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Nietzsche on Truth and Overcoming

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NIETZSCHE ON TRUTH AND OVERCOMING

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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THESIS ABSTRACT:

Nietzsche on Truth and Overcoming traces the development of Friedrich Nietzsche's epistemic criticism. Nietzsche's outright denial of the existence of truth is grounded in his claim that stable metaphysical entities do not exist. The following inquiry examines Nietzsche's method of doubting which compels him to dismiss "being" as a fictitious "perspectival falsification".

Nietzsche's denial of the reality of pre-existent "being" creates problems with communicating what he means through normal language. Nietzsche on Truth and Overcoming elucidates the problems which Nietzsche creates through his uprooting of being and provides Nietzsche's hint as to where mankind might still look for the "most real", in art. Through his conception of the Dionysian artist, Nietzsche offers us the tragic annihilator of the "all-too-human" fictions of linguistic truth. This thesis thereby concludes that the Dionysian artist is Nietzsche's "answer" to epistemology, for the tragic wisdom of the Dionysian provides a glimpse into primal reality precisely because he affirms existence in spite of not knowing fiction as the logical opposite of truth.

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INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper will be concerned primarily with Nietzsche's criticism of epistemology and his appraisal of truth. For a thorough consideration of Nietzsche's inquiry into the status of truth, it will be necessary to examine Nietzsche's conception of language and its relation to metaphysics. Insofar as Nietzsche characterizes truth as a "species of falsity", this thesis will disclose Nietzsche's conception of the aesthetic dimension of truth. A large portion of this project will thus be oriented around the grounding of Nietzsche's claims concerning "the truth about truth" and the reality of reality. It will also be prudent to inquire into the status of "truth values" and "moral values" and the status which both of these "values" hold in Nietzsche's philosophy. All of this should only be done, however, after a brief preface regarding the sources of Nietzsche's thought.

The body of Nietzsche's thought on epistemology comes to us in:

- A. the books which Nietzsche himself published or intended to publish:

The Birth of Tragedy (1872) (BT)
Human, All too Human (1878) (HA)
The Dawn (1881) (D)
→The Gay Science (1882) (GS)
→Thus Spake Zarathustra (1883-85) (Z)
Beyond Good and Evil (1886) (BGE)
The Genealogy of Morals (1887) (GM)
→The AntiChrist (1888) (published in 1895) (A)
Twilight of the Idols (1888) (published in 1889)
(TI)

B. Other works published:

Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks (1873)
(PTG)
On Truth and Falsity (1873) (TF)

C. The material from Nietzsche's notebooks published as
The Will To Power.

While different scholars have placed various amounts of weight on the above "categories" in interpreting Nietzsche's¹ thought, I think it is most appropriate to rely on the books which Nietzsche published (or wanted to publish) as the best way of gauging his philosophic activity. There has been a plenitude of misinterpretation and outright misrepresentation of Nietzsche's thought in the recent past. The most outlandish is the Nazi's adoption of Nietzsche as their party-philosopher through the "scholarship" of Baumlér who relied predominantly on fragments from Nietzsche's unpublished notes. It is doubtful that Nietzsche, who asserted that "The anti-semité lies as a matter of principle", could have been so distorted, however, without the meddling of his sister, Elisabeth.

1

For citation purposes, note that the aforementioned abbreviations will be used with the appropriate book or chapter numbers in Roman numerals and the appropriate section numbers in arabic numerals; e.g. Thus Spake Zarathustra, Book 2, section 12, = (Z II 12); citations from On Truth and Falsity will be from page numbers, as this essay is not conveniently divided into sections. Textual citation from other authors will be noted in a similar way, but I will use the author's name in lieu of the title, with the appropriate page number(s).

Elisabeth Nietzsche intentionally held up publication of Ecce Homo and The Antichrist. Seeking to build herself up as the sole spokesperson for her "beloved brother's" philosophy and further her "cultural" status in Germany in the 1920's and 30's, she portrayed Friedrich Nietzsche as an anti-semite thereby lending "philosophic" support to her political aspirations of anti-semitism both in Germany and in Paraguay (Kaufmann p. 43). Elisabeth went so far as to claim The Will to Power was Nietzsche's crowning philosophic achievement, when it was only an assemblage of his unpublished notes which she took the liberty of editing and doctoring.

Walter Kaufmann cites Elisabeth Nietzsche as propagating a tremendous amount of misconception about her brother's work, some recognized, but much also unrecognized even through the late 1970's. Fortunately, for the present inquiry, Elisabeth Nietzsche's role as meddler has not so much affected our access to his thoughts on epistemology as it has on social ethics. Still, it should be noted that The Will To Power was not completed nor planned to be published by Nietzsche himself but is only a large collection of Nietzsche's roughly organized notes, much of which lacks the polished quality of his finished works. The Will To Power does, however, contain helpful and illuminating thoughts on epistemology which complement Nietzsche's published books; one should nonetheless be careful in ascribing isolated

thoughts contained in The Will to Power to Nietzsche's mature positions, as we simply do not know the reasons why Nietzsche chose not to develop further and publish some of his thoughts contained in these notes. Perhaps Nietzsche chose to abandon or omit some of this material from the works which he published himself because he was not satisfied with the content. This is not to suggest that a categorical disclaimer should preface The Will to Power for the interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy. Rather, it is only to suggest that we notice the way which we have come to have these notes and to proceed with caution, always looking for evidence in Nietzsche's own published texts for complementary support of its thought content. Through this way of reading, we can hopefully avoid attributing erroneous epistemic stances to Nietzsche. Some of The Will to Power could be, after all, unscrupulously fished out of Nietzsche's wastebasket.

It is also appropriate to note Nietzsche's later critique of his first book, The Birth of Tragedy. In "A Critical Glance Backward", Nietzsche attacks his firstborn:

as I look at it today my treatise strikes me as quite impossible. It is poorly written, heavy handed, embarrassing...it lacks logical nicety and is so sure of its message that it dispenses with any kind of proof.
(BT later preface III)

Further:

I fumbled along, using terms borrowed from the vocabularies of Kant and Schopenhauer to express value judgements which were in flagrant contradiction to these men! (BT later preface VI)

Evidencing this "flagrant contradiction" we have Nietzsche describing music as the bridge to the noumena:

music is distinguished from all the other arts by the fact that it is not a copy of the phenomenon, or, more accurately, the adequate objectivity of the will, but is the direct copy of the will itself, and therefore represents the metaphysical of everything physical in the world, and the thing-in-itself of every phenomenon.
(BT XVI)

Sometime in 1873 (between On Truth and Lie and Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks), there is a major shift in Nietzsche's thinking about the thing-in-itself which I will trace in this paper, a shift which would later prompt Nietzsche to declare that the thing-in-itself is a contradictory notion.

It is an important theme in this thesis that Nietzsche's thoughts on art remained constant insofar as Nietzsche considered art as "the most real". In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche was precisely trying to proclaim art as the "most real" by ascribing to it the role of peeking into the noumenistic realm; when Nietzsche finally does dismiss the noumena as unreal by claiming "things" are contradictory, he is left with having no possibility for truth as correspondence. Nonetheless, we have the later Nietzsche still asserting "a Dionysian hope"; Nietzsche reaffirms his earlier claims for art as being the "most real", and truth itself becomes a "fable", a "fiction", a kind of art itself. One can therefore surmise that Nietzsche's thoughts on truth changed in the early 70's, but

his appraisal of art maintained its "most real" status throughout his writings.

If one were to formulate a general outline of Nietzsche's epistemology based on The Birth of Tragedy alone, it would clash with the next nine books which Nietzsche intended for publication. In the following year, however, in his unpublished essay, On Truth and Falsity, Nietzsche gives us a clue in which direction his later thoughts would progress. This transition period reveals the seeds of Nietzsche's later propensity to attack the notions of what had before this time passed for "real being". Herein also lies evidence why Nietzsche believed humans are engaged in an ongoing "falsification" process. Through this process of imagining the existence of stable metaphysical entities, Nietzsche thinks man projects truth into existence.

In On Truth and Falsity Nietzsche elucidates why he attacked the ground of the platonic form and the supposition that truth has the capacity to illuminate extra-linguistically. I find no reason to discount this work in helping to explain Nietzsche's later criticisms and suspect that the only reasons why Nietzsche never published it himself were simply due to the facts that: 1) proposing nominalism was hardly an original philosophic enterprise in the 19th century; and 2) the essay itself is very short, less than twenty pages.

Due to Nietzsche's project of attacking what is presumed to be most real as a mere "fiction", we are often left with problems in trying to understand and communicate what Nietzsche means, for it is not always clear where we are left when Nietzsche aborts the metaphysics which are contained implicitly in language. This is not to suggest that Nietzsche simply undermines his own claims to truth by claiming "there is no truth" and is thus easily dismissed. Rather, the method of pointing to the lack of grounded "things" enables him to undermine the prerequisite entities needed for empirical truths to exist. This denial of logically grounded "things" provides an important cornerstone for the theme which pervades his thought: the fundamental dissonance of logico-linguistic thought to reality.

In short, the emphasis of this project is to elucidate Nietzsche's thoughts on truth. Standing in the midst of the death of truth, Nietzsche's thinking and appraisal of reality reveals itself as a distinctly aesthetic worldview. Moreover, in Nietzsche's works we can find an obvious obsession with art both before and after his rejection of the noumena. It may be worthy of asking if all of Nietzsche's attacks on epistemology are not simply out of his pathos for art. While it would be interesting to explore this question, this lies beyond the margins of this project and we should rather start with Nietzsche's

dismissal of Descartes' cogito in chapter one.

CHAPTER ONE: SELF-OVERCOMING

Generally we strive to acquire one emotional stance, one viewpoint for all life situations and events: we usually call that being of a philosophical frame of mind. But rather than making oneself uniform, we may find greater value for the enrichment of knowledge by listening to the soft voice of different life situations; each brings its own views with it. Thus we acknowledge and share the life and nature of many by not treating ourselves like rigid, invariable, single individuals--Human, All too Human (618)

The aim of this chapter is to examine Nietzsche's approach to philosophical inquiry. Nietzsche's attack on epistemology is rooted in his appraisal of the nonexistence of stable metaphysical entities. This creates a problem with the meaning of "truth" and "falsity" in a fundamental sense. Nietzsche's philosophical method takes Descartes' method of doubting into a realm prior to metaphysics, wielding the discerning knife of a psychologist on Descartes himself and (in Nietzsche's case) on Nietzsche himself, dismissing [the ego / the self / the "I" / the subject] as a hollow, albeit useful, superstition and supposition for life and existence.

The fact that one becomes what one is presupposes that one has not the remotest suspicion of what one is.
(EH II 9)

The ego is...a "refined swindle", an "ideal".
(EH III 5)

The subject: this is the term for one belief in a

unity underlying all the different impulses of the highest feeling of reality: we understand this belief as the effect of one cause--we believe so firmly in our belief that for its sake we imagine "truth", "reality", "substantiality" in general--"The subject" is the fiction that many similar states in us are the effect of one substratum: but it is we who first created the "similarity" of these states; our adjusting them and making them similar is the fact, not their similarity (--which ought rather to be denied). (WP 485)

Nietzsche asserts that the ego is a "useful falsification", but it is hardly an inward or internal "fact" of consciousness by which we can reason to other alleged undoubtables. Nietzsche implies that "internal facts" are the result of confused thinking and they are not capable of existing even in principle. While the reality of the ego is a claim out of the "bosom of life", life is no proof for the reality of selfhood. Verily, if one did not believe in the reality of one's self, things would perhaps not go so well--one might wander into traffic or chew off one's own limbs. It seems very probable that without belief in the self, one could not take precautions to prevent one's own demise. Nietzsche thus recognizes the self as the oldest prejudice. It is a prejudice which is indispensable for lifecraft, yet hardly indispensable for philosophical inquiry.

Nietzsche also identifies the profound influence that language has had in maintaining the fictitious "reality" of the self superstition:

The inner world is full of phantoms and will-o-the-wisps: the will is one of them...And as for the ego. That has become a fable, a fiction, a play on words.

(TI VI 3)

Nietzsche, as philologist, still considers other paths of discourse for philosophy that might wrestle away the prejudices perpetrated by the more "biased" tongues:

The strange family resemblance of all Indian, Greek, and German philosophizing is explained easily enough. Where there is affinity of languages, it cannot fail, owing to a common philosophy of grammar--I mean owing to the unconscious domination and guidance by certain grammatical functions--that everything is prepared at the outset for a similar development and sequence of philosophical systems; just as the way seems barred against certain other possibilities of world-interpretation. It is highly probable that philosophers within the domain of the Ural-Altai languages (where the concept of the subject is least developed) look otherwise "into the world", and will be found on paths of thought different from those of the Indo-Germanic peoples and the Muslims. (BGE 20)

While it would be premature in this inquiry to scrutinize extensively Nietzsche's conception of the relation of language to metaphysics, it should be noted that Nietzsche wants us to consider the self as an imagined reality which is propagated through language and social convention. The self is a common belief which loosely fitted organic "unities" have needed to embrace for survival. More specifically, the self is a manifestation of "the will to power" according to Nietzsche, as it makes disorganized quantities of power stronger by acquiring the semblance of a useful but fictitious unity. Thus, Nietzsche is asking us to think through and past the Cartesian reality of the self as some sort of philosophical grounding point. This method is relevant and useful for dealing with some of the pseudo-

problems which exist in contemporary metaphysics.

Various metaphysicians sometimes devise problems oriented around the existence of personal identity: there is a man, Fletcher, who was unfortunate enough to receive brain damage from a car accident. In dire need of a large portion of a brain, a brainsurgeon removes part of the brain of a trapeze artist, Abdul, who likes to eat onion dip, and transplants this portion of Abdul's brain to Fletcher's brain. When the surgery is completed, Fletcher is not the same. While he can still carry on the complex rigors of his job as a software engineer with his previous proficiency, he is also startled by his craving for onion dip which he previously had found intolerable to eat. He also has vivid, detailed memories of circus life as well as a newfound propensity for acrobatics and goes home to Abdul's wife and children, knowing things about Abdul's wife that only Abdul could know.

At this point the grinning metaphysician proposes the following question: Is this new person Fletcher or Abdul? (presuming that one must be this person or the other person in a sense of an exclusive "or"). It becomes evident that one does not want to grant this "new" person the exclusive identity of Fletcher if he has the memories of Abdul. What is illuminating is that the boundaries of selfhood are here violated and we are left with the choices of claiming that the person is Fletcher with some of Abdul's memory (which

creates problems because personal identity is usually presumed to have a good deal to do with one having access to previous memories connected through time) or the person is a combination of Fletcher and Abdul. One could also make a case for the person actually being Abdul, of course, but this is not the point; what is important in this illustration is the fact that we are capable of coming up with problems where it is not at all certain that we can say a person is this person or that person. We can also make up reasons to justify either side, but it comes down to the fact that what we take for being the determinant of "selfhood" is bound up in a loosely determined principle. The belief in the ego relies on previous memory and perhaps a bit of guessing. If we take Nietzsche's method of denying the very reality of the self, this "problem" does not even present itself as such, simply because the "thing" which we call the self is not a static "thing" at all, but merely a regulative fiction whose exactness as a metaphysical entity is dictated by memory, social convention and the conditions of existence. When we step into weird circumstances where the "normal" conditions of life are otherwise, we find that the proof from "life" no longer holds. Philosophically, the task which we are given is to think through this oldest superstition which we have unwittingly adopted as our most immediate reality, the self.

The most valuable insights are arrived at last; but the most valuable insights are methods (WP 469).

To discern a method in Nietzsche's thought is thus not difficult, as long as one does not think of "method" as being constituted by axiomatic starting points. Nietzsche goes so far as to assert that "a will to a system is a lack of integrity" (TI I 26), as the thinker who is unwilling or unable to relinquish hold of his own starting points already is biased in what he himself is maintaining. Nietzsche's method is simply to question everything in order to try to free philosophy from the tacit and outright prejudices it has adopted. Serious thinkers must not stop at the belief in the self as an ultimate grounding principle. Moreover, it would be better to harbor more than one soul in one's breast to facilitate the probing of a multiplicity of perspectives, as "The snake that cannot cast its skin perishes. So too with those minds which are prevented from changing their views: they cease to be minds" (D 573).

The psychology of the belief in the ego is the most intimate relation that most individuals have, i.e. belief in one's self; but when one is determined to think "this far and no further... we can surmise that he has passed the climax of his powers, and is very tired, very near the setting of his sun" (D 542). Standing in close proximity to belief in the self are one's thoughts on values, as the gauge one adopts on moral positions is an integral part of "self-knowledge" and leads to feelings of self-identity. Yet if one is going to exist with intellectual integrity,

this is precisely where one must have courage, according to Nietzsche, for the confrontation and overcoming of individual perspective, especially if that perspective bars various kinds of world-interpretation.

To escape a static belief in oneself enables one to consider the world "from different eyes", yet the suspension of belief in the ego requires great strength as it entails undermining the closest element of one's existence, the comfort of the ground of familiarity. This is not to suggest the frighteningly weird insanity of alleged demonic possession, but merely an exercise in the suspension of self-enthralment for constructive or instructive purposes. In this regard, Nietzsche as immoralist demonstrates a profound understanding of dissociative psychology:

The few who dared...by saying "it wasn't I! Not I! But a god through me". The wonderful art of creating gods--polytheism--was the medium through which this impulse could discharge, purify, perfect, and enoble itself...In polytheism the free-spiriting and many-spiriting of man attained its first preliminary form--the strength to create for ourselves our new eyes--and ever again new eyes that are even more our own: hence man alone among all the animals has no eternal horizons and perspectives (GS 143)

The great power which Nietzsche diagnoses in the creation of "new gods" is a direct manifestation of a suspension of beliefs in the self, a way to place a bulwark between "the self" and any guilt to be wielded against that person for whatever deed the person needed courage from an "other" to perform.

Through his understanding of the strength which is

wielded when one can generate an "other" to empower oneself, Nietzsche anticipates the interesting psychological defense-mechanism which has gone wrong in the majority of people who experience multiple personality disorders (MPD). In most cases, there is evidence that victims of MPD have undergone similar previous experiences. Most persons with MPD have been abused emotionally and / or physically. The result is that these people, in their later childhood or as adults harbor "extra souls" as a means to cope with harsh, disturbing realities of the past. While many children create "imaginary friends" out of boredom or recreation, abused children sometimes create "imaginary friends" or other personalities out of necessity. In this way, abuse can be vented towards an "other" and the ugly torment of the child's "reality" can be dissonated, thus creating a barrier between the tormented child and the abuser. Unfortunately, sometimes these children cannot outgrow the characters which they have harbored and the nasty weirdness of living with an abused, uncontrolled, "demonic" spirit lingers on, long after abuse has ceased.

Insofar as "harboring extra souls" is concerned, Nietzsche realized the power of insight and action which can accrue to those who are strong enough for self-overcoming. To be stuck in one world interpretation is, according to Nietzsche, nothing less than a sign of weakness of a thinker. Ultimately one must stand outside of the want to

never relinquish an axiomatic starting point for the sake of intellectual integrity, as "serious thinkers must occasionally escape from their virtues" (D 510).

What needs to be extracted here from Nietzsche's thought for the general theme of this paper at this time is that Nietzsche thinks that Descartes' cogito is doubtable and that the belief in the "I" is only a fiction generated out of the "conditions of existence":

Many hecatombs of human beings were sacrificed before the impulses learned to comprehend their coexistence and to feel that they were all functions of one organizing force within one human being (GS 113)

Thus we can surmise that although Nietzsche thinks the self has been very useful for biological survival, it is hardly a philosophically grounded starting point as Descartes would have us believe.

CHAPTER TWO: BEING AS PERSPECTIVE

"The real and the apparent world"--I have traced this antithesis back to value relations. We have projected the conditions of our preservation as predicates of being in general. Because we have to be stable in our beliefs if we are to prosper, we have made the "real" world a world not of change and becoming, but one of being.--The Will to Power (507)

This chapter is to be oriented around the theme of truth values and moral values and the reasons why Nietzsche disavowed belief in them both. In chapter five, it will be necessary to follow up on the psychology of belief which Nietzsche thinks characterizes values in general. What is also of primary importance for this chapter and for the larger inquiry of this paper is Nietzsche's denial of the logician's "X" which is the opposite of "not-X". First of all, however, it is appropriate to outline the problem of moral values and truth values, both of which Nietzsche characterizes as fictitious.

The word "meaning" usually has two different general senses:

1. "Meaning" can mean meaning in a propositional sense wherein it refers to discourse concerning a state of affairs, the way things are or the way things are not.

In this sense, we would have a proposition such as "The cat is in the oven". If the cat is, in fact, in the oven, then the proposition would be meaningful in the sense that this

would be true, corresponding to the state of affairs. Likewise, if the cat is not in the oven, the proposition would also have meaning, though not corresponding to the state of affairs, as the proposition would be false.

2. Meaning can also be used as a way to measure magnitude of values in the sense of morale.

In sense #2, an instantiation of "meaning" would be: "My life is meaningless without you." (or) "I lack meaning in my job". In this second sense, we most often have connotations of purpose. Historically, most philosophers have distinguished the difference between these types of meaning in an ontological sense. This does seem reasonable, as the first meaning of "meaning" refers to "being as such" whereas the second refers to the fulfillment of moral conditions.

It is worth noticing that the word "true" has been used to designate both of the aforementioned senses of "meaning", designating each sense in its own "appropriate" way, yet still maintaining functionally different meanings:

TRUTH: Cecil's story about the man with the wooden knee is not true.

In this first case (above), we have "truth" describing the reality of being, i.e. what is actually the case.

truth: Hey, hey, what can I do,
I've got a woman and she won't be true.

In the second usage of truth, we have truth referring to a correctness of or a fulfillment of a moral "oughtness". It is interesting that the word "truth" is widely used to



describe both kinds of phenomena, being and morality. Perhaps the word "truth" is used for both these meanings (in English anyway) because most users of language think of morals as having being in the same way being has (or is) being; or perhaps people are confused about what being is. Whatever the case may be, there seems to be good reason to think that we can differentiate between various "things" which partake of being, and beliefs about "things". "Things" presumably can exist without anyone knowing about them or believing they exist; beliefs about morality, however, are presumably contingent on believers, without which they presumably don't exist. I am not trying to formulate any thesis here about the ultimate nature of moral values, as this is hardly necessary for the current theme of inquiry. Rather, what is of importance here is the recognition that most philosophers establish and maintain a difference between morality and being as such, and there exist many methods which are used to distinguish between these two types of "meaning" (and) "truth". A fairly innocent example might be furnished for the difference between "truth in the sense of morals" and "truth in the sense of being" by claiming "the ground is morally neutral but the ground is not neutral in a sense of being because it "is"--it partakes of being". Nietzsche, as we will see, however, denies not only the reality of the moral realm but also rejects the reality of the more fundamental, primary

source of truth, that which is grounded in being, dismissing the "reality" of being as an "all too human" construction.

In his early essay, On Truth and Falsity, Nietzsche claims "If he [man] does not mean to content himself with truth in the shape of tautology, that is, with empty husks, he will always obtain illusions instead of truth" (TF p. 177). What Nietzsche is asserting here is that all truths are bound to be unilluminating because they are circular or tautological; the reason this is so is because these truths only exist as a byproduct of the relationships which man himself determines. Since man is the cause of stable metaphysical entities through his process of "falsification" of reality, he is trapped in a game of self-referential groundlessness for his uncovering of "truths".

At the heart of the presumption of truth is the underlying implicit metaphysics of language and logic which distinguishes "x" from "non-x" in a way which falsely presumes that its method is non-problematic:

Every word becomes at once an idea by...having simultaneously to fit innumerable, more or less similar (which means never equal, therefore altogether unequal) cases. Every idea originates through equating the unequal. As certainly as no one leaf is exactly similar to any other, so certain is it that the idea "leaf" has been formed through an arbitrary omission of these individual differences, through a forgetting of the differentiating qualities, and this idea now awakens the notion that in nature there is, besides the leaves, a something called "the leaf", perhaps according to which ...no copy had turned out correct and trustworthy as a true copy of the primal form. (TF p. 179)

Here begins the falsification of phenomena at the most

fundamental level, at the existence not only of "words", but through their supporting metaphysical entities. There exist no essential qualities for these alleged "things" which are, through language, arbitrarily categorized. They are by-products of "all too human" perspective optics, as they are "truths" grounded only in convention. Nietzsche thinks that the supposition that there is some underlying infallible logic behind words is a naive assumption, as the existence of universals is due only to a "forgetting of the differentiating qualities".

The underlying logic of language which presumes there is a justified way to distinguish "x" from "not-x", i.e. to differentiate "something" from what "something is not" in a logical fashion is a fiction: "The logical truth of a pair of opposites being and non-being is completely empty, if the object of which it is a reflection cannot be given. Without such derivation from a perception, it is no more than a playing with ideas, which in fact yields no knowledge...the error as to content rather than form cannot be detected by using any logical touchstone whatsoever" (PTG XI).

Nietzsche's appraisal of the arbitrary guidelines which determine metaphysical entities makes sense in that it is impossible to have a "logical" way, i.e choice-free way to postulate the existence of metaphysical entities. One must first ask the question: what is going to "count" as a determinant for this various thing to be an "x" or a "non-x". In

the answer to this question we must, out of necessity, be involved in a choice-grounded structuring of the entity itself--the criterion for "what is going to count", and this choice could be otherwise. There needs to be a presupposition that the initial criterion is correct. Thus being, as grounded by metaphysical entities, is supposed into existence. Once "being" has been supposed into existence, treated a priori, the "truth game" can be played, but this is hardly noteworthy if one has the expectation that this "truth" has a capacity to illuminate us about some extra-linguistic reality:

If somebody hides a thing behind a bush, seeks it again and finds it in the self-same place, then there is not much to boast of, respecting this seeking and finding; thus, however, matters stand with the seeking and finding of "truth" within the realm of reason. If I make the definition of the mammal and then declare after inspecting the camel, "Behold a mammal", then no doubt a truth is brought to light thereby, but it is of very limited value, I mean it is anthropomorphic through and through, and does not contain one single point which is "true-in-itself", real and valid, apart from man.
(TF p. 183)

The whole notion of truth "being out there" independently of human meddling is dismissed by Nietzsche as a starry-eyed fiction. The pre-existent "real world" which is assumed to exist in a capacity to afford us transcendent truths does not exist, as "we are spiders capable of catching only what fits in our webs" (D 117). What we are left with is a Heraclitean flux of undifferentiated oneness. Nietzsche leaves us staring down the barrel of a loaded infinite series of "particulars" with no logical

grouping categories apart from those which we contrive in the most basic sense. The oneness is just that, as when we speak of this Heraclitean ultimate, it no longer makes sense to speak of logical dualism ("x" vs. "non-x") except as a confusion about the origin and role of conceptualization. Here also falls "being" in the sense of being as the opposite of "non-being", for there is no "non-being" apart from that which we project onto the "one". Non-being is only a derivation out of the belief in the reality of metaphysical categories.

Nietzsche claims that the world seems "logical" only because humans have unwittingly made it logical, positing substance and categories a priori. Yet Nietzsche warns logicians that logic rests on assumptions that do not correspond to anything in the undifferentiated oneness of reality. A product of falsification is "the assumption of the equality of things, the identity of the same thing at different points in time...fortunately it is too late to be able to revoke the development of reason, which rests on that belief" (HA 11). It is important to realize here that Nietzsche diagnosed truth as "a kind of error without which a certain species could not live", considering truth as a practically if not epistemologically grounded relation. Yet this certainly goes beyond human falsification, as other species must posit the existence of things persisting through time. Katie the dog may not articulate it as such,

but she utilizes her "dog logic" when chasing cats, assuming that when the cat hides under the car, the cat still remains a cat--and perhaps a tasty one at that. This assumption of object permanence and persistence through time is something which living things must adopt to survive and is thus a fundamental condition of life. Even "dog logic" must distinguish the difference between various types of "things", in order to get food, avoid danger, etc. Herein lies the elemental necessary prejudice of stable entities which virtually all species adopt, a logic for survival in the most basic sense. Katie the dog doesn't need to be concerned with the ultimate metaphysical grounding of the cat, but philosophers should, according to Nietzsche, take cognizance of the presuppositions which ground their notions of metaphysical entities, and independent self-sufficient duration through time is one of them. Likewise, the belief in universals and (more importantly) the belief in "things" are only beliefs which are outgrowths of a particular perspective; this perspective that there are "things" is a prejudice adopted out of the belief in matter. Yet this theme of the groundedness of materiality is related to Nietzsche's critique of Kant and this issue needs to be discussed in the next chapter, The Illusion of Things.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ILLUSION OF THINGS

Perhaps we will recognize that the thing-in-itself deserves a homeric laugh, in that it seemed so much, indeed everything, and is actually empty, that is, empty of meaning.--Human, All too Human (16)

In his first book, The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche writes of "music being the immediate language of the will", with language doomed forever to hold only a superficial contact with music:

...set over against music, all appearance becomes a mere analogy, so it happens that language, the organ of symbol and appearance, can never succeed in bringing the innermost core of music to the surface...no amount of poetic eloquence will carry us a step closer to the essential secret of that art. (BT VI)

While Nietzsche is certainly right in his diagnosis that language can never capture what music "is" by communicating how it sounds through narrative, it is more important to note that Nietzsche attributes a sort of primal stomping ground of truth to the realm of Dionysian art in his first book. This is before the turn in his thought which would eventually culminate in the outright rejection of Kant's "thing in itself" as unreal, denouncing it as a mere result of confused thinking. Nietzsche's later period would also attack Kant's whole project of trying to come to grips with "pure reason", an undertaking which is, out of the necessity which characterizes all attempts to frame a theory of knowledge, mistaken in its inception.

Before embarking on the investigation of circularity which Nietzsche discloses as embedded in any theory of knowledge or truth, it is important to realize that the problem of self-reference is one Nietzsche himself was very much concerned with. This will be a concern in chapter four, as it will be necessary to test Nietzsche's own epistemic footing, whether he wants to admit he has feet or, he in fact, exists. Whether Nietzsche stands outside of metaphysics is a question which must be dealt with. At this time, however it may be helpful to introduce a distinction which will also prove to be of use later in this inquiry.

In John Lange's book The Cognitivity Paradox, Lange distinguishes between first and second order philosophy:

First order philosophy is philosophy as proposal.

Second order philosophy is philosophy which presupposes that the first order questions are settled and proceeds on that basis (Lange p. 59)

This distinction between first and second order philosophy will help in making sense of two interesting problems which need to be dealt with here. The first is Nietzsche's criticism of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. The second is the circularity that exists in all attempts to propose a theory of knowledge. The second problem exists because any theory of truth or knowledge which is proposed is bound up in its inception with at least two "valuations" which could be otherwise; there needs to be a "value" that considers "truth" as something worthy of

investigation in order for a framing of truth to begin and there also needs to be the value-choice of what is to be the determinant of "truth". In this chapter, the latter problem of having to choose the discriminating determinant of truth will be a central theme. Analysis of the other "value" will be postponed until chapter five, as this "value" has to do with the utility of truth.

The distinction which Lange makes regarding first and second order philosophy helps in articulating Nietzsche's rejection of Kant. Nietzsche, as Hegel did before him, realized that setting limits on reason presupposes a stance outside of reason and this is, according to reason itself, quite unreasonable. The mistake which Kant makes is that he isolates himself in the second order philosophy and for that reason the starting point of his inquiry harbors unrecognized presuppositions which ought not be accepted. Kant not only presupposes that knowledge is possible, but he wants an analysis of that which he himself has supposed into existence:

One would have to know what being is in order to decide whether this or that is real...what certainty is, what knowledge is and the like--But since we do not know this, a critique of the faculty of knowledge is senseless: how could a tool be able to criticize itself when it can only use itself for the critique? It cannot even define itself! (WP 486)

Kant practices "second order philosophy", assuming that the problems of knowledge and certainty have already been settled. In undertaking The Critique of Pure Reason, he

does not start by asking the question if there is knowledge, but rather asks under what conditions is knowledge possible; "If I do not already know whether there is knowledge, whether there can be knowledge, I cannot reasonably put the question 'what is knowledge?' Kant believes in the fact of knowledge: what he wants is a piece of naivete: knowledge of knowledge!" (WP 530)

Kant's project needs to assume the availability of a transcendent mode of cognition, in order for the critique not to be used on itself; he must be certain of what "certainty is" beforehand, but there is no guarantee of the veracity of his initial supposition of what constitutes certainty. In order for the critique even to begin, the inquirer must suspend the conditions under which knowledge is possible so it is free from self-examination. Nietzsche attacks Kant precisely because Kant has delegated himself an epistemologically privileged status which is impossible to exist without a fundamental breach of reason. Moreover, this problem which Nietzsche scrutinizes about the circularity that exists in any attempt to frame or construct a theory of knowledge facilitates similar insights into the elemental workings of inquiry, i.e. the fundamental problem of the circularity of truth.

Nietzsche realizes that all conceptions of truth and knowledge are inextricably bound up in value judgements; he also asserts that the truth theories of philosophers have

been characterized by an underhanded ignoring or forgetting of this:

They (philosophers) all pose as if they had discovered and reached their real opinions through the self-development of a cold, pure, divinely unconcerned dialectic (as opposed to the mystics of every rank, who are more honest and doltish--and talk of "inspiration")--while at bottom it is an assumption, a hunch, indeed a kind of "inspiration"--most often a desire of the heart that has been filtered and made abstract--that they defend with reasons they have sought after the fact. (BGE 5)

Nietzsche makes evident that he believes that any theory of truth which is advanced is inevitably bound up in this "inspiration". For this reason, in any theory of knowledge, the problem of the nonexistence of any value-free criteria manifests itself; whatever one chooses to be the determinant of truth presupposes the correctness of that very initial criterion. Thus, it makes no sense even to speak of non-perspectival truth because any thinkable truth criterion is inevitably prejudiced by an initial confession or "inspiration" as to what is going "to make" or bear truth. The impossibility of legitimate truth theories prompts Nietzsche to warn:

"Pure reason", "absolute intelligence", presuppose an eye such as no living being can imagine, an eye required to have no direction, to abrogate its active and interpretative powers--precisely those powers that alone make seeing, seeing something. All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing.
(GM III 7)

Many philosophers have (and still do) describe the highest powers of cognition as a sort of "mental seeing", as the organ of sight seems to be the most disconcealing and lucid

of any of the powers of sense perception. Lacking any other analogy which could capture the highest powers of "intuition" in such an immediacy, this seems quite sensible. Yet the question remains: how justified is Nietzsche in making his claim that knowing is like seeing, grounded in perspective? How far can Nietzsche take this analogy? Moreover, what proof has Nietzsche to ground such an assertion and how are we to understand such a claim in the context of his other thought?

Insofar as perception and intellection are relational between a subject and some object, Nietzsche's metaphor is illustrative; in both cases one needs to distinguish a criterion of reality.

- A. (with knowledge) How do I know this? What is the reason why I think I know this? Have I taken the reality of this assertion on testimony? What are the presuppositions that need to exist for me to know that this "x" is a "fact"?
- B. (with seeing) How do I see this? What is the reason "why" I think I see this real, existent thing? Is this merely a bad hallucination? Is this a hologram? A mirage?

In cases of knowledge, it is obvious that Nietzsche is driving at the point that we do not have a value-free schema for leveling claims about knowledge. One provides reasons for one's justifications based on presumably more certain, fundamental truths and Nietzsche provides good evidence that such truths simply don't exist. As we have already seen, Nietzsche believes that we must confront questions about

knowledge through our own "colored" schemas. In the context of Nietzsche's thought, it is evident that he has not only denied the reality of knowledge because of its relational character, but he has also denied the reality of the categories by which we distinguish between various objects of sense perception, as both are byproducts of a particular perspective which could be otherwise in "other conditions of life". Not only are we in the midst of "falsified" perspectives, both perceptually and cognitively, but Nietzsche thinks we should abort belief in both the permanence of physical as well as metaphysical pre-existent realities, likening "pure materiality" to the unreality of the logician's self-sufficient "a":

The "A" of logic is like the atom, a reconstruction of the thing--If we do not grasp this, but make of logic a criterion of true being, we are on the way to positing as realities all those hypostases: substance, attribute, object, action, subject, action, etc.; that is, to conceiving a metaphysical world, that is a "real world" (--this, however, is the apparent world once more--). (WP 516).

Under the influence of Dalmatian Boscovitch, who regarded atoms "themselves as immaterial centres of force" (Dampier, p. 297), Nietzsche is ready to dispense with "the changeling of the atom". Both philosophers view the atom as assailable unities which could be broken down further and further, therefore suggesting that there are no elementary "units", or static building blocks of matter. Insofar as science currently understands the atom as a sort of cloud of energy with particles of charge existing in only statistically

probable locations, "the atom cannot meaningfully be said to possess any of those qualities which we attribute to experience--not red, sweet, [or] smooth" (Grimm p. 74-5). The very reality of the material world is thus only a manifestation of our schema through which we view it. It does not "really exist" in a way outside of the interpretative slant we bring to it by our very acts of perception. Thus, understanding Nietzsche's analogy between knowing and seeing is laden with more than just a rejection of the reality of knowledge. As evidenced in Beyond Good and Evil as well as The Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche is undertaking the mischievous task of denying the reality of the material world. Moreover, modern science via quantum mechanics has come around to Bosovich and Nietzsche's way of thinking, as the groundedness of "things" in materiality is only insecure at best.

There are many kinds of eyes. Even the sphinx has eyes--and consequently there are many "truths", and consequently there is no truth. (WP 540)

With Nietzsche's rejection of the subject and the material world as nonexistent, independent realities, he is left in the peculiar position of dismissing all phenomena as "fictions". Insofar as Nietzsche has taken up the problem of being in contact with the phenomenal realm in an exclusive sense, Nietzsche can be thought of as a sort of "neo-Kantian". However, Nietzsche's stance is radically different, as he denies the intelligibility of the noumena.

Nietzsche's appraisal of philosophy and humanity is one which is sunk deeply in self-deception as man is capable of seeing nothing but shadows on the wall of Plato's cave, unreal images mistaken for "realities". To speak of an "outside" of the cave where there could be immutable, enduring, nonhuman truths is to speak of an altogether undemonstrable and therefore fictitious world. The problem of there being no unbiased measures of reality creates the problem of an epistemic dissonance between the reality of concepts and what the things are which they reflect, for strictly speaking, according to Nietzsche, the "things themselves" don't exist. With the abandonment of the existence of "things", we also have the vanishing of the possibility of "facts" as existent:

Against positivism, which halts at phenomena--"There are only facts"--I would say: No, facts are 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 (WP 481).

With Nietzsche's appraisal of the non-existence of facts, many problems are raised insofar as problems of language are concerned; i.e. does Nietzsche want us to take his appraisal as a "fact", a statement about reality? Or is there no reality? Moreover, if there is no reality, how does one defend such a position--through "real" concepts? Now that we have a general outline of Nietzsche's approach to epistemology, these are the tasks which are to be investigated in the next chapter, along with other

metaphysical problems which have been raised by Nietzsche's assault on truth. The most elemental theme which needs to be investigated, however, is the problem of self-reference that Nietzsche diagnoses and whether he himself is immersed in it.

When we endeavor to examine the mirror itself, we discover in the end that we can detect nothing there but the things which it reflects. If we wish to grasp the things reflected we touch nothing in the end but the mirror--this is the general history of knowledge.
(D 243).

CHAPTER FOUR: ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF LANGUAGE AND BEING

The world with which we are concerned is false, i.e., it 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".--The Will to Power (616)

Now that we have a general outline of Nietzsche's methodology and his stance on epistemology, it is necessary to direct some critical thought towards the problems which Nietzsche has generated through his stances on knowledge and truth. The following chapter will investigate some of the problems one encounters when one denies the existence of stable metaphysical entities; without such entities existing apart from the delusion of human contrivance, truth becomes fiction. The outright denial of the groundedness of truth presents some problems with the defensibility of such a position and also reveals some problems with the limits and meaning of language. Chapter four will also begin the investigation of Nietzsche's conception of the "lie", which he uses as a word (and perhaps as an action) in an "untraditional sense".

As outlined in chapter two, the word "truth" has been used to describe both epistemological and moral "truths". Insofar as this chapter is concerned, it will be important to examine the epistemological sense of truth and the

position which Nietzsche takes on it. It should be noted that Nietzsche's appraisal of what is "going on" in philosophy has stirred up trouble for himself in his reception by various philosophers. Even in his day, The Birth of Tragedy "provoked pamphlets and counter-pamphlets attacking him on grounds of common sense and sanity. For a time Nietzsche, then professor of classical philology at the University of Basle, had no students in his field. His lectures were sabotaged by German philosophy professors who advised their students not to show up for Nietzsche's courses" (PTG translator's Introduction I).

There has been a good deal of confusion in the interpretation of Nietzsche's thought, some of which is due to the nature of the project Nietzsche was involved with, denying what was previously considered to be the given standard by which reality is to be measured, i.e. truth, as "fiction". Frederick Copleston, in his book Friedrich Nietzsche, Philosopher of Culture, claimed Nietzsche was "motivated by a firm resolve to shut his eyes to the truth", and several other philosophers have all but dismissed Nietzsche as having something seriously wrong with his philosophy. In Nietzsche we have a person who claims on the one hand that "there is no truth" and then we find him asserting:

I wish...that these microscopic examiners of the soul may be really courageous, magnanimous, and proud animals, who know how to contain their emotions and have trained themselves to subordinate all wishful thinking

to the truth--any truth, even a homespun, severe, ugly, obnoxious, un-Christian, unmoral truth. For such truths do exist. (GM I 11)

Nietzsche seems to be taking both sides of mutually exclusive positions, claiming that there is no truth and then claiming there are truths. However, if one looks at the larger problem of what Nietzsche is "trying to get at", and the medium through which he is trying to communicate it, we can rescue Nietzsche from at least some of the problems of contradiction he is involved with.

It is important to realize that Nietzsche uses the word "truth" as oriented around the existence of "being as such" in two different ways. Failure to distinguish between them will undoubtedly produce "contradictions" and provide warrant to anyone who wants to dismiss him as philosophically "clowning around". The distinction which needs to be made here is between: T1. Truth as grounded in "value-free" being, which Nietzsche claims does not exist (and) T2. Truth as part of the "game" of anthropomorphic logicolinguistic rules. In the case of truth as grounded in "value-free" being, we have Nietzsche claiming that "truth does not exist", i.e. as some extra-linguistic reality, as there are no meaningful entities that exist prior to human "falsification" of such stabilities into existence. The second use of "truth" which Nietzsche embraces is truth as part of the "game-playing" of linguistic reality. Through this medium, Nietzsche as a writer must channel his thoughts

insofar as he wants to communicate "rational" ideas. One must take cognizance of this mode through which humans understand ideas, as truth in this sense Nietzsche has no desire to deny. It exists, but it is not pre-existently "real", as is often tacitly supposed by its users.

There has been a good deal of misunderstanding of the development of Nietzsche's thought based on the confusion of T1 and T2. This is still going on, most recently by Maudemarie Clark in her book Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy. Clark claims that there is a radical swing in Nietzsche's appraisal of science in his later books, citing Nietzsche's early claims that science "falsifies" reality and then providing evidence from The Genealogy of Morals and The Antichrist that Nietzsche no longer thought that knowledge and science "falsify" in his later works. The problem which Clark fails to grasp is that Nietzsche is concerned with two different senses of "truth" in these works and the shift in attitude does not mark a change in his rejection of epistemological reality; the early views of truth as illusions from On Truth and Falsity are thoroughly consistent with his later celebration of science.

The shift that Clark proposes as existent in Nietzsche's thought is not a shift in position as Clark believes. Rather, it is a shift in the the type of "truth" which Nietzsche is scrutinizing. In Nietzsche's early denial of truth, he does so because he is trying to make

evident that the process of falsification is necessary because humans must posit imaginary "things" and categories by which to reason about those things, i.e. universals. Later, in The Antichrist when Nietzsche lauds science as "the wisdom of the world", he is writing of truth in a specific and different sense. The "wisdom of the world" which he praises is consistent with his earlier thought, as here Nietzsche is consciously speaking within the anthropomorphic realm of truth which he had himself outlined. Merely because all things are ultimately metaphysically "false" does not mean one can not play the "game of truth" which exists in the anthropomorphic realm in different ways; one can obviously reason in cleaner, more proficient ways or poorer ways in this realm. Just because one does not have a stable basis for the grounding of the logico-linguistic entities such as "things" and universals by which one groups "things", does not mean that there are not better ways to understand and utilize the consequential causal relations which "flow" from these entities once we have adopted them. There is logic which governs fiction and Nietzsche's denunciation of pseudoscience in Twilight of the Idols makes this thrust quite clear:

Today we possess science precisely to the extent to which we have decided to accept the testimony of the senses--to the extent to which we have learned to sharpen them further, arm them, and then learned to think them through. The rest is miscarriage and not-yet-science--or formal science, a doctrine of science, a doctrine of signs, such as logic and that applied logic which is called mathematics. In them

reality is not encountered at all, not even as a problem--no more than the question of the value of such a sign-convention as logic. (TI III 3)

Nietzsche's position that in science "reality is not encountered at all, not even as a problem" provides good reason to think he still retained his falsification thesis through his later works, although Clark takes the contrary position. However, Clark is right in diagnosing a shift in Nietzsche's thought about the role of the senses. Nietzsche had claimed earlier in Human, All Too Human that we are wrapped in the falsifying sensations of the senses which have been left over from "the period of low organisms:

Someday the gradual origin of this tendency in lower organisms will be shown, how the mole's eyes of these organizations [unities] at first see everything as identical; (HA 18)

Nietzsche clearly did change from this early thinking in that in his later position he believed the senses do not falsify, insofar as they show passing away and change; what we make of them through logic, positing unities which correspond to sense perception in the form of the self-sameness of "things" "falsifies". Nietzsche is thus not giving up on his notion that humans themselves still do "falsify". The reason Clark thinks that Nietzsche believed he should abandon his falsification thesis and did actually do so in his later works is due to her failure to distinguish the difference between Nietzsche's use of two different senses of truth, T1 (truth as existent in some extralinguistic sense which is "out there" and pre-made in

the world), and T2, (truth as an anthropomorphic linguistic "game").

Clark claims that Nietzsche's shift away from the falsification thesis was necessitated by Nietzsche's later dismissal of Kant's "thing-in-itself" as a contradictory notion. Nietzsche's diagnosis of the existence of "things" as being able to exist only in relation to other unproven "things", i.e. positing agents, certainly does confirm that Nietzsche thinks in his later stage that the "thing-in-itself" is contradictory, or at best a product of confused thinking. To ask how an object looks from no perspective or how an object "is" from no perspective is dismissed by Nietzsche as meaningless (see chapter three). While Clark is certainly right in her recognition that Nietzsche did not dismiss the "thing-in-itself" as an impossibility in The Birth of Tragedy and in On Truth and Falsity, Clark's appraisal of Nietzsche's alleged realization that there is a necessary mutual exclusivity between the falsification thesis and the existence of "things-in-themselves" is based on Clark's own misunderstanding of Nietzsche's attack on the reality of "truth" in a pre-linguistic sense (T1).

Clark believes falsification cannot happen if there are no "things-in-themselves" that can be falsified. Through this supposition, Clark interprets a good deal of Nietzsche's thought, erroneously supposing that Nietzsche

himself recognized this and changed his thoughts on science, among other things. Yet it is evident by the type of truth Nietzsche denies, that Clark is applying a truth paradigm that ought not be used. This is precisely the type of truth Nietzsche is trying to deny, but is forced to do so through an inauthentic medium, language.

The "truth" which Nietzsche is trying to deny is one in which there are "real existent things". If the world is simply an undifferentiated Heraclitean oneness, where "things" and logical categories are contrived in the most fundamental sense, we have the problem of trying to communicate this through language, which must presuppose we do have language connected to being in an unproblematic way. Nietzsche is trying to escape metaphysics but is imprisoned in the language which he must use which cannot permit him to claim that something falsifies if there is no truth of which the something is falsifying. For this reason, the word "being" in this Heraclitean-Nietzschean voice means something radically different than "being" otherwise would, for it is not the opposite of non-being, but an undifferentiated oneness where the parameters of language are not able to spill out. If there exist no opposites in such a realm by which we consider "what is" in contradistinction to "what is not", we are left with a world withdrawn into a quietude prior to logical dualism and truth can only make the sound of one hand clapping, for "one is

always wrong, but with two, truth begins" (GS 260). In this area the metaphysics of language breaks down, as we cannot expect Nietzsche to elaborate successfully the unconceptual through the conceptual framework of language. With no logical relation between the "things" which we posit and the stuff which we take for representing these "things", we have no basis for granting these entities the grounding force of truth, as they simply hide behind the perceptual cloak of the fiction of "being". One can, therefore, have a process of falsification without the existence of "things-in-themselves", but we must understand "falsity" in a different sense; the word "falsity" must be understood here as linguistically and logically different, for there is no "truth" which it can be measured up against:

If the existence of things themselves cannot be proved, surely the inter-relationship of things, their so called being or nonbeing, will advance us not a step toward the land of truth. Through words and concepts we shall never reach beyond the wall of relations, to some sort of fabulous primal ground of things" (PTG XI).

The barrier which Nietzsche wants to step through cannot be done through linguistic truth, simply because we have no way to critique the language that describes what is presumed to be most real (truth, being) from an outside vantagepoint. When Nietzsche says that man's truths are "merely his irrefutable errors", what he is driving at is nothing less than the denial of the stable entities which are necessary for non-contrived truth to exist.

...what naivete to extract from (schematization) a

proof that we are therewith in possession of a "truth in itself"!--Not being able to contradict is proof of an incapacity, not of "truth" (WP 515)

To speak of "truth" and "being" in this above sense extends language to a realm which language normally does not have access to. One must not confuse this kind of existence--undifferentiated oneness with the linguistic realm of logical dualism. Problems that exist with interpreting Nietzsche on truth often manifest themselves because Nietzsche is in the peculiar position of needing a lexicon which distinguishes between truth "as grounded in stable metaphysical entities" (T1) from truth as existent within the linguistic game (T2). This situation demands that Nietzsche's readers look carefully for "signposts" to discern the channels through which his thought goes. Yet we also find problems which are not as easily explained away in Nietzsche's thought. The problem still exists of discerning where Nietzsche's insights ground his own claims within the "truth game" which he himself outlines as dissonant from reality.

If we take Nietzsche's thoughts on epistemology seriously, we can surmise that Nietzsche apparently thinks that he has refused to take an epistemological stance (within epistemology) based on his methodology. If Nietzsche is correct in his claims about linguistic, anthropomorphic truth, it seems that all claims would be ultimately metaphysically false. In spite of this, Nietzsche thinks

that there are better and worse ways of operating cognitively once the belief in stable metaphysical entities is adopted. This does not appear to be problematic; i.e. once one adopts tacit belief in "things" one can understand the various causal relations which would thereby flow from them to reason in better or worse ways. Yet there is a big problem insofar as Nietzsche has dealt himself the ability to declare that "things" don't exist and there can be no epistemological truth. Nietzsche must reason according to logical principles to illustrate his claim that epistemology is bound to be circular. Any path by which Nietzsche establishes that truth criteria must be circular, presupposes that he must use those very "circular" rules to establish such a claim. Thus Nietzsche's position undermines a great deal, including itself. However, this may not even have interested Nietzsche, as it is not clear that Nietzsche even supposes that he is not writing "fiction".

At this point, we must challenge what Nietzsche means by "lie", as he seems to understand the lie in both his "ultimate metaphysical sense of truth" and within the linguistic "game" of truth. It is not clear, however, that he obeys the rules of the latter kind of truth, even when he makes no pretensions of speaking in the former. That is, in Nietzsche's earlier period, he misuses the word "lie" in a linguistic sense. This is perhaps a bit ironic as he also

provides us with some reason to believe that the young Nietzsche himself lies.

In On Truth and Falsity, Nietzsche writes:

we really and truly do not know anything at all about an essential quality which might be called honesty, but we know about individualized, and therefore unequal actions, which we equate by omission of the unequal, and now designate as dishonest actions; finally out of them we formulate a *qualitas occulta* with the name "honesty". (TF p. 180)

Out of this line of thinking, Nietzsche dismisses the pre-existent ontological reality of the lie, claiming the liar only "abuses the fixed conventions by convenient substitution or even inversion of terms" (TF p. 176). There is nothing logically suspect about Nietzsche's dismissal of the metaphysical groundedness of the "lie"; yet Nietzsche incorrectly uses the word "lie" in the conventional linguistic sense while not voicing any intention of speaking in the sense of T1 which undermines the reality of all linguistic units:

What therefore is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms: in short a sum of human relations which became poetically and rhetorically intensified, metamorphosed, adorned, and after long usage seem to a nation fixed, canonic, and binding; truths are illusions of which one has forgotten they are illusions...to be truthful, that is to use the usual metaphors, therefore expressed morally: we have heard only about the obligation to lie according to a fixed convention, to lie gregariously in a style binding for all. Now man of course forgets that matters are going thus with him; he therefore lies in that fashion pointed out unconsciously and according to habits of centuries' standing--and by that very unconsciousness, by the very forgetting, he arrives at a sense of truth (TF p. 180-1).

Here Nietzsche obviously equates "falsehood" with lying, as

Nietzsche seems to speak of "lie" in the sense of a general false consciousness, a world view which perpetuates itself through convention. Only through such perpetuation does humanity stumble onto its "truth". Thus Nietzsche provides his account of truth in an Aussermoralischen Sinne.

Nietzsche also reinterprets the conventional meaning of forgetting, as it seems that one must know one possesses metaphors if one is going to "forget" that one has only metaphors. This is clearly not the case in the above passage. Nietzsche chooses not to stay within the traditionally inscribed meanings of individual words. Moreover, Nietzsche's work refuses to fit into other traditional linguistic paradigms for discourse, as is evident by his use of the aphorism. Nietzsche's undermining of the pre-existent metaphysical reality of the lie enables him to extend the meaning of "lie" and other words to realms of meaning he would otherwise not have access to. Consequentially, this makes a single, correct interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy very difficult, as is evidenced by the very different readings of Nietzsche by scholars. One could even make a case for claiming that "the way does not exist" in interpreting Nietzsche's thinking. Yet this problem with language should be temporarily forestalled, as this problem will resurface in chapter five. We should rather return to where the lie lies in Nietzsche's notion of truth.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra, Nietzsche's self-styled prophet is approached by one of his disciples who asks Zarathustra about the poets:

But what was it that Zarathustra once said to you? That the poets lie too much? But Zarathustra too is a poet...But suppose somebody said in all seriousness, the poets lie too much: he would be right, we do lie too much. We also know too little and we are bad learners; so we simply have to lie. And who among us poets has not adulterated his wine? Many a poisonous hodgepodge has been contrived in our cellars; much that is indescribable was accomplished there. And because we know so little, the poor in spirit please us heartily, particularly when they are young females (Z II 17)

Considering the role of Zarathustra in Nietzsche's thought as one who embodies Nietzsche's insights, it might be wise to exercise caution while examining the content of Nietzsche's philosophy. In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche claims that the death of Greek tragedy was at the hands of "aesthetic socratism":

The fact that the aims of Socrates and Euripides were closely allied did not escape the attention of their contemporaries. We have an eloquent illustration of the rumor, current at the time in Athens, that Socrates was helping Euripides with his writing. (BT XIII)

Nietzsche's access to this "rumor" as well as the role that he ascribes to Greek tragedy as functioning as a religious catharsis in Greek culture is perhaps dubious. When he presented this book while holding his chair in philology at Basel, his colleagues were incensed: Where are citations? Is this person fabricating things about Socrates and Greek tragedy?

Nietzsche characterized untruth as a condition of

life. Insofar as trusting Nietzsche on matters of fact, it would probably be wise to exercise a good deal of caution. Fortunately for this inquiry, the central concerns have been about epistemological truth. Nietzsche's thoughts on "truth" stand independently of any lies which he could have fabricated. I am not suggesting that Nietzsche is a pathological liar, but one should notice that Nietzsche did at times claim a preference for "falsity"--or as Nietzsche might have put it, a preference for "art", as "art is worth more than truth" (WP 853). This places us at the parting point for chapter four, as the theme of truth as a moral/morale value must be taken up in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONFUSING THE LEAST REAL WITH THE MOST REAL

It might seem as though I had evaded the question of "certainty." The opposite is true; but by inquiring after the criterion of certainty I tested the scales upon which men have weighed in general hitherto--and that the question of certainty itself is a question of the second rank... The question of values is more fundamental than the question of certainty: the latter becomes serious only by presupposing that the value question has already been answered.--The Will to Power (587...588)

This chapter will scrutinize Nietzsche's conception of the utility of truth for life. An integral part of Nietzsche's consideration of truth as a "morale-value" is influenced by Nietzsche's notion of the nature of consciousness as grounded in language. Nietzsche claims that humans are in the position of confusing the least real (language, logical systems) with the most real, (immediate, pre-conceptual experience). It will be necessary to examine the ground of Nietzsche's claim as well as to take notice of the kind of evidence Nietzsche uses as the basis for these thoughts. First, however, it is imperative that we consider Nietzsche's conception of words and their relationship to consciousness.

In The Gay Science, Nietzsche writes:

Now, if you are willing to listen to my answer and the perhaps extravagant surmise that it involves, it seems to me as if the subtlety and strength of consciousness always were proportionate to a man's (or animal's) capacity of communication, and as if this capacity in turn were proportionate to the need

for communication...Man, like every living being thinks continually without even knowing it; the thinking that rises to consciousness is only the smallest part of all this--the most superficial and worst part--for only the conscious thinking takes the form of words, which is to say signs of communication, and this fact uncovers the origin of consciousness...My idea, as you see, that consciousness does not really belong to man's individual existence but rather to his social or herd nature...Fundamentally, all our actions are altogether incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual; there is no doubt of that. But as soon as we translate them into consciousness they no longer seem to be. (GS 354)

Nietzsche thinks that humanity, in its need to communicate about the world and itself, was forced out of necessity to adopt the reality of the reference of words, ignoring the individuality of all experiences so as to communicate a general intersubjective understanding of these alleged unities. If it did not, humanity could not find out about danger, where to get food, etc. Yet Nietzsche asserts that before conscious "'thinking' there must have been 'invention', the construction of identical cases, of the appearance of sameness, as it [construction of identical cases] is more primitive than the knowledge of sameness" (WP 544). As mentioned in chapter two and four, humanity "falsifies" by adopting a criterion by which it distinguishes "being" from "non-being". Assuming the reality of an outside world of being without knowing it, conscious thinking never touches on reality, as the truth wielded in language schema is in "the most fundamental cases only the posture of various errors in relation to one

another" (WP 535). As a consequence, the words which we have are wornout metaphors which are not real and Nietzsche goes so far as to call them "vulgar", as they channel our thoughts and distract us by deceiving us about ourselves and the world. As "proof", Nietzsche provides us with the following incident:

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 have felt so happy when I caught this bird (GS 298).

Moreover, the only birds which can really be caught by the hand are those which can no longer fly:

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!...Alas, always only birds that grew weary of flying and flew astray and now can be caught by hand--by hand! We immortalize what cannot live and fly much longer--only weary 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 fifty 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! (BGE 296)

The above is the sort of evidence Nietzsche must use to ground his claims about the "vulgarity" or ultimate unreality of words. Nietzsche is in the position of wanting to make a claim about the pre-linguistic when the only medium he has through which to do it is obviously the linguistic. The only way which Nietzsche can object to the

structures by which we understand reality is to appeal to some instant where the structures of language do not "mesh" with experience. Nietzsche uses this experience (of having the ability to catch only flightless birds through words) to try to show that the logico-linguistic structures by which we understand the world clash with the reality of pre-linguistic experience.

If one considers Nietzsche's incapacity to catch "birds in flight", and looks for some sort of status in its epistemological grounding, Nietzsche appears to be taking a stance which cannot be defended by providing other reasons to justify his case in that Nietzsche either had such experiences (and they mean what he thinks they mean) or he did not. There is no more rationale that he is capable of giving to justify his conclusion, as he is at the end of the "epistemic rope". For Nietzsche to have a correct "intuition" into this realm, not only does such experience have to "be there" but we must also assume that Nietzsche is not simply deluded or unable to use language correctly which is, in spite of what Nietzsche thinks, able to, in principle, pin down "the bird in flight".

Insofar as Nietzsche has a claim about reality which could be grounded epistemologically, he cannot be justified. Unfortunately for Nietzsche, he is trying to level an anti-conceptual claim about the conceptual world, so he has no means to prove his claim except by doing so

"indirectly". In appealing to his dissonant experience, he is again trying to stand before and outside the mechanics of epistemology, by showing that the entities that language and epistemology use are products of falsification and social convention. In the case of language, Nietzsche thinks we are in the process of making blunt unities out of all the various sharpnesses of our experiences.

While Nietzsche is intentionally trying not to take an epistemological stance, he is doing so in a way which is different from his refusal to do so on knowledge as such. In the case of Nietzsche attacking Kant and claiming "there is no truth", Nietzsche is attacking internal flaws which are embedded in theories of knowledge; one cannot have "knowledge" of "knowledge" as one would have to suspend the conditions under which knowledge is normally possible if one were to do so. Nietzsche has more of a problem with attacking the dissonance between reality and language, as he cannot point to internal inconsistencies such as those that are existent in theories of truth with their alleged value-free claims of "real" being. What he must do is attack language from an external vantagepoint by showing that it doesn't "match up" with the immediacy of our experiences. Whichever approach he uses, Nietzsche still concludes that both in epistemology and language the starting points of reference are not pre-existently real and we are foolhardy if we think we are capable of making claims

about reality based upon these "tools":

Parmenides said, "one cannot think of what is not"--we are at the other extreme, and say, what can be thought of must certainly be a fiction (WP 539)

Conscious thought is sunk deeply in falsification according to Nietzsche and it has been mistaken as the criterion of the real. The belief in language and logical systems as a measure of reality is thus a reversal in the most profound sense; philosophers have confused the "least real" with the "most real":

Conscious thinking, especially that of the philosopher, is the least vigorous and therefore also the relatively mildest and calmest form of thinking; and thus precisely philosophers are most apt to be led astray about the nature of knowledge (GS 333).

The Socratic maxims "virtue is knowledge; all sins arise from ignorance; only the virtuous are happy" (BT XIV) are not only "untrue" according to Nietzsche, but they have inculcated the prejudice that "the good" and "the true" are intimately related, thus cooking up obligatory force for themselves. Moreover, philosophers have completely imagined the reality of moral and truth values as existing prior to human falsification and thereby have put up bullwarks between themselves and the development of their interpretative skills. Worst of all is Nietzsche's portrait of the "wisest men of all ages", who have judged life alike:

...it is no good. Always and everywhere one has heard the same from their mouths--a sound full of doubt, full of melancholy, full of weariness of life, full of resistance to life...Formerly one would have said..."At least some of all this must be true! The consensus of the sages evidences

the truth". Shall we still talk like that today? May we? "At least something must be sick here", we retort. These wisest men of all ages--they should be first scrutinized closely. Were they perhaps shaky on their legs? late? tottery? decadents? Could it be that wisdom appears on earth as a raven, inspired by a little whiff of carrion? (TI II 1)

Nietzsche considers it imperative to create a new meaning against the "slanderers of this world". The platonic prejudice of the unreality of this earthly world must go, as should the supposition that reason-virtue-happiness are connected for this is a sign of weakness and complaint against the richness and ambiguity which is characteristic of the chaotic flux of this world. While dialectics may wield powerful tools of reason, Nietzsche thinks they should not be turned to justify existence as they are humanity's weakest fictions. Not only have dialectics set the course of philosophy for two millenia, but their practitioners have declared themselves the very measure of reality. The henchmen of dialectics, (philosophers and priests) have baptized moral truths and alleged truths of "being" at the expense of the development of clean methodology. Even the Platonic/Christian god's signature of truth is not an excuse anymore, as Nietzsche claims that:

It is no more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than appearance. (BGE 34)

According to Nietzsche, philosophers hate "becoming", i.e. reality, as dialectics can only trap what has "being".

"When these honorable idolators of concepts worship something, they kill it, they threaten the life of everything they worship...they all believe, desparately even, in what has being" (TI III 1). In the context of Nietzsche's thought, this is to do nothing less than turn one's back on the natural immediacy of the pre-conceptual. When Nietzsche diagnoses the "good of truth" as grounded in the least real fictions spilling into the "good of morals" and declaring itself as the most important and most real, he concludes that mankind is unique among the animals in his magnitude and capacity for self-torment:

He projected all his denials of self, nature, naturalness out of himself as affirmations, as true being, embodiment, reality, as God (the divine judge and executioner), as transcendence, as eternity, as endless torture, as hell, as the infinitude of guilt and punishment. In such psychological cruelty we see an insanity of the will that is without parallel: Man's will to find himself guilty, and unredeemably so...What a mad unhappy animal is man! (GM III 26)

Imprisoned in his idol of truth, humanity thereby harbors a cerebral malice towards animality and what he has made of himself and his role in the world. Through the self-torment of repression humanity thus cultivates an inner hatred whose genesis is due to "the reversal of the evaluating look, this invariable looking outward instead of inward,...a fundamental feature of rancor...Physiologically speaking all its action is a reaction" (GM I 10).

Nietzsche concludes that the course of philosophy in dealing with the imaginary world of truth has tried to hack

off the roots of mankind's unconscious and forbidden animal nature, making humans the "insane animal". By mistaking its own fictions for reality, humanity has made himself sick, branding evil and false that which is physiologically the closest. Humans are passively "nihilistic" in that the fictions in which they believe are grounded in nothing--the idols "known" as truths. The condition is made even more desparate because the seductive force of language even goes so far as to structure empirical reality to the extent that we cannot even realize that it controls the way we think and deal with the world. Yet mankind is not doomed. Nietzsche hinted that it is not too late to bestow meaning on this earth. It still can hope for salvation from the "slanderers of this world" in Dionysian art.

CHAPTER SIX: DIONYSIAN AFFIRMATION: IGNORING BEING

An anti-metaphysical view of the world--yes, but an artistic one.--The Will to Power (1048)

The present inquiry so far has traced Nietzsche's development of the disavowal of the belief in truth which exists prior to human perspectival optics. Nietzsche has tried to expose all truth as mere idol or "the posture of various errors to one another" (WP 535). Some of these truths enhance man's "will to power" and are useful in making man stronger through the mastering of phenomena by positing beings, logic, and acquiring highly developed senses of causation. Yet these idols have also restricted growth and dampened vital energies by placing limits on humanity. This chapter will synopsise the logic of Nietzsche's assault on being and offer Nietzsche's answer to these worn-out metaphors, the nihilator par excellence, the tragic artist.

The first five chapters of this inquiry present the logic of Nietzsche's rejection of truth:

1. Mankind is born into a chaotic flux with no pre-existent being. This is the fundamental condition of existence.
2. "Many hecatombs of human beings were sacrificed before these impulses learned to comprehend their coexistence and

to feel that they were all functions of one organizing force within one human being" (GS 113). Mankind bestows upon its members the belief in selfhood, thus making himself a "self"; the individual thus adopts the thereafter indispensable power-increasing fiction of the ego, creating and learning to view oneself as a powerful unity.

3. Through individuals positing themselves as a unities, they are able to believe "unproblematically" in unities in general. Through language one communicates about the newfound "beings" which are found (or taken to be found) as real and existent in the world, independent of perception.

4. Humans are able to reason about remote time and space and even "beings" as of yet unencountered. Incipit dialectics, a highly proficient mechanical application which wields knowledge of the relations among his fictitious unities. Here humans come to develop a sense of and for truth.

5. Truth about the world is spilled into the truths about morality, the way things "ought to be": rational, unanimalistic. Truth commands an obligatory force and turns on the spontaneity and healthiness of mankind's instinctual animal past. "The wells of Eros" are poisoned by a carnally unbegotten prophet, the son of God. Christianity adopts the Platonic god of ultimate rationality who guarantees the veracity of being and mankind is no longer an animal free to roam amongst its immediate instinctual nature, i.e. that

which was originally and is primally the condition of existence. Torn between beast and God, the idol demands revolt against the primal nature and humanity becomes psychologically and physiologically "sick".

At this point humanity is paralyzed in its ability to create a better understanding of the world which could relinquish itself from self-inflicted madness. Philosophers can provide no answers as they have already accepted the given reality of "being" and its consequential reality to justify existence. They are especially unable to do so because they are "the sober, the weary, the exhausted" precisely because they are at home only in the dialectical world of the exchange of "real" ideas. Like computers, they are only able to operate proficiently with their pre-programmed static concepts of logical dualism and are therefore unable to generate new interpretations. The smell, sound, and sight of this prompts Nietzsche to conclude that they are the farthest from reality and in lieu of looking to philosophers for an understanding of life, he offers the tragic wisdom of Dionysian art.

While Nietzsche shifted his early epistemological stance in regards to Dionysian art as a keyhole to peak into the noumena (as outlined in chapter three), Nietzsche's Dionysos (in spite of other transformations in the character of Dionysos in Nietzsche's thought) represents the tragic artist who can stand in the midst of the terrifying and the

uncertain fearlessly, and even prefer the uncertainty and terror which constitute the conditions of life and therefore the nature of Nietzschean reality. The Dionysian artist spontaneously affirms life with a superabundance of animalistic and human energy rather than hiding behind the illusory shield of dialectics. He has the courage to stand without the need or want of the reactionary fiction of the contrivances of rationality to justify existence.

Nietzsche obviously thinks that not all art is Dionysian and insofar as the artist annihilates being by substituting art for truth Nietzsche elucidates:

The desire for destruction, change, becoming can be the expression of an overfull power pregnant with the future (my term, for this, as is known is the word "Dionysian"); but it can also be hatred of the ill-constituted, disinherited, underprivileged, which destroys, has to destroy, because what exists, indeed existence itself, all being itself, enrages it, provokes it. (WP 846)

Nietzsche's Dionysian is not resentful towards the world nor reactionary, but spontaneously creates and affirms his life-instincts. In contrast to the "Inartistic states: those of objectivity, mirroring, suspended will", Nietzsche's artist stands prior to the fictions of "being" and could not be concerned with the way things (allegedly) are. Moreover, Nietzsche asserts that "to demand of the artist that he should practice the perspective of the audience (Of the critic--) [is]...to demand that he should impoverish himself and his creative power" (WP 811). Here we can see that Nietzsche's tragic hero as creator in a

sense does not "know what he's doing". Here lies part of his "tragicness", in that he is like a child who doesn't yet understand what he should and shouldn't do because he is unfamiliar with "the way things are". He is therefore often the victim of his own undoing.

Nietzsche characterizes the non-dionysian artist as one who has not only his "artistic" perspective, but also the perspective of his audience. The reason that this might make for a more socially-dictated "successful" artist is that he knows how his work will be viewed by the public. Yet, according to Nietzsche, this is precisely what makes him inferior as an artist. Once he puts himself in the eye of the audience's perspective, his work becomes concerned with evoking responses of religious fervor, nationalism, seduction of women, etc. He puts himself at the mercy of the "all too human" world which brings its own slant into interpretation and thus loses his spontaneity. The non-dionysian's art becomes a means to some other end and he no longer can stand outside the logic of interpretative schema.

Logically speaking, if one is going to use the word "creation" in the sense of making "something" come out of "nothing", no one should be able to create, as the "reality of being" in logical dualism has no transition stage between "something" and "nothing"; either something "is" or it "is not" and the only way in which we can posit the existence of

unities as existent is to understand the difference between "when something is" and "when something is not". Yet this is precisely how the Dionysian artist can create. He does not understand or simply chooses to ignore "being" as ready made. Prior to belief in the obligation to recognize the difference between "being" and "nonbeing", he freely arranges "being" and thereby creates his own unities, "making up" the very structure by which reality is to be interpreted himself. By not knowing or at least not believing in the importance or the "reality" of "how things are", he is able to arrange and construct the way he interprets reality and thus manifest this interpretation in his art, logically (or illogically) prior to the being of logical dualism itself. Thus the artist becomes like a god or God--or whoever is entitled to create and sanction a new meaning in the world. Moreover, he does this "out of nothing" but his abundance of life-affirming creative energy.

Nietzsche views God as the archenemy of art for "God's absolute truth relegates all art to the realm of falsehood and in so doing condemns it" (BT later preface II). As a consequence, Nietzsche believes the development of mankind's creative faculties have been all but pre-empted and beaten into near nonexistence by the obligatory idol of truth. Nietzsche plays with his irony of a fiction which demands the unreality of other fictions:

It was the greatest of rebaptisms; and because it has been adopted by Christianity we do not recognize how astonishing it is. Fundamentally, Plato, as the artist he was, preferred appearance to being! lie and invention to truth! the unreal to the actual! But he was so convinced of the value of appearance that he gave it the attributes "being", "causality", and "goodness" and "truth", in short everything men value. (WP 572)

Nietzsche further paints his own history of the "true world" and how it "became a fable" in Twilight of the Idols:

The History of an Error

1. The true world--attainable for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man; he lives 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.")

2. The true world--unattainable for now, but promised for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man ("for the sinner who repents"). (Progress of the idea: it becomes female, it becomes Christian).

3. The true world--unattainable, indemonstrable, unpromisable; but the 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, Konigsbergian)

4. The true world--unattainable? At any rate, 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)

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)

6. The true world--we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one 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; highpoint of humanity; INCIPIIT ZARATHUSTRA.) (TI IV)

Thus Nietzsche gives us the history of philosophy as a fiction, a fable, an artwork which is finally to be recognized as such. Moreover, Nietzsche's "proof" lies in his own unabashed writing of philosophy as art--or perhaps it just lies.

After his mischief of denying the reality of the ego, things-in-themselves, truth, and morality, Nietzsche thus leaves us with art as "the cult of the untrue" as a hint as to where we may look for the nature of reality, for philosophy is over. If we take Nietzsche seriously perhaps we should either not listen to him or consider exchanging our wornout metaphors for the not yet created. For those of us who may have followed Nietzsche's dance through the absence of ultimate obligatory truth both in being and morality, Nietzsche parts leaving the illusory vanishing smoke of art standing both before and amidst truth as man's ultimate reality--by default! Even for those amongst us who think Nietzsche is simply insane and breathes rantings of delusions stirred on by syphillitic, schizophrenic dementia, perhaps we can still yet welcome the will not to slander life:

There is much filth in the world; that much is true.
But that does not make the world a filthy monster.
[Thus spake Zarathustra] (Z III 14)

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