



NIETZSCHE

Science/ Art/  
Life

University of  
Dundee  
2022



Friedrich Nietzsche Society

27<sup>th</sup> International Conference  
Friedrich Nietzsche Society

***Science, Art, Life***

Hosted by Dr. Ashley Woodward and Dr. Amélie Berger Soraruff

(University of Dundee)

Dalhousie Building, University of Dundee, Scotland, 16-17 September 2022

Streamed Event on Collaborate

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# Welcome to the 2022 FNS Conference

## *Science, Art, Life*

Nietzsche asserts that 'a higher culture must give to man a double-brain, as it were two brain-ventricles, one for the perceptions of science, the other for those of non-science: lying beside one another, not confused together, separable, capable of being shut off; this is a demand of health.' (*HAH* 251). This demand of health indicates that both science and art should be subject to a higher standard of value, the existential value of life. In his latter preface to *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche describes the aim of the book as to examine science through the lens of art, and art through the lens of life.

This broaches the question of the priorities given to these tendencies, which do not remain constant throughout the itinerary of Nietzsche's thought. Nietzsche's diagnosis of the nihilism of the modern age is in a certain sense a bemoaning of the rise of science and the decline of tragic art. Yet he also diagnosed decadent cultural tendencies, for example in the works of Wagner, to which science might be an antidote. Moreover, following his close reading of Lange's *History of Materialism* he kept abreast with developments and debates in the natural sciences. His arguments for will to power and eternal return are indebted to scientific theories in atomism and thermodynamics, yet he never lost his profound sensitivity to music and to art in general, seeing it as an essential stimulus to life.

Questions of the relation between science and art remain at the forefront of debate today. Our natural sciences are having effects more profound than ever on the meaning and quality of our lives, from what some see as the physical instantiation of metaphysics in networked information and communication technologies, to the unintended consequences of the technosciences, the destruction of the environment and the threat of extinction it brings. Meanwhile, the very distinctions between the human and the natural sciences, between the sciences and the arts, have been increasingly questioned, and contemporary philosophy finds itself in greater dialogue with the sciences than in much of the twentieth century.

This themed conference then invites a timely reflection on Nietzsche's untimely meditations concerning the tensions, connections, resonances, and aporias of thinking science, art, and life together.



Friedrich Nietzsche Society

## Conference Organisers

**Ashley Woodward** is a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Dundee. He is a member of the Scottish Centre for Continental Philosophy, was a founding member of the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy, and is an editor of *Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy*. His work on Nietzsche has mostly focused on the problem of nihilism and on interpretations and influences of Nietzsche in later philosophical traditions. His books include *Nihilism in Postmodernity* (Davies Group 2009), *Understanding Nietzscheanism* (Acumen 2011), and the edited volumes *Interpreting Nietzsche* (Continuum 2011) and *Nietzsche and the Politics of Difference* (with Andrea Rehberg; De Gruyter, 2022). He has published articles on Nietzsche in journals such as *Nietzsche-Studien*, *Continental Philosophy Review*, and *The Agonist*. His other research interests include recent and contemporary French philosophy, aesthetics, and philosophy of information.

**Amélie Berger-Soraruff** is an Associate Member of the Scottish Center for Continental Philosophy and teaches at the University of Dundee. She has also lectured for the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy. Her research focuses on technologies and their political significance. Her areas of interest include French Philosophy, Media Theory, Phenomenology, and Aesthetics. She has published on Bernard Stiegler and Michel Foucault. Her first book on the 'technics of existence' will be published with Bloomsbury.

## Conference Schedule: Note for Online Participants

Conference proceedings are arranged taking **UTC+ 1** as our UK baseline. BST stands for British Summer Time.

The following table should allow you to compare your own time zone with the proceedings of each day of the conference, if needed.

Time Zones Offset from UTC (Universal Coordinated Time)						
UTC-7	UTC-4	UTC-3	UTC	UTC+1	UTC+8	UTC+10
PDT (US West Coast)	EDT (US East Coast)	Brazil	Universal Coordinated Time	UK, Portugal	China	Australian East Coast
Example: 12.00 noon UTC equals...						
5.00 am	8.00 am	9.00 am	12.00 noon	1.00 pm	8.00 pm	10.00 pm
Los Angeles	New York	Brasilia	- - -	London	Shanghai	Sydney

For planning purposes, you may find <https://www.worldtimebuddy.com/> to be particularly helpful.

A separate schedule and instructions will be sent to online participants with links to access rooms on Collaborate.

Time (BST)	<b>Day 1 (Friday 16 September)</b>		
8.30 – 9.15	REGISTRATION		
9.15– 9.30	WELCOME Lecture Theatre 1		
09.30 – 11.00	<b>Key Note 1: Rebecca Bamford</b> 'The Gay Science §341 As/And Experiment'  <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>		
Coffee Break	20 minutes		
11.20–12.50	<b>Session 1</b> <i>Science/Art/Life 1</i> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b> <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i>	<b>Session 3</b> <i>Science + Life 1</i>
	'Transformational Finitude: From Heraclitus to Nietzsche via Helmholtz and Lange' - Joel White (v)	'Truth, Metaphysics, and Life Affirmation in Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy' - Katie Brennan (v)	'Nietzsche and the Science of "Becoming What One Is" - Thomas Lambert
	'Nietzsche's Spiritual Exercises: Reading Nietzsche Through Ancient Eyes' - Neil Durrant		

	<p>'Nietzsche's Concept of Breeding: Between Science, Life, and Art'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Marina García-Granero</p>	<p>'Welcome to the Machina: Science as a Form of Life in Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Glen Baier</p>	<p>'<i>Wissenschaft, Life, Becoming</i>'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Mat Messerschmidt</p>
Lunch	1 hour		
13:50-15:20	<p><b>Session 4</b> <b><i>Untimely Meditations</i></b> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b></p>	<p><b>Session 5</b> <b><i>Art + Life 1 : Literature</i></b></p>	<p><b>Session 6</b> <b><i>Nature + Naturalism</i></b></p>
	<p>'Art, science, and life in <i>Wir Philologen</i>'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Neriojamil Palumbo</p>	<p>'The Art of Parable for Life'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Stephen Cheung</p>	<p>'The meaning of the earth. Nietzschean remarks on science and life in the Anthropocene'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Benoît Berthelier</p>
	<p>'Nietzsche's Untimely Antidote to the Science of History'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Jessica Elkayam</p>	<p>'Nietzsche's Poethics: Poetry as a Way of Life'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Philip Mills</p>	<p>'Naturalizing and inhabiting nature'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Robert Guay</p>
	<p>'Constructions in the Shipwreck: Nietzsche's Apollonian Images in the Untimely Meditations'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Melanie Shepherd</p>	<p>'Fictions less futile: Nietzsche on Living Aesthetically'</p> <p>-</p> <p>Jill Marsden (v)</p>	



Coffee Break	20 minutes		
15.40–17.10	<b>Session 7</b> <b>General 1</b> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>	<b>Session 8</b> <b>Middle Period 1</b>	<b>Session 9</b> <b>Science + Art</b>
	'Nietzsche on Intellectual Conscience and Truth's "Moral Ground"' - Richard Elliott	'Science in the Service of Life: Nietzsche, Wissenschaft, and the 'Metaphysical Need' in the Middle Period Writings' - Dylan Bailey	'Knowledge, Death and Dream: The Statue at Saïs' - Paul Raimond Daniels (V)
	'Toward a New 'Cult of the Untrue': Nietzsche on the Role of Falsity in Discrediting and Creating Values' - Michael McNeal	'Science in the Service of Life in Nietzsche's Middle Period' - Laura Langone	'Nietzsche on Art, Science and Civilization: Towards a Politics of "Great Style"' - Pieter De Corte (v)
	'Emotional Dominance and Psychophysiological Decadence in Nietzsche' - Kaitlyn Creasy (v)	'Stages of the "Human, All-Too-Human". Religion, Art, Science, and Beyond' - Charles Lebeau-Henry	'Modern science as most recent representative of the Ascetic Ideal?' - Gabriel Zamosc
17.15 – 18.45	<b>Key Note 2: Tsarina Doyle</b> 'Nietzsche's Naturalism: Causality, Science and the Human' <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>		
<b>Conference Dinner – Malmaison</b>			



Time (CEST)	Day 2 (Saturday 17 September)		
9.30 – 11.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Note 3 : Gregory Moore</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">'Darwinism, Pessimism, and the Value of Life in Nietzsche and Hartmann'</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lecture Theatre 1</b></p>		
Coffee Break	20 minutes		
11.20–12.50	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 10</b> <i>Science/Art/Life 2</i> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 11</b> <i>Forms of Life</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 12</b> <i>Science + Life 2</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">'From the Perspective of Life: Science as Art'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Andrea Rehberg (v)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'In the service of culture, in the service of life'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pedro Nagem de Souza</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'Jesting at the Edge: On Nietzschean Laughter in Science, Philosophy, and Life'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lodewijk van Eeden</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">'Nietzsche and Computing'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ashley Woodward</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'Zarathustra's Vita Contemplativa'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Peter Groff (v)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">'What does it mean to live in accordance with Life? Critically assessing Nietzsche's Life theory and its implications for his ethics'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Simon Townsend (v)</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">'The Realm of Our Invention: On the Role of Parody in Nietzsche's Thought'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Caroline Wall</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">'Infinite Monkeys: Nietzsche and the Cruel Optimism of Personal Immortality'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bobby Johnson</p>

Lunch	1 hour		
13.50–15.20 UTC+1	<b>Session 13</b> <i>Middle Period 2</i> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>	<b>Session 14</b> <i>Art + Life 2: Music</i>	<b>Session 15</b> <i>General 2</i>
	'Language and Art' – Astréa Issler Ribeiro	'Platonic Musical Education in Richard Wagner in Bayreuth' – Jozef Majernik	'Nietzsche's Early Tragic Philosophy' – Peter Stewart-Kroeker (v)
	'Experiment in Nietzsche's Dawn' – Katrina Mitcheson	'Nietzsche's Nachgesang' – Daniel Conway (v)	'Zarathustra's characterful encounters – the leech and the magician' – James Leigh
	'Honesty, Science, and the Passion for Knowledge: Contextualising Nietzsche's Fate in Book IV of The Gay Science' – Fraser Logan	'Great Art as a Form of Life' – Imran Hashmi	'Science and the Return of the Gods in Nietzsche and Heidegger' – Nicholas Low
Coffee break	25 minutes		
15.45–17.15	<b>Publishing Roundtable</b> <b>Lecture Theatre 1</b>		
<b>Conference and Exhibition Closing / wine reception</b>  <b>Dalhousie Foyer / Gallery</b> <b>17.30 – 19.00</b>			

## Presenter Abstracts

### Keynote Presentations

**Rebecca Bamford**

Queen's University Belfast

'The Gay Science §341 As/And Experiment'

For Hans-Christian Ørsted and for Georg Christian Lichtenberg, thought experiments owed their initial meaning to scientific experiments. Thought experiments are also found in philosophy, mathematics, art, and theology, and play significant roles in ordinary life as well as in some therapeutic contexts. However, there is no firm definition of a thought experiment (Stuart, Fehige, and Brown, 2018). Thought experiments are still receiving critical attention within a range of scholarly fields, including epistemology, metaphilosophy, and science studies, as well as phenomenology, literary studies, and cognitive science. My aim in this paper is to develop a clearer account of thought experiments as genuine experiments in Nietzsche. While I shall discuss a range of textual evidence from Nietzsche, I will focus predominantly throughout on Nietzsche's well-known aphorism from *The Gay Science* §341, an aphorism that has been held to count as a thought experiment, and which has featured prominently in the available scholarly literature.

I begin by examining Georg Simmel's analysis of GS §341 as an experiment: Simmel was the first philosopher to give significant attention to GS §341 as a form of thought experiment in his book *Schopenhauer and Nietzsche* (1907). I assess Roy Sorenson's (1992) and Genevieve Lloyd's (1993) critical assessments of Simmel's response to Nietzsche's experiment. I then consider analyses of thought experiments and other relevant evidence within current scholarship (e.g. Ridley 1997; Loeb, 2006, 2010; Marsden 2009; Westerdale 2013; Gemes 2013; Acampora 2018; Creasy 2020). I explain the key characteristics of Nietzsche's thought experiment in GS §341 that we may derive from previous accounts. I then clarify why Nietzsche's thought experiment in GS §341 can count as a genuine experiment: GS §341 has the capacity to generate novel affective responses and experiences that are key to advancing Nietzsche's free spirit project, of which GS §341 is part, and which are transformative and worldview changing on individual and social levels, even while not necessarily worldview changing for every individual.

**Bio:** Dr Bamford works in 19<sup>th</sup> Century European philosophy and in ethics, including in bioethics. She has additional research expertise in African philosophy and in social and political philosophy. She is the co-author (with Keith Ansell-Pearson) of *Nietzsche's Dawn* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2020). She is currently working on several book projects on Nietzsche's experimentalism, on Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, and on the politics of identity.

## **Tsarina Doyle**

National University of Ireland, Galway

'Nietzsche's Naturalism: Causality, Science and the Human'

This paper will examine the character of Nietzsche's naturalism by highlighting the role of natural causality in his efforts to translate the human being back into nature (BGE, 230). Although it has been claimed that an emphasis on natural causality commits Nietzsche to a scientific naturalism that excludes the human point of view (Schacht 2012: 192), it will be argued here instead that Nietzsche's naturalism should be understood metaphysically rather than scientifically. In so doing, it will be shown, Nietzsche circumvents a problem that we inherited from the scientific project of the Enlightenment, and which continues to inform contemporary debates. This is the problem that if one aligns naturalism with the perspective of the natural sciences then one faces the risk of either reducing the human being to the scientific image of things, or else, claiming that the human being cannot be adequately described within this image and must, therefore, be understood as dualistically apart from it. Rather than adopt either of these oppositional points of view in the sense of prioritizing the scientific over the manifest image, or vice versa, this paper will argue that Nietzsche engages the natural sciences with a view to broadening their perspective to include the human point of view.

It will be shown that Nietzsche achieves this broadening of the scientific perspective by engaging with the natural sciences on both a methodological and metaphysical level. Both levels of engagement imply one another and entail, specifically, critical reflection on and modification of the scientific account of causality. By this is meant that Nietzsche's naturalism arises from both his efforts to supplement the perspective of the natural sciences with metaphysically real causal powers that are modally dispositional and his claim that both the spheres of human and non-human nature must be understood in terms of these dispositions. This argument has the result that non-human and human nature should be understood as metaphysically continuous rather than dualistically apart or that one should be prioritized over the other.

The argument will be executed by first establishing that Nietzsche's naturalism entails an emphasis on causality and causal explanations. Rather than

minimizing the role and scope of causality, as some have suggested, Nietzsche, instead, emphasizes the importance of understanding causality correctly in order to better comprehend the human being's place in nature. It is precisely its emphasis on causality that Nietzsche highlights in his praise for scientific method. Science, he argues, has played a significant role in undermining non-naturalistic and, in his view, illegitimate accounts of the world. Still, despite this praise, Nietzsche claims that scientific method is not without problems, reflection upon which leads him to critically engage with and draw upon the methodological resources of science to overcome its deficiencies and broaden its perspective to include that of the human point of view. Specifically, in part two, we see Nietzsche modify the scientific account of causality to understand it in distinctively dispositional and metaphysical terms and argue that both human and non-human nature should be understood in these terms. Finally, I address the issue of whether Nietzsche's revised account of causality might be supported by contemporary physics and, thus, whether, despite his criticisms of science in the period of the Enlightenment, the metaphysical and the scientific might be brought into closer harmony.

**Bio:** Tsarina Doyle is Lecturer in Philosophy at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Her research interests include epistemology and metaphysics in modern philosophy with particular emphasis on Kant and Nietzsche. She is especially interested in how these historically situated approaches intersect with contemporary debates. She is the author of *Nietzsche on Epistemology and Metaphysics : The World in View* (Edinburgh UP, 2009), *Nietzsche's Metaphysics of the Will to Power : The Possibility of Value* (Cambridge UP, 2018), and numerous journal articles.

## Gregory Moore

Georgia State University

'Darwinism, Pessimism, and the Value of Life in Nietzsche and Hartmann'

"Did not pessimism and Darwinism walk hand in hand, united by the spirit of the age?" This rhetorical question, raised by Karl Joël in his philosophical dialogues on free will (1908), points to a debate, once conspicuous and urgent in the Germany of the 1860s and 870s, but little remembered today. Namely: the problem of the value of life, as understood by the two culture-defining systems of thought that had risen to prominence in those decades—Schopenhauerian *Weltschmerz* and the theory of evolution—and the degree to which they could be reconciled. On one hand the struggle for existence affirmed the pessimistic inference as to the suffering and meaninglessness of the cosmos; on the other it appeared to promise moral and material improvement in human affairs. Eduard von Hartmann led the way in attempting to integrate Darwinism—or rather, what he called the "organic theory of descent"—with a pessimistic worldview.

This paper aims to reconstruct the historical connections between the emergence of pessimism and Darwinism and will argue that Nietzsche's programmatic statements on life and culture, particularly in the works of the mid to late 1870s, are best understood in the light of this context. After all, it was in this framework that Nietzsche's thought was initially received: by Hartmann as well as by others (e.g. Hans Vaihinger) among that first generation of early philosophers who came to terms with his ideas.

**Bio:** Greg Moore is an intellectual historian with a particular interest in Germany since the Enlightenment. He is the author of *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor* (Cambridge UP, 2002) and the translator and editor of Johann Gottfried Herder's *Selected Writings on Aesthetics* (Princeton University Press, 2006) and Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (Cambridge UP, 2008). He is currently preparing a translation of Herder's *Ideas for the Philosophy of History of Mankind* and a monograph on the philosophical reception of Darwinism in Germany.



## Presenter Abstracts

### Parallel Session Presentations

**Parallel 1** - 11.20 to 12.50

#### **Session 1 - Science/Art/Life 1**

**Neil Durrant:** 'Nietzsche's Spiritual Exercises: Reading Nietzsche Through Ancient Eyes'

In this paper I ask whether Nietzsche's ethos of contest can be understood as spiritual exercises that bring science and art together through experimental and aesthetically motivated ways of living. I argue that Nietzsche's ethics (focusing on *Dawn* and *The Gay Science*) proposes quasi-scientific personal experimentation as a way of life. I analyse these experiments as spiritual exercises and consider how they bring art and science together in Nietzsche's thought. I argue against the claim that Nietzsche opposes scientific thinking to aesthetic judgement, focusing instead on his idea that philosophy functions to make science both beautiful and entertaining (*D* 427). Ethics thus becomes a lived process that transforms individual lives into artworks through experimental self-creation. Drawing on Hadot's notion of spiritual exercises, I propose four Nietzschean practices: gardening, sailing, climbing, and dancing. Drawing on the Epicurean tradition, Nietzsche sees the individual as a garden to be cultivated as a personal practice (*GS* 9, *D* 560) that develops the drives in pursuit of an aesthetic-ethical ideal. In this exercise the individual conducts rigorous experiments to understand and manipulate their underlying 'drivescape'. Using the metaphor of sailing (*D* 315, 545, *GS* 283, 302) Nietzsche draws on the figure of Columbus to encourage the individual to take risks by venturing into unknown topographies of lived experience. By enlarging lived experience in this way, the individual can sharpen their aesthetic choices. Nietzsche uses the metaphor of mountaintop wandering (climbing) to describe the importance of solitude for self-creation (*D* 499, *GS* 342). Away from polluting voices, the individual purifies their aesthetic-ethical ideals. Finally, he uses dancing (*GS* 324, 381) as a metaphor to describe a pseudo-Stoic practice in which an individual sees themselves from a tragic-comic perspective.

I conclude by considering the role of friends and enemies in maximising the utility of these spiritual exercises for self-creation. As they get entangled in intimate contests with carefully selected friends and enemies, an individual exercises their will to power. In doing this, they are increasingly conformed to the constraints of their own peculiar lifestyle (*GS* 299). Thus, in the practice of Nietzschean spiritual exercises, the scientific method of experiment and the art of living fuse together to make "beautiful that which is necessary" (*GS* 276).

## Marina García-Granero: 'Nietzsche's Concept of Breeding: Between Science, Life, and Art'

Is *Züchtung* merely cultural or does it have a scientific basis? Where lies Nietzsche's originality compared to evolutionary thinkers that also employed this concept? What role does 'breeding' play in Nietzsche's critique of different forms of life? Does *Züchtung* operate through art? Cultivation or breeding (*Züchtung*) is a polysemic concept that Nietzsche used to capture how different cultures shape different forms of life, or radically, different types of human beings. Both science and art are part of this process. Nietzsche scrutinizes the techniques and means that influence the unconscious preferences of people and cultures; in short, how human beings are formed and transformed. I will show how my interpretation differs from previous treatments: for example, John Richardson's reading of breeding as eugenics, or Gerd Schank's and Thomas H. Brobjer's interpretation as a merely cultural synonym of education. Through *Züchtung*, biology, morality, and aesthetics are inextricably connected. Nietzsche did not coin the concept. In the first German editions of *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin's 'natural selection' was translated as *natürliche Züchtung*. *Züchtung* referred to the processes by which farmers choose the hereditary qualities whose transmission they wish to ensure, and similarly in botany — which resonates in Nietzsche's allusions to the "garden" and the "human-plant". Nietzsche's critical readings of Lange, Bagehot, Spencer, Lubbock and Espinas pushed him to both incorporate an evolutionary basis and to critique the axiological assumptions of social Darwinism. Evolution manifests itself in conservative processes that raise a homogeneous species, select, and promote certain qualities while forbidding or sacrificing others. Against social Darwinism, Nietzsche presents alternative forms of selection or breeding that provide the space for the development of exceptional, free-spirited individuals, such as the good Europeans. The 'last man' and the 'overhuman' are an allegorical representation of two opposing life-ideals: the first characterized by survival, adaptation, and conformism, while the second depicts vitalism, pluralism and the overcoming of herd values.

Based on a monism —or adualism— between body and spirit, art, culture, and morality operate as a circle, that can be either vicious or virtuous. Works of art are symptomatic of physiological conditions, and at the same time, a society can be physiologically transformed through art. This is promptly hinted in Nietzsche's posthumous fragments. In a note from 1875, Nietzsche wrote that Wagner breeds (*züchtet*) his audience (PF 1875 5[134]), which is to say that Wagner's art physiologically forms his spectators. Significantly, in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche recalled the "tremendous hope" that lay beneath *The Birth of Tragedy* and called for "a Dionysian future" and a "new faction in favour of life that takes on the greatest task of all, that of breeding humanity to higher levels" (EH BT 4, trans. Judith Norman). Likewise, *The Case of Wagner* and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner* display a profound medicalization of art. Nietzsche's pathographies are a diagnostic strategy not only of Wagner, but of his spectators, that is, *décadent* societies. Meanwhile, aesthetics is instrumentally exploited in politics, namely, by Bismarck's regime. Wagner's art meets the definition of German and reinforces it: "obedience and long legs" (CW 11). Nietzsche drew a parallel between Wagner and the II Reich, certainly not intended as a compliment. Wagner's art is a "dressage", "a training (*Dressur*)"

that stifles every movement. Art can be decadent, but it can also transformative and push to a splendid Dionysian promotion of life.

## Session 2 - *The Birth of Tragedy*

**Katie Brennan:** 'Truth, Metaphysics, and Life Affirmation in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*'

How do Nietzsche's metaphysical commitments in *The Birth of Tragedy* impact his views of truth and life affirmation? In this paper, I analyze three different metaphysical readings of *The Birth of Tragedy* with the aim of determining the impact that each metaphysical reading has on Nietzsche's theory of life affirmation through tragedy. Nietzsche argues that tragedy is capable of affirming life through metaphysical solace. Thus, his metaphysical picture will be essential for understanding how life affirmation functions in *The Birth of Tragedy*. These different metaphysical pictures also imply different conceptions of truth. The first reading, advocated for by Julian Young and Ivan Soll, argues that Nietzsche adopts a Schopenhauerian metaphysics. On this reading, the life affirming potential of tragedy is a result of one's communion with Nietzsche's equivalent of the Schopenhauerian will. Here, truth is taken to be a reflection of the Schopenhauerian will. The second reading, advanced by M. S. Silk and J. P. Stern and Aaron Ridley, argues that Nietzsche retains a robust metaphysical theory that has been adapted from, but ultimately differs from, Schopenhauer's theory of the will. On this theory, Nietzsche is taken to hold a belief in the existence of a primordial unity that one can come in contact with through Dionysian art. Metaphysical solace comes as a result of communion with this primordial unity. Here, truth is taken to be that which reflects the Dionysian primordial unity. Third, scholars like Gemes and Sykes argue that Nietzsche does not maintain the existence of a Dionysian primordial unity. Instead, they argue that Nietzsche's comments about the metaphysical solace that tragedy provides can be understood as a result of the ancient Greeks' *belief* in the existence of a primordial unity. Here, Nietzsche's theory of truth becomes more complicated. It is no longer rooted in a metaphysics of existence. Instead, truth takes multiple forms.

In section I, I outline the three different metaphysical pictures described above. Each metaphysical picture implies a different conception of truth and path to life affirmation. In section II, I argue that the third metaphysical picture outlined above, which maintains that Nietzsche rejects the existence of a metaphysical Dionysian unity, is the most compelling because it implies a version of life affirmation that anticipates Nietzsche's later work. On this view, tragedy affirms life by demonstrating to the audience that life is worth living without reference to an otherworldly metaphysical entity. The Dionysian is transformed from a source of ultimate meaning and truth to one form of belief among many. This foreshadows Nietzsche's mature theory of life affirmation, which does away with the concept of "metaphysical comfort" and asks that we "learn the art of comfort in this world" (BT, "Attempt," 7). On this reading, a perspectival conception of truth emerges, also anticipating Nietzsche's mature work. Examining all three metaphysical positions allows us to examine how Nietzsche's early thinking on life affirmation is continuous with his mature work.

**Glen Baier:** 'Welcome to the Machina: Science as a Form of Life in Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy'

In this paper, I defend the proposition that Nietzsche, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, treats science primarily as a troubled 'form of life'. The expression 'form of life' here denotes a mode of incarnation in which the human being acquires specific physiological attributes through adherence to the mandate and practice of science. Science, thus, is presented as more than a method of investigation or a variety of intellectual pursuit. Science is ontologically determining in that it shapes our bodily existence. For that reason, Nietzsche asserts that science harms life. It does so by converting human beings into the means by which life itself is subverted. For Nietzsche, the power of science is found initially in the attractiveness of its worldview. It makes the world more predictable and manageable by insisting that objects must be amenable to conceptual schema. In this manner, it seeks to negate the uniqueness of particulars, thus rendering them equivalent. This equivalence requires imposition of categorical limitations on objects at the expense of their actual manifestation. In terms of the human being, science entreats us, not only to produce equivalencies, but to embody them. We are to become equivalent selves, charged with the task of making things equivalent. It is this dimension of science which Nietzsche takes to be contrary to life.

In the course of the paper, I provide an overview of Nietzsche's account of the ascendancy of science. On this level, my analysis demonstrates how science gives 'birth' to a 'perverse' version of the human self, a self best described as a machine. To support my interpretation, I chart how *The Birth of Tragedy* employs the notion of a *deus ex machina* as a central framing device. The *deus ex machina* is discussed early in the text as a rhetorical instrument which allows dramatists to achieve closure through the use of dubious tactics. In this regard, it is linked to the work of Euripides, and it is what ensures that his plays have proper finales. The *deus ex machina* thus guarantees that all loose ends are tied up, and nothing is left unexplained. For Nietzsche, however, the *deus ex machina* not only ruins the possibility for genuine tragic art, it also facilitates the emergence of a problematic model of human agency. Hence when *the deus ex machina* finds its way into science, the scene is set for a decisive change in the parameters ascribed to human thought and action. Hence the last observation Nietzsche forwards regarding the *deus ex machina*. He speaks of it as the "god of machines and smelting furnaces" under which the "energies of the spirits of nature" are "understood and applied in the service of higher egotism". This god "believes in correcting the world through knowledge, in life led by science and it is truly capable of confining the individual within the smallest circle of solvable tasks" (*BT* 17). It is that individual that I contend is the self as machine, a self physically prepared for the repetitive job of producing equivalencies.

### Session 3 -Science + Life 1

**Thomas Lambert:** 'Nietzsche and the Science of "Becoming What One Is".'

The notion of becoming what or who one is can be found throughout Nietzsche's works, perhaps most famously in his intellectual autobiography, *Ecce Homo*, the subtitle of which is "How One Becomes What One Is" [*Wie man wird, was man ist*] (see also GS 270, 335; Z IV.1; EH II.9, III.BT.3). It is quite natural to understand this expression as referring to the sort of process Nietzsche describes in the second section of that book:

Meanwhile the organizing "idea" that is destined to rule keeps growing deep down—it begins to command; slowly it leads us *back* from side roads and wrong roads; it prepares *single* qualities and fitnesses that will one day prove to be indispensable as means toward a whole. (EH II.9; see also GS 290)

Indeed, according to one influential interpretation, Nietzsche's own "becoming" is a lengthy project involving the writing of his many books and culminating in the authorship of *Ecce Homo*, "in which Nietzsche can be said with equal justice to invent or to discover himself" (Nehamas 1985, 196). On such an interpretation, the duration of one's "becoming" could be an entire lifetime, a process of self-actualization spanning from cradle to grave. While there should be no doubt that Nietzsche is interested in such projects, the reading somewhat discounts the fact that Nietzsche, when writing about "becoming" [*das Werden*], typically means to refer to much more basic phenomenon: "passing away ... and change" (TI III.2; see also EH III.BT.3). In this sense, agents "become" with every new action. As I contend in the first part of this talk, this suggests another interpretation of what it means to "become what one is": just as Nietzsche hints in *The Gay Science*, one "becomes" what one is each time one acts according to one's *conscience*: "*What does your conscience say?—'Thou shalt become he who thou art'*" (GS 270). I argue that acting according to conscience is "becoming" what one is because the voice of conscience, for Nietzsche, *just is* a function of the power relations that obtain between the psychological drives constituting one's self. Thus, action according to conscience—that is, *strong-willed* action—most truly expresses one's inner nature. In the second part of the talk I argue that Nietzsche considers scientific inquiry critical to attaining a life in which one is disposed to "become what one is"—that is, in which one is disposed to act according to conscience rather than exhibiting weakness of will. In particular, attaining such a life requires philosophers to engage in what Walter Kaufmann has called "experimentalism" (Kaufmann 2013, 89; see also BGE 42, 210) in order to "become the best learners and discoverers of everything that is lawful and necessary in the world" (GS 335). Specifically, the task is to discover the specific power relations that obtain between one's drives in order to work toward creating a life that affords the healthy expression of those drives most apt to provide psychological stability and agential unity.

### **Mat Messerschmidt:** '*Wissenschaft, Life, Becoming*'

This 25-minute presentation investigates the unsteady placement of life between Being and Becoming in Nietzsche's thought, focusing especially on the necessity of reification (as making-a-being) for knowledge. On the one hand, Nietzsche positions himself as the "last disciple and initiate of the god Dionysus," where Dionysus is a symbol of Becoming. He makes clear that Becoming is, in some sense, the wellspring of life's vitality. On the other hand, Nietzsche

repeatedly claims that the chaos of Becoming must be "falsified" or "stamped] ... with the character of Being" in order for human beings to obtain knowledge: "*Knowledge is FALSIFICATION of the multiple and innumerable into something equal, similar, countable.* Thus, *life* is only possible thanks to such a *falsification-apparatus.*"

The question posed by this talk, then, is the following: how can life preserve itself without losing itself – how it can perform the necessary act of falsifying Becoming into Being for the sake of knowledge without severing itself from "Dionysus"? For Nietzsche, I argue, this question has a heavily historical cast: modernity is the epoch in which knowledge threatens to strangle humanity's relationship to Becoming. This is why Nietzsche strangely regards Socratic reason as every bit as "modern" as today's *Wissenschaft* as discussed in *Genealogy III*, or historiographical scholarship, as discussed in the second *Untimely Meditation*. Ultimately, however, Nietzsche's ability to coherently separate "modern life" from "life" in general is questionable: the universal, transhistorical necessity for life of stamping Becoming with the character of Being means that both the Dionysian past remembered by the early Nietzsche and the Dionysian future aspired to by the mature Nietzsche may be illusory. This difficulty is illustrated by an analysis of the requirements of organic life as embodied incorporation, or *Einverleibung*. This sense of "life" in Nietzsche's thought has been explored in particular by Barbara Stiegler and Didier Frank, whose work on this topic will be relevant for me here.

**Gabriel Zamosc:** 'Modern science as most recent representative of the Ascetic Ideal?'

Nietzsche claims that far from being an enemy of the Ascetic Ideal, modern science constitutes its ally and its most recent representative, and that art is a much better antagonist of said ideal. In this paper, I interpret these enigmatic claims by establishing that the theme of sovereignty or independence is key for understanding the meaning of the Ascetic Ideal as a will to nothingness. I explore some of the ways in which, for Nietzsche, ascetic practices help breed the possibility of sovereignty in the human animal, which is why the genuine philosopher sees them as bridges to independence. However, because for the most part nature has carried out this breeding task in an irrational, blind, coarse, and unconscious manner, the process has been derailed and the philosopher has had to live historically in flight of self-consciousness and misunderstand himself, by adopting the inauthentic gloomy caterpillar form of the ascetic priest and his variants, who elevate all ascetic practices into an ideal of life (the Ascetic Ideal), thereby turning asceticism into the opposite of what it promised to be: a bridge to servitude instead of independence, i.e., a will to nothingness. Accordingly, I argue that in the hands of the priest, the promise of redemption through an (allegedly) more truthful (otherworldly) mode of existence that can be accessed through asceticism, ends up displacing the great promise that is the sovereign individual (i.e., the autonomous philosopher). Contrary to what might be expected, Nietzsche claims that the advent of secularized modern science has not altered this situation. On the contrary, with its unconditional will to truth, which Nietzsche equates with a faith in the metaphysical value of truth, modern science continues to evade autonomy and sets itself in hostile opposition to it. Against the tendency of many

commentators to interpret the unconditional will to truth as a claim about the *epistemic and metaphysical form* in which the scientist conceives of truth and knowledge (as transcendent, disinterested, and so on), I argue that this is not the principal thrust of Nietzsche's critique of science, and that we should instead understand the unconditional will to truth as a claim about the supreme value the scientist gives to truth and the way he subordinates his creative will to that value. Scientists represent the kernel of the ascetic ideal because they commit themselves whether deliberately or surreptitiously to a continuous denial of their self-consciousness, or to a continuous denial of their own autonomy.

In the remainder of the paper, I explore the ways in which the pursuit of truth as unconditionally valuable leads the human will away from what it could be and toward everything it is not (i.e. toward nothingness): in particular, toward the animalization and belittlement of itself and the naturalistic conception of itself as "fated" (i.e. as an automata). This explains why, by sanctifying the will to deception and not subordinating the creative will to truth, art is a better antagonist of the ascetic ideal. However, as a type, artists are corruptible and not independent enough, which is why I conclude by suggesting that the only one who can truly oppose the Ascetic Ideal and escape the slavish gloomy caterpillar form in which the creative will has been historically entrapped, is the alated butterfly of the philosopher-artists who pursues a *joyful science* and existence in which both truth *and* untruth are subordinated to the goals and hopes of the creative will that legislates values for humankind as a whole.

## Session 4 - *Untimely Meditations*

### **Neriojamil Palumbo** : 'Art, science, and life in *Wir Philologen*'

The paper's aim is to retrace Nietzsche's 1875 notes for the planned but never published fifth *Untimely Meditation*, *We Philologists* – with a specific focus on the topics of science, life, and art in their close and seldom discussed relationship. The questions that the investigation addresses are: to what extent are the preparatory notes for *We Philologists* in continuity with Nietzsche's early philological works up to *The Birth of Tragedy*? To what extent could they be considered as an anticipation of topics – such as the deconstruction of Christianity, the critique of eudemonism, or the historical genesis of the genius – that will only find a definitive shape in the writings of the subsequent decade, such as *The Gay Science*, *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morality*? And finally: what sort of connection between science, life, and art can one find in *We Philologists*? Anticipating not only the aphoristic style of later works by Nietzsche, but also their assertive and polemical posture, these unpublished notes could be considered as one of the forgotten gems of his production – as a literary and philosophical exercise where the themes of science, life, and art appear in a connection and in an interdependence rarely matched by other, more celebrated writings by the philosopher. More precisely, the modern representatives of the Socratic archetype – namely, the philologists – are depicted by Nietzsche as embodiment of an understanding of science that, despising art and its manifestations, was therefore unable to take the irrational aspects of life into account. Consistently with its subject, the paper adopts sometimes a philological approach to the notes, comparing their framing and phrasing of the analysed topics with the characterizations of the latter in previous and subsequent works by the philosopher. Relying mainly on the Colli-Montinari edition of Nietzsche's works – but also on the English translation of the notebooks, recently republished in the twelfth volume of *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* – the analysis proceeds drawing on prompts by former authoritative commentators of the notes such as Heinrich Niehues-Pröbsting and James Porter.

### **Jessica Elkayam** : 'Nietzsche's Untimely Antidote to the Science of History'

In the second of his *Untimely Meditations*, as doctor to an ailing culture, Nietzsche delivers a diagnosis regarding what purports to be the greatest virtue and accomplishment of his age: its cultivation of history [*ihre historische Bildung*] (UM II: Foreword). While the public identifies historical education as the source of its culture, Nietzsche professes that they suffer from a "consuming fever of history." As Nietzsche sees it, it is in "service of the future and the present" (UM II: 4) that he stands *apart* from his age (Large 1994). I therefore argue that Nietzsche's untimely prescription to cure his age of the malady it suffers necessarily involves standing *against* science. Though *The Birth of Tragedy*, elaborates a less confrontational, albeit continuous view of science as shining light into the dark places of life to discover it as essentially perverse, reprehensible, and thus in need of justification (BT: 13), I argue Nietzsche's perspective on the problem – increasingly bound to that of



European nihilism – shifts with his attenuation of who acts as his worthy opponent (EH: Wise, 7). In *Birth*, Socrates augurs the death of tragedy and indicates at the limits of the cold logic to which his dialectic optimism aspires, the potential for science to be supplemented by art (BT: 14). Thus, Socrates is *both* (1) the enemy shadow “down to the present moment and even into all future time...spread over posterity” *and* (2) the potential occasion to “lead science to its limits at which it must turn into *art*,” aesthetically justifying existence (BT: 15).

By 1874, perhaps already skeptical of his artist-metaphysics, Nietzsche's hopes for science are far less naïve. Attaining to the limits of science, though not impossible, will be far more difficult to realize than the young Nietzsche surmised, because he now realizes science is the interloper on the relation between history and life (UM II: 4). Science alters the relation between the human being and its past. That is, in its pathological mediation of recuperative memory (history) and life (figured by the unhistorical as the gestational darkness that nourishes it), the overbright, hostile star of science threatens the vitality of Nietzsche's culture. It initiates a hypervigilant wakefulness that aspires to take all of becoming into its unrelentingly conscious purview (UM II: Foreword, 4, 7). Hence the fever of history is consumptive, symptomatic of the “insatiable stomach” of the “scholar, the man of science, and indeed the most speedily employable man of science, who stands aside from life so as to know it unobstructedly” (UM II: 10). Here, the conversion of history into science has assured that the matter of science (and indeed, of Socrates, as the 1886 “Attempt at Self-Criticism” indicates) must be polemically treated if it is to be untimely enough to create vital roots for future flourishing (UM II: 4).

Concluding with reflections on the five dangers history poses to life (UM II: 5) I demonstrate: (1) how Nietzsche's conception of science has become considerably richer (and its dangers better delimited) and (2) to what extent these dangers still obtain for our time, potentially foreclosing the possibility that history could (again) become art.

**Melanie Shepherd** : ‘Constructions in the Shipwreck: Nietzsche's Apollonian Images in the Untimely Meditations’,

Considering the fate of the Socratic ideal in his own day, Nietzsche writes in *The Birth of Tragedy*: “But science, spurred by its powerful illusion, speeds irresistibly toward its limits where its optimism, concealed in the essence of logic, suffers shipwreck” (BT 15). At this point, “suddenly, the new form of insight breaks through, *tragic insight* which, merely to be endured, needs art as a protection and a remedy” (BT 15). The central role of that art which Nietzsche seems to have in mind throughout *BT*—Wagner's operas—would also seem to suffer a kind of shipwreck of its remedial function. If the end of *BT* intimates that Wagnerian music is waiting in the wings to usher in a rebirth of tragic culture, Nietzsche's next works show no traces of this hope. Indeed, the first two *Untimely Meditations* describe the situation of German culture as “barbarism,” offering no indication that artistic salvation is on the horizon. Instead, Nietzsche transforms the philosophical and artistic inspirations for *BT*, Schopenhauer and Wagner, into exemplary figures

whose lives constitute an alternative to this barbarous present as models of self-formation.

The scholarly treatment of exemplarity in *UM* largely ignores *BT* or makes the case that Nietzsche has distanced himself from *BT* significantly during this period. Meanwhile, interpretations such as Matthew Meyer's dialectical reading cause us to revisit the ongoing relevance of *BT* even in parts of the corpus where Nietzsche rejects its style and claims. In this paper, I will argue that, despite the enormous stylistic shift, Nietzsche's use of exemplary figures in *UM* should be understood more continuously with what he begins in *BT*. Nietzsche's presentation of exemplary lives is itself much more an act of image creation than it is factual reporting, demonstrating that not only lives, but *images* of exemplary lives are central to the formation of culture. I will argue that the insights of *BT* serve as a guide for understanding these images. Having identified the barbaric in ancient Greece with Dionysian tendencies not yet influenced by any real culture, Nietzsche's choice of "barbarism" to describe the cultureless, scholarly condition of modern Germany also gives some clues as to the strategy by which he attempts to save it. In *BT*, the barbaric Dionysian impulse becomes artistic by becoming incorporated into a decidedly Apollonian culture, producing a pre-tragic lyric poetry. Given the trajectory of Nietzsche's work toward his tragedy *Zarathustra*, I will make the case that Nietzsche constructs exemplars in *UM* not merely for their own sake, but as an Apollonian art aimed at inducing Dionysian artistic possibilities out the shipwreck of modern science.

## Session 5- Art + Life 1 : Literature

### Stephen Cheung: 'The Art of Parable for Life'

How does Nietzsche use the parabolic form to create himself? Despite the broad scholarly consensus that Nietzsche values aesthetics as a stimulus to life and a means to self-creation, there remains a tendency among commentators to separate the 'substance of Nietzsche's texts from the materiality of their form', too often treating Nietzsche's aesthetic choices as the mere adornment of his philosophical writing. This means that those moments in which Nietzsche is working to 'turn himself into an aesthetic phenomenon' will inevitably be overlooked and the manner by which he becomes 'the poet of his own life', misunderstood. The aim of this talk will be to consider how Nietzsche employs the parabolic form in particular as an act of self-creation. Consider for example the well-known confrontation between Nietzsche's madman and the crowd. Jörg Salaquarda refers to this as 'Nietzsche's famous *fable* of "the madman"'. Solomon and Higgins refer to it more broadly as a 'story'. Schacht refers to it in even more general terms, simply identifying it as a 'well known section of his work [...] bearing the heading the madman'. However, 'section', 'story' and 'fable' are unhelpfully imprecise terms that fail to take seriously Nietzsche's form and style, treating them as the incidental setting for Nietzsche's point but not making the point itself. Kaufmann is more precise when he says that 'Nietzsche invented a parable', and this designation matters precisely because not all stories are the same.

In this instance, I will argue that an appreciation for Nietzsche's aesthetic and philosophical accomplishment for life begins prior to the parable's contents,

with the parabolic form itself. I will begin by drawing on the resources of New Testament scholarship to show from within the literary context of *The Gay Science* that Nietzsche did in fact intend to write parable. Then, against the backdrop of Nietzsche's understanding of *myth*, I will explore Nietzsche's use of the parable of the madman for self-creation, noting how Nietzsche intentionally uses the parabolic form for its ability to conceal one half of the aesthetic experience from his readers and thus to enhance the pathos of distance. All of this will add dimension to our understanding that Nietzsche's aesthetic focus was indeed on the 'interested' creator.

### **Philip Mills** : 'Nietzsche's Poethics: Poetry as a Way of Life'

What is the relation between ethics and poetics? In other words, how does Nietzsche's concern with poetry is related to his understanding of philosophy as a way of life? In this paper, I argue that the study of Nietzsche's poetics uncovers the ethical dimension of his thought: a way of writing becomes a way of living.

la pensée poétique advient, imprévisiblement, quand et seulement quand une forme de vie transforme une forme de langage et quand une forme de langage transforme une forme de vie, les deux inséparablement. (Meschonnic 2001, 41-42)

It is well known that poetry is a central concern for Nietzsche: not only does he adopt a poetic style in his philosophical works, but he also wrote poems and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the book he considers to be his *chef d'oeuvre*, takes the form of a long poem. While the poetic dimension of Nietzsche's works (Nehamas 1985; Babich 2006; Westerdale 2013) as well as, more recently, his poetic works as such (Benne et Zittel 2017; Grätz et al. 2018) have been thoroughly explored, the relation between his poetics and his broader ethical concern with philosophy as a way of life remains underdetermined. In this paper, I argue that Nietzsche's poetics is related to his worldview, to his ethics, and that poetry, more than being a simple ornament for his thought, implies a specific way of living. If philosophy is related to a way of life, and if Nietzsche's philosophy has a central poetic dimension, this poetic dimension must participate in this way of life. To borrow the words of French linguist Henri Meschonnic, 'poetic thought emerges when a form of life transforms a form of language and when a form of language transforms a form of life.' To the extent that this concern with philosophy as a way of life is an ethical one, Nietzsche's poetics can be considered a poethics. Recent work in Nietzsche scholarship has focused on his ethics (Tevenar 2007; Clark 2019; Stern 2020) and I aim to pursue this investigation by relating it to his poetics.

My argument is divided in three steps: First, I briefly define what a Nietzschean poetics could be, focusing principally on a few sections from the *Gay Science*; second, I show how this poetics, insofar as it involves a transformation of the world, can be considered to have an ethical dimension, focusing on Nietzsche's remarks on the relation between style of writing and way of living, especially his idea of 'giving style to one's character'; third, I conclude by showing how Nietzsche's poetics can be considered a poethics connecting the artistic dimension of poetry *qua* creation of sense and value in language to the ethical and existential dimension of philosophy as a way of life *qua* creation of sense and value in life.

### **Jill Marsden:** 'Fictions less futile: Nietzsche on Living Aesthetically'

How does Nietzsche's approach to Philosophy as a Way of Life interconnect with his views on art? In the early 1870s Nietzsche was much taken by the question of how one might live by one's philosophy, even suggesting that the philosopher's 'life' is a 'work of art'. Such ideas are most readily amenable to a 'tragic' interpretation, with poetry, drama and music vying for our attention as expressions of the lived vitality of existence. By contrast, 'literary' art seems less obviously embodied and sensuously realised; indeed, whenever the literary is engaged by Nietzsche's readers, discussions of style and rhetoric tend to dominate. The problem here is that the hint of the merely ornamental clings to metaphor and fiction with extraordinary tenacity. Nietzsche's argument in 'On Truth and Lie in a Non-Moral Sense' that we only live with repose, security and consistency by virtue of *forgetting* our fundamental metaphor-making is itself too easily forgotten. Such is the power of 'utile' values that the expediency of 'conceptual fictions' is accepted without question, the implications of resisting them going abandoned.

What might be achieved by abiding with fictions less utile? What value is there philosophically in living aesthetically? Nietzsche claims that he wrote 'On Truth and Lie in a Non-Moral Sense' when he was immersed in the intensification of pessimism and 'believed in nothing anymore' (HH II, P, i). The essay suggests that 'truth' is less about conviction than about the standardization of experience, the institution of a system of equivalences which mandates the homogenization of life and the exclusion of the anomalous. At this period in which Nietzsche is contemplating philosophy as a way of life, it transpires that he is diagnosing a proto-nihilism. If this is the context for the discussion of art, science and life, we might be persuaded that the essay's arguments are more existential than epistemological. This paper will argue that from the 'numberless twinkling solar systems' to the 'flying center of the gnat', Nietzsche's narrative enacts a mode of thinking that bypasses the falsely naturalized perspectives of human knowing. Liberated from the axis of utility, his literary thinking offers access to 'truth' on a different scale, revealing how both art and science might be resistant to the tyranny of the same and a counterforce to the nihilism of our age.

### **Session 6 -Nature + Naturalism**

**Benoît Berthelier:** 'The meaning of the earth. Nietzschean remarks on science and life in the Anthropocene'

Ecological sciences unequivocally tell us that the very possibility of life on this earth is threatened. As a consequence, various political and philosophical injunctions to get back to the earth have emerged. In this context, it can be fruitful to turn to Nietzsche and Zarathustra, who tirelessly invited us to stay true to the earth and to care for its meaning. Such an "environmentalist" approach to Nietzsche's philosophy has aroused limited yet constant debate in the past decades (see Storey, 2016; Creasy, 2020). Re-reading Nietzsche in the light of environmental issues of which he was almost completely ignorant is however far from being self-evident (Ott, 2005). Indeed, it is not easy to know how to give a Nietzschean account of the scientific facts which constitute our environmental crisis (from climate change to the mass extinction of species). The very notion of a

scientific "fact" is problematic in a Nietzschean approach, as Nietzsche famously claimed that "there are no facts, only interpretations" (*NF* 1886 7[60]). In this regard, one could be tempted to follow the path of a Nietzschean symptomatology of ecological interpretations, as these may appear to be driven by catastrophist instincts and new forms of ascetic ideals. As Zarathustra exposed the "preachers of death", both "yellow" and "black ones" (*ASZ*, I), one might ask today: what about "green" ones? However, it is worth going beyond such an allegedly Nietzschean suspicion towards ecology. Nietzsche invites us first and foremost to look at science through the lens of life. The important question is to determine how scientific knowledge, and especially ecological knowledge, can be incorporated into and transform our ways of life. How can ecological sciences be the new condition of a fully terrestrial life?

First, I will address this question by outlining the evolution of the concept of "earth" in Nietzsche's thought, a topic which has received only partial attention from commentators (Del Caro, 2004; Shapiro, 2016; Montebello, 2019). I will then focus more specifically on *ASZ*, and explain how ecological thought should always meet this one condition, as expressed by Zarathustra: "that the Overman shall be the meaning of the earth" (*ASZ*, Prologue, 3; Berthelie, forthcoming).

### **Robert Guay: 'Naturalizing and inhabiting nature'**

Are Nietzsche's appeals to human animal nature and its (pre-)history intended to show that self-regulation is illusory and plays no role in the explanation of behavior, or are they intended to show how creatures such as ourselves could have become capable of distinctive forms of self-understanding that inhabit our forms of self-regulation? I answer the question by looking at the role of necessity and other modalities in Nietzsche's historical narratives and his account of drives. This paper is about the relationship in Nietzsche's thought between nature and what might be called normative self-regulation: the ways in which we hold ourselves to commitments and standards, whether with respect to belief, experience, or action. I present two broad options for how to think about this relationship, argue that one of them is wrong, and then elaborate on the second one in light of some of Nietzsche's discussions of nature. One option is naturalizing norms: showing how talk of moral and epistemic powers can be replaced with an explanation of how belief and behavior is produced in a natural causal order. This can take a number of different forms, but a 'naturalizing' reading of Nietzsche is committed to the idea that Nietzsche wishes to explain away some familiar discourse about ourselves in favor of an account of how reality genuinely works. On the contrary reading, Nietzsche aims to show how human animals, subject to contingent biological processes over a long developmental history, can nevertheless make themselves capable of forms of self-determination that cannot be explained in purely causal terms. Nietzsche offers accounts of human psychology in order to show how more complex, reflexive actualizations of power could emerge out of simpler forms of natural activity, and to show how human naturalness is in turn shaped by the achievement of such power.

My arguments for the latter reading appeal to the roles that Nietzsche gives modal standings such as necessity and 'prerogatives' [*dürfen*] in his accounts, in particular the account of promising in *GM* II and his accounts of the internal

directedness of drives. I argue that, for Nietzsche, the constitution of a subjective standpoint, the character of 'activity', and the powers over ourselves that emerge in the historical narratives all depend on the institution of modal standings, and that this is how Nietzsche accounts for the ability of natural creatures to hold ourselves to and respond to norms. I conclude by discussing the implications of this view of the relationship between nature and human normative powers by considering two passages: GS 109 on 'naturalizing' [*vernaturlichen*] and TI.9.48 on a possible 'return to nature'.

Session 7 – General 1

**Richard Elliott** : 'Nietzsche on Intellectual Conscience and Truth's "Moral Ground"'

The over-arching claim motivating this paper is one which, astonishingly, remains mired in controversy in the reception of Nietzsche: the claim that Nietzsche promotes truth as one of *the* cardinal positive virtues. Nietzsche's oeuvre engages in both a descriptive endeavour that there are philosophically productive truths that we can learn (about, e.g., the origins of our moral judgements, about the kind of animals that we humans are, about the limits of self-knowledge, etc.), and in turn offers a prescriptive endeavour – that we (or some humans, at least) ought to put such truths to maximal service, so as to lead a more exemplary and flourishing life. Indeed, across his texts Nietzsche consistently ties the strength and splendour of a human with the ability to incorporate, bear and seek out more and more, greater and greater truths. A full exposition of this claim would require a much longer paper. In this shorter paper pertinent to the themes of this conference, I will address what many argue to be a stumbling block to the position outlined above. The paper will analyse how exactly we ought to square the truth-valorization replete throughout Nietzsche's texts with the passages of GS 344, and the entire Third Essay of the *Genealogy*. By this I document a tendency to rather lazily allude to *GM* III and this passage from *GS*, as if such an allusion alone is somehow a knock-down against this otherwise textually consistent claim about the priority and value of truth. I pay close attention to these passages, to claim that the imperative for reconfiguring one's own grounds for the pursuit of truth is the positive take-away from these critiques. As such, under the right grounding criteria, such pursuits serve to be a facet of the highest positive Nietzschean ideal. Nietzsche's charge is directed against the foundations that motivate the pursuit of truth, directing scrutiny towards our passive inheritance of the motivational ground of Judeo-Christian ethics for such pursuits. Illuminating this claim allows us to clear away this apparent stumbling block.

This chimes neatly with the idea that there is a positive conception of intellectual conscience to be drawn from *GM* III, and the *Genealogy* more widely. This conception that will be duly explored. Nietzschean intellectual conscience acts as a provision for rethinking a "supra-moral ground" for the pursuit of truth. This *Umwertung* of such a pursuit is one that both arises out of and comes to oppose the "moral ground" of truth that we find the object of Nietzsche's critique at *GS* 344. Providing this exploration explains Nietzsche's displays of affinity with and charity towards certain proponents of the ascetic ideal, as well as being able to account for versions of positive asceticism within the counter-ideal he offers. Appropriately, given Nietzsche's account of the reconfiguration and malleability of forms in *GM* II 12, such asceticism can in turn serve to oppose and overcome the life-negating ideals from which they arose

**Michael McNeal** : 'Toward a New 'Cult of the Untrue': Nietzsche on the Role of Falsity in Discrediting and Creating Values'

In utilizing art and science to discredit the reigning decadent values of our age and create new, life-affirming certainties, how do Nietzsche's free spirits employ appearance and/or untruth differently than the ascetic priests of *ressentiment* he denounced?

Moreover, what role may art play in concealing the conceits upon which future certainties rest? In his critique of values, Nietzsche noted the importance of deception and distinguished between those that diminish life and those that enhance it (TI Improvers 5). Unlike major thinkers since Machiavelli and Montaigne, particularly Enlightenment philosophers, Nietzsche acknowledged the role of falsehoods and dissimulation in generating, legitimating, and enforcing truths, in addition to the socially constructive roles that falsehoods serve (A 15, TI Reason 2). In this essay I examine Nietzsche's "insight into delusion and error as a condition of cognitive and sensate existence" (GS 107), and their expression via the will to truth (the impulse to knowledge creation). I argue that falsity, both in discrediting the delusions and errors animating decadent values and in creating new, life-affirming ones, is central to his futural thought. By carefully analyzing GS 107, 344, BGE, 4, 43 and 211, and A 55, and explicating some key linkages between them, I show that from recognition of the contingency of all truth claims and art's productive function in falsifying or legitimating them, Nietzsche expected free spirits to utilize art and science to discredit nihilistic values and their priestly proponents, in order to generate salubrious new truths. By extension, I consider how Nietzsche's understanding of falsity and dissimulation connects with his account of the origins of moral judgements, the human need for a meaningful existence, and the desire—among healthy individuals—to become who one is. My account further aims to reveal how Nietzsche's "gay science" synthesizes his mature understanding of science and art to provide the means by which his bold experimenters "take liberties even with science," to revalue all values and fabricate life-affirming truths (GS 180). From the secondary literature I engage Clark's concern with perspectivism and the problem of falsification (1990) and draw upon theoretical insights from Acampora (2013), Ansell-Pearson and Bamford (2020), Gemes (1992), and Gooding-Williams (2002) to elucidate the agonism entailed in truth-creation – the shared illusions that are necessary for life-affirming values to take root. I conclude by reflecting upon the necessity of untruth for future socio-cultural flourishing, including how Nietzsche's positive assessment of falsity fortifies his free spirits in their striving to discredit convictions (HH 483, A 54-5), generate affirmative ascetic practices, and overcome decadent values. Finally, I consider how the new "cult of the untrue" (GS 107) they attempt to create presupposes future constraints upon "the great masses" by conditioning their shared conscience (A 54).

**Kaitlyn Creasy:** 'Emotional Dominance and Psychophysiological Decadence in Nietzsche'

In this paper, I examine how the shaping of one's emotional life by one's sociocultural context leads to psychophysiological decadence in the work of Nietzsche. In his late works and notebooks, Nietzsche characterizes



psychophysiological decadence as a disempowering disintegration of the will. In addition to claiming that decadence of this sort involves “the conflict of passions” (KSA 13:14[157]) and the “disaggregation of the will” (KSA 13:17[6]), Nietzsche associates decadence with a decline in the will to power, remarking that “[w]henver the will to power falls off... there will also be physiological... decadence” (A17). Importantly, these two dimensions of decadence are closely related insofar as the fragmentation of the decadent individual's will leads to her disempowerment. Otherwise put, one way in which the will to power—an individual's perpetual striving to grow in her form of life (Dunkle 2020)—can “fall off” is for the individual willing power to be fragmented, since fragmented individuals are typically unable to grow in their form of life. If an individual's drives are at cross-purposes, for example, she cannot accomplish the ends towards which she is directed because her drives work against one another's expression. Alternatively, if an individual's drives are not coordinated, she will not be able to overcome the ever-increasing resistances required for growth in her form of life, which requires a strength of will Nietzsche associates with unity of the will.

As others have argued, Nietzsche understands psychophysiological decadence as a widespread modern condition (Stern 2009). In TI, for example, Nietzsche explains how decadence—which he calls “physiological self-contradiction” and “degeneration of the instincts”—is the typical state in modernity (IX:41). But why, on Nietzsche's view, is decadence so ubiquitous? Although Nietzsche thinks there are many causes of psychophysiological decadence, in this paper, I focus on one: socialization, including both 1) the internalization that occurs when one enters society and 2) the infiltration of one's emotional life by her sociocultural context. Here, I focus on the latter. Although Nietzsche thinks the emotional lives of individuals are always already infiltrated by their sociocultural context, this infiltration leads to psychophysiological decadence—becoming emotional dominance—when the sociocultural milieu an individual inhabits produces emotions that lead to an internal conflict and will-fragmentation that disempowers her. Unfortunately for us, Nietzsche thinks is a common occurrence. Thus, the ubiquity of decadence. After fleshing out my argument for this point, I attend to the way in which the superficial and falsifying emotion concepts we consciously deploy (GS 354) to make sense of those bodily sensations Nietzsche calls “affects”—emotion concepts which come from the sociocultural context we inhabit, such as “sin” and “compassion” in the Christian-moral context—often provoke and entrench an antagonistic relationship among my drives which Nietzsche would characterize as psychophysiological decadence. Since the emotion concepts I deploy are bits of social knowledge yet function to regulate my affective life, pointing this out demonstrates one way in which my sociocultural context impacts my physiology (as it must if it is to cause *psychophysiological* decadence).

### **Session 8 - Middle Period 1**

**Dylan Bailey** : ‘Science in the Service of Life: Nietzsche, Wissenschaft, and the ‘Metaphysical Need’ in the Middle Period Writings’

Throughout his corpus, Nietzsche speaks of *Wissenschaft* with a high degree of ambivalence, sometimes blaming it as a primary contributor to an

increase of spiritual illness and decay in societies and individuals, sometimes praising it as a primary means of alleviating that same illness and promoting spiritual health and intellectual cleanliness. This paper addresses the question: "what factor(s) distinguish *Wissenschaft* which is inimical to life and health from *Wissenschaft* which is life and health promoting?" By answering this question, Nietzsche hopes, *Wissenschaft* properly used can become a tool for health, liberation, and flourishing rather than a cause of Western cultures' continued decadence. I argue that, according to Nietzsche, the crucial difference between the two is the health of the thinker and the resultant reason why they are employing *Wissenschaft*: out of a "metaphysical need" or as part of a "hermeneutic of suspicion." Nietzsche often refers to the decadent drive to believe in and invent absolute truths or values as our "metaphysical need." This drive is decadent because it represents an inability to accept the unknowability of the world and our always merely perspectival knowing. We need a metaphysics because we lack the courage to invent our own values, which we recognize as contingent instead of absolute. Modern *Wissenschaft* preserves the metaphysical need which arose in Platonic/Christian thinking, since science too is driven by this need for systematic knowledge of the whole, this will to truth at any cost, and the desire for absolute certainty as the necessary prerequisite for meaning. Nietzsche's project can be understood as an attempt to replace this metaphysical need inhabiting so much of our *Wissenschaft* (especially theoretical or speculative thought) with a hermeneutic of suspicion, and he argues that scientific knowledge (especially psychology), is necessary for this task. In fact, he views scientific knowledge as uniquely capable of cooling down our overheated metaphysical imagination, replacing our need for (and trust in) certainty and systematicity with an attitude of skepticism, suspicion, revaluation, and indifference to such absolutes. He accomplishes this by combining a psychological delving into the drives which are most likely giving rise to the "metaphysical" use of *Wissenschaft* with a "history of ethical and religious sensations." By replacing our metaphysical need with a hermeneutic of suspicion, we again become "true to the earth" and to our actual human condition.

### **Laura Langone :** 'Science in the Service of Life in Nietzsche's Middle Period'

Is Nietzsche's philosophy of the middle period positivist? Most scholars, notably Clark (1990), Babich (1994), and Leiter (2002) examined the role of science within Nietzsche's late philosophy, almost disregarding the middle period of his thought, to which I shall dedicate this paper. Contrary to the famous views of Danto (1965) and Kaufmann (1968), my answer to the above question is negative. I shall build on the work of Gallo (1990) and Heckman (1993). Unlike them, I will consider all three works of Nietzsche's middle period: *Human All Too Human*, *Daybreak*, and *The Gay Science*. In HH, Nietzsche introduces the new method of philosophy as 'genealogy': it is a method that traces the phenomena back to their causes. This kind of 'historical philosophy' 'can no longer be even conceived of as separate from the natural sciences' (HH 1). Nietzsche commends the scientific explanation of phenomena based on the concept of cause for liberating mankind from the fear of natural phenomena, personified as gods. Science made life, conceived of as 'the immortality [...] of movement' (HH 208), on earth possible, enabling humans to

predict and control such phenomena. I agree with Heckman that Nietzsche in HH praises science only as a weapon against the 'narcotics' of religion, metaphysics, art, and morality (HH 108). Already in HH, Nietzsche is aware of the limits of science, highlighting its 'cold spirit' (HH 244). Indeed, science does not help us set goals. For this we need non-science and a 'double brain' to experience it (HH 251). In D 5, Nietzsche reiterates that science freed us from the fear of gods, while in D 33 reaffirms the kinship between historical philosophy and science, calling the free spirit a 'man of science'. Only apparently Nietzsche negates these views in GS 111 and GS 112, where he seems to delegitimise the scientific explanation of phenomena by pointing out the irrational origin of logic. I agree with Remhof (2015) that in these aphorisms Nietzsche embraces a constructivist conception of causality.

However, this does not mean that Nietzsche changed his position compared to HH. In my view, Nietzsche thinks that the concept of cause, although it is a human, all too human concept, is necessary to fight against the narcotics that poison life. Hence, Nietzsche is not positivist as science for him has only instrumental value: it serves life. I will show that this conception of science is also shared by Schopenhauer in 1818 *WWR*. Thus, contrary to a popular view, I will illustrate that there are important similarities between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche also during his middle period. In this phase, science appears as the necessary condition of life. However, it is not sufficient. Once we learned how to control nature, another need arises to which science cannot furnish any answer: giving meaning to things. We need art for this.

### **Charles Lebeau-Henry** : 'Stages of the "Human, All-Too-Human". Religion, Art, Science, and Beyond'

In this presentation, I would like to examine Nietzsche's characterization of the different stages of humanity to which he dedicates his attention in *Human All-Too-Human* as well as the goal he assigns to the development they trace. By doing this, I will attempt to shed some light on the complex, often paradoxical character of each stage and on the role they play in relation to Nietzsche's idea of "progress" (HH24). "The scientific human being is a further development of the artistic one." (MHH222) With these words, Nietzsche brings to a close the argument of *Human, All-Too-Human's* section on art and prepares the central section of the book, which aims to provide an image of this "scientific" human being in the guise of the free spirit. With characteristic ambivalence, Nietzsche's words also serve to signal the persistence of some traits of the artistic way of engaging with the world in this scientific way. The continuity between these different stages is much more than a temporal one. Every new stage builds upon some aspects of the previous one and abandons others, bending the attained sum of capacities and needs in a new direction. Art deepens and offers satisfaction to the heightened sensibility developed by religion, and, like it, acts as a "palliative" by reinterpreting experience to avoid suffering (cf. HH108 and 1876, 23[148]). Unlike religion, its focus is also firmly directed towards the world as it exists, towards the variety of observable phenomena of nature and especially towards life as one of them. Science in turn seeks to pursue this observation of nature and life according to a better method of

truth-seeking (HH634 and HH635) while undermining art and religion's effects as remedies. But, as such, it provides no consolation and very little motivation (HH251).

The resulting instability of this scientific stage of humanity appears both as a danger for life and an opportunity for culture. This is because it is not an end, but instead a transition. The free spirits must not only experience the past stages and learn from them (HH20), but must also find a way to leave room for illusion in themselves and in the culture they are working towards (HH251 and HH276; cf. Ansell-Pearson, 2018). With the free spirit, Nietzsche, as a "physician of culture", seeks to prepare another stage of culture, one that would *follow* that of the scientific human being: the culture made possible by a future "wise humanity," which would relay the moral humanity to which the free spirit still belongs (Cf. HH107, 1876 23[160]) and, seemingly, mark the passage beyond the human, all-too-human (cf. Schacht, 2020).

## Session 9 - Science + Art

**Pieter De Corte** : 'Nietzsche on Art, Science and Civilization: Towards a Politics of "Great Style"'

How do Nietzsche's ideas about the respective roles of art and science evolve through his philosophical works, and what are their implications for Nietzsche's conception of civilization and its political dimension? The question of the relationship between art, science and civilization has always been at the heart of Nietzsche's thought. At the beginning of his intellectual itinerary, Nietzsche exalted Greek tragic art as the highest symbol of life affirmation, as the way through which humanity could hope to reconcile itself with the world and counterbalance the decadent effects of rationalism and Socratic optimism. During his "middle period", Nietzsche seemingly experienced a change of heart, and granted the most eminent position to science, which he recognized as a privileged instrument for the pursuit of knowledge and the development of civilization in the hands of the philosopher, understood as a "physician of culture". Despite this newfound focus on the positive role of science, Nietzsche remained deeply interested in art, and convinced that it retained a crucial role to play in human life by giving solace to a disillusioned humanity, and by reinforcing its positive affective dispositions towards life through aesthetic means – an exercise in what he called the "aesthetic justification" of existence. Contrary to the thesis according to which Nietzsche reversed the privilege of art to the benefit of science in the middle period, it is thus necessary to note that Nietzsche went beyond the binary opposition of art and science which characterized some of his first writings, in order to advance an integrated conception of their respective roles in human civilization. In the last part of his intellectual itinerary, Nietzsche indeed developed an original way of thinking about art, science and civilization. As the foundation of any rigorous natural philosophy, and as the source of a "cultural medicine" based on new forms of knowledge and power – among which physiology plays an important role –, science was portrayed by Nietzsche as a precious tool in his project of revaluation, and therefore in the effort to reconcile humanity with existence which is the proper

aim of art understood as a "metaphysical" activity of the will to power. For art, according to Nietzsche, is not only the art of museums, but the name of a process of transfiguration through which humanity justifies its existence through aesthetics means. In other words, art is both an individual and a collective endeavor culminating in the formation of character by the discipline of instincts, and in the architecture of "great style" which is that of higher culture and great politics.

The new civilization that Nietzsche calls for, as a harmonious and orderly edifice unifying and "balancing" human energies, is indeed reminiscent of the very structure of the classical artwork. The need for an alliance between the forces of art and science therefore harkens back to the very logic of the highest of all arts, which is the philosophical art of legislation, understood as the "most spiritual will to power".

**Joel White** : 'Transformational Finitude: From Heraclitus to Nietzsche via Helmholtz and Lange',

The proposed presentation will demonstrate to what extent Friedrich Nietzsche, in his early Basel lectures on Heraclitus (1870s), attempts to *erroneously* align the presocratic philosophy of Heraclitus (understood by Nietzsche to be a philosophy of "eternal transformation" *panta rhei*) to contemporary developments in the then nascent science of thermodynamics, in particular the work of the neo-Kantian Herman von Helmholtz and his 1856 "On the Interaction of Natural Forces". While several Nietzsche scholars have already pointed to this specific history and the thermodynamic influence on Nietzsche (especially for the cosmological development of his notion of the eternal return of the same) as well as the extent to which Nietzsche read and discovered the work of Helmholtz via his reading of Friedrich Lange's 1865 *The History of Materialism*, what I argue in this presentation is that, in contradictory fashion, Nietzsche employs Helmholtz's "On the Interaction of Natural Forces", which is a paper that aims to demonstrate the absolute *finitude* of transformation, to philosophically argue for *eternal* transformation—that is, as both a correlate to Heraclitus' philosophy as well as to his own early philosophical position regarding Becoming. The reason why this is philosophically important is that Nietzsche is using the second law of thermodynamics, as laid out in Helmholtz, to argue that all things change and thus partake of Becoming—but he does not affirm an absolute limit to this change. Indeed, by the 1888, Nietzsche will argue that his notion of the eternal return of the same refutes the ultimate entropic conclusion of the second law—the heat death of the universe, the point when transformation becomes impossible. The last open question of this presentation will therefore be, is it possible to construct a philosophy of Becoming that accepts the ultimate limit point of Becoming that is heat death?

The approach of the paper is exegetic, critical as well as philosophical. It will offer an exegetic reading of the interconnection of all four philosopher's texts from Heraclitus to Nietzsche, questioning at each stage to what extent *eternal* or *finite* transformation is affirmed. It will critically show that Nietzsche's affirmation of eternal transformation (for Heraclitus and his early philosophy) is predicated on textual support that argues the exact opposite. Finally, it will speculate on how

Nietzsche's philosophy might be altered if heat death were affirmed.

**Parallel 4** – 11.20 to 12.50

### Session 10 – Science/Art/Life 2

**Andrea Rehberg** : 'From the Perspective of Life: Science as Art'

What does Nietzsche mean by 'art', 'science' and 'life', and how does he understand the relations between them? These questions will be addressed in this paper via readings of certain of his key texts. It is in two of his earliest texts, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) and "On Truth and Lie in the Extra-Moral Sense" (1873), that Nietzsche explicitly sketches out the relations between life, art and science, as he sees them then. He shows there, as also in many other texts, both early and late (e.g., *Untimely Meditations*, *Twilight of the Idols*), that the artistic impulse is *the* fundamental aspect of life and is at the basis of everything human beings do, even concept-formation and the apparently neutral, objective and value-free pursuit of scientific endeavours. In that sense, and insofar as art-impulses are the prime expressions of life, there are profoundly life-affirming impulses at work in science. But on the other hand, science is often portrayed as nihilistic and life-denying by Nietzsche. The question then becomes how we can understand these seemingly contradictory tendencies within science in its relation to art and, ultimately, to life. The answer, I would suggest, lies in the perspective that is adopted on the phenomenon of science.

What I will attempt to show in this presentation is that, paradoxically, from a limited, partial and parochial, human perspective, science is essentially a nihilistic phenomenon; but from the comprehensive, impartial, all-encompassing 'perspective' of life (if it is not self-contradictory to say that there can be such a 'perspective'), science must be understood as just another product of art. In order to sustain the discussion of these chiasmic logics, other early texts of Nietzsche will also be taken into account, for example, assorted notes from the *Nachlass* of the 1870s. In addition, certain modern, non-European philosophical developments – above all, those of the Kyoto School – may be drawn upon to unfold the aforementioned chiasmic logic, since there are clear and demonstrable parallels between their thought and the thought of Nietzsche.

**Ashley Woodward** : 'Nietzsche and Computing'

How can Nietzsche's thought help us to understand issues in computation, and the contemporary complex of problems for science, art, and life, that have issued from the transformations of culture brought about by the computer revolution? Of course, Nietzsche could not have known anything of computation in the current, technological sense of the term. However, there are precedents in attempting to apply Nietzsche's thought to contemporary informational and computational technologies, notably the edited collection *The Digital Dionysus: Nietzsche and the Network-Centric Condition* (ed. Dan and Nandita Biswass Mellamphy, Punctum, 2016), Alain Jugnon's *Nietzsche et Simondon* (Dittmar, 2010), which brings Nietzsche's thought together with that of one of the earliest philosophers of information technologies, and Bernard Stiegler's identification of

Nietzsche's notion of nihilistic levelling with the effects of big data (in *Pouquoi nous sommes nietzchéens*, Impressions nouvelles, 2016). In the spirit of such works, I propose that the above research question might be fruitfully explored by using the following points of approach. 1. Following André Leroi-Gourhan, technologies may be considered as *exteriorisations* of human functions. 2. This allows us to ask the question, what kind(s) of human functions do computers exteriorise, and what is their value for life? 3. While Nietzsche does not discuss mechanised computation, he *does* discuss computation and related notions as aspects of human thought. In the second essay of the *Genealogy*, for example, he relates memory and the capacity to make promises, as origins of guilt and bad conscience, to the ability to calculate [ ] and compute [ ], and for human beings to become reliable, regular, and automatic [*notwendig*]. This allows us to extrapolate judgements regarding the value for life of mechanically exteriorizing such functions. 4. Information technology has in fact been understood as an actualization of metaphysics, with attendant notions such as calculation and computation, by Heidegger, in his critiques of cybernetics, and this would seem to presage the views of computation which might be extracted from Nietzsche following the above points. Moreover, both technical computer science and the symbolisations of computers in culture has tended to emphasise the computational function, understood as precise calculation. 5. However, following for example [X], 'computer' is a misnomer – the machine we call computers have computation as only one function, and are, more broadly speaking, simply abstract symbol manipulators. Along similar lines, despite the tendencies of wide historical reception, there is no intrinsic connection between information and computational or calculative processes – information implies only a transmission and a transformation of some message. 7. The question of *what* human functions computers can and do exteriorize is then a more open one than is usually supposed, and we can intervene in the current understanding of information technologies with Nietzsche's reflections on the different values of human functions and capacities.

While in philosophy computers and information technologies are typically aligned with 'science,' the flexibility of this reconceived notion allows them to be associated with 'art.' In fact this should not be surprising, since information technologies have always treated the transmission and transformation of signals dealing with sensation (radio, television, etc.) as much as of mathematics or abstract thought. Following the path I will schematically open here, then, the questions of science and art and their respective value for life may be asked in the context of computation.

**Caroline Wall** : 'The Realm of Our Invention: On the Role of Parody in Nietzsche's Thought'

In the first edition of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche endeavors to put forward a new set of values to take the place of Christian morality. To that end, he proposes that we treat knowledge itself as unconditionally valuable, and life as a heroic quest for truth (GS 283, 324). Nietzsche also holds that the will to life inclines us towards error, to the extent that "the whole of human life is sunk deeply in untruth." (HH 34) He treats this contradiction between the aims of truth and life as a feature

of his proposal, rather than a bug: insofar as our anthropomorphic view of the world undermines our attempts to grasp it as it really is, the quest for truth becomes not only heroic, but tragic. (GS 300) He ends the text with a passage titled "*Incipit tragædia*," which concludes with the claim, "the tragedy begins." (GS 342) Nietzsche opens the second edition of *The Gay Science* with a retraction of this earlier approach: "'*Incipit tragædia*' we read at the end of this awesomely aweless book. Beware! Something downright wicked and malicious is announced here: *incipit parodia*, no doubt." (GS P.1) Furthermore, he closes the second edition by describing a superhuman spirit which "confronts all earthly seriousness so far...as if it were their most incarnate and involuntary parody." (GS 382) By enclosing *The Gay Science* within these twin references to parody, Nietzsche indicates its importance for properly reinterpreting the body of the text—yet he leaves vague what he means by parody, as well as what role he believes it should play in value creation and other philosophical projects.

I propose that Nietzsche aims to accomplish two things by introducing parody into *The Gay Science*. First, I argue that he parodizes his earlier treatment of science as a tragic task to indicate that this earlier view is erroneous. After recognizing the assignment of unconditional value to truth as yet another iteration of Christian morality (GS 344, 357), Nietzsche comes to see this evaluation of the world as unsustainable, and discourages his readers from adopting this view by mocking it. Second, I argue that after dismissing science as a source of new and healthy values, Nietzsche identifies parody as a promising alternative approach to value creation. Having previously observed the effectiveness of artistic parody in extracting aesthetic value from non-aesthetic sources (WS 123), Nietzsche depicts the philosopher of the future as creating new values from old values through a similar approach (GS 382), and even suggests that this is the only plausible approach to creating new values for the "hybrid European." (BGE 223)

## Session 11 - Forms of Life

**Pedro Nagem de Souza** : 'In the service of culture, in the service of life'

In the first period of his thought, Nietzsche experiments with many configurations of internal relations of drives and values in a "true culture", be it in a prescriptive or descriptive sense of the word. There is a double question present throughout these speculative experimentations: 1) what is the function of a drive, an ideal type, or activity towards a *true culture*; 2) and what is its function towards *life*. These two aspects are complementary since a culture, if it deserves its name, can only think of itself in continuity with nature, as perfecting it without becoming artificial and stagnant. The impulsive, ideal, and practical levels are superimposed, since what is determinant is the perspective of culture as a whole: "My task: to comprehend the internal coherence and the necessity of any true culture." The relations of limiting and nourishing between each of these levels have always the horizon of cultural health – which is basically synonymous to internal coherence. If we consider the writings of the period as a whole, there's a certain oscillation of the many configurations of this double question. For example, in the matter of the limits to the "drive for knowledge", the task of limiting is sometimes exerted by the



philosopher, and sometimes treated as a property of culture itself, with no help from philosophy and even avoiding it altogether.

I intend to show that these oscillations are consequences of Nietzsche's early thoughts about the relation between values and drives, on the one hand, and between culture and life, on the other. Internal coherence of culture is at least an indication of continuity with life, and new arrangements of drives both presuppose and cause new dispositions of values. In this sense, the philosophical task of legislating greatness is not only that of a culture's physician, but also that of a conceptual poet.

### **Peter Groff: 'Zarathustra's Vita Contemplativa'**

Nietzsche's philosophy is oftentimes seen as inimical to the classical ideal of the *vita contemplativa* as the highest form of human life. His notions of the death of God, the sovereignty of becoming, the perspectival character of existence and the will to power would appear to strip nature of any stable, unified noetic structure (GS 109, 125, 374; Z II:2, 12; BGE 9, 36). Further, his psychological drive-theory, notion of necessary fictions and critique of "immaculate perception" seem to undermine the possibility of any meaningful theoretical knowledge of the whole (D 119, GS 110, Z II:15, GM III.12). Finally, his insistence on the fundamentally nomothetic task of the philosopher (creating new values and determining the future of the human, i.e., "great politics") appears to recast the philosophical life as a kind of *vita activa* (Z I:12, II:12, 22, III:12; BGE 211). However, I shall argue that Nietzsche in many ways actually returns us to an appreciation of the *vita contemplativa* as the best possible life – albeit one unanchored by any divine or transcendent realities.

In the first part of the paper, I will briefly reconstruct the ways in which Nietzsche attempts to retrieve and resuscitate the classical ideal of *scholē/otium* and by extension, the contemplative life. Here he valorizes leisure and even "idleness" over work or productivity, "thinking" (which requires leisure and independence) over "scholarship" (which remains bound up not only with received tradition and the needs of the state but also the unreflective and self-immolating work ethic of modern commerce) and various forms of philosophical *anachōrēsis* over the active political life of the city. (DS 8, SE 6, HH 282-86, HH 291, 438, GS 338). The life of knowledge pursued by the free spirit however requires something rather different from the god-like *theōria* of the ancients: among other things, it involves the capacity to resist and twist free of convictions, the ability to engage experimentally with the world in a kind of multi-perspectival way that foregrounds different affects and even personae, and the acuity to see through one's own unconsciously projected "aesthetic anthropomorphisms" to an increasingly de-humanized, de-deified nature (HH 629ff, D 432, GS 109). In the second (and main) part of the paper, I will focus on *Zarathustra*. This text would seem to epitomize Nietzsche's ambitious notion of genuine philosophers as "*commanders and legislators*" whose highest task is great politics (BGE 241). But I will argue for the primacy of contemplative themes, focusing on (1) the idea of Zarathustra's *Müßiggang* in early sketches for the book (KSA 9:12[112, 225]), (2) Zarathustra's three withdrawals from the world, which make possible his insights (Z I: Prologue 1, Z II:1, Z III *passim*) and mostly importantly, (3) the gradual turn from Zarathustra's future-oriented work of transforming an "imperfect" humanity to a self-sufficient, joyous

affirmation of the world as it is, already perfect in itself (Z III *passim*, cf. Z IV:10, 19). This last aspect culminates in Zarathustra's final return to solitude, Being's opening up and coming to word for him and his eventual embrace of eternal recurrence. Along the way, I will be engaging with some recently published commentaries on *Zarathustra*, focusing on the notion of "creative contemplation" (Strauss 2017) and Zarathustra's "unharnessing" of the will to power, which makes possible a new non-humanizing contemplative receptivity to the world (Meier 2021). Overall, I shall make the case that the apex of Zarathustra's life is not in fact his much-heralded "work" (the *vita activa* of great politics) but rather a kind of post-theistic *vita contemplativa*.

## Session 12 - Science + Life 2

**Lodewijk van Eeden** : 'Jesting at the Edge: On Nietzschean Laughter in Science, Philosophy, and Life'

The aim of my paper is to show that different kinds of Nietzschean laughter can be distinguished. More specifically: the comedic element is different for the scientist than for the philosopher, and also Zarathustra laughs with a laugh all his own. The phenomenon of 'laughter' in Nietzsche's thought has received quite a bit of attention in recent decades. Gunter (1968), for instance, holds laughter, as a way of acknowledging and ultimately embracing the absurdity of life, to be pivotal in Zarathustra's journey of self-overcoming, a view with which Lippitt (1992) agrees; but both don't thematise Nietzsche's own use of laughter. Hatab (1988) goes further by stressing that for Nietzsche form and substance cannot be distinguished and that because of his humorous style some especially comedic passages should not be taken at face value, while Hay (2013) suggests that Nietzsche's use of laughter amounts to a method that allows Nietzsche to enter a field of textual meaning that without comedy would remain closed off. Although there has been little interaction between the various authors writing on laughter within Nietzsche, most contributions seem complementary rather than contradictory, and I in any case have no significant quarrels with any of the positions cited above. But I do think certain questions still loom large above this philosophical territory, the three most noteworthy being: 1) does Nietzsche distinguish different kinds of laughter, 2) how can we explain that when his stylistic apparatus otherwise appears to be at its peak (i.e. in *JGB*, but especially in *ZGM*, *DA*, and *EH*), Nietzsche relies less heavily on quick-witted aphorisms, and 3) how to handle what might be called a special case of the liar's paradox, that is the fact that Nietzsche is exceedingly tongue-in-cheek when he is talking about laughter explicitly?

In my paper, I will address at least part of these questions. I will zoom in on Chapter 6 of *JGB*, where Nietzsche differentiates philosophers from scientists (*wissenschaftlichen Menschen*), and especially paragraph 212, where Nietzsche characterises having a contrarian attitude towards your own time as a defining characteristic of the philosopher. A much-made distinction is between 'the laughter of the herd' and 'the laughter of the height', but within this latter category I will now distinguish between the 'subjective' laughter of the philosopher, and the 'objective' laughter of the scientist, which will allow me to show that each scientific statement contains, by virtue of everything it excludes, an element of irony, and

that the received Kuhnian framework of paradigm shifts can be seen as a joke in slow-motion. The laughter of the philosopher, on the other hand, entails a 'wilful' bringing to bear of everything that was excluded, of every non-reality, on everything that was thus far considered as included and at the foreground, thereby enlarging, elevating the philosopher's reality. And I will conclude with a description of Zarathustra's laughter at the end of his journey, a laugh similar to the laugh of the philosopher but more totalizing, a laugh which Nietzsche himself also develops throughout his later works and ends in his exalted good humouredness of *Ecce Homo*. There the philosopher holds still, temporarily looks back. The possibility of laughter is simply celebrated, this peculiarly human space of buffoonery in which joyful self-overcoming can thrive luxuriously.

**Simon Townsend** : 'What does it mean to live in accordance with Life? Critically assessing Nietzsche's Life theory and its implications for his ethics'

There has been a resurgence of interest in the idea that at the center of Nietzsche's mature work is a vitalistic, quasi-metaphysical idea of 'Life', and that his normative judgements are based on this idea. According to this view, Nietzsche uses the concepts 'will to power' and 'nature' interchangeably with 'Life'. In this, he is partially following Schopenhauer in ascribing an underlying 'Will' to organic life, replacing the 'will to live' with a 'will to power.' But he was also strongly influenced by contemporary evolutionary thinkers, such as William Henry Rolph and Wilhelm Roux, and intended his Life theory to have a scientific basis. A variation of the Life theory appears in influential works such as Richard Schacht's *Nietzsche* (1983) and John Richardson's *Nietzsche's System* (1996). It has recently seen a revival. In 2011, Nadeem J. Z. Hussain argued that 'Life' plays a key role in Nietzsche's argument in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and Nietzsche's 'Life-theory' has recently been developed in two books, Jeffrey Metzger's *The Rise of Politics and Morality in Nietzsche's Genealogy* (2020) and Tom Stern's *Nietzsche's Ethics* (2020).

This paper critically contrasts the divergent ways in which these authors have treated two crucial issues. The first is how we characterize the tendencies or aims of Life. Nietzsche uses various concepts to characterize the aims of life: growth, self-overcoming, expansion, power-seeking, creativity. I assess the attempts that have been made to construct a coherent account of the aims of Life out of this varied terminology. The second issue is how best to explain Nietzsche's normative judgements. In the context of the Life theory, it follows that what we *should* do is determined by how we characterize what Life 'wants'. His ethics is thus intimately connected with his biological theory. But, even once we construct a plausible account of the aims of Life, the process of developing an ethics is complicated by Nietzsche's claim that *all* actions, regardless of how they are rationalized or appear to consciousness, express the underlying will of Life. That is, even those actions that seem to be anti-natural or anti-life are actually working to further Life's aims. Given this, we need an account of how Nietzsche distinguishes between praiseworthy and blameworthy actions, and how this connects to his Life theory. If we take the Life theory seriously as an interpretation of Nietzsche - and I argue that there are good reasons to do so - then such questions become of central importance to understanding his thought. Nonetheless, interpretations of Nietzsche's Life theory have so far failed to reach any kind of consensus on these

crucial questions. The aim of this paper is to assess the plausibility of the ways in which recent scholarship has navigated these difficult issues, offering insight into the key areas of contestation in this fertile area of contemporary Nietzsche scholarship.

**Bobby Johnson** : 'Infinite Monkeys: Nietzsche and the Cruel Optimism of Personal Immortality'

Friedrich Nietzsche is a popular source of inspiration for transhumanist writers. Transhumanism is a philosophical movement characterized by the goal of developing and using technology to significantly alter—or “enhance”—the human organism and experience. Through technological transformation, transhumanists hope to bring about a new “posthuman” species—one with physical and cognitive capacities vastly superior to those of humans today. Some transhumanists, such as Sorgner (2009) and More (2010), argue that Nietzsche ought to be seen as a precursor of their movement. One of the defining features of transhumanism is the desire for personal immortality. Transhumanists hope that the technology of the future will provide the means of achieving extreme longevity or, for the more optimistic writers, literal immortality. For many, far out scientific speculation has assumed the comforting function traditional religious ideas of immortality once served. I argue that this feature of transhumanism, at least, is wholly incompatible with Nietzsche's philosophy. It can be quite convincingly demonstrated that Nietzsche does not believe that personal immortality of any sort is either desirable or metaphysically possible. Regarding the undesirability of immortality, Nietzsche's comments resemble those of his influence Montaigne, and anticipate the arguments made by Bernard Williams in his 1973 essay “The Makropulos Case.” The idea here is a familiar one, both in philosophy and fiction—immortality is thought to be undesirable in part because it would become unbearably *boring* (see *Daybreak* §211, for a direct example). Nietzsche routinely emphasizes the lifelessness of long-lasting or immortal things, and instead stresses the value of rare, fleeting, experiences, and change. Regarding the impossibility of immortality, Nietzsche resembles fellow skeptics about persistent personal identity, such as David Hume, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Derek Parfit, whose rejection of metaphysical self leads to a blurring of the lines between survival and death, and a breakdown of normal intuitions about personal immortality. Nietzsche's skepticism about the self appears in his comments on immortality, such as those found in *Human, All Too Human*: “If a man of eighty thousand years old were conceivable, his character would in fact be absolutely variable, so that out of him little by little an abundance of different individuals would develop” (§41).

Perhaps more important than a demonstration of Nietzsche's apparent incompatibility with a philosophical movement which frequently claims him as a precursor is the opportunity to examine and perhaps answer some difficult questions in Nietzsche scholarship that such a discussion provides us with. How, for example, are we to reconcile Nietzsche's apparent hostility to personal immortality with his myth of eternal recurrence? And how are we to imagine Nietzsche would respond to transhumanism's dressing of traditional religious

hopes and values in the trappings of science? Is this a case of science serving life, or devaluing it?

**Parallel 5** – 13:50 to 15:20

### **Session 13** – *Middle Period 2*

**Astréa Issler Ribeiro** : 'Language and Art'

The paper analyses the paragraph 11 of 'Human, all too Human' together with the sentences cited by George Bataille and Susan Sontag. This paper discusses the interaction between the natural world, knowledge, and art and how they can be connected to language and truth. Language was created out of the eternal movement of natural world. Language can stop the never-ending transfiguration of the world adopting a veil that hides the movement with a static formal appearance. The intellect, which is the "organ" of language has considered that designating things is knowledge and has considered itself the master of this world of designations. Knowledge is understood as a construction that belongs to consciousness and not to the unconscious. Yet, there is a knowledge that is unconscious and is closer to the eternal movement of the natural, real world. We might call it an intuitive language. We humans as much as other animals use unconscious language to 'think', calculate, measure, feel, smell, and ultimately to 'know' things. There could only be truth and lie, right and wrong in relation to conscious language. Only with the use of words there can be truth. That is what Susan Sontag in 'The Benefactor' refers to. In the natural world, on the other hand, the 'ones' who are likely to speak the 'truth' are the impulses, the various forces inside and outside of us. Bataille understands that art welcomes the plurality and the multiple forces that appear not in an orderly way, but in a disorderly manner as they appear in nature. The role of art is to get us closer to the natural world that we lost contact in our daily conscious lives, but which is undoubtedly constantly pulsating inside of us. Only art, as Nietzsche says in "The Birth of Tragedy" chapter 7 "has the power to transform those disgusted thoughts about the horror and absurdity of existence into representations to which it is possible to live."

\* Science gives us shelter from the tempestuous arbitrary forces of the natural world as it presents us: 'reality' (religion gives us shelter presenting us, for example: 'life beyond this life'), can art give us shelter, too? If so, how? Three quotations are interwoven concerning the concepts that emerge from them. The first quotation is the paragraph 11 from 'Human all too Human', where language and science are analyzed, the second is by George Bataille about poetry (art) and the disorder of thoughts, and the third Susan Sontag's quotation from 'The Benefactor' where she reflects on language and truth. Conscious and unconscious knowledge rotates around the concepts of science, language, truth, and art.

**Katrina Mitcheson** : 'Experiment in Nietzsche's Dawn'

In Dawn Nietzsche claims 'We are experiments: let us also want to be such!' (D 453). The method of experiment is therefore applied by Nietzsche at an

existential level- so what does it mean to be an experiment? In this paper, I will argue that to answer this we need to understand experiment for Nietzsche as combining the virtues and methods of both the sciences and the arts. Nietzsche takes inspiration from science in the notion of experiment itself, and in his celebration of the virtues of observation, modesty regarding our conclusions, and purification from false beliefs including supernatural explanations. Yet to understand what it means to be an experiment we also need the idea of artistic creativity. Further, it is crucial to recognise the lived nature of the experiment. As Hadot suggested we should see the different schools of Ancient philosophy as a 'field for experimentation' offering 'models of life', Nietzsche too does not separate the pursuit of knowledge and questions of how we live. In Dawn 453 Nietzsche includes 'solitude' in his list of sciences 'needed to build anew the laws of life and behavior', making clear that the insights of natural sciences must combine with lived practices.

Once we recognise the fundamental interconnection between knowledge and life, then the separation of science and art becomes a false dichotomy. Nietzsche suggests 'There is no one and only scientific method that leads to knowledge! We must proceed experimentally with things, be sometimes angry, sometimes affectionate toward them and allow justice, passion and coldness toward them to follow one upon the other.' (D 432) Focusing on Dawn, I argue that the scientific and artistic aspects of Nietzsche's experimental method must be understood in combination with Nietzsche's drive psychology. We recognise the presence of the drives, including behind our supernatural beliefs, when we rigorously observe ourselves and our bodies. We deepen our knowledge by exploring our drives, including through artistic experimentations in style such as Nietzsche engages with in his writing of Dawn itself. And we experiment in the possibilities of our drives and ourselves (D 501), when we create new laws and values and give artistic shape to new combinations and hierarchies of drives. To understand this latter experimentation in self-cultivation, I argue that we do better to turn to the exemplar of artists and their experimentation with, for example, sculpture or choreography, than to restrict ourselves to the model of scientific experimenters.

### **Fraser Logan :** 'Honesty, Science, and the Passion for Knowledge: Contextualising Nietzsche's Fate in Book IV of The Gay Science'

I argue that the themes of new suns and fire throughout Book IV of GS, as well as the famous lantern in GS 125, are references to honesty [Redlichkeit], the "youngest virtue". In contrast to contemporary Nietzsche scholarship, which tends to examine amor fati independently of Nietzsche's biographical details, I emphasise that Nietzsche is not trying to love some abstract notion of "fate" in GS 276, but rather his specific fate in 1882: to suffer from the passion for knowledge, which he considers the more honest [ehrlicher] name for science [Wissenschaft]. I trace his efforts to justify science as a virtue, and his view that Redlichkeit must be counterbalanced by art's "good will to appearance", back to the struggle between honesty [Ehrlichkeit] and dissimulation [Verstellung] described in SE.

Nietzsche has numerous intellectual developments. Therefore, my approach is always to highlight the specific historical and biographical context in

which he writes. I am influenced by other scholars who emphasise Nietzsche's intellectual developments, especially Stern and Ansell-Pearson, and by Quentin Skinner more broadly. I emphasise Nietzsche's intentions in writing, in addition to the literal or textual significance of his writings. I work closely with Nietzsche's original German and, following Lane and White, distinguish between Ehrlichkeit and Redlichkeit, which are often conflated as "honesty".

## Session 14 - Art + Life 2: Music

### **Jozef Majernik** : 'Platonic Musical Education in Richard Wagner in Bayreuth'

Richard Wagner in Bayreuth (WB) is commonly read as a hagiography of Wagner by the young Nietzsche, and as a document of his (at least youthful) irrationalism (Gray 1995, 408; Large 2012, 100; Brooks 2018, 188). In this paper I would like to challenge this consensus, focusing on the notion of "richtige Empfindung" in WB 5 (KSA 1, 456). This notion is taken over from Wagner's essay *Oper und Drama*, and contrasted with "richtiges Denken", superficially confirming the common views of WB. I shall argue that although the notion of "richtige Empfindung" is taken from Wagner, Nietzsche uses it in a thoroughly un-Wagnerian way: namely as a reference to the Platonic conception of musical education, as it is presented in the *Laws* (Books II and VII) and in the *Republic* (376e–403e). There is direct evidence in favor of this reading in the *Nachlass*: Nietzsche has noted down some of the relevant passages from the *Laws* in the period of working on the *Untimely Considerations* (KSA 7, 95–6). The Platonic context transforms our understanding of the relation between "correct feeling" and "correct thinking" in WB: following the Platonic model, they do not stand in an exclusive opposition, but the former is rather to serve as a preparation for the latter, as a way to habituate the young to a life of thinking before their cognitive capacities are fully developed. Wagner's musical dramas are envisioned as works of art that would be suitable as means for such a musical education ("musical" in the wider, Greek sense that encompasses everything "of the Muses": i.e., cultural education in contemporary parlance).

In WB 11, Nietzsche describes the sensibility of the free men of the future that he hopes to bring about; this sensibility centers on the thesis "dass der freie Mensch sowohl gut, als auch böse sein kann, dass aber der unfreie Mensch eine Schande der Natur ist, und an keinem himmlischen, noch irdischen Troste Antheil hat"; and a few lines later Nietzsche says that this sensibility is "genau Das, was ich früher richtige Empfindung [...] nannte" (KSA 1, 506–7). This description confirms the centrality of this un-Wagnerian, but rather Platonically conceived, relation of feeling and thinking to the argument of WB, and to the project of the *Untimely Considerations* as a whole. It also shows that Wagner is not an object of Nietzsche's worship in WB, but just a means to Nietzsche's own project of musical education toward the philosophic life.

### **Daniel Conway** : 'Nietzsche's Nachgesang'

A survey of Nietzsche's philosophical writings confirms his persistent fascination with the redemptive figure of the singing sage, in whom he glimpsed the wondrous power to heal the various wounds, divisions, and estrangements

suffered by humanity. In the *Birth of Tragedy*, for example, he conjured the haunting image of the "music-practicing Socrates," who, he imagined, would succeed where the real Socrates had failed. Nietzsche proceeded to mobilize this image in an effort to further his campaign to recognize Richard Wagner as one such singing sage, inasmuch as Wagner, or so he promised, would set right what Socrates, that lazy versifier, had gotten wrong. As this example indicates, what Nietzsche expected the singing sage to achieve (or catalyze) was nothing short of the renewal (or restoration) of a distinctly tragic culture, wherein mortal humans would know and feel their existence to be justified on its own merits. Nietzsche imagined himself shoulder-to-shoulder with, or just a step behind, the redeemer of European modernity. As Nietzsche outgrew his youthful infatuation with Wagner, his fascination with the figure of the singing sage became increasingly more self-centered. Having sunk in 1879 to what he would later confirm was the nadir of his vitality, Nietzsche took himself in hand and resolved to sing his way toward the achievement of self-integration that had long eluded him. Taking to heart the advice Zarathustra would receive from his companion animals, Nietzsche endeavored to sing himself back to health. Having turned the focus on himself, however, he also became increasingly persuaded of the distance that was likely to continue to separate him from the singing sage whose approach he awaited. As he eventually realized, they would not stand shoulder-to-shoulder after all, for the late modern epoch simply would not support a credible program of cultural renewal.

The good news here is that Nietzsche, content no longer to serve simply as a prophet or prompter of the singing sage, resolved to become a singer in his own right. The bad news, he realized, is that he would only ever sing for a decidedly lesser audience, while pursuing a distinctly preliminary—and, therefore, more modest—goal. In the post-Zarathustran period of his career, his singing was devoted to the cultivation and encouragement of those who would join him in preparing the late modern epoch as the stage upon which the anticipated cultural renewal someday may take place. Until that time, the lusty songs of health would remain locked away in the repertoire of the singing sage.

Nietzsche's goal in the post-Zarathustran period of his career is to transform this demotion in status into his signature mark of distinction. Comparing himself favorably to Socrates, Wagner, and all other pretenders to the rostrum of the singing sage, he both accepts and affirms the lesser, preparatory role he will play in the production of a philosophy of the future. Rather than reach beyond his grasp, as these others have done to disastrous effect, Nietzsche measures himself against his epoch and adjusts his goals accordingly. His is a genius of restraint, born of an uncommon awareness of self and surroundings. He will play a material role in escorting humanity (or, at least, European civilization) beyond the morality of good and evil, even if he himself must remain entangled within the morality he has vowed to retire.

**Imran Hashmi** : 'Great Art as a Form of Life'

Does Nietzsche's conception of great art represent a form of life?



This paper will examine Friedrich Nietzsche's understanding of art's existential role in life. *The Birth of Tragedy*; the pro-Wagner Richard Wagner in Bayreuth; and the anti-Wagner polemics *The Case of Wagner*, and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner* will be this paper's key texts. Though Nietzsche's views of Wagner changed, his conception of great art remained broadly consistent. Consequently, the above works are optimal sources for this investigation. It will be argued that, for Nietzsche, great art was not just part of a healthy cultural life; it also created a 'form of life', following Rahel Jaeggi's definition of a form of life as the "cultural and social reproduction of human life" (Jaeggi 2014, p. 21, all translations my own). This form of life has several features, which are part of Nietzsche's wider criticism of rationality in artistic production. It will therefore be concluded that the form of life stemming from Nietzsche's understanding of great art promotes a non-rationalistic existence that encourages feeling over thinking.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche wrote that life can only be justified aesthetically (BT 5), suggesting that art for Nietzsche was a means of finding purpose in life. This quotation expanded on Nietzsche's earlier claim that the Ancient Greeks used art, and specifically attic tragedy, as a way of dealing with the "horrors of life" (BT 3). These two excerpts highlight a significant feature of Nietzsche's early aesthetic thought: that art is a means of coping with the horrors of existence, rather than of shaping or understanding life's purpose. However, it will then be shown that Nietzsche departed from this understanding of art's purpose in Richard Wagner in Bayreuth. Here he argued that Wagner used art to understand the world by "philosophising in sounds" (WB 8) and "thinking [...] in visible and tangible processes" (WB 9). In Nietzsche's view, great art like Wagner's, as Nietzsche believed it was in the mid-1870s, represented a way of understanding existence. It was no longer a means of merely coping with existential horrors. It was now too an "element of life" (Leiner, 1995, p. 132). Leiner's thoughtful observation will be taken further to show that Wagnerian artistic production, as Nietzsche saw it, became a form of life that served as Nietzsche's model for cultural change.

Nietzsche promoted this form of life even after his 'split' from Wagner, the timing of which has divided critics (compare Prange, 2013; Ridley, 2014; Holub, 2018.) Despite departing from Wagner, Nietzsche's aesthetics remained consistent. In his later works on Wagner, Nietzsche compared Wagner's music to an illness, emphasising the existential nature of art for Nietzsche. In order to arrive at the new form of life Nietzsche envisaged, humans must first suffer through cultural illness. This paper will finally show that the reward for overcoming this existential struggle, however, is great: a culture that nurtures a 'healthier' form of life that supports human emotions and needs.

## Session 15 - General 2

### **Peter Stewart-Kroeker** : 'Nietzsche's Early Tragic Philosophy'

Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) contrasts the dying Socrates's cheerful optimism to the pessimistic wisdom of the Dionysian satyr Silenus: what is best in life is "not to have been born, not to be, to be nothing. However, the second best

for you is: to die soon" (BT 3). Such is the opposition between scientific optimism, which imbues life with rational meaning, and Schopenhauerian pessimism, which denies the value of life. Nietzsche overcomes this opposition in image of the music-making Socrates, who represents the tragic affirmation of life as an aesthetic phenomenon. In this paper I examine how the explicit opposition between optimism and pessimism in *The Birth* conceals an implicit antagonism between idealism and materialism. I argue that this latter antagonism, whose tension proves irresolvable, leads to the pessimistic insight that Nietzsche's music-making Socrates transforms into tragic affirmation. While the affirmation of existence as an aesthetic phenomenon may appear to resolve the antagonism between materialism and idealism, such affirmation is tragic insofar as it remains the affirmation of an illusion. The aesthetic ideal that the philosopher affirms is forever at odds with its counterimage, the unaesthetic absurdity of life. Nietzsche dismisses the desire to get beyond this play of appearances as a delusion whose metaphysical solace undermines itself in being recognized as such, thereby ceasing to be comforting. Unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche amplifies the agonistic dissonance of existence without succumbing to pessimistic resignation or subscribing to a metaphysical system. He tragically accepts the contradictory nature of human existence, leaving us only with a juxtaposition of appearances deprived of any intelligible metaphysical ground.

Julian Young argues that Nietzsche's position is Schopenhauerian because the philosopher's aesthetic ideal remains otherworldly, thereby re-instating a pessimistic vision of earthly life that is consistent with Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the will. While Young responds to commentators who contend that Nietzsche's tragic affirmation of life challenges Schopenhauer's pessimism, most still agree that Nietzsche's aesthetics remains infused with Schopenhauer's metaphysics. Following James Porter, my argument contests the common periodization of Nietzsche's works, which treats *The Birth* as fundamentally Schopenhauerian. I divide the paper into three parts. The first two sections consider the Hellenic antagonism between idealism and the materialism that informs Nietzsche's tragic worldview, outlining how this antagonism informed Schopenhauer's earlier formation of pessimism, which I argue Nietzsche's aesthetic affirmation of life challenges. In section three, I discuss how this aesthetic affirmation overcomes the Platonic opposition between myth and metaphysics, which Nietzsche symbolizes with the image of the music-making Socrates.

### **James Leigh : 'Zarathustra's characterful encounters – the leech and the magician'**

In arguably his most unusual work, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche's central character, the prophet Zarathustra, encounters a bewildering array of characters, all of whom are used by Nietzsche, both explicitly and metaphorically, to teach certain aspects of his philosophy. In this paper, I will examine the two minor characters for whom an interpretation is obvious in relation to two of the conference's main themes, namely: the scientist – identified in the text as "the leech" and the magician, who represents not only Wagner, but the poetic arts and artists in general. These two characters join a further cast of those whom Zarathustra encounters in the approach to the conclusion of the work. These are the higher men, who represent those aspects of Nietzsche's own struggle, which

he describes in *Ecce Homo* as part of his *Bildungsroman*, those things he had to overcome in order to arrive at his own self-overcoming.

In examining Zarathustra's reaction to these characters, these "higher men" – and others for whom the interplay between science and art form a crucial part of their role in the narrative – I hope to offer a means of examining Nietzsche's *Lebensphilosophie* from a new angle. In the fourth and final part of the narrative, Zarathustra meets and invites these higher men to a feast, one in which we see the different forces pitted against one another in an examination of the very foundations of life itself and the beginning of the revaluation of all values. A consideration of Zarathustra's – and thus Nietzsche's – response to the scientist and the artist, the leech and the magician, will help us understand further the final overcoming which Zarathustra seeks to teach as he emerges from the cave "glowing and strong as the sun at dawn coming forth from dark mountains." Thus, this paper seeks to examine Nietzsche's response to both science and art, through the lens of the minor characters in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and arrive at a conclusion which goes beyond the limitations of both art and science to provide a true basis for Nietzsche's emerging *Lebensphilosophie*.

### **Nicholas Low** : 'Science and the Return of the Gods in Nietzsche and Heidegger'

What does the possibility of "new gods" mean for Nietzsche and Heidegger? What do their respective remarks about the possibility of new gods within modern culture imply about the future of science? What do their accounts teach us about their understanding of the task of philosophy in the modern "scientific" world?

In his 1937 lecture course on Nietzsche's thought of the eternal return of the same, Martin Heidegger claims that thinking of the eternal return as a religious concept requires an acknowledgement that it signals a fundamentally new understanding of religion and of the gods. Heidegger argues that Nietzsche's demand for the "de-deification" of nature in *The Gay Science* does not indicate atheism or irreligiosity, but rather a clearing of the path to the reappearance of the gods: "...truly metaphysical thinking, at the outermost point of de-deification, allowing itself no subterfuge and eschewing all mystification, will uncover that path on which alone gods will be encountered – if they are to be encountered ever again in the history of mankind." Given Heidegger's own abiding interest in the return of the gods, especially after the "turn" in his thinking, this claim represents a crucial moment in the lecture series. While Heidegger ultimately identifies Nietzsche's philosophy as the closure of metaphysics rather than the ground of a "new beginning" for thinking, he nevertheless intimates that any such new beginning must pass through Nietzsche's thought of eternal return as a response to nihilism. Furthermore, he implies that if the gods are to once again appear to human beings, it will be as a result of pursuing Nietzsche's concept of de-deification.

For Nietzsche, the de-deification of nature is an element of the practice that he identifies as "gay science." As Heidegger notes, this practice is not a science in any sort of conventional sense, and so de-deification signals neither reductive materialism, naive realism, nor any other metaphysical instantiation of scientific thinking. Rather, de-deification has to do with a fundamentally transformed understanding of truth, one that eschews the indecent will to get behind all appearances, instead affirming semblance and the sensuous. However, it remains

unclear what this transformation has to do with gods, and what the appearance of gods could mean within a de-deified nature. The goal of this paper is twofold: first, to give one account of what the reappearance of the gods might mean within Nietzsche's formulation of gay science; and second, to assess Heidegger's assertion that Nietzsche's thinking remains anchored in metaphysics and nihilism. While these are important questions in their own right, there are also more fundamental matters at stake. Both Heidegger and Nietzsche consider the practice of philosophy to pertain to humanity's essential self-understanding, and as such, to be facing an epochal crisis in modernity. Given this shared conception, what then does the appearance of "the gods" in their writing suggest about their understanding of philosophy, especially vis-a-vis science? What are the tasks of philosophy in a "godless" world where the return of the gods may yet be possible? These investigations will engage primary texts by both Nietzsche and Heidegger, including unpublished notes from Nietzsche's Nachlass, as well as important secondary literature. Most significant will be the work of David Farrell Krell, whose work on both Heidegger and Nietzsche informs his translation of Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures.

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