history of philosophy. The genealogist is not concerned with determining truth and falsity but with diagnosing symptoms:

My demand on the philosopher is known, that he take his stand beyond good and evil and leave this illusion of moral judgment beneath himself. This demand follows from an insight which I was the first to formulate: that there are altogether no moral facts. Moral judgments agree with religious ones in believing in realities which are no realities. Morality is merely an interpretation of certain phenomena—more precisely, a misinterpretation. Moral judgments, like religious ones, belong to a stage of ignorance at which the very concept of the real and the distinction between what is real and imaginary, are still lacking; thus "truth," at this stage, designates all sorts of things which we today call "imaginings." Moral judgments are therefore never to be taken literally: so understood, they always contain mere absurdity. Semeiotically, however, they remain invaluable: they reveal, at least for those who know, the most valuable realities of cultures and inwardnesses which did not know enough to "understand" themselves. Morality is mere sign language, mere symptomatology: one must know what it is all about to be able to profit from it. (TI VII, 1)

Genealogy, as Nietzsche practices it, is an inquiry into the "health" of a belief, a morality or philosophy. The whole of the On the Genealogy of Morals is directed toward deciphering the health of Christian morality. Book V of The Gay
Science, however, provides perhaps the most succinct expression and example of Nietzsche's interpretive strategy:

What is romanticism?—Every art, every philosophy may be viewed as a remedy and an aid in the service of growing and struggling life; they always presuppose suffering and sufferers. But there are two kinds of sufferers: first, those who suffer from the over-fullness of life—they want a Dionysian art and likewise a tragic view of life, a tragic insight—and then those who suffer from the impoverishment of life and seek rest, stillness, calm seas, redemption from themselves through art and knowledge, or intoxication (Rausch), convulsions, anaesthesia, and madness. (GS 370)

Romanticism, Nietzsche goes on to suggest, is identified with the latter type. Schopenhauer and Wagner, who sought redemption in art through tragic resignation, are considered prime examples of those who suffer from an impoverishment of life. Nietzsche then offers this characterization of the other type, the Dionysian, the tragic artist:

He that is richest in the fullness of life, the Dionysian god and man, cannot only afford the sight of the terrible and questionable but even the terrible deed and any luxury of destruction, decomposition, and negation. In his case, what is evil, absurd, and ugly seems, as it were, permissible, owing to an excess of procreating, fertilizing energies that can still turn any desert into lush farmland. (GS 370)

Nietzsche regards the "Christian" also as a kind of romantic: suffering from life, the Christian wants mildness, peacefulness, and, above all else, "a god who would be truly a god for the sick, a healer and savior." The theoretical optimism of Socratism is also implicated; for those who seek the "conceptual understanding of existence," those who regard existence, life, as fathomable, are also regarded as suffering from the impoverishment of life.
In proceeding with this form of questioning, Nietzsche remarks that his eye grew sharper for the "backward inference," that is, the genealogical inquiry, that moves "from work to maker, deed to doer, from the ideal to those who need it, from every way of thinking and valuing to the commanding need behind it."

Nietzsche then offers this summation of his interpretive strategy:

Regarding all aesthetic values I now avail myself of this main distinction: I ask in every instance, "is it hunger or superabundance that has here become creative?"

At first glance, another distinction may seem preferable—it is far more obvious—namely the question whether the desire to fix, to immortalize, the desire for being prompted creation, or the desire for destruction, for change, for future, for becoming. But both of these kinds of desire are seen to be ambiguous when one considers them more closely; they can be interpreted in accordance with the first scheme that is, as it seems to me preferable. The desire for destruction, change, and becoming can be an expression of an overflowing energy that is pregnant with future (my term for this is, as is known "Dionysian"); but it can also be the hatred of the ill-constituted, disinherited, and underprivileged, who destroy, must destroy, because what exists, indeed all existence, all being, outrages and provokes them. (GS 370)

To see existence as an aesthetic phenomenon, to regard all interpretations as aesthetic values, is not a romantic retreat into an isolated realm of the aesthetic; it is rather to look at art, the aesthetic phenomenon of existence, from the perspective of life. The genealogical task of the philosopher is to decipher the value for life in the "aesthetic values" of a philosophy or a culture. The legislative task of the "genuine philosopher," as Nietzsche understands it, is to create new values—a revaluation of values. The results of Nietzsche's genealogical analysis of "The History of an Error" led to the diagnosis that so far only decadence values have prevailed, values that are symptoms of a great weariness, the sickness of nihilism. In opposition to decadence values Nietzsche puts forth the values of the
noble, the one who affirms perspectivism, and thus life in all her enigmatic depth. As a countermovement to nihilism Nietzsche proscribes Dionysian "truths"—or, in other words, art, a tragic art that enables the affirmation of life, and thus the great health.

The affirmation of the tragic artist involves something of a contradiction which echoes somewhat the monstrous crossing of Apollinian and Dionysian art in *The Birth of Tragedy*. On the one hand, the affirmation of life is achieved through the Apollinian interposition of a veil which conceals or places at a distance that which makes life difficult to bear. The overcoming of nihilism requires seeing life as an aesthetic phenomenon: as something to be embellished and transfigured through the creation of beautiful illusions, projections of *Schein*. Yet the affirmation of the tragic artist, saying yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems, seems to require tearing through the Apollinian veils and facing life without falsification, facing the terrible truth. The terrible truth, however, is that beneath the veil there is only an abyss.

This contradictory, double-movement of veiling and unveiling is a feature of the affirmation Nietzsche called amor fati: "I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who make things beautiful" (*GS* 276). This notion of amor fati is then related to that which Nietzsche referred to as "the highest formula of affirmation":

My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely
bear what is necessary, still less conceal it—all idealism is mendaciousness in the
face of what is necessary—but love it. (EH "Why I am so Clever," 9)

The eternal return is certainly one of the terrible Dionysian "truths" Nietzsche
refers to in the last works. But what sort of truth is this?

Whatever is said in Nietzsche’s texts can never escape being subjected to
further interpretation. Perspectivism rules out as well a definitive "correct"
interpretation of Nietzsche that would render further interpretation unnecessary.
The profound enigma of life is that no interpretation yields a truth unveiled. If
"every word is a mask" the key "words" of Nietzsche’s revaluation—the noble, the
decadent, life, eternal return—remain enigmatic and elusive. Early on Nietzsche
recognizes this continually renewed surprise:

It is for the writer a continually renewed surprise when his book continues to live
as soon as it is detached from him; he has the impression like that of an insect
from whom a part has separated in order to go henceforth its own way. Perhaps
he almost forgets it, perhaps he raises himself above the views that he has put
down, perhaps he no longer even understands it and has lost those wings which
carried him to flight at the time that he thought out the book: which continues on
to seek out its readers, enkindle life, inspire joy, terror, engender new works,
become the soul of new plans and undertakings—in short, it lives as a being
endowed with soul and spirit and is not yet human. That author has drawn the
happiest lot who as an old man can say that in his writings there continues to live
all that he had in him of life-engendering, strengthening, elevating, enlightening
thought and feeling, and that he himself is now nothing but the grey ashes, while
the fire has everywhere been rescued and thrown forward to all horizons. If one
now goes on to consider that every human action, and not only a book, becomes
in some way the cause of other actions, decisions, thoughts, that everything that
happens is inextricably knotted to everything that will happen, one comes to
recognize the existence of an actual immortality, that of movement: all that has
never stirred up some dance is, like an insect in amber, caught and eternalized in
the complex totality of being. (HAH 208)

Nietzsche recognizes here that what is said in the text has a life of its own.

In order for there to be an exact reproduction of what is written in what is read,
the reader would have to have gained the same perspective as the author. "To understand one another, it is not enough that one use the same words; one also has to use the same words for the same species of inner experiences; in the end one has to have one's experience in common" (BGE 268). Since one can not share the same experience in common, the same perspectives, understanding is always partial, and every reading, in a sense, produces a new text. That powerful magic of life that leads Nietzsche to affirm that "life is a woman" is that what unveils itself, "unveils itself for us once only" (GS 339). What is said in a text, in a sense, is said once only. Nietzsche understands that he cannot control the fate of his writings:

Ultimately, nobody can get more out of things, including books, than he already knows. For what one lacks access to from experience one will have no ear.

This is, in the end, my average experience and, if you will, the originality of my experience. Whosoever thought he had understood something of me, had made up something out of me after his own image—not uncommonly an antithesis to me. (EH "Why I Write Such Good Books," 1)

The "noble" fears being understood more than being misunderstood. Nietzsche is the masked philosopher not only for recognizing that life rolls by in a procession of masks, but also for consciously adopting a strategy of masking in his "style": a means of holding at a distance the reader that lacks the proper ear. The mask serves to put some distance between author and reader, to make blatantly obvious what is the case in all reading: that there is no origin, no original text which can guarantee a "correct" reading.

One does not only wish to be understood when one writes; one wishes just as surely not to be understood. It is not by any means necessarily an objection to a book when anyone finds it impossible to understand: perhaps that was part of the
author's intention—he did not want to be understood by just "anybody." All the nobler spirits and tastes select their audience when they wish to communicate; and choosing that, one at the same time erects barriers against "the others." All the more subtle laws of any style have their origin at this point: they at the same time keep away, create a distance, forbid "entrance," understanding, as said above—while they open the ears of those whose ears are related to ours. (GS 381)

Nietzsche's "style" perhaps also suggests that one should not take his Dionysian "truths" too seriously. It is perhaps better to take them as mere attempts and temptations. As attempters and tempters the philosophers of the future Nietzsche describes will certainly have gotten over that lovesickness of dogmatic philosophers who sought, above all, to possess the woman-truth. They would certainly have dispensed with the over-serious task of discovering a truth that would be a "truth for everyman," a truth that would guarantee agreement among rational beings; they would thus no longer regard philosophy as the rigorous science of laying indubitable foundations or providing the final vocabulary that would make all discourse commensurable.²¹⁶ Having gotten over the lovesickness of previous philosophers in what sense would these philosophers of the future love their truths? As attempters it would seem that they would have overcome the desire for possession that distinguishes dogmatic philosophers. Rather, the love of wisdom becomes an experiment with knowledge, the philosopher is free to engage in a thinking that risks error. In regarding their experiments as temptations, the philosophers of the future regard their "truths" as having an aesthetic rather than epistemological status. Rather than presenting their thought in the form of a rigorous argumentation which would endeavor to
lead the reader to a point of agreement, the tempter offers up the thought experiment as an invitation to an experiment which the reader is free, and may in fact even be encouraged, to reject.

Nothing so much characterizes Nietzsche’s thought as this propensity to engage in what he often clearly admits are dangerous thought experiments, experiments which do not demand assent, but rather attempt to provoke thought, to question the unquestioned. One might note that Nietzsche’s questioning of the value of truth is all cast in the conditional: "Suppose we want truth: why not rather untruth? and uncertainty? even ignorance?" (BGE 1). Perhaps this is what makes reading Nietzsche so different from the experience with most philosophers—one is almost never sure how to take his "strange, wicked, questionable questions." The constant masquerade, in which one is never sure with which voice Nietzsche is speaking, holds the reader at a certain distance, challenging the reader to resist Nietzsche’s temptations. In a letter of 1888 Nietzsche writes:

I have never yet been characterized as a psychologist or as a writer ('poet' too) or as the inventor of a new kind of pessimism (Dionysian, born out of strength and taking pleasure in seizing the problem of existence by its horns) or as an immoralist (until now the highest form of 'intellectual rectitude', which is entitled to treat morality as illusion when it has itself become instinctive and unavoidable). It is not at all necessary or even desirable to side with me; on the contrary, a dose of curiosity, as if confronted with some unfamiliar plant, and an ironic resistance would be an incomparably more intelligent position to adopt. 217

With the masked philosopher it is no longer a question of whether one agrees or not. One can only take up the experiment on one’s own to see where it may lead.
Taken as mere attempts, Nietzsche's "truths" regarding the affirmation of life are recognized as experiments that are not free of danger. They are not then "truths" which would demand assent. One might object that Nietzsche surely wants us to agree with him on at least some level, to acknowledge his 'doctrine' of perspectivism, to accept that 'God is dead,' to realize that humanity must be overcome, that the way must thus be prepared for the Übermensch, to affirm eternal recurrence. Insofar as Nietzsche does have a "teaching" to offer, he is a tempter, putting forth his view not as a "truth" or a "doctrine" demanding our assent, but rather as an aesthetic phenomenon which tempts or invites us to creatively take up a thought experiment of our own.\textsuperscript{218} Taken as art in this sense, what is written and painted in the text does not become a dead thing like the moon, but rather invites our participation in something that is alive.

2. Jean-Pierre Vernant draws out the play of revealing and concealing in the mask of enigmatic god: "Dionysus wants to be seen to be a god, to be manifest to mortals as a god, to make himself known, to reveal himself, to be known, recognized, understood. This 'manifestness' that must, in certain conditions, be a feature of the god's presence, is expressed forcefully in the fourth stasimon by the chorus of Lydian women devotees, who first state their desire that justice should "be manifest (phaneros)" (993), then declare what is for them a matter of principle: 'My happiness depends upon pursuing what is great and manifest (phanera)' (1007). Next they proceed to invoke the Dionysus of epiphanies, calling upon the god to show himself too, to make himself manifest: 'Appear!' (phanethi) (1018). But Dionysus reveals himself by concealing himself, makes himself manifest by hiding himself from the eyes of all those who believe only in what they can see, in what is 'evident before their eyes,' as Pentheus himself puts it at line 501, when Dionysus is there before him, under his very nose, but invisible to him beneath his disguise. It is an epiphany alright, but of a god who is masked." Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 391.

3. Different approaches to the masked philosopher: On the one hand Nietzsche is "playing a game with the reader, forcing him not only to think about the subject under discussion but also to follow the elusive scent that is being laid and to attempt to discover the 'real' Nietzsche underneath the mask." W.D. Williams, "Nietzsche's Masks" *Nietzsche: Imagery and Thought*, ed. Malcom Pasley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 84. For Charles E. Scott the "mask" does not suggest in Nietzsche's writing a deceptive countenance placed on a self-revealing identity. It is not an ontological opposite to 'ground' or to transcendent reality. It does not mean something that covers something else that is more basic but indicates rather the enigma and dissemblance of phenomena." Scott thus suggests "that one of Nietzsche's projects is to let the mask show itself as mask." Charles E. Scott, "The Mask of Nietzsche's Self-Overcoming," *Nietzsche as Postmodernist*, ed. Clayton Koelb (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 217.

4. Vernant sketches the outlines of the debate concerning the interpretation of *The Bacchae*: "This same text, read by excellent Greek scholars, has given rise to two radically different types of interpretation. Some scholars have read into it categorical condemnation of Dionysism, an attack against religion in line with the skepticism displayed toward the gods for which Aristophanes criticized Euripides. Others, in contrast, have regarded it as evidence of a veritable conversion on the part of the poet who, as his life drew to a close, seems to them to have been touched by grace as it were, and to have wished to exalt a superhuman form of wisdom that, in contrast to the arrogant knowledge and reason of the sophists, stemmed from abandoning oneself to divine ecstasy, the mystic madness of the god of blessed possession" (383-384). Vernant's own reading is on the side of the epiphany of Dionysus (a reading opposed to Nietzsche's early conclusions about Euripides but which nevertheless comes to quite Nietzschean conclusions concerning the Dionysian and the need for opening up the space of tragedy); he understands the Dionysian not so much in terms of a kind of mysticism but rather, as a recognition of otherness: "The tragedy of *The Bacchae* shows the dangers that are involved when a city retrenches within its own boundaries. If the world of the same refuses to absorb the element of otherness that every group and every human being unconsciously carry within themselves, just as Pentheus refuses to recognize that
mysterious, feminine, Dionysiac element that attracts and fascinates him despite the horror that he claims to feel for it, then all that is stable, regular, and the same tips over and collapses and the other, of hideous aspect, absolute otherness and a return to chaos, come to appear as the sinister truth, the other, authentic, and terrifying face of the same. The only solution is for women to use the controlled trance, an officially recognized thiasos promoted to the status of a public institution, while men turn to the joy of the komos, wine, disguise, and carnival and for the city as a whole, in and through the theatre, to make it possible for the other to become one of the dimensions of both collective life and the daily life of each individual. The victorious eruption of Dionysus is a sign that otherness is being given its place, with full honors, at the center of the social system." Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, 402.

5. Among other allusions consider the aviary metaphor in the *Theaetetus* in which the mind is likened to an aviary and knowledge to birds that can be caught by hand: "Now consider whether knowledge is a thing you can possess in that way without having it about you, like a man who has caught some wild birds—pigeons or what not—and keeps them in an aviary he has made for them at home." Plato, *Theaetetus* 197c. The translations to Plato's dialogues to which I will refer is *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns), Bollingen Series LXXI (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961). The dialogues have been translated by the following: R. Hackforth (*Phaedrus*); Paul Shorey (*Republic*); F.M. Cornford (*Theaetetus*). Nietzsche's lament that writing can not capture the living but only birds weary of flying would only echo the condemnation of writing in Plato. Nietzsche had elsewhere made use of the same metaphor to a similar effect: "I caught this insight on the way and quickly seized the rather poor words that were closest to hand to pin it down lest it fly away again. And now it has died of these arid words and shakes and flaps in them—and I hardly know any more when I look at it how I could ever have felt so happy when I caught this bird" (GS 298). Note Graham Parkes' consideration of these allusions in his treatment of Nietzsche's psychology in Graham Parkes, *Composing the Soul: Reaches of Nietzsche's Psychology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 216-217.

6. The deconstruction of the Platonic opposition that debases writing in favor of speech is one of Derrida's frequent themes, perhaps one could say—even though it is rather problematic—the major "thesis" of his early writings. Here I refer to the 1968 essay "La pharmacie de Platon," a masterful, often hilarious, text woven around the play of the pharmakon in Plato's condemnation of writing. Writing is condemned by Plato because it is a pharmakon, a word that is often mistranslated, as Derrida points out, in that in the original it contains both the sense of "remedy" and "poison." Writing is thus condemned because of an inherent dangerousness that can be attributed to its pharmaceutical operation, its double nature, its undecidability that subverts the logic of identity upon which the hierarchy of oppositions depends. The deconstruction of Platonism is already at work in Plato's text, as Derrida's title playfully suggests, since the condemnation of writing takes place in "Plato's Pharmacy," that is, since the condemnation of writing also relies upon the pharmakon and thus cannot escape its effects. This all goes on in the "back room" of the pharmacy in the sense that, on the one hand, Derrida focuses on the "myth of Theuth" recounted at the end of the *Phaedrus*, a myth regarded by traditional interpretations as extraneous to the main argument of the dialogue, and thus relegated, so to speak, to the "back room" of the pharmacy. But there is also the further sense in that, for Derrida, it is explicitly "in the back room, in the shadows of the pharmacy, prior to the oppositions between conscious and unconscious, freedom and constraint, voluntary and involuntary, speech and language, that these textual 'operations' occur." Jacques Derrida, *La dissémination* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), 69-198; English translation: "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissentiation*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 61-171, 129.
7. The myth Socrates recounts tells the tale of the presentation of the gift of writing, along with other arts, by Theuth, the inventor and god of writing, to Thamus, the king, the god of the gods: "On each art, we are told, Thamus had plenty of views both for and against; it would take too long to give them in detail. But when it came to writing Theuth said, 'Here, O King, is a branch of learning that will make the people of Egypt wiser and improve their memories; my discovery provides a recipe (pharmakon) [writing is explicitly presented as a pharmakon] for memory and wisdom.'" The king, however, recognizes the danger and will have nothing to do with writing: "But the king answered and said, 'O man full of arts, to one it is given to create the things of art, and to another to judge what measure of harm and of profit they have for those that shall employ them. And so it is that you, by reason of your tender regard for writing that is your offspring, have declared the very opposite of its true effect. If men learn this, it will implant forgetfulness in their souls; they will cease to exercise memory because they rely on that which is written, calling things to remembrance no longer from within themselves, but by means of external marks. What you have discovered is a recipe (pharmakon) not for memory, but for reminder. And it is no true wisdom that you offer your disciples, but only its semblance, for by telling them of many things without teaching them you will make them seem to know much, while for the most part they know nothing, and as men filled, not with wisdom, but with the conceit of wisdom, they will be a burden to their fellows.'" Phaedrus 274c-275b.

8. Phaedrus 275e-d. Derrida's strategy involves suggesting how Plato's text is caught up in the play of the pharmakon. Even as he opposes the pharmakon of writing, Socrates, "he who does not write," is also master of the pharmakon. Derrida first suggests that behind the portrait of Eros in the Symposium one can make out the face of Socrates, the face of a pharmakeus (magician). "Plato's Pharmacy," 117. In a more radical move, Derrida then connects Socrates to the pharmakos, a sorcerer or even the "scapegoat." Derrida's suggestion, perhaps something of a little joke, challenges the very notion of the "text" since pharmakos is not a word Plato actually used and is thus supposedly "outside" of Plato's text. Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 128-134.

9. Derrida points out that not only is writing explicitly identified as a pharmakon in Plato's text, but that elsewhere, in the Republic, the painter's colors are called pharmaka (420c). Derrida further points out that in Greek, pharmakon also means to paint, not a natural color but an artificial tint, a chemical dye that imitates the chromatic scale given in nature." Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 129.


12. Phaedrus 275e-d.

13. Republic X, 597e.

14. Derrida's essay even further suggests how Nietzsche's address to his written and painted thoughts is caught up in this chain through the pharmakon: "The magic of writing and painting is like a cosmetic concealing the dead under the appearance of the living. The pharmakon introduces and harbors death. It makes the corpse presentable, masks it, makes it up, perfumes it with its essence, as it is said in Aeschylus. Pharmakon is also a word for perfume. A perfume without essence, as we earlier called it a drug without substance. It transforms order into ornament, the cosmos into a cosmetic. Death, masks, makeup, all are part of the festival that subverts the order of the city, its smooth regulation by the dialectician and the science of being. Plato, as we shall see,
is not long in identifying writing with festivity. And play. A certain festival, a certain game." 
Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 142.

15. Allan Megill portrays Nietzsche's "aesthetics" as setting the agenda "for the whole of modernist and postmodernist art and thought." Megill traces this aestheticism from Nietzsche through Heidegger and Foucault to Derrida, in whom he finds this trajectory of thought to come to an end. Allan Megill, Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 1. See also, James J. Winchester, Nietzsche's Aesthetic Turn: Reading Nietzsche after Heidegger, Deleuze, and Derrida (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).


17. The subtitle for "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable" in Twilight of the Idols (TI IV).

18. Megill, Prophets of Extremity, 8. This brief review of the precedents to Nietzsche's aestheticism is largely indebted to Megill's work. Megill cites here an essay by Ernst Behler that traces these connections. Ernst Behler, "Nietzsche und die Frühromantische Schule," Nietzsche-Studien, 7 (1978), 59-96.


20. "The extraordinary courage and wisdom of Kant and Schopenhauer have succeeded in gaining the most difficult victory, the victory over the optimism concealed in the essence of logic—an optimism that is the basis of our culture. While this optimism, resting on apparently unobjectionable aeternae veritates, had believed that all the riddles of the universe could be known and fathomed, and had treated space, time, and causality as entirely unconditional laws of the most universal validity, Kant showed that these really served only to elevate the mere phenomenon, the work of maya, to the position of the sole and highest reality, as if it were the innermost and true essence of things, thus making impossible any knowledge of this essence or, in Schopenhauer's words, lulling the dreamer still more soundly asleep . . . With this insight a culture is inaugurated that I venture to call a tragic culture" (BT 18).


23. Kant, Critique of Judgment, § 49.

25. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 14. Here it is crucial to hear, as John Sallis emphasizes, the full "spread of sense" of *Schein*—from "shine," to "appearance," "semblance" and "illusion"—which shall echo throughout this dissertation. The world of *Schein* is the "apparent" (*scheinbare*) world, the world of lies and illusion, to which the artist is consigned in the structure of Platonism. Sallis offers this brief sketch of a phenomenological analysis to illustrate the spread of *Schein*: "in order for something to have a certain look, it must show itself, must shine forth; only insofar as it shines so as to have a look can it then become an appearance, for instance, an appearance of something else that perhaps does not shine forth; and only insofar as something has a certain look can it look like something else that it is not, hence become a semblance; finally, both appearance and semblance can develop into various modes of illusion, for instance, something can look so much like something else that it gives itself out as that other thing." John Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 25-26.

26. As Megill reports, for Schiller "there are two kinds of semblance, the aesthetic and the logical. Logical semblance is marked by a confusion with 'actuality [Wirklichkeit] and truth.' In aesthetic semblance, on the other hand, we distinguish between semblance and truth, and love the semblance because it is semblance and not because we take it to be something better. Aesthetic semblance is play, while logical semblance is mere deception." Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 14.

27. "The only difference between the world and the work of art," as Megill points out, "is that in the former the creative activity is unconscious whereas in the latter it is conscious." Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 15.


31. Megill points to this theme of the breakdown of the boundary between philosophy and literature as the common thread uniting Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 17.


35. Megill, Prophets of Extremity, 2.


37. "Above all, eternal return does not 'round back.' On the contrary, it stands as a kind of perpetual crisis, in which the desire to round back is countered by the conviction that all paths are broken." Megill, Prophets of Extremity, 19.


39. Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche. Volume One: The Will to Power as Art, translated by David F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1979). This is a translation of Heidegger's Nietzsche, Band I (Pfullingen: Verlag Günther Neske, 1961), pp. 11-254. Further references to this text will cite Nietzsche, I followed by page number. When necessary page numbers from both the English and the German will be cited with a backslash [/] distinguishing between the translation and the original.


43. Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, 74.


45. Heller, The Importance of Nietzsche, 159.

46. Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, 75.

47. Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, 9.

48. The issue of the weight one is to give to the unpublished Nachlass is one of the most divisive in Nietzsche studies. Bernd Magnus draws a distinction between "lumpers," those who lump together the unpublished and published writings, and "splitters," those who mark a difference. In giving precedence to the unpublished writings, Heidegger, on this account, is sort of an "inverse splitter." See Bernd Magnus, "Nietzsche's Philosophy in 1888: The Will to Power and the Übermensch," The Journal of the History of Philosophy 24, no. 1 (1986): 79-98. See also the insightful comments in Parkes, Composing the Soil, 15.

50. Kaufmann marks the early phase from *The Birth of Tragedy* to a culmination in the third of the *Untimely Meditations, Schopenhauer as Educator* (1874). The middle "positivistic" or "experimentalist" phase is characterized by an abandonment of the early aesthetic concerns for a period of "psychological observation." This period, marked by the break from Wagner, begins with the fourth of the *Untimely Meditations, Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (1876) and continues through the "aphoristic" works, *Human, All Too Human* (1878), *Dawn* (1881), and *The Gay Science* (1882). The mature phase, which Kaufmann and Heidegger both characterize in terms of a development of the single thought of "the will to power," thus begins with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in 1883. Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Megill follows this division into three phases, but in contrast to Kaufmann, characterizes the early phase as "Romantic" and the mature phase as something of a return to the early "aesthetic" preoccupations. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, 34-35.


52. Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*.

53. Clark, for example, argues that "On Truth and Lie" does not anticipate Nietzsche's mature position. She finds the essay to indicate instead the extent to which Nietzsche was still holding on to the metaphysical presuppositions of *The Birth of Tragedy*. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 63-93.

54. In the introduction to his translation of this essay, Daniel Breazeale suggests such an interpretation. Daniel Breazeale, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the early 1870's* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1979). Alan D. Schrift also reads this essay as a preview of the mature thought in moving toward the notion of knowledge as dissimulation: "Whereas philosophy had traditionally conceived knowledge to be a mirroring of reality with the aid of concepts (words) as representations (Vorstellung) of that reality, Nietzsche argues that "the intellect unfolds its principle powers in dissimulation (Verstellung)."" Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation: Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 124-125.


56. Clark sums up the problem in this way: "Nietzsche's apparent nihilism in regard to truth threatens the coherence of his critique of morality, and of his entire philosophy—insofar as the latter commits Nietzsche to certain truths while at the same time it denies that there are any truths. Nietzsche's own practice is apparently at odds with his theory." Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 4.

57. This seems to be the view taken by Ofelia Schutte who endeavors to read Nietzsche without masks. Ofelia Schutte, *Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche without Masks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
58. Clark's reading suggests such a scheme. Her work, however, focuses on the problem of truth without really engaging Nietzsche’s thinking on art (which suggests, in my view, what is lacking in her account). Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 1-27.

59. Richard Schacht also takes a version of this position: "Far from holding that there are no truths about reality which may be discovered and stated, because there is no actual nature of things to discover and describe, he in fact holds the contrary, and has a good deal to say of a substantive nature in this connection. And far from denying objective validity to all value-judgments as such, he in fact maintains that a certain standard of value has an objective basis in the very nature of things." Richard Schacht, "Nietzsche and Nihilism" in *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert Solomon (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), 58-82, 82.


62. "The criterion was always and only whether any of the structures which science exemplified enhanced and facilitated life. To demand that science be true is to expose oneself to question whether 'truth' means anything more than the facilitation of life. Nietzsche, as we shall see, advanced a pragmatic criterion of truth: p is true and q is false if p works and q does not." Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 71-72.

63. As Clark points out, this "seems to warrant Rorty's conclusion" that "James and Nietzsche made parallel criticism of nineteenth-century thought," but that "James' version is preferable, for it avoids the 'metaphysical' elements in Nietzsche which Heidegger criticizes, and, for that matter, the 'metaphysical' elements in Heidegger which Derrida criticizes." Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 12. For Rorty's comment see Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), xviii.

64. See, for example, Kaufmann contention that despite the affinities between Nietzsche's "experimental" philosophy and pragmatic thinkers, "Nietzsche's experimentalism is not to be equated with pragmatism." Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 85-89. Nehamas also argues against attributing to Nietzsche a pragmatic theory of truth. Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, 42-73.


69. Clark, however, does not find the "new Nietzscheans" to offer a convincing alternative to Heidegger—that if the discordance between art and truth is not resolved in Nietzsche one needs to find a way beyond him. She charts then a rather unusual course in using Nietzsche against the
deconstructionists in defending a traditional form of philosophic discourse. She contends that, insofar as this philosophy of the future involves an emphasis on falsification and the denial of truth, it did not even have much of a future in Nietzsche's thought. Following Kaufman and Wilcox she argues that in Nietzsche's final position he rejects truth only in terms of correspondence to the thing-in-itself. She claims, however, to better account for his apparent denial of truth by paying closer attention to the development of his thought. In her view, Nietzsche drops the "falsification thesis" with its denial of truth, so important to the radical interpretations, in the last six works, and thus, puts forth as truths claims about history, philosophy, the ascetic ideal and the affirmation of life. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 95-125.

70. The connection between Yeats and Nietzsche has often been noted. Erich Heller finds Nietzsche's prophecy in "The Second Coming" while drawing out the "affinity between Yeats's sensibility and Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy." "Yeats and Nietzsche" in The Importance of Nietzsche, 127-140. For a in-depth discussion of Nietzsche's influence upon literary modernists, and upon Yeats and "The Second Coming" in particular, see John Burt Foster, Jr., Heirs to Dionysus: A Nietzschean Current in Literary Modernism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 39-144, 99.

71. "Western history has now begun to enter into the completion (Vollendung) of that period we call the modern, and which is defined by the fact that man becomes the measure and the center of beings. Man is what lies at the bottom of all beings; that is, in modern terms, at the bottom of all objectification and representability (Vorstellbarkeit). No matter how sharply Nietzsche pits himself time and again against Descartes, whose philosophy grounds modern metaphysics, he turns against Descartes only because the latter still does not posit man as subiectum in a way that is complete and decisive enough. The representation of the subiectum as ego, the I, thus the 'egoistic' interpretation of the subiectum, is still not subjective enough for Nietzsche. Modern metaphysics first comes to the full and final determination of its essence in the doctrine of the Übermensch, the doctrine of man's absolute preeminence among beings. In that doctrine, Descartes celebrates his supreme triumph." Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche. Volume Four: Nihilism, translated by Frank A. Capuzzi and edited by David F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1982), 28. This text is a translation of Heidegger's Nietzsche, Band II (Pfullingen: Verlag Günther Neske, 1961), 61-62.

72. Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, 156.

73. Nishitani explains that the totality or "deity" Nietzsche refers to in the second form "may be something like the God of 'pantheism,' immanent in the world." My treatment of these three forms of nihilism is indebted here to Nishitani's account. Keiji Nishitani, The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism, trans. Graham Parkes with Setsuko Aihara (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990, 34-35.

74. Clark, at least, reads this passage in this way. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 110.

75. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 2.

76. "The thought of the Ideas and the interpretation of Being posited here are creative in and of themselves. Plato's work is not yet Platonism. The "true world" is not yet the object of a doctrine; it is the power of Dasein; it is what lights up in becoming present; it is pure radiance without cover." Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, 205.


79. In each of the final three stages Wilcox "recognizes elements from periods in his own development." Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche*, 123. Clark follows Wilcox in finding the final three stages to mark a development in Nietzsche's thought. "That each of the final three stages represent a stage of Nietzsche's own thinking fits best with the obvious break between the first and the second half of the list in terms of the explicitness of Nietzsche's allusions (and probably, with his estimate of his own importance." Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 112.

80. Nietzsche's reference to Comte (indirectly) and to positivism (explicitly) in stage 4 of the aphorism under discussion are benign—even uncharacteristically gentle. The true world, being, the metaphysical absolute, has neither been attained nor known, we are told. And if absolute reality has never been attained or known authentically, how can it conceivably console us? To what could it obligate us? Certainly redemption is not to be found here either. "To what could something unknown obligate us?" Nietzsche calls this positivistic thrust and its disavowal of dualism, the 'first yawn of reason.'" Bernd Magnus, *Nietzsche's Existential Imperative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 136.


82. Clark, *Nietzsche: On Truth and Philosophy*, 112. It would seem that in both Clark and Heidegger's account, Nietzsche's early work, that which precedes his early positivism, that is, both *The Birth of Tragedy* and the "Truth and Lie" essay, are too indebted to Schopenhauer to mark Nietzsche first path into his own philosophy. . . In Clark's account, in both *The Birth of Tragedy* and the "Truth and Lie" essay, Nietzsche is still under the sway of Schopenhauer's representational account of knowledge and still thinks of truth in terms of a "metaphysical correspondence theory," i.e., if there is truth it can only be in terms of correspondence to the thing-in-itself. The only difference: "Regarding truth, BT and TL differ only in relation to BT's claim that Dionysian experience alone gives us access to things-in-themselves" (90). The further development that marks Nietzsche's positivism: "Human, All Too Human already differs significantly from TL. The latter's denial of truth shared with BT the aim of devaluing the truths accessible through science and common sense and establishing the cognitive superiority of art. Nietzsche completely repudiates this aim in HA" (95).


85. "The empirical world is regarded as illusory, for instance, if one insists that empirical science cannot give us truth, or that human truths are really illusions. As I have argued, we find such claims in GS and BG coupled with a denial of a metaphysical world. Therefore, Nietzsche would include GS and BG in stage 5. If this is correct, Nietzsche must have overcome the denial of truth found in these works." Clark, *Nietzsche: On Truth and Philosophy*, 113.


100. Clark reads Nietzsche as a kind of neo-Kantian. "As I will interpret him, Nietzsche agrees with Kant that we cannot know things-in-themselves, and thus that, contrary to Descartes, the truth we are capable of discovering does not satisfy the metaphysical correspondence theory. Nietzsche is anti-Kantian, however, in that he denies the very conceivability of the thing-in-itself. It nevertheless seems appropriate to call his position 'neo-Kantian' because I believe he arrived at it through his acceptance of, and long reflection upon, Kant's denial of our knowledge of things-in-themselves, and that he was the first of many who criticized the whole idea of the thing-in-itself to draw the correct conclusion concerning our concept of truth from this criticism: that its content does not go beyond what I have called 'the minimal correspondence theory,' and that it does not allow us to make sense of the possibility that a theory that fully satisfies our cognitive interests could still be false." *Nietzsche On Truth and Philosophy*, 61.

101. Clark's interpretation that the final development in Nietzsche's thought does not emerge clearly until *On the Genealogy of Morals* runs into the problem of how to account for *Zarathustra*, since Nietzsche, in *Ecce Homo*, regarded this work as his most important, and clearly, in "The History of an Error" places Zarathustra at the end, outside the narrative of the error. Her solution then: "In fact, I think he had substantially overcome his denial of truth already in his two previous books, Z and BG. Although I have so far placed BG in stage 5, I think it largely belongs to stage 6 . . . , but that it still retains some formulations from stage 5 (e.g., BG 4 and BG 25). As the passage on the "True World" makes clear, because Nietzsche places *Zarathustra* in stage 6, we must presume that he would place all his later works, including BG, in stage 6. My interpretation can
explain this in the following way. By the time he wrote Zarathustra, Nietzsche had pretty much overcome the ascetic ideal (and certainly recognized the need to overcome it), which had provided the motivation for his earlier view that truths are illusions. The spirit of Z and later works therefore belongs to stage 6. But it is hardly surprising that a few of the formulations would be holdovers from stage 5, especially in BG where Nietzsche is in the midst of formulating reasons for the necessity of moving to stage 6 (e.g., BG 15)." Nietzsche On Truth and Philosophy, 114.


106. This question opens up an intriguing reflection on Nietzsche's thinking of tragedy in David Farrell Krell, Postponements: Woman, Sensuality, and Death in Nietzsche (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 34.


110. Megill takes this position in his treatment of Thus Spoke Zarathustra. "Instead of reasons, Nietzsche gives us images; instead of arguments, allegories. . . The central image of Zarathustra is eternal return. Around this image are located a number of other images, of which the most important are the Superman, the will to power, and the Higher Man. But Nietzsche fails to make
these images part of any coherent argument. Each image constitutes a kind of vision, something
that, without our knowing why, simply comes to be. . . . Zarathustra did not argue; he merely spoke" (61-62). Megill then links this account of Nietzsche’s mythmaking to a critique of the aesthetic
turn. "In Nietzsche’s later writing, this aesthetic conception of myth takes over completely . . . But
there is a serious problem in this final aestheticization of myth. As we have seen, in The Birth of
Tragedy Nietzsche views myth as providing a solid foundation for the process of aesthetic creativity
by which all culture lives. . . . We now find, however, that what was viewed as the ground of art is
itself a form of art. All ground is lost, and we are left with a free-floating universe.” Megill,
Prophets of Extremity, 100-101.

111. Peter Sloterdijk, Thinker on Stage: Nietzsche’s Materialism. Translated by Jamie Owen
Daniel (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 12.

112. Eberhard Scheiffele suggests such a strategy is a "primary feature of Nietzsche’s
perspectivism: namely, the ‘estranging’ of what is one’s own by questioning it from behind
(hinterfragen), from the perspective of the foreign." Eberhard Scheiffele, “Questioning One’s ‘Own’
from the perspective of the Foreign” in Nietzsche and Asian Thought, ed. Graham Parkes (Chicago:


114. As Taminiaux puts it, "Schopenhauer’s metaphysics is nothing but an attempt to translate
in ordinary language, in concepts, what music expresses intuitively." Taminiaux, "Art and Truth in
Schopenhauer and Nietzsche,” 92.

115. Clark seems to read The Birth of Tragedy in this way. Thus both The Birth of Tragedy
and the "Truth and Lie" essay are still committed to Schopenhauer’s representational view of
knowledge: if there is truth, it can only be in terms of correspondence to the thing-in-itself. Where
"Truth and Lie" departs from The Birth of Tragedy is that in the latter Nietzsche still believes
knowledge of truth is possible: knowledge of the contradictory essence of the Will is disclosed in
Dionysian music. Nietzsche departs only a little from Schopenhauer in that not all art discloses the
thing-in-itself. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 63-93.


117. Richard Schacht tells us that "this means for him both that life is essentially artistic, and
that art is an expression of the fundamental nature of life.” Richard Schacht, Nietzsche, 482.

118. Here the Kaufmann translation is allowed to stand but not without some misgivings.
Kaufmann renders Rausch here as "intoxication" and elsewhere as "ecstasy" [in (BT 2) cited in the
paragraph below]. Rausch is translated by others sometimes as "frenzy" or as "rapture."
"Intoxication" is certainly appropriate for it does allow for connotations that could be connected to
Dionysus, the god of wine. Still there is some hesitation for it does not seem that the physiological
phenomenon that Nietzsche has in mind is a mere drunkenness or inebriation. "Frenzy" seems like
a sort of nervous agitation. "Rapture," which Krell uses in his translation of Heidegger’s Nietzsche,
seems better than "frenzy" but seems needed for Verzückung which comes into play later.
Kaufmann renders Verzückung "ecstasy," but this seems needed for Entzückung which also comes
into play later and which Kaufmann also renders as "ecstasy." It seems that if one is going to use
different words where Nietzsche uses different words, one has no choice but to use "rapture" and
"ecstasy" for Verzückung and Entzückung, leaving "intoxication" for Rausch. Nevertheless, if the
physiological phenomenon that Nietzsche suggests the Dionysian is analogous to is the result of a pharmaceutical action one might also think of "rush." However, although "rush" sounds closest to Rausch, it does not seem strong enough. "Ecstasy," on the other hand, might be the best choice since the physiological phenomenon associated with the postmodern pharmakon that goes by that name seems (from what I have been told) especially analogous to the Dionysian experience.

119. Schacht finds a problem in the dual role of art as supplement and yet also that which first brings nature forth—as expressions of the art impulses of nature herself. "Life" thus is cast in a dual role, with the consequence that the relation of art to it is also a dual one. It is difficult to conceive of this dual relation coherently and faithfully to Nietzsche's representations of each aspect of it, however, without the two sides of it falling irreparably apart. Can the world of art in the narrower sense be thought of as a world 'supplementing the reality of nature, placed beside it for its overcoming,' and therefore distinct from it and contrasting to it—and at the same time as the creation of this very nature itself, expressing its own basic 'artistic impulses,' and therefore fundamentally homogeneous and identical with it? In The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche tries to have it both ways; but it is far from clear that it is possible to do so.* Schacht, Nietzsche, 484.

120. Sallis notes (footnote 8) that Nietzsche may have considered adding to The Birth of Tragedy a more philologically oriented discussion of Homer. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 22-25.

121. Sallis also notes that this determination of the beautiful as shining is not all that different from Kant or even Plato. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 27.


125. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 35.

126. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 42.

127. Sallis, Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy, 42.

128. What has tragedy to do then with Dionysus? This question, Jean-Pierre Vernant tells us puzzled even the Greeks of the fifth century. Although the performances were held during the festival of Dionysus, at the theatre consecrated to Dionysus, with the place of honor reserved for the priest of Dionysus, all the tragedies but one take as their subjects the heroic legends of epic poetry, and thus seemed to have nothing, strictly speaking to do with Dionysus. Vernant argues against attempts by scholars to link tragedy with Dionysus through a connection to the past and thus through religious origins. Instead, in a manner undoubtedly influenced by Nietzsche's analysis, Vernant argues that "tragedy's connection with Dionysus lies, not so much in roots that, for the most part, elude us, but rather in whatever was new in what tragedy introduced, in whatever constituted its modernity for fifth-century Greece and, even more, for us" (187). What was new, he goes on to say, was the introduction of a tragic consciousness, in which man and his actions were presented not as stable realities but as problems, unanswerable questions, enigmatic riddles. The
heroes extolled in the epics now becomes a subject of debate, and through this, the individual Greek discovers himself to be a problem. Finally, the innovation of tragedy, was the invention of a "literary genre that presented fiction on stage as if it were real," which, he goes on, "could only make its impact within the framework of the cult of Dionysus, the god of illusions, confusion, and the constant muddling of reality and appearance, truth and fiction." Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, 202.


130. Sallis adds that one might tend to call this difference contradiction, as even Nietzsche had. Nevertheless, "it will be necessary to ask whether this difference, as manifested in the Bacchae and thought in *The Birth of Tragedy*, can be sufficiently delimited by the concept of contradiction; or whether this concept does not already constrain it within the very system that it would exceed and disrupt, constituting thus only a metaphysical double of the Dionysian." Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 47. It only figures that in violating the principle of identity the principle of contradiction would also be violated. Dionysus is both god and mortal, man and woman, stranger and also most familiar, terrible and most gentle.

131. Vernant thus describes the mask of Dionysus: "The mask, with wide staring eyes that fix one like those of the Gorgon, expresses and epitomizes all the different forms that the terrible divine presence may assume. It is a mask whose strange stare exerts a fascination, but it is hollow, empty, indicating the absence of a god who is somewhere else but who tears one out of oneself, makes one lose one’s bearings in one’s everyday, familiar life, and who takes possession of one just as if this empty mask was now pressed to one’s own face, covering and transforming it." Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, 396.

132. Sallis notes that in the Bacchae Teiresias uses the word pharmakon in its double sense to describe the madness of Pentheus, the inversion of Dionysian mania. Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 51, n. 9.

133. "How one interprets this disruptive, abysmal identity will determine not only how tragedy is to be thought but also how it is to be (dis)placed in its opposition to that other possibility that Nietzsche calls Socraticism but already begins to think as Platonism or metaphysics, as in the texts of the late 1880’s in which he proclaims an end, and inversion and displacement. The turn that will be even more at issue a century later—at the end or closure of metaphysics—will never have been independent of the abyss with which thought is confronted by the Dionysian." Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 52.

134. Sallis cites this note from 1869: "In those orgiastic festivals of Dionysus there prevailed such a degree of being-outside-oneself (Aussersich-sein), of ekstasis, that men acted and felt like transformed and enchanted beings." And then from the lecture "The Greek Music Drama," presented in 1870: "The all-powerful, suddenly appearing effect of spring here augments also the life-forces to such excess (ubermass) that ecstatic states (ekstatische Zustände), visions, and the belief in one’s own enchantment breaks out everywhere. . . . and here is the cradle of drama." Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 53.

135. "Such is, then, ecstatic logic: a logic of reiterated duality, of the duality of transgression and disruption and of disruption and reinstatement. It is a logic to be written only by way of a certain duality, which has already been in play without my having, up to this point, marked it, a duality of effacement and re(inscription), a crossing what is said with an unsaying—in short, a


139. "How I regret now that in those days I still lacked the courage (or immodesty?) to permit myself in every way an individual language of my own for such individual views and hazards—and that instead I tried laboriously to express by means of Schopenhauerian and Kantian formulas strange and new valuations which were basically at odds with Kant's and Schopenhauer's spirit and taste!" (*BT* SC 6).

140. Sallis notes that some letters from the time of the writing of *The Birth of Tragedy* seems to confirm Schopenhauer's influence, but then notes that Nietzsche's praise is for the man and not the thinker. Furthermore, he shows in those notes that there was a distrust of Schopenhauer's system from the beginning. Nietzsche had already unmasked Schopenhauer's distinction between will and representation as only another guise for Kant's system. Sallis demonstrates that Nietzsche attacks Schopenhauer on four sides: 1) as in Kant the concept of *thing-in-itself* is merely a concealed category, posited by thought; 2) attacks Schopenhauer's identification of *thing-in-itself* as will; 3) shows that the attributes of will as distinguished by Schopenhauer are simply binary opposites of appearances, and thus the distinction between will and world as representation cannot be sustained—already the "true world" has become a fable—will is no *thing-in-itself*; 4) since our entire instinctive life is known to us only through representation, will cannot be taken as key to knowledge of all things—there is no path to the primal one. Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 60-67.


144. "The Dionysian is such that it cannot be presented as such. It is not an original of which music would present images but rather that excess that music can only let resound. It is not an origin set over against the individual who might represent it, even if as thing-in-itself. It is nothing other than the very round of ecstasy into which one can be drawn, the circuit of transgression, disruption, reinstatement, which in its very wavering between determination and indetermination can never be *something present*. The Dionysian is an excessive figure, a figure in excess of (the) metaphysics (of presence), echoing, resounding, from beyond being." Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 75.


152. Sallis thus remarks: "these images serve both to reveal and to conceal: they both set the Dionysian before one's eyes, make it visible, present as shining in the distance that which cannot as such be presented, be made present; and yet, thus projected into the distance, in the very radiance of their shining, the images limit that vision, draw one back from that gaze into the abyss that would be no vision at all of anything present." Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 98.

153. Sallis outlines Euripides's "correction" of Aeschylus's *The Libation Bearers* in *Electra*. Both dramas enact the same story of Orestes' return from exile to carry out with Electra's help revenge against their mother, but Euripides rewrites the story so it can be made intelligible. To begin with, he puts the prologue before the exposition in the mouth of one who can be trusted. The prehistory is thus given in a prologue by a trustworthy farmer. For Nietzsche this brings in the "man of everyday life." This not only brought the spectator onto the stage, images of the everyday replace images of the Dionysian. Tragedy is withdrawn from the abyss. Moreover, Euripides changes the ending. In *The Libation Bearers* it seems Orestes is not guilty, but *Electra* ends with judgment of guilt by Phoebus. As this judgment comes down from a god the story ends, as it began, in trustworthiness. The final exchange between Orestes and Clytemestra in *Aeschylus's drama* is rewritten as taking place between Electra and Clytemestra. Electra's discourse, Sallis contends, is the beginning of dialectic: where Aeschylus was enigmatic, Euripides tried to bring clarity in posing arguments and counterarguments. Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, 112-121.

154. As Taminiaux characterizes Nietzsche's view: "Life itself as will is inherently characterized by a tension which cannot and should not be surmounted. In other words in Life the One is not dissociable from the manifold, Identity is not dissociable from differentiation. Or, more concretely, invention or creation is not dissociable from destruction. But then the denial of the manifold, of differentiation, of time amounts to a denial of life itself. In other words, truth as it is conceived of by theoretical optimism in the way of a pure intelligibility devoid of any contradiction and even of any ambiguity, amounts to some sort of death. The will to truth in that sense is a denial of life." Taminiaux, "Art and Truth in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche," 99.


159. The *Philosophenbuch* is the title given by the editors of the *Musarionausgabe* (Vol. VI, pp. 1-119) to a collection of Nietzsche's notes of 1872-1875. Under this title were included four subdivisions: "The Last Philosopher. The Philosopher. Reflections on the Struggle between Art and Knowledge" (1872), "The Philosopher as Cultural Physician" (1873), "On Truth and Lie in an Extramoral Sense" (1873), and "The Struggle between Science and Wisdom" (1875). These notes are edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the early 1870s* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1979).


162. De Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 89.


166. De Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 111.


171. "A denial of both reference and truth completely severs the connection between language and reality, confusing the human condition with one that exists only at the extreme limits of madness." Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 74.

172. Breazeale makes this point: "A survey of Nietzsche's published remarks on the problem of knowledge and the nature of truth reveals a superficial inconsistency. On the one hand, he often asserts that human beings are unable to obtain genuine knowledge, that we are condemned to illusions, lies, perspectives, and interpretations; on the other, there are many characteristic passages in which truths are spoken of as instruments for achieving human ends and in which knowing is defined as the actual process by which man makes his world habitable. Occasionally both views are present in a single sentence, such as the following: 'What then in the end are all of man's truths? They are only his irrefutable errors' (GS 307)." Breazeale, *Philosophy and Truth*, Introduction, xxxii.

174. Clark takes this view. "Knowledge of the conventions of speakers' languages is, of course, a great practical help for figuring out the meaning of an utterance. But knowledge of these conventions is neither necessary nor sufficient for knowing most of the truths we want to know. The arbitrary character of these conventions is a triviality from which nothing important about truth follows." Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 69.

175. Because of the role which syntactical categories play in structuring our thought and which semantic unities (concepts) play in constructing our world, Nietzsche concluded that knowledge could never be any more purely descriptive than language itself. And for him, the fundamental character of language is far more clearly revealed in the self-consciously creative use which the artist makes of language than by the putatively objective and literal propositions of natural science: language is rhetoric. It is not a transparent, neutral medium for the communication of timeless truths or the reflection of "things in themselves." In concepts and words men construct a second, more human, nature for themselves—an artfully constructed world which is the greatest testimony to the fundamental human power of imagination (or, as Nietzsche called it, 'the drive toward the formation of metaphors')." Breazeale, Philosophy and Truth, Introduction, xxxv.

176. "This is to say, for Nietzsche language is merely a sum of concepts which are themselves the artistic imposition of an image or hieroglyphic sign upon other images. There is no originary presence at the inception of language; instead at the origin of language stands the primal force of the artist whose creative power is recognized in the primal process of world-production as an infinite regress of images." Schrift, Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation, 125.

177. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy 70.

178. The theme of Derrida's "White Mythology" concerns the concept of metaphor as one of the guiding "philosophemes" of metaphysics. "Metaphor remains, in all its essential characteristics, a classical philosopheme, a metaphysical concept" (219). The deconstruction that Derrida undertakes in this essay consists in demonstrating that "metaphor is less in the philosophical text (and in the rhetorical text coordinated with it) than the philosophical text is within metaphor" (258). Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology" in Margins of Philosophy, 207-271.

179. "Metaphor, therefore, is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular reappropriation of literal, proper meaning. . . . Henceforth the entire teleology of meaning, which constructs the philosophical concept of metaphor, coordinates metaphor with the manifestation of truth, with the production of truth as presence without veil . . . " Derrida, "White Mythology," 270.


181. "Knowing is therefore founded upon operations which are usually dismissed as mere rhetorical tropes: upon transferring things from one sphere to an entirely different one (metaphor); upon confusing a thing with its properties (metonymy); upon taking a part for a whole (synecdoche); and upon illicit generalizations and abrupt shifts from one subject to another (metastasis)." Breazeale, Philosophy and Truth, Introduction, xxxv.

182. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 77-85.


190. Kofman offers this explanation, linking Baubo to Dionysus: “Bauho is the equivalent of *koilia*, another of the "improper" words used in Greek to designate the female sex. Baubon, the symbol of the male sex, derives from Baubo. Through the intermediary of Baubon, the story of Baubo crosses that of Dionysus. On the one hand, Dionysus is born in Nysa, at the spot where Hades carried off Persephone; on the other, when Dionysus was looking for the road to Hades, he encountered Proshymnos with whom he had unspeakable relationships. After Proshymnos's death, Dionysus replaced him with a figwood phallus as a sort of consolation: such an instrument seems to have been called *baubon*. Baubon and Baubo, as personifications of the two sexes, appeared under this aspect in the Eleusian rites where Baubo is an animated *koila*. In the Eleusian mysteries, the female sexual organ is exalted as the symbol of fertility and a guarantee of the regeneration and eternal return of all things.” Kofman, “Baubo: Theological Perversion and Fetishism,” 197.


192. The phrase is borrowed from Gayatri Spivak, from the preface to her translation of *Of Grammatology*, xxxvi.

193. Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche’s Styles*, 38/39. The translation, which reads: "And [Nietzsche's] style protects the presence, the content..." seems to have this backwards. Derrida’s text reads: "Le style peut donc aussi de son éperon protéger contre la menace terrifiante, aveuglante et mortelle (de ce) qui se présente, se donne à voir avec entêtement: la présence, donc, le contenu, la chose même, le sens, la vérité—à moins que ce ne soit déjà l'abîme défloré en tout ce dévoilement de la différence." The colon, omitted in translation, announces that what is to follow is that which obstinately thrusts itself into view, and which (Nietzsche’s) style must protect against.

194. Explaining Nietzsche's "experimentalism” Kaufmann relates: "The key terms that Nietzsche uses time and again are now *Experiment* and now *Versuch*; but it is well to keep in mind that *Versuch*, too, need not mean merely "attempt" but can have the characteristic scientific sense of "experiment": it is quite proper in German to speak of a scientist as making a *Versuch.* To be sure, Kaufmann does caution that "Experiment is for Nietzsche not quite what it is for most other philosophers or scientists.” Still, the *Versuchische* of Nietzsche’s thought is perhaps tied too closely here to "experiment" in the "characteristic scientific sense,” whatever that is. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche:
Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, 85, 89.

Karsten Harries provides more insight into this character of Nietzsche's thought: "Versuchen means first of all "to attempt." To make a Versuch is to try something, uncertain of whether such trial will prove a success. A scientific experiment is a Versuch in this sense. We engage in experiments to test our conjectures; such testing presupposes a readiness to retract one's presuppositions and to rethink one's assumptions. Nietzsche's texts invite such hermeneutic experimentation.

But Versucher means first of all not a scientific researcher but a tempter. The devil, who tempted Adam and Eve with the promise that their eyes would be opened and they would be like God, knowing good and evil, is the Versucher. Nietzsche's sailors, it would seem, are of the devil's party, tempted by and tempting with the promise of truth. But the devil is only the mask in which Dionysus presents himself to Christians subject to the spirit of revenge, this 'tempter god and born pied piper of conscience whose voice knows how to descend into the netherworld of every soul,' this god of explorers and philosophers to whom Nietzsche offered his firstborn as 'a sacrifice' (BGE 295)." Karsten Harries, "The Philosopher at Sea," in Nietzsche's New Seas: Explorations in Philosophy, Aesthetics, Politics, 21-44, 30.


196. Book V of The Gay Science occupies a problematic or crucial position in Clark's account of the periods of Nietzsche's development. Since the final development, for Clark, takes place only in the final six books, beginning thus with On the Genealogy of Morals in 1887, GS V comes at a strategic place. See, Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 95-125.

197. It is for this reason that Nehamas thinks that Nietzsche does not have a pragmatist theory of truth. "But it seems to me that if Nietzsche accepts any theory of truth at all here, this is the correspondence theory itself. He claims that our basic beliefs, whatever their value to life, are false; this is far from rejecting that theory. On the contrary, it seems to presuppose that very theory and to express his pessimism about our prospect of living both well and in truth." Nehamas further argues against attributing to Nietzsche any "theory of truth." His conclusion is that Nietzsche "simply cautions against assuming that truth and knowledge, whatever they are, are always beneficial and that ignorance and falsehood always cause harm." Because a belief is beneficial is not necessarily to say that it is true. False beliefs are sometimes more beneficial than true ones. "Nietzsche claims that many of our most central beliefs are false, and that, far from hurting us, these beliefs have so far produced some of the greatest benefits. But he never argues that their being beneficial makes them true." Nehamas, Nietzsche: Life as Literature, 53-55.


199. See Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 117-125.

200. "But does even this interpretation account for Nietzsche's strong view that untruth is a condition of life? Suppose we come to understand that realism in painting is only one among many possible genres: can't we then simply give up the belief that realistic paintings alone represent the visual world as it really is? And can't we develop the same tolerant attitude in regard to whatever enterprise occupies us? What we need to do, one might urge at this point, is to become more self-conscious and less arrogant about our practices and modes of life, to become aware of their contingent bases, and perhaps to abandon the goal of ever representing the world as it really is. This new modesty might well do away with falsification. In that case Nietzsche's view that we must inevitably falsify the world in which we live would appear to be little more than
another dispensable hyperbole." Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, 57.

201. It depends, once again, upon to what extent one reads "On Truth and Lie" to be still committed to the existence of a thing-in-itself, however unknowable. Clearly, by the mid 1880's Nietzsche no longer considers the notion of the thing-in-itself to be even sensible. Nietzsche's position would then be at least that of stage five of "The History of an Error."

202. Nehamas raises such a possibility. We falsify because we are "eternal children," which simply means that we can never outgrow the condition of having to outgrow our truths. We never reach the hard ground that would terminate our inquiry. Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, 57-61.

203. For Dewey one of the main philosophical evils is that of "the fallacy of disguised selective emphasis." John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (New York: Dover, 1958), 23.


206. Wilcox presents the "antinomy" in Nietzsche's thought. "In Chapters II and III we explored the depth of Nietzsche's cognitivism—including, inter alia, his insistence upon honesty, his claim that Christianity is based upon error and lies, and his statements that the value of a man depends upon his ability to live with the truth. Now in the two preceeding chapters we have explicated some of the senses in which he believed that there is no truth—there is no truth about any thing-in-itself, and no truth about the phenomenal world which is not a perspectival interpretation, simplification, and 'falsification.' Is Nietzsche then involved in a fundamental contradiction—does he both advocate truth and deny its possibility?" Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche*, 155.

207. Nehamas draws out the irony in Nietzsche's hyperbolic tone. "It is, then, just this personal, Socratic element in Nietzsche's project that accounts for his exaggerated, swaggering, polemical, self-conscious and self-aggrandizing, un-Socratic style. Both desperately need their audience's attention. Socrates tried to secure it in conversation, through his ironic humility, his arrogant self-effacement, which draws people either unsuspectingly or angrily into argument—but which in either case draws them in. Nietzsche's attempts to attract attention through his thick style, which is often insulting and in bad taste, but which never lets his readers forget that the argument they are getting involved in is always in more than one sense personal." Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, 27. Nietzsche's irony is the reverse of Socrates': whereas Socrates' humility serves the greatest arrogance, Nietzsche's boasts front a modest position. Also, these declarations of truth would also have to be considered in the light of Nietzsche's thinking concerning war, which would have to be traced back to his earliest writings which concern the *agon*. For there to be a good contest both sides must be relatively equal. Thus in the war against Christianity boasts that *Zarathustra* is the highest book, the greatest gift to humankind (*EH* Preface, 4). Might it similarly be an exaggeration when Nietzsche speaks of Zarathustra's new "truths," another rhetorical barb aimed at the tradition founded upon a belief in truth?

208. Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 137.
209. "As I interpret him, Nietzsche rejects metaphysics not simply because it lacks truth, but because it expresses the nihilistic ascetic ideal. In rejecting metaphysical truth and the thing-in-itself, therefore, he rejects not merely a theory of truth, but also a life-devaluing ideal and set of valuations that he claims constitute a threat to human life. This is why Nietzsche still screams at us to the end to pay attention to what he has to say about truth. Not because he thinks there is no truth, but because if we understand why philosophers have been caught up in the dream of metaphysical truth, we understand something he thinks important for our future. In fact, I will argue that according to Nietzsche's analysis of the ascetic ideal, his own earlier denial of truth is one of its expressions." Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 23.


211. Heidegger, Nietzsche, I, "Author's Foreword to All Volumes."


213. "In saving Nietzsche, Heidegger loses him too; he wants at the same time to save him and to let go of him. At the very moment of affirming the uniqueness of Nietzsche's thinking, he does everything he can to show that it repeats the mightiest (and therefore the most general) schema of metaphysics. When he is pretending to rescue Nietzsche from this or that distortion—that of the Nazis, for example—he does so with categories which can themselves serve to distort—namely, with that opposition between essential and inessential thinkers, authentic thinkers and inauthentic ones, and with the definition of the essential thinker as someone selected, chosen, marked out or, I would even say, 'signed'. Signed—by what? By whom? By nobody—by the history of the truth of Being." Derrida, "Interpreting Signatures," 254.


216. But in terms of this antifoundationalism, Nietzsche's characterization of the philosophers of the future would fit a wide spectrum of twentieth-century philosophical movements from the hermeneutics that evolves from Heidegger's attempts to resolve the discordance between art and truth, to pragmatism (especially as interpreted by Rorty), to recent Anglo-American philosophers following in the wake of Wittgenstein, not to mention that trajectory of thought opened up by the French Nietzscheans. Cornel West sees Nietzsche as prefiguring such a wide spectrum of philosophers including Quine, Sellars, Goodman, and Putnam. Cornel West, "Nietzsche's Prefiguration of Postmodern American Philosophy," Boundary 2 9.10 (Spring/Fall 1981), 242.


218. Megill's conclusion regarding Nietzsche's aestheticism—that the Zarathustrian mind "demands that we accept its view of the universe; it does not attempt to argue for such an acceptance"—thus misses entirely das Versucherische of Nietzsche's thought. Megill, Prophets of Extremity, 62.
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