

NIETZSCHE ON THE RELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND
PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Nietzsche on the Relation Between Language and Philosophy

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This thesis analyzes the relation between language and philosophy in the thought of Nietzsche. Nietzsche criticized philosophy as traditional metaphysics mainly because he thinks that it denies life. What in language is life-denying for Nietzsche? In this study, an answer to this question is attempted, and Nietzsche's usage of language is claimed to be consistent with his criticism of the metaphysics of language.

Keywords: Nietzsche, Language, Philosophy, Metaphysics.

ÖZ

Nietzsche Düşüncesinde Dil-Felsefe İlişkisi

Yıldız, Necdet

M.A., Department of Philosophy

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam

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Bu çalışma Nietzsche düşüncesinde dil-felsefe ilişkisini inceler. Nietzsche geleneksel metafizik olarak felsefeyi en başta hayatı reddettiği için eleştirir. Nietzsche'ye göre dilde hayatı reddeden nedir? Bu çalışmada bu soru cevaplanmaya çalışılmış ve Nietzsche'nin dili kullanım şeklinin dilin metafiziğine olan eleştirisiyle tutarlı olduğu savunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nietzsche, Dil, Felsefe, Metafizik.

To my parents

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BGE Beyond Good and Evil

BT The Birth of Tragedy

GM On the Genealogy of Morals

GS The Gay Science

HH Human All Too Human

Rh Rhetoric

TI Twilight of the Idols

TL On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense

W The World as Will and Representation

WM On Music and Words

WP The Will to Power

WS The Wanderer and His Shadow

Z Thus Spoke Zarathustra

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Friedrich Nietzsche was quite a different type of a thinker from most of his predecessors and his contemporaries. Living in the modern period, he questioned the foundations lying at the basis of modernity, i.e., metaphysics, Christianity, and contemporary morality, which were the main elements of the dominant value system. At his time, the questions of the reason behind the emergence of contemporary values and whether the modern values are the only possible set of values were not frequently and systematically asked. It would be legitimate to say that Nietzsche was the first one who systematically asked these questions with “genealogical method”, and he questioned the value of these values from another perspective, the perspective of the affirmation of life. In Nietzsche’s terms, he asked whether the dominant Platonic-Christian values were “life-promoting”, or symptoms of “decadence”.

For any subject of inquiry about Nietzsche’s thought, attention to the development of his thought would be helpful in order to understand what the context is and what he tries to establish. There is quite an agreement upon this matter; the development of Nietzsche’s thinking can be divided

into three periods according to many scholars.¹ The 1870-1873 works, *Birth of Tragedy* and notebooks from this period belong to his earlier period. In his earlier period, Nietzsche is said to be under the influence of Schopenhauer, and the terminological basis of his thought is Schopenhauerian. From *Human, All-too-Human*, the form and the content of his writing said to change at least partly, and his works between 1878-1882 (*Human, All-too-Human*, *Daybreak*, *The Gay Science*, and his unpublished notes within these years) are thought to belong to his middle-period. From his 1883 work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche is said to have found his own style. Thus, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and his later works (such as *Beyond Good and Evil*, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Antichrist*) are considered to belong his later, or, "mature" period. In this thesis, the periods of the development of Nietzsche's thinking will be considered and will be linked to his ideas on the relation between philosophy and language.

*"What light does linguistics, and especially the study of etymology, throw on the history of the evolution of moral concepts?"*² Nietzsche asks this question right at the end of the "First Essay" of his famous work *The Genealogy of Morals*. As a philologist, this question is a suggestion of his for an etymological academic study which he believes to be helpful for having new insights and perspectives, and also helpful for his own pursuit, i.e., reevaluation of all values from the perspective of life, since he believes that an inquiry on moral values without a historical perspective will lack depth and keep us in the

¹ For example; Kaufmann, p. 295, Breazeale, p. xv, and, Wicks, sections 2, 3, 4, and 5. Cf. BT, "An Attempt at Self Criticism", 6, and, GM, Preface, 4. Here and hereafter, references to page numbers where indicated by the letter p, to sections where thus specified, otherwise to aphorism numbers.

² GM, "First Essay", section 17.

prison of present values, leaving present values unquestioned. For him, an etymological study on the evolution of moral concepts will give us where they come from, their historical adventure, and would provide an insight and opportunity for questioning them in a genealogical fashion and for a possible reevaluation thereby.

Why do moral values pose a problem for Nietzsche? His questioning of the “value of the values” may give an important clue for the answer of this question. Nietzsche asks whether the moral values reveal a “sign of distress, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life”, or rather they reveal the “plenitude, force, and will of life, its courage, certainty, future”.³ This was an intentional “rhetorical question”, and for him, dominant moral values of his time were life-denying. In its widest sense, Nietzsche's critique of classical western metaphysics wasn't inspired by its lack of correctness, rather, from its life-denying effects; and for Nietzsche, life-denying of philosophy, i.e., philosophy as traditional western metaphysics, and the values it created must be overcome. Nietzsche says that “[w]e do not consider the falsity of a judgment as itself an objection to a judgment [...]. The question is how far a judgment promotes and preserves life, how well it preserves, and perhaps even cultivates, the type [...]”.⁴ Since for Nietzsche, the value system of western metaphysics, which claims the knowledge of the “in-itself” of things, fail to promote and preserve life, and it must be overcome. And to overcome such a dominant tradition of his time, i.e., traditional western philosophy, and the values inherent in it that deny life, strategically, it is required in the first place to show its own defects vividly. Precisely, if one shows that

³ GM, “Preface”, section 3.

⁴ BGE, “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, 4.

metaphysics cannot provide what it says to provide, or, the idea of “truth” can in no way be “truthful”, then the door to criticise metaphysical thinking gets wide open. And perhaps, a new question, the question of genealogy opens up: “if metaphysics is mere mythology, why human beings have come to embrace it”?

Asking such questions, Nietzsche speaks to us not always as a philosopher, but as a value and culture critique too, among other ways in which Nietzsche tries to give his messages, since western metaphysics profoundly shaped western culture and thus life. And for him, life (richness of life, body and senses, as opposed to “theoretical” lifeless expressions) matter more than theoretical opinions or arguments, but, in order to make his voice heard, he had to speak –at least partly– the common “theoretical” language of philosophy of his day. However, he also claims that he has found his own language in the times of his philosophical maturity, which, as I will try to establish, is parallel to his views on language and his aim of life-affirming which is at the heart of his own philosophical adventure.

According to my interpretation, Nietzsche's profession, i.e., classical philology, which involves the studies of the history and structure of language and of classical languages, supported him a lot, for detecting and expressing the aspects of western philosophy that he would call defects, and thus, both for developing his own perspective for his future critique, and for communicating it to us, since many of the “defects” of Western metaphysics could be observed directly by investigating the phenomenon of language. And the *problematique* in this thesis, which is “the question of the

adequateness of language to explain reality”, is the sub-problem of the following question: “In what way did Nietzsche criticise western philosophy”? In this thesis, precisely, I will attempt to lay bare the importance of the phenomenon of language in Nietzsche's critique of western philosophy by looking into the relation between philosophy and language in his thought. Though I do not plan to get involved in a study of linguistics or etymology, this thesis is also planned to be a parallel discussion to Nietzsche's above question. In a narrow sense, my project is to show what light had being a philologist threw onto Nietzsche's thought for him to detect the “defects” of classical western philosophy in his view. And in a wider sense, my project will be an attempt to show the relation between language and philosophy taking Nietzschean ideas as a guide.

To emphasize, as mentioned above, this thesis will not involve the realm of linguistics directly. In other words, it will be an isolated study i.e., from the academic discipline of linguistics, which will focus on the relation between language and philosophy in the thought of Nietzsche. In this thesis, I will try to inquire in this topic considering the development of Nietzsche's thought. Doing this, I will deal firstly with Nietzsche's perspectivism and his perspective, namely, the perspective of the affirmation of life, and this will be the subject matter of Chapter 2. Then, I will discuss the major Nietzschean opinions on language in his earlier writings, which are, the two main elements of language he suggests (musical and metaphorical elements, which are, the “tonal subsoil” and the “gesture symbolism” respectively), the primacy and the universality of the musical element of language (its tonal subsoil), the nominalist view on the metaphorical element of language

(which is gesture symbolism), the relation between language and human epistemic activities and “truth” (the metaphorical character of knowledge and its inability to express anything in-itself because of the necessary relation with the arbitrary gesture symbolism and propositional knowledge), the telos of language (as the preservation of the individuals and the species, which is by communicating the relations of things to human beings), the illogical operation in the formation of concepts (equalization of unequal things), and the emerged world of language and its powerlessness compared with the world of appearances; and those will be the subject matter of Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, I will try to deal with Nietzschean thoughts on language in his middle and later periods, which are about the concepts of world, consciousness, nihilism and life. In this chapter, I will focus on the major linguistic problem concerning morality which Nietzsche had problematized, i.e., the separation of doer and deed. Then, I will conclude with trying to show the continuity of Nietzsche’s thought on language and the relevance of the notion of perspectivism to his whole thought concerning the relation between language and philosophy, and with giving final comments about the problem “in what way Nietzsche criticised western metaphysics”.

CHAPTER 2

NIETZSCHE'S PERSPECTIVISM AND HIS PERSPECTIVE

Before talking about what Nietzsche told us about the relation between language and philosophy, I think that an introductory analysis, which is of Nietzsche's perspectivism, would be very helpful. I will defend the importance of perspectivism for this thesis, which is about the relation between language and philosophy for three reasons. These reasons are: 1)Nietzsche does not deal with language and philosophy in a non-perspectival manner, 2)the necessary perspectivism of life and knowledge is what language tends to conceal with the grammatical traps, and 3)how intensification and internalization of this concealment helps metaphysical convictions that deny perspectivism and thus life –as for Nietzsche, perspectivism is the condition of all life.⁵

In this chapter, by giving a brief exposition of the concept of perspectivism, I will attempt to justify my first claim. My second and third claims will be dealt with in the conclusion chapter since justifying these claims require a detailed discussion of the theme of language in Nietzsche's thought.

⁵ BGE, Preface.

2.1. Nietzsche's Perspectivism in a Nutshell

One interpretation has collapsed; but because it was considered *the* interpretation it now seems as if there were no meaning at all in existence, as if everything were in vain.⁶

When the most general aim of Nietzsche's philosophy, i.e., reevaluation of all values from the perspective of life, is considered, it can be seen that perspectivism plays a key role. As discussed in the introduction, one of Nietzsche's biggest projects was to affirm life with his writings via overcoming the life-denying consequences of Western metaphysics. Traditional Western metaphysics, for him, was an extended Platonism (which is not necessarily the philosophy of Plato himself), and this extended Platonism holds some basic assumptions which permeate almost all types of philosophies available at Nietzsche's time. As an episteme-ontological assumption, metaphysics holds one absolute truth, usually beyond the earth (as an implicit assumption or explicitly), and the task of the philosopher was to find it, or, at least to imply it to some extent. Ontologically, hidden or bare, Platonism and the philosophers of traditional Western metaphysics assume that this world is not the true world, but only the world of appearances. The "true" world is beyond bodily life, and body –and similarly, life- was, at best, of second degree of importance. And in terms of ethics, parallel to the assumption of the unreality of "this" world, these were, for Nietzsche, "nihilistic" values that repress body and support selflessness.

⁶ WP, 55.

Perspectivism is firstly, the strategic philosophical weapon of Nietzsche which is directed at the episteme-ontological assumption which holds all the metaphysical system erected: a two-world system, which consists of a true world and the world of appearances. Nietzsche's philosophy is the "overturning of Platonism"⁷, and his famous rejection of metaphysical "truth" is conducted with the understanding of perspectivism. As mentioned, Nietzsche strategically showed the internal contradictions of traditional metaphysics. And as an alternative, he suggested perspectivism.

Secondly, *contra* the episteme-ontological assumption of metaphysics discussed above, there is no "true world", but infinity of perspectives in the flux of life according to the perspectivist understanding of the world. For Plato, in popular interpretation, knowledge is not a matter of this world since this world is the world of appearances *vis-à-vis* the intelligible world. However, if one ascends to the world of Ideas, which is the "real world", or the "true world", they can also ascend to knowledge. After Plato, the metaphysical tradition which shares his two-world claim in an explicit or an implicit way emerged, and the whole history of philosophy became a history of two-world systems of metaphysics. Nietzsche does not accept any two-world claims, and he finds these claims nihilistic, or, life-denying. Moreover, the two-world systems are a result of a certain perspective, which is the perspective of the herd, the weak, and the decadent. In Nietzschean terminology, two-world systems are symptoms of decadence, or "weariness of life", and based on extreme concerns on preservation. Since this perspective, i.e., true world beyond the world of appearances, is too much

⁷ Haar, p. 47.

internalized and intensified (with the seduction of linguistic structures), human beings, and among them, especially philosophers, went on to get caught in the nets of the two-world nihilistic perspective depending on the absolute primacy of preservation by reaction, as opposed to expenditure, or the “discharge of strength”, by action.

I would now come to my first claim of this chapter, which is, in other words, that Nietzsche does not treat language and philosophy in the way a traditional “philosopher of truth” does, just like anything he deals with. In my view, Nietzsche almost never says, or tries to explain something as “this and that are the case and this and that are not” in a strict theoretical fashion, or, like “mathematician attempting to prove a theorem, or a scientist attempting to substantiate a theory”.⁸ Nietzsche does not try to provide a system to his readers, since “will to system is lack of integrity”⁹, rather, what he usually does is to describe some phenomenon about life, or to interpret them, from a perspective, or from a multiplicity of perspectives. This is because of his perspectivism: “facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations”.¹⁰ His philosophy is of course not only descriptive, but also strongly prescriptive, but in that case too, he tries to make us hear his voice from a context and at least one perspective¹¹, since, for him, evaluations are also necessarily perspectival.

⁸ Schacht, p. 1.

⁹ TI, “Maxims and Missiles”, 26.

¹⁰ WP, 481.

¹¹ Valuations, for him, must depend on a perspective. Will be discussed.

Perspectivism is always present at the background of Nietzsche's thought irrespective of what he says, and if it was not the case, for me, that would signal a problem of consistency in Nietzsche's thought. As an introduction to the analysis of this term, a commentary made by Nietzsche himself in his notebooks from 1885-1886 would be useful. This commentary not only highlights how perspectivism “permeates” Nietzsche's thought, but also that the notion of perspectivism has several aspects.

Q1:¹² That the value of the world lies in our interpretation (-that other interpretations than merely human ones are perhaps somewhere possible-); that previous interpretations have been perspective valuations by virtue of which we can survive in life, i.e., in the will to power, for the growth of power; that every elevation of man [sic] brings with it the overcoming of narrower interpretations; that every strengthening and increase of power opens up new perspectives and means believing in new horizons-this idea permeates my writings. The world with which we are concerned is false, i.e., is not a fact but a fable and approximation on the basis of a meager sum of observations; it is "in flux," as something in a state of becoming, as a falsehood always changing but never getting near the truth: for-there is no "truth".¹³

To start from the end of the quotation above, we see Nietzsche using the term truth in quotation marks, which refers to the absolute truth of metaphysics, or truth free from perspectives. Nietzsche's perspectivism is epistemologically this idea: there is no truth as understood by metaphysics, and thus knowledge independent of perspectives, since justification may be performed only within a perspective. Or, it is the idea called “fundamental perspectivism of knowledge”: there is no God's eye point of view from which everything is seen as they are, or, in-itself. Thus, from God's eye point of view, which is from the point of view of a “nonentity”, everything is false.

¹² Since I will refer to this quotation again, I call it “quotation 1” and abbreviate it as Q1. There will be another quotation abbreviated as Q2 in the same fashion in the following text.

¹³ WP, 616.

However, from perspectives, there is a room for “truths”, which means something altogether different from what the metaphysical truth (or, “two-world”, absolute, in-itself, “disinterested”, and God’s eye point of view) is. And here, the plural form is not trivial. In other words, there is no metaphysical truth which is one and represents things “as they are”, however, there are “eyes that see”, or perspectives, and consequently, there are plural truths. Precisely, each interpretation is performed with a specific kind of interest, or, a kind of relation. In other words, nothing can be seen without a specific kind of eyes, or, nothing *is* at all. Perspectivity is the nature of any “knowledge”, and according to Jean Granier’s interpretation, “[t]he idea of fundamental perspectivism of knowledge has as its precise function of uprooting of the metaphysical conviction that subjectivity is capable of dominating the totality of Being”.¹⁴ And for him, Nietzsche’s perspectivism involves the claim of epistemological finitude of the subjects, and as a consequence, the incapability of subjects, who are necessarily in a perspective in each case, to grasp the essence of Being, or the richness of reality, while they only contribute to the constitution of it.¹⁵ Thus, Nietzsche shows that metaphysics is incapable of saying what it claims to say: there is no systematic explanation of the totality of being independent of any perspective.

Nietzsche thinks that our world pictures are human ones, i.e., our world-pictures are anthropomorphic ones, and there is a necessary perspectivism in order to construe the world, as it is written in Q1. He asserts the following words which may also describe his idea of perspectivism and its relation

¹⁴ Granier, p. 191.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

with life.

Q2: [...] [E]very specific body strives to become master over all space and to extend its force (—its will to power:) and to thrust back all that resists its extension. But it continually encounters similar efforts on the part of other bodies and ends by coming to an arrangement ("union") with those of them that are sufficiently related to it: thus they then conspire together for power. And the process goes on—. ¹⁶

Here, according to my interpretation, Nietzsche says that not only human beings have perspectives, but at least animals and plants. In other words, human beings are no different from animals and plants in the case of having a perspective, for they are also living beings. Rather, they are in the process of clashing of the wills to power, and perspectives result from this process.

Moreover, perspectivism of Nietzsche is a multi-faceted, yet more, countless-faceted idea. As just discussed, truth and thus knowledge is relative to "eyes" of the species, and either evaluation. There are perspectives of not only species, but also all individual bodies as it is written in Q2, and individual bodies are also multiplicities of forces and perspectives (which means that the soul is not an atomistic entity). And the perspectives of the centers of forces change from time to time according to their countless *status*, like power, health, age, nutrition, position, affects, etc. As in Q1, for him, "every strengthening and increase of power opens up new perspectives".

Knowledge springs from evaluation in order for preservation, and evaluation springs from perspectives (concerning preservation and exploitation)¹⁷, "that of the preservation of the individual, a community, a race, a state, a church, a

¹⁶ WP, 636.

¹⁷ Cf. WP, 494, 496, 497, and 503.

faith, a culture"¹⁸. In other words, perspectives are the combination of status of power and the relations of things to the individuals, and in a wider sense, to the forces in the individual.¹⁹ And "this necessary perspectivism by virtue of which every center of force-and not only man [sic]—construes all the rest of the world from its own viewpoint, i.e., measures, feels, forms, according to its own force"²⁰. We invest values in things, and nothing is "valuable in-itself",²¹ and we construe a world accordingly as a manifestation of will to power.

Perspectivism, since it permeates Nietzsche's thought, is directly related with both his treatment of language, and the relation between language and philosophy, and thus his critique of the metaphysical truth. In the notion of truth of the traditional metaphysics, which Nietzsche is against, there is a hidden or bare assumption of "God's eye point of view", in which, as it were, everything can be seen "as they are". And in traditional metaphysics, philosopher's task was to 'find' the truth, and philosophizing is the activity of searching of the way phenomena look from "God's eye". What if the God's eye point of view doesn't exist, or in Nietzsche's words, there is no fact, but only interpretations?²² For Nietzsche, "[i]n so far as the word "knowledge" has any meaning, the world is knowable; but it is interpretable otherwise, it has no meaning behind it, but countless meanings".²³ This is the gist of Nietzsche's perspectivism showing itself: knowledge, whatever it might

¹⁸ WP, 259.

¹⁹ Cf. Granier,194.

²⁰ WP, 636.

²¹ WP, 260.

²² WP, 481.

²³ *ibid.*

mean, depends on perspectives. And for Nietzsche, it means only “interpretations” of will to power to construe a world of preservation of a force center. Humanity, as a center of force, has come to manifest their will to power with intellectual and conscious interpretation within the realm of language. What is the result of this phenomenon? The answer will be given in the course of the thesis, and it is that “a life-denying perspective had triumphed over all others”. This perspective is the perspective of metaphysical truth.

2.2. Nietzsche’s Perspective: The Perspective of “Life”

Nietzsche makes several attempts to describe the term “life”. Somewhere he says that, “[a] multiplicity of forces, connected by a common mode of nutrition, we call “life”²⁴ Feelings, ideas and thoughts belong to this mode of nutrition, and they belong to the specific mode of nutrition as a means²⁵. Nietzsche elsewhere defines life as “an enduring form of processes of the establishment of force, in which different contenders grow unequally”²⁶. I may unite these as “organic centres of force, united in the same mode of nutrition for a period of time, willing to be a master of all others”. Indeed, Nietzsche unites his perspectives upon life with a shorter phrase: will to power. “[L]ife itself is will to power”²⁷ Every organic being wills to discharge its power, and this is what Nietzsche calls life.

²⁴ WP, 641.

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ WP, 642.

²⁷ BGE, 13.

How do the organic beings struggle in life? For Nietzsche, the struggle of existence between living beings is performed, among other means, by “interpretation”. “The will to power interprets; even the construction of an organ is a matter of interpretation”.²⁸ In Nietzsche’s view, “[i]t is our needs that interpret the world; our drives and their For and Against. Every drive is a kind of lust to rule; each one has its perspective that it would like to compel all the other drives to accept as a norm”.²⁹ It is clear that the interpretation here is not intellectual, rather, it is a natural, or, as Rehberg puts it, a “physiological” one.³⁰ Nietzsche clearly shows signs of naturalism and has an evolutionary understanding based on the idea of the interpretation of the drives of organic beings, i.e., their calculating of power of others and other bodies. However, Nietzsche does not agree with physiologists that posit the drive for self-preservation as the main drive of a living being. In Nietzsche’s understanding, the drive of preservation, or the survival instinct, is only a consequence of the will to expend³¹. In other words, a living being has an instinct of preservation *in order to* have a chance to discharge its power, this is its evaluation (of forces, of conditions, of time, etc.) in order to have the “feeling of power”. This calculation is economic: will to power evaluates the “For and Against”, the scarce resources and limitless desires of power. For instance, even in obedience, there is a resistance present, and in commanding, there is the admission of the absolute power of the opponent.³² And while they are not mutually exclusive, Nietzsche thinks that the instinct

²⁸ WP, 643.

²⁹ WP, 481.

³⁰ Cf. Rehberg, p. 279.

³¹ Cf. WP, 650.

³² WP, 642.

of preservation is only a consequence of the will to power as expenditure.³³

What then is the “perspective of life” from which Nietzsche attempts to evaluate the world? Or, what is a life-affirming perspective? Nietzsche’s answer, in my opinion, follows from the above discussion, and could be described roughly as follows. “Affirming the constant struggle of existence, constant action without the will to non-action or inertia, which make all the achievements in life possible”. It is, in other words, “Yes-saying” to everything, including all the pains in life as described above.

In the following chapters, I will try to expose Nietzsche’s views directly related with language; and, the relation between his views on language and “philosophy as metaphysics” and his “perspectivist philosophy” will show itself throughout the discussions in those chapters.

³³ Cf. Rehberg, p. 282.

CHAPTER 3

NIETZSCHE'S EARLY WRITINGS: THE BIRTH OF LANGUAGE OUT OF THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC, THE DUALITY IN THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE, AND THE METAPHORICAL CHARACTER OF KNOWLEDGE

[M]usic is an *unmediated* objectivation and copy of the entire *will*, just as the world itself is, just as in fact the Ideas themselves are, whose multiplied appearance constitutes the world of particular things. Therefore, unlike the other arts, music is in no way a copy of the Ideas; instead, it is a *copy of the will itself*, whose objecthood the Ideas are as well: this is precisely why the effect of music is so much more powerful and urgent than that of the other arts: the other arts speak only of shadows while music speaks of the essence.³⁴

Nietzsche's claims on language, in terms of quantity, belong mostly to his earlier period. We can see him talking about words, conceptions, genesis of language, and the relations between language and philosophy, and language and truth, in the essays "On Music and Words" (1871), "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" (1873) and his published work *Birth of Tragedy* (1872) in a lengthy and detailed way.

The picture Nietzsche draws in his earlier works is against the Cratylan view in Plato's *Cratylus*. In *Cratylus*, Socrates talks with Cratylus and Hermogenes, who are champions of ideas so called "naturalism" and "nominalism" respectively. While it would be a separate thesis subject to

³⁴ Schopenhauer. W, p. 285.

determine Socrates' (or Plato's) own position, or, to compare Nietzsche's picture with Hermogenes' approach, it is clear that Cratylus is a proponent of naturalism, which defends the idea that words are related to the true nature of things. Hermogenes, on the other hand, supports the view that language is a product of convention, which is called nominalism. Nietzsche's position is, while it would be wrong to identify it with that of Hermogenes in *Cratylus*, is the nominalist one. Nietzsche, as will be discussed, accepts two basic elements in language, one musical and one metaphorical. While claiming a kind of universality in its musical element (close to the naturalist view), Nietzsche holds a nominalist view on the metaphorical element on language, which makes propositional knowledge and its communication possible.

In his early period, Nietzsche had a profound interest in the genesis of language, and presumably, his reasoning on the relations between language, philosophy and truth was based on his conclusions derived from the subject of the genesis of language. His treatment of the subject matter was, however, highly under the influence of academic philologists Burckhardt and Ritschl, and his "educator" Schopenhauer.³⁵ It is not a surprise that he speaks from within the academic and philosophical background, formulations and the terminology of these scholars. Thus, although he had original insights on the relation between language and philosophy, the theme of language in Nietzsche's early thinking seems to be dealt with in a theoretical fashion similar to his inspirers. However, as some scholars noticed a continuity in Nietzsche's thought concerning the relation between language and human

³⁵ Hazelton, p.48.

epistemic activities (including philosophy),³⁶ I believe that Nietzsche acquired the perspectivist insight concerning knowledge from the conclusions he derived about the nature of language in his early years, although perspectivism remained unmentioned *per se* in his earlier works. And according to Alan Schrift's interpretation, from the beginning, "Nietzsche's explorations into the nature of language are directed toward demystifying the philosophical pretensions of truth and knowledge, as man's [sic] quest for knowledge reveals itself to be grounded on the "fundamental human drive": the drive toward the formation of metaphor".³⁷

Before going in depths of Nietzsche's direction toward demystification of philosophical pretensions with the term "metaphor", I think it is necessary to remark in what sense Nietzsche uses the term. In "Lecture on Rhetoric", Nietzsche gives Aristotle's definition of metaphor as "the carrying over [Übertragung] of a word whose usual meaning is something else, either from the genus to species, from the species to genus, from species to species, or according to proportion".³⁸ But Nietzsche uses the term in a more general way. While Aristotle uses the term in a linguistic context, Nietzsche's usage is about carrying over something from sphere to sphere, i.e., "physical to spiritual, literal to figurative, audible to visual, subject to object, etc".³⁹ For now, I will not add on the issue of Nietzsche's usage of the term "metaphor", however, this issue will get clearer when talking about TL.

³⁶ E.g. Michel Haar, Roger Hazelton and Alan D. Schrift.

³⁷ Schrift, p.372.

³⁸ Rh, 317. (qtd. in Schrift, p.374).

³⁹ Schrift, p.375.

Nietzsche, in the fragment "On Music and Words" (1871), as the name of the essay suggests, discusses the relations between music and language.

Nietzsche, in this essay, claiming a "duality in the essence of language", gives a picture of the metaphorical character of knowledge. He asserts that "[i]n the multiplicity of languages the fact at once manifests itself, that word and thing do not necessarily coincide with one another completely, but that word is a symbol",⁴⁰ and immediately asks what the word symbolizes, and his answer is that it does symbolize, whether conscious or [mostly] unconscious, but "only conceptions".⁴¹ Nietzsche holds that words cannot correspond to "innermost nature", or let's say, the essence of things. Not only outer things, but also inner phenomena, for early Nietzsche (and for later Nietzsche too), can be "known" only via conceptions. Even Schopenhauer's "Will", as a word, is a mere conception, the most general phenomenal form of a "Something" that cannot be deciphered in the absence of a conception⁴². Thus, in Nietzsche's view, human beings, intellects of which are bound to work with conceptions, are able to get hold of the "innermost nature of things" (in Schopenhauerian and early Nietzschean terms, thing-in-itself, the Will, primordial Unity, or, the original phenomenon) only in its metaphorical expressions.⁴³

We are in epistemic relation with the nature of things only via conceptions and the supposedly corresponding words, and Nietzsche sees a duality at the

⁴⁰ WM, p. 30. In TL, the expression "not necessarily" will turn into something like "necessarily not". Will be discussed.

⁴¹ *ibid.* [Emphasis mine.]

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 31.

heart of language by observing a dichotomy in the realm of conceptions. Because of this duality, “language suffers from a radical powerlessness reveal what it claims to reveal”.⁴⁴ For him, with the strict necessity of getting nowhere beyond conceptions, there are two species in the realm of them, one of which “manifest themselves to us as pleasure-and-displeasure sensations, and accompany all other conceptions as a never-lacking fundamental basis”.⁴⁵ This duality is parallel to the Schopenhauerian duality of Will and representation. The fundamental basis in the sphere of conceptions; namely, the conceptions of “pleasure-and-displeasure sensations”, or as Nietzsche too allows the readers to call it the sensations of the “Will” is the one that “by which and out of which alone we understand all Becoming and all Willing [...]”, and it is “[...] fundamental to language”.⁴⁶ This kind of expressions, i.e., expressions of pleasure-and-displeasure-sensations, is symbolized in *the tone of the speaker*, while all conceptions are symbolized in the speaker’s “gesture symbolism”.⁴⁷ The primal cause of this kind of sensations are incomprehensible for us, it is an issue as complicated as the cause of the emergence of living beings, however, regardless of the languages of the speakers, this “tonal subsoil” is common in all speaking human beings. Thus, for Nietzsche, music is an element in the formation of language, and it is the primary symbolism, which is directly related to the primal cause, the Will, with an unknown origin. Musical element, moreover, since it is common in all human beings, shows a universal character. The multiplicity of languages is, however, a result of a secondary symbolism, which Nietzsche calls

⁴⁴ Haar, p.71.

⁴⁵ WM, p.31.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *ibid.* [Nietzsche’s italics.]

“gesture symbolism”, or the “consonants and vowels”, “the positions of our organs of speech”.⁴⁸

The gesture symbolism is secondary in the sense that it is able to develop only upon the fundamental basis of “organic pleasure-pain responses”, and “[a]s our whole corporeality stands in relation to that original phenomenon, the Will, so the world built up out of its consonants and vowels stands in relation to its tonal basis”.⁴⁹ Nietzsche supports this idea with the idea that music can create metaphors, however, it is impossible for metaphors, or the conceptions, to create music out of itself.⁵⁰ In other words, the tone of the speaker is the direct expression of the Will, or in later Nietzschean terms, Will to Power, which is common to all human beings. It comes from, and is the expression of the fundamental force of life (the Will, or for later Nietzsche, Will to Power), and this fundamental energy of life is responsible for the creation of everything else, such as conceptions.

The duality between the tonal subsoil and the gesture symbolism is explained with the Apollonian-Dionysian contrast in the following parts of WM. While, by Nietzsche, the tonal subsoil (which is the fundamental basis) is described as the Dionysian origin of language, gesture symbolism, which “seeks to communicate the clearer, but more superficial realm of feelings, ideas, and images which are its objective referents” is referred as Apollonian.⁵¹ This means that, in language, the musical element which is

⁴⁸ WM, p.32.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 33.

⁵¹ Hazelton, p.50.

symbolized in the tone of speaker, the Dionysian element represents the amoral energy of and expansive forces of life without the concern to communicate and control the chaos inside of and outer to the human being. It is the “echo” of that chaos, and the copy of the original phenomena whose origin is unknown to us. On the other hand, there is the Apollonian gesture symbolism which functions as the epistemological element which symbolizes conceptions corresponding to the apparent things. This symbolism is, however, a secondary one created by the original melody, the unconscious and instinctive Dionysian forces of life. “[M]usic, if regarded as an expression of the world, is in the highest degree a universal language that is related to the universality of concepts much as these are related to the particular things” .⁵² In BT, Nietzsche says the following:

[I]t is impossible for language to exhaust the meaning of music's world-symbolism, because music refers symbolically to the original contradiction and original pain at the heart of the primordial unity, and thus symbolizes a sphere which lies above and beyond all appearance.⁵³

Thus, for there is the musical element in language, language must be a manifestation of the Will, which is the conception of the “Something” that will be expressed as “Will to Power” in later Nietzsche. In Haar’s words, Nietzsche tells us that “[w]ords, expressing through their sounds and rhythms the movements of the psyche, manifest some type of Will to Power [...]”.⁵⁴

⁵² BT, p.77f.

⁵³ BT, p.36.

⁵⁴ Haar, p.69. [Haar refers to “artistic Will to Power”.]

On the other hand, being arbitrary and thus secondary, the other element, gesture symbolism, symbolizing only conceptions, which is still essential to language, deprives language of talking about the nature of things, or the in-itself, while it functions as “shaping” the world interpretation, and making strange things familiar. As discussed, knowledge may be sought only in conceptions, and this may only take place in language within its Apollonian origin which only can work in the realm of conceptions, and it is the only element related with conceptions. Up to here, Nietzsche communicates his insights that language was born out of the spirit of Dionysian music, and because of this, it contains a universality. It gave birth to knowledge with the Apollonian forces within it, and thus, the faculty of knowledge has a necessarily metaphorical and rhetorical character since knowledge might be sought only in language which contains this arbitrary element working with correspondence to conceptions.

Haar notices the Nietzschean claim of the unity of aesthetic and artistic powers in language and he tells us that, Nietzsche’s unique and constant insight is that “language derives from a pre-linguistic element that controls it and is essentially “aesthetic””.⁵⁵ In Nietzsche’s thought, as Haar puts it, the origin of every fiction (including all world-pictures) is the artistic Will to Power, and the apparent separation of music and metaphor resolves itself in the core of it.⁵⁶ From this metaphorical (and thus artistic) character of

⁵⁵ Haar, p.71.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

language, and thus knowledge, that Nietzsche describes us, it can be inferred that “[f]or Nietzsche, [...] *logos* is subject to art, and not art a form of *logos*”.⁵⁷

Moreover, in epistemic and philosophical activities, since it requires the involvement of language with its arbitrary element⁵⁸, there must be an entropy, i.e., the expression must be of a less power than the expressed. “Language, as an organ and symbol of manifestation (i.e., as a symbol of symbol) can never bring forth the most intimate basis of music”.⁵⁹ The arbitrariness of the sign-aspect in language necessitates the loss of power in expression, and makes language and any epistemic and thus philosophical activity remain necessarily metaphorical, and inadequate to represent the “object” of the metaphor perfectly. According to Haar, “the same structure of entropy is revealed in Truth and Lying in the Extra-Moral sense [...]” with the point of departure not as music, but perception.⁶⁰

In TL, Nietzsche performs a genealogy of the term truth, as it is understood in western metaphysics. In general, his aim may be read as to set out the contradictions concerning “the drive for pure truth” for this essay.⁶¹ The contradictions that Nietzsche talks about are the historical and psychological contradictions of human beings, and this essay is a psychological analysis of the part of humanity –human beings of knowledge— that at some time was in the claim of pure truth. When performing this genealogy, Nietzsche looks

⁵⁷ Haar, p. 71.

⁵⁸ Cf. WP, 522.

⁵⁹ Haar, p.71.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 72.

⁶¹ Cf. Berry, p. 34.

back to find what phases the term truth had undergone. He finds out that, in the genealogy of truth, there is first the genesis of language, which is based on the human intellect (which makes language and any kind of knowledge possible) that “unfolds its principle powers in dissimulation”.⁶² Genesis of language has nothing to do with purity, since language is invented for designating “the relations of things to human beings”, with the aim of the preservation of the individual, not to grasp “things in themselves”.⁶³ And for expressing the relation between things and human beings, the creator of language “lays hold of the boldest metaphors”.⁶⁴ “[A] nerve stimulus is transferred into an image; first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overlapping of one sphere, right into the middle of an entirely new and different one”.⁶⁵ Here, in the same fashion, Nietzsche tells us that there is entropy, i.e., a loss of power, in each transference. We see that Nietzsche still holds that language has a metaphorical character, which makes knowledge not a tool of representing the inner nature of things, or, so-called “in-itself”, but only as designating the relations of things to human beings in a way that contains arbitrariness to at least some degree.

Apart from the loss of power in each case of transference in the structure of word formation, there is another aspect of language, which is its *telos*, or, utility. For Nietzsche, language is an invented tool for socialization and preservation of the individual and the species. “[...] [A] uniformly valid and

⁶² TL, p. 80.

⁶³ *ibid.*, pp. 80ff.

⁶⁴ TL, p. 82.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

binding designation is invented for things, and this legislation of language likewise establishes first laws of truth".⁶⁶ If one lies, the others in society feel defrauded, and this is important since truth has some life-preserving consequences. Nietzsche holds that if one lies, but not in a harmful manner, the society wouldn't be concerned so much. However, if one tells the so-called truths in a harmful manner, others even get hostile. What makes truth morally valuable for human beings is its consequences⁶⁷. Thus, "an honest drive for pure truth" seems incomprehensible for Nietzsche, and reaching it with using the tool of language, which is intrinsically metaphorical, i.e., assuming complete correspondence of three completely different spheres, is a *contradictio in adiecto*.

Here again, Nietzsche tries to communicate his idea that language is not an adequate tool for explaining the true nature of reality. With the necessary artistic element and resulting entropy in linguistic expression, language cannot express reality in a completely perfect fashion. This was a critique of western philosophy of his time and past, which had long been in the pursuit of finding the pure truth, with the help of concepts. Language starts with metaphors, shifts between different spheres that have nothing to do with each other (cf. the discussion concerning Nietzsche's usage of the term "metaphor" in the fifth paragraph of this chapter). The sphere shifts: first from a nerve stimulus to an image as a first metaphor, then from that image to a sound as a second metaphor, as mentioned above. In each use of a word, the world of nerves is supposed to overlap with the world of images, and the world of images with the world of sounds completely. From the perspective

⁶⁶ TL, p. 81.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

of “pure truth”, is it possible? This was Nietzsche’s question, and his answer was “certainly not”, and in his words, these metaphors correspond “in no way to the original entities”.⁶⁸ Remembering what Nietzsche discussed in WM, the metaphors may only correspond to conceptions, however, still with some entropy. Now, the representational understanding of perception enters into the picture as well. In other words, even our perceptions are metaphors, and what language designates become metaphors of metaphors. Thus scientists and philosophers in the claim of “pure truth”, the “in itself”, the “real world”, “the unchanging”, and who have to build their works with the blocks of language derive their materials not from the “essence of things”,⁶⁹ since this reveals an internal contradiction. Precisely, Nietzsche's claim about language here is that, starting from its genesis, language is a tool for preservation, and it is not a safe basis to rely on in the search of alleged “pure truth”. Language is, for him, the necessary metaphorical basis of knowledge, and from its birth, its reason of existence was to be a means to the preservation of the individuals and the species. And philosophy as a human activity, therefore, only can talk about relations, not unchanging essences.

The second Nietzschean claim I would like to state from TL is about “concepts”. It is a supplementary view to the first argument, which is just stated. The argument is that, the formation of concepts depends on an illogical operation, which is “the equation of unequal things”.⁷⁰ For example, any particular apple can in no way be totally the same, while their concept, apple, is identical and applied for all. Nietzsche himself gives an example of

⁶⁸ TL, p. 83.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

“honesty”. When one calls another “honest”, and we ask why, the usual answer is “on account of his honesty”.⁷¹ However, this is like saying that apple (or apple-ness) is the cause of the apples. There are occult, incomprehensible qualities (likeappleness, honesty, goodness, etc.) which make different things to be called the same. And thus, perspective of pure truth based on concepts is by no means possible. Rather, concepts are “residues of metaphors”, i.e., they are derived from words which are derived from nerve stimuli,⁷² and they are meaningful only as a means to communicate affects or the relations of things to human beings. Then what is “truth”? One of Nietzsche's most-famous-ever quotations that answer this question – telling us what truth is as understood by metaphysics— is in TL.

A moveable host of metaphors, metonymies, and; anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which we have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions- they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.⁷³

In the lines above, Nietzsche emphatically shows us the major connection between language and “pure truth”. Although in the invention of the words and concepts as metaphors, the only consideration was the relations of things to human beings, which gives language an anthropomorphic character *contra* the Cratylan view, after a long period of artistic intensification, a people of “truth” (of metaphysicians) disregard this -since it is forgotten- and these

⁷¹ TL, p. 83.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 85.

⁷³ *ibid.*, p. 84.

people even declare the relations between concepts as showing the “unchanging” world. However, the formation process of concepts is also forgotten, the connections between concepts and senses are completely put into a cold storage called history, and the concepts have become the “real” objects. The “real” world is now the world of concepts, forms, species, which have no connection, except for designating relations, with bodily, sensual, temporal world of appearances, a world drained of time, motion, and thus life. Moreover, “[w]e believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors of things”.⁷⁴ With logical connections, concepts build a world, in other words, language has a world of its own, but it is a product of a completely different sphere from the world of senses, but makes us feel that we know the real things, or the essence of things. Furthermore, the intensification of this feeling given by language to us, supported by forgetfulness, results in the emergence of a second world, the alleged “true world”.

⁷⁴ TL, p. 82f.

CHAPTER 4

NIETZSCHE'S MIDDLE AND LATER PERIODS: LANGUAGE, WORLD, THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS, AND LIFE

Up to now, I tried to expose Nietzsche's earlier views on language, which were 1)the two main elements of language he suggests (musical and metaphorical, i.e., tonal subsoil and gesture symbolism respectively), 2)the primacy of its musical element, i.e., its tonal subsoil, 3)the nominalist view on the metaphorical element of language, i.e., gesture symbolism, 4)the relation between language and human epistemic activities and metaphysical "truth", i.e., the metaphorical character of knowledge and its inability to express anything in-itself because of the necessary relation with the arbitrary gesture symbolism and propositional knowledge, 5)the *telos* of language, i.e., the preservation of the individuals and the species, which is by communicating the relations of things to human beings, 6)the illogical operation in the formation of concepts, i.e., equalization of unequal things, and 7)the emerged world of language and its powerlessness compared with the world of appearances. In this chapter, I will try to expose Nietzsche's middle and later period views on language and their relation to 1)his earlier insights on language, 2)philosophy, truth and knowledge, and 3)perspectivism and his own thought with the themes of nihilism, Will to Power and life.

In his middle period, while Nietzsche still goes on emphasizing that the world of language is a different and simpler than the outer world of flux, he also focuses on the nature of consciousness and the need for communication in human beings. In *Human, All-Too-Human*, *Daybreak*, and *The Gay Science*, he partly abandons Schopenhauerian framework, and “makes some new and distinctive contributions to social thinking”.⁷⁵ In both his middle period and later, or, “mature” period, Nietzsche constantly philosophises in a perspectivist understanding, as discussed in Chapter 2, and what he says about language come to agree with what he says about perspectivism. In his mature period, he philosophizes with his original language and ideas and with his “hammer”, genealogically attempting to uproot the metaphysical convictions with the significant contribution of his earlier insights on language. At the beginning of his thoughtful essay “Language, Metaphor, Rhetoric: Nietzsche’s Deconstruction of Epistemology”, Alan D. Schrift successfully tries to establish that Nietzsche’s earlier insights on language informs “many of his later positions insofar as many of Nietzsche’s criticisms of the traditional problems of metaphysics and epistemology will reveal themselves to be a consequence of some of his earlier insights into the nature of language and metaphor”.⁷⁶

The point that “language has a world of its own” and the feeling the linguistic world gives us is discussed in *Human, All-too-Human*, and this theme still goes on in Nietzsche’s middle and later periods. Nietzsche straight-forwardly says that “mankind [sic] set up in language a separate

⁷⁵ Hazelton, p.50.

⁷⁶ Schrift, p.372.

world beside the other world”⁷⁷. And humanity uses this world as a hinge, as it were, to ascend the pure truth⁷⁸. This is the source of the undeserved pride of human beings, their alleged superiority over animals on this issue. The “sculptor of language”, for him, was not so modest, only in the claim of designating things, rather had the feeling of having the supreme knowledge of the world. Moreover, like logic, language too “depends on presuppositions with which nothing in the real world corresponds, for example on the presupposition that there are identical things, that the same thing is identical at different points of time.”⁷⁹ “Self-identity” is an assumption of language and logic, however, has no correspondence with the world we live in. Language and logic provide a simpler world, which may have some utilities, however, very far from grasping the essence of this world.

The importance of this false world, or of our necessary errors taking its roots from the genesis of language is that it has strong effects on philosophising, and thus on life. When he talks about the freedom of the will and the isolation of the facts, Nietzsche argues that our usual way of observing facts involves taking facts as different from one another, assuming that there is an “empty space” between them.⁸⁰ “In reality, however, all our doing and knowing is not a succession of facts and empty spaces but a continuous flux”.⁸¹ Belief in the freedom of the will assumes a succession of facts, in each of which a free judgment is performed. Each action, in this assumption, is

⁷⁷ HH, 11.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ HH, 16.

⁸⁰ HH, 306.

⁸¹ *ibid.*

isolated from each other. Thus, it is incompatible with how we live, as if there is an “atomism” concerning living and doing. We can well speak of “identical facts”, or “identical characters”, but there exists neither of them⁸². Our moral judgments, i.e., praises and censures, depend on this atomist assumption. Grouping game goes on erroneously, as stated in TL too, in moral judgments, like good-evil, sympathetic-anxious, etc. “The word and the concept are the most manifest ground for our belief in this isolation of groups of actions: we do not only *designate* things with them, we think originally that through them we grasp the *true* in things”.⁸³ Language, as discussed above, provides us the sense of truth through the world of its own. We make things simpler than they in fact are, through language, by dint of the grouping games we perform via language and concepts. We isolate the things in flux and understand them as separate entities. And with this linguistic illusion, we assume self-identity and free-will.

However, world is not simple as the world of language. “A philosophical mythology lies concealed in *language* which breaks out again every moment, however careful one may be otherwise”.⁸⁴ And grammar is “metaphysics for people”.⁸⁵ Consequently, language provides a support for our moral prejudices, such as the freedom of the will, via the assumptions hidden in it. This will be discussed in detail later, however, the question will be the following: what is the reason behind this picture? Nietzsche first gives the “why”, by treating the subject of consciousness.

⁸² HH, 306.

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ HH, WS, 11.

⁸⁵ GS, 354.

For Nietzsche, human beings would still do what they do, like feeling, willing, remembering, and acting without consciousness.⁸⁶ Consciousness is a mirror without which life is perfectly possible. Indeed, most of our lives take place without being conscious, we act without this mirror. But then, why did such a thing like consciousness arise in human beings? Nietzsche says that

[w]here need and distress have forced men [sic] for a long time to communicate and to understand each other quickly and subtly, the ultimate result is an excess of this strength and art of communication— as it were, a capacity that has gradually been accumulated and now waits for an heir who might squander it.⁸⁷

This is to say, consciousness has developed only under the pressure of the need for communication, and it functions as a “net of communication between human beings”, which wouldn’t be needed by a solitary living being like a beast of prey.⁸⁸ In other words, the delicate and weak nature of human beings had played the major role in the emergence of consciousness. The reason behind its emergence is its utility: the preservation of the individual and the species. “As the most endangered animal he [sic] [human beings] needed help and protection, he [sic] needed his peers, [...] he [sic] had to [...] make himself [sic] understood; and for all of this, he [sic] needed “consciousness” first of all”.⁸⁹ “[T]he thinking that rises to consciousness is”, however, “— the most superficial and worst part— for only the conscious thinking *takes the form of words, which is to say signs of communication*, and this

⁸⁶ GS, 354.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *ibid.* [Emphasis mine.]

fact uncovers the origin of consciousness".⁹⁰ And thus, the development of language and the development of consciousness go "hand in hand".⁹¹ The sign-creator human being is, for Nietzsche, the same being as the being that becomes more and more conscious.⁹² As a result, consciousness is not about the individual existence of human beings. Even when thought in terms of preservation, instincts are enough to perform this function. However, as a social being, preservation takes a different shape that includes the usage of consciousness, which is the most "common", most "simple and most "communicable" part of our "incomparably individual" experiences. According to Schrift, this thinking is a result of his earlier thought, that is, "only what is "average" and "common" in man [sic] can be communicated".⁹³ The value of consciousness is strictly the "social" or "herd" utility.⁹⁴ And language is the medium of communication which spread the development of consciousness further. While there is a social utility in the development of consciousness, there is not the "truth"; but the interpreting will to power in the search for preservation.

In terms of perspectivism, for Nietzsche, consciousness is the translation of the individual experiences into the "perspective of the herd".⁹⁵ Hazelton stresses that, in Nietzsche's view, language as a means communication between conscious beings can only communicate the contents of consciousness. Since language developed only for social utility, for

⁹⁰ GS, 354. [Nietzsche's italics.]

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ Schrift, p.387.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ GS, 354.

Nietzsche, the proper sphere of language is “a superficial and symbolic world, a generalized and a vulgarized world”.⁹⁶ Schrift says that, while among primitive peoples language served to communicate feelings and to correct them with their expression, with the development of civilization and the surplus of the power of communication given by the development of consciousness, Nietzsche holds that

[l]anguage strains more and more to express the reverse of feeling, namely thought, losing thereby its power to meet the real needs of men [sic] while increasing its tyranny over their actions and in time even their feelings, so that men [sic] become the “slaves of words”.⁹⁷

Human beings became the slave of words, but why? Since words guide human actions and consequently life, Nietzsche, trying to interpret things from the perspective of life, had to deal with language on the course of his later period too. Discussed in previous paragraphs, the world that language gives us is different, and simpler than the real world of chaos. The world of language has given human beings the sense of knowing the true nature of things mistakenly and created the “only interpretation”, the interpretation of traditional metaphysics which claims the knowledge of the absolute. Since we are in epistemic relation with the world only in conceptions and thus the allegedly corresponding words, philosophical moralities and value systems are a result of the false world that language gives. And for Nietzsche, there is a “linguistic illusion” behind the whole morality of metaphysics, which is the addition of doer into every deed.

⁹⁶ Hazelton, p.50. (Cf. GS, 354).

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

As discussed, in Nietzsche's view, "language contains a hidden philosophical mythology which, however carefully we may be, breaks out afresh at every moment"⁹⁸. As Schrift puts it, "[t]he belief in the subject or ego is a central figure in this mythological constellation which finds a "firm form in the functions of language and grammar""⁹⁹. This central figure of the belief in the subject is the result of the grammatical habit of positing a doer in addition to the deed"¹⁰⁰. For Nietzsche, at the birth of language, there was a "crudely fetishistic mindset" of human beings, seeing doers and deeds everywhere, the presuppositions of reason which believes in the atomic "I", the causal efficacy of the will, and reason forces us to make use of "unity, identity, permanence, substance, cause, objectification, being", and the concept of "thing" has emerged.¹⁰¹ Being is "pushed under everything as a cause, where there is only becoming. After a long history of reason, philosophers concluded that the categories of reason do not come from the empirical world. So where did they come from? Greeks concluded that we lived in a higher world at some point. Eleatics gone to excess in this interpretation, interpretation of "being as a cause", and even their opponents could not refute the seduction of the basic presuppositions of reason. Nietzsche gives an example, the invention of atom by Democritus¹⁰². With the eyes of "being", appearances, change, alteration, and becoming in general had been seen as illusory, however, the linguistic seductions in reason was

⁹⁸ WS, 11.

⁹⁹ Schrift, p.390.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ TI, "Reason in Philosophy", 5.

¹⁰² *ibid.*

“where the error lies”.¹⁰³ Nietzsche thinks that there is only becoming, and when being is posited to becoming via the grammar of reason, it is necessary for paradoxes, disharmonies, contradictions and errors to seem to take place. “Now we read disharmonies and problems into things because we think *only* in the form of language— and thus believe in the “eternal truth” of “reason” (e.g., subject, attribute, etc.).¹⁰⁴ Discussed in previous paragraphs, the world that language gives us is different, and simpler than the real world of chaos. As it is seen, Nietzsche thinks that it is the world of reason, and the perspective of “pure truth”. The world of language, or, “reason” (reason as understood by metaphysics) has given human beings the sense of knowing the true nature of things mistakenly and created the “only interpretation”, the interpretation of traditional metaphysics which claims the knowledge of the absolute and moral imperatives. The addition of a doer to the deed is, however, a linguistic illusion, and it has a huge effect on both philosophising and morality, leading to the understanding of souls having “free will” independent of their bodies. Nietzsche holds that the fundamental errors of reason (which are usually the fundamental characteristics of metaphysics) are petrified in language.¹⁰⁵ For Nietzsche, as mentioned, one of the most fundamental errors, or paralogisms of reason in Kantian terms, is to separate the doer from the deed. When we have a look at western languages, we see that they have a grammatical structure in which self-identical atomic subjects as person souls do the deeds are assumed, and this structure seduces reason to think that the subject could do what it does with a free will. In other words, with the intensification of this aspect language, we tend to think that

¹⁰³ TI, “Reason in Philosophy”, 5.

¹⁰⁴ WP, 522.

¹⁰⁵ GM, “First Essay”, 13.

the subjects can do otherwise. Nietzsche clearly thinks that this is not the case, and there are only deeds, but no doers.¹⁰⁶ Life is “becoming”, and it is something “temporal”. The assumption of self-identity, as “atomistic” thinking of a subject, is not applicable to life.¹⁰⁷ And this paralogistic thinking can be found in the descent of the metaphysical morality, and its values. At this point, it would be helpful to give a possible analysis of the following quotation

[n]o wonder if the submerged, darkly glowering emotions of vengefulness and hatred exploit this belief for their own ends and in fact maintain no belief more ardently than the belief that *the strong man* [sic] *is free* to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey *accountable* for being a bird of prey. [...]”.¹⁰⁸

This passage may be read as the heart of GM, as follows. In the history of the emergence of Platonic-Christian morality, there was first the noble mode of evaluation and the weak types. The weak human beings (represented by lambs here, who were in fact the strong ones before, but with their physical practice, they acquired sickliness and weakness: the priestly caste) produced hatred, a *ressentiment* to the noble types, which are physiologically strong, well-bred, and without the consideration of safety because of their power (represented by the birds of prey). Nobler types, who are able to expend, did not care pain and safety, and they also did not care the safety of others. In other words, they find their self in their own superiority, without considering the others, the weaker ones, as their interpretation of will to power. This is to say, they *affirm* themselves in the first place, without having

¹⁰⁶ GM, “First Essay”, 13.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. WP, 631, and BGE, “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, 17.

¹⁰⁸ GM, “First Essay”, section 13.

a look at the others. However, the weaker types, with a slavish type of evaluation, morally condemn the strong ones in advance, as a manifestation of their reactive will to power. Denial is prior to affirmation for them. And this type of evaluation makes the most of the structure of language, which leads to the paralogistic thought that the doer (the atomic subject, their soul) can choose to do in one way or the other. Not to be victims of the strong ones, weak ones produce a type of evaluation based on preservation. To preserve themselves, they first call the strong ones as “evil”, and then they define themselves in opposition to them, as “good”. Nobler ones, at some point, start to have the feeling of guilt as a result, and this fact may be considered to be the beginning of the end of nobility.

To sum up, in his middle and later periods, Nietzsche dealt with the world, the nature of consciousness, and life. For Nietzsche, the development of consciousness and language go hand in hand, and the active force here is social utility. However, the world that consciousness can think of via language is a vulgarized world with naïve assumptions of grammar. This world, since it “works” because it can designate the relations of things to human beings, seduces us to believe that it is the “true” world. This seduction is completely natural: human beings can think only in the realm of language, nothing else. And the alleged “true-world” resulted in infecting the evaluations of the individuals and societies. Paralogistic thinking, which is a major example of the grammatical-syntactical structures in language that seduce us to believe in “free will” independent of the bodies has life-denying effects such as the over-emphasis on preservation. On the other hand, a life-denying perspective, which believes in another “true world”, can take the

advantage of the structures in language that seduces us to believe in an absolute truth. Human beings cannot throw off grammatical and concept based common sense thinking, and it indeed works in many occasions since preservation is as necessary moment of life as expenditure, however, Nietzsche seems to think that it is good to remember —he says that it is forgotten that words are metaphors— that this thinking has nothing to do with the essence of the world, but only a result of reactive will to power in the search for the preservation of the species, the metaphorical manifestation of artistic will to power. The intensification of it results in over-emphasis on preservation, and the type that needs preservation more can exploit this. The internalization of the world of language denies other types of thinking which is perhaps possibly compatible with life-affirming, action based world constructions, which also do not exclude preservation, just like Apollo and Dionysus do not exclude each other. Life is primarily acting, in the struggle for existence, and over-preservationist thinking supported by the elements of language and forgetfulness is, for Nietzsche, life-denying.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

As it is seen, Nietzsche lays bare that language is a manifestation of will to power and a social utility mechanism, as an Apollonian art, or a *techné*, and while it really contributed to the preservation of the species in the course of history, at some time it started to contribute to life-denying dogmas with the products of it such as philosophy as metaphysics. With the intensification and internalization of the structures in language, which is evoked by the need of preservation and exploited by it, nihilistic world view triumphed with the forgetting of truth as an art, and the same for philosophy, and her daughter science as they all depend on the linguistic structures. Philosophy and science spring from language; and language can only be “metaphorical”, and the term “literal” loses its meaning, since there is no correspondence possible between the spheres responsible for the birth of language. Language only shows the relation of things to human beings, and can only create “maps” of the world which is necessarily not the world itself, but an image of the world from a perspective. Language is the stuff of the *techné* of mapmaking.

Language, for Nietzsche, has concealed the errors of reason petrified in it from us, and it made a long-lasting “metaphysics of truth” possible, and in a way, even necessary. However, this must have been overcome. What if one

finds out that the concept of “pure truth” is meaningless and impossible? Although we find out that a perfect truth is nonsense, our conceptual structure is always at work to deceive us back to a life-denying metaphysics. “I fear we shall never be rid of God, so long as we still believe in grammar”¹⁰⁹ says Nietzsche. Here, God represents the Christian God, as well as Platonic “good”, the ideas, the unchanging, the “true world”. If we think with oppositions, the law of the excluded middle, the separation of the doer and the deed, the atomism of the subject, and all the linguistically emerged errors of reason, one will have to be in a way like believing in a religion which assumes an “other world” because of the hidden mythology in grammar. This reasoning of Nietzsche is an opposition to dogmatic thinking and a call for a perspectival language which deviates from standard grammatical usages of propositional truth, like Nietzsche’s own language: aphoristic, artistic, and suggestive. Precisely, perspectival language is necessarily suggestive, and represents the perspectives, which are the results of the necessity for the organic beings to interpret. Remembering the forgotten interpretive and artistic character of language requires consistent language usage. Nietzsche indeed used language in an artistic way without the claim of non-perspectival truth, or something like a “true world”. For Nietzsche, language, in two senses; i.e., language as such, and the style of the author/speaker, determines philosophising, and he sees to think that if one philosophizes in a language (again in two-senses), s/he is seduced to share the perspective of that language. In the latter sense of the term, if one philosophises in a life-denying non-perspectival style of language, it is most likely for them to use life-denying expressions in the sense Nietzsche uses the

¹⁰⁹ TI, “Reason in Philosophy”, 5.

term. Aphorisms, however, are perspectival evaluations without the claim to reveal the totality of being, which are also open to infinite interpretation changing from time to time, and perspective to perspective.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the subject that “language determines philosophizing”, in the first sense of the term, is treated with historical observations. As discussed, since only one interpretation of the world, the two-world, the nihilistic, life denying, and herd interpretation triumphed over the others, the importance of Nietzsche’s that insight shows itself in detecting the reason of this victory. For Nietzsche, development of the philosophical ideas is not optional, or original. Philosophical ideas and methods develop in relation to one another. In other words, diverse philosophical ideas are like “the members of the fauna of a Continent”.¹¹⁰ The thinkers who lay bare the “possible” philosophies are not in the wrong track, there is a determining and limiting factor: language. Although there is a sense of discovery in the emergence of new philosophies, the thinking of philosophers is

[...]not nearly as much a discovery as it is a recognition, remembrance, a returning and homecoming into a distant, primordial, total economy of the soul, from which each concept once grew: – to this extent, philosophizing is a type of atavism of the highest order. The strange family resemblance of all Indian, Greek, and German philosophizing speaks for itself clearly enough. Where there are linguistic affinities, then because of the common philosophy of grammar (I mean: due to the unconscious domination and direction through similar grammatical functions), it is obvious that everything lies ready from the very start for a similar development and sequence of philosophical systems; on the other hand, the way seems as good as blocked for certain other possibilities of interpreting the World.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ BGE, “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, 20.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

Thus, Nietzsche shows us that human thinking, as intellectual interpretation, is bound by the context and consequently determined. And language is a very important determinant, since there is a concealed ontology in the grammatical structures of every individual language that makes certain types of thinking necessary. Nietzsche, in support for this view, makes a contrast between Ural-Altaic and Indo-Germanic languages. For him, philosophers within the domain of Ural-Altaic languages have a different look “into the world”, from Indo-Germanic domain, since the conception of the subject is the least developed in that family of languages.¹¹²

Thus, in Nietzsche’s view, containing a hidden mythology in it, language represents a certain historically grown social perspective, and may become an obstacle against the development of other philosophical perspectives for the individual thinkers of the members of the society of that language. And informing the social perspectives of the language creators, there are, for Nietzsche, the “physiological value judgments and racial conditioning”, since grammatical functions get shaped according to these factors.¹¹³

As discussed in the introduction chapter, Nietzsche opposes to western metaphysics mainly because he in fact opposes the life-denying implications of it. From this, can we infer that Nietzsche blames language as such for these life-denying implications and opposes language (whatever it may mean)? I think it is not the case. Nietzsche argues that “[t]ruth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The value for life is ultimately decisive”.¹¹⁴ The illogical, according to Nietzsche, is necessary for

¹¹² BGE, “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, 20

¹¹³ *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ WP, 493.

human beings. "Among the things that can reduce a thinker to despair is the knowledge that the illogical is a necessity for mankind [sic], and that much good proceeds from the illogical. It is implanted so firmly in the passions, in language, in art, in religion, and in general in everything that lends value to life [...]"¹¹⁵ Thus, Nietzsche opposes the life-denying aspects of language, not to the errors or the illogical operations within, and not to language as such, or, let's say, he would not oppose to a language without life-denying implications, if it is possible at all. Nietzsche's perspective is the perspective of life, and his value judgments depend on this perspective.

To describe how his knowledge on language helps Nietzsche to criticise western philosophy, I think that it is helpful to remember some of the main themes of Nietzschean corpus. These may be "the problem of denying life and nihilism", "perspectivism" and "revaluation of all values". I would like to provide some relevant comments to the idea that Nietzsche's critique of western philosophy is based on his discomfort that it is life-denying, and use these to expose how Nietzsche's views on language supports his critique of western philosophy briefly.

Nietzsche saw that the Platonic-Christian mode of evaluation was dominant at the time he lived, but the theoretical philosophy underlying this type of evaluation was, for him, at the stage of collapse. Nietzsche performed a genealogy of the Platonic-Christian mode of evaluation that denies "this world" which is temporal, changing, without essences and perfection to a secondary degree of importance. Human being has invented another world, a "perfect" world where is non-temporal and no change happens, by dint of

¹¹⁵ HH, 28.

its forgetfulness, and its nihilistic impulses combined with weakness with the invention and intensification of some aspects of language, including its grammatical structures like subject-object division, and the forgotten artistic-metaphorical aspects of it. Moreover, this world is full of pain, and it is based on the dissolution of the material, including the human body. Thus, human body is started to be considered as the source of all failures, the “disease itself” to be remedied at some point in the history, and to get rid of this disease, embracing a world without becoming (this thinking is nihilism *par excellence*), without body, without pain and anything “evil” would be the optimum -though unconscious- strategy, as described in GM (First Essay). This new world has been invented, internalized, and intensified, and called “reality”, “the world of ideas”, or “the real world”. Philosophy as metaphysics and modern assumptions of science indeed provided an immense support to the assumption of two-world with construction of new concepts, and helped the two-world theory to be regarded as natural and thus self-evident. Two-world assumption became the various two-world theories, and besides the claim of usefulness, metaphysics as theories of two-world started to have the claim of “truth”, the unchanging “truth”, which is the “essence” of things. The essence of things is by all means the “true world” which is only represented by us in “this” world, the world of appearances, for the philosophers of metaphysical tradition starting from Plato.

Nietzsche showed the contradictions inherent in western metaphysics and the way from metaphysics to nihilism. He used a philosophical hammer to check the strength of old values. Then he found out that these values were

hollow with the help of his views on language. He saw that, even “critical philosophy” of Kant is inadequate to rescue metaphysics from decadence. For Nietzsche, “[...] Kantian position that self-critical rationality provides a fulcrum potentially not subject to the distortion of our conceptual apparatus”¹¹⁶ is missing the fact that our conceptual apparatus goes hand in hand with the structure of language, and contains the petrified errors of reason in language. With the hidden mythology in grammar, the petrified errors of reason in it because of its metaphorical character which is “forgotten”, it would be vain to attempt at a critical philosophy that would find its lawful room of maneuver. Critical philosophy must have been, rather, investigating what in us lead ourselves to metaphysics.

Lastly, “God is dead”¹¹⁷ declares Nietzsche, as the self-cancellation of Platonic-Christian “truth”, and the God's eye point of view, however, new values are needed for life to be meaningful. Overcoming such a long lasting tradition is very difficult, inasmuch as this tradition shows its values as natural and self-evident via language. “The reason why” shows itself in the errors in language, which are discussed, and since we still have the same grammar, Nietzsche offers a task to vanquish the shadows of Christianity.¹¹⁸ This difficult task is to overcome the life-denying two-world metaphysics and this requires a new language, rid from the old errors of self-identity, distinction of doer and deed, isolation of facts, etc. Since Nietzsche was well aware of the problems inherent in language, he also knew that his project of revaluation must be held in a different language, i.e., excluding the aspects

¹¹⁶ Strong, p. 241.

¹¹⁷ GS, 167, 181, and 343.

¹¹⁸ GS, 167.

that caused the problems. The answer of the question “why hasn't Nietzsche written in a “philosophical”, or argumentative way?” shows itself here. Strictly philosophical language –in the metaphysical sense- naturalizes the errors of reason and this can only be overcome with new ways of expression, like parody, irony and artistic aphorisms. Nietzsche's usage language thus shows the manner to a revaluation of all values by using language in its proper sphere, the artistic and truly metaphorical one. Metaphysical truth, or the understanding of truth repudiating the infinite perspectives of life and embracing the wrongly allegedly “disinterested” two-world theories are nihilistic and must be evaluated as “bad”. And a new evaluation is created: while philosophizing, life-denying must be overcome with perspectival, evaluative, and hammer-hitting language of parody and aphorisms. While No-saying and No-doing to old values can be performed with its own style of using language; Yes-saying, which means the affirmation of life, can be performed with singing and dancing words. Just like Nietzsche writes the following in Zarathustra.

– but bird-wisdom speaks like this: “See, there is no up, no down!
Throw yourself around, out, back you light one! Sing! Speak no more!
– are not all words made for the heavy? Do not all words lie to the light?
Sing! Speak no more!” – ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Z, p.187.

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APPENDIX

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı :
Adı :
Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: