

## Nietzsche and the Battle Over Being

**Abstract** This chapter concerns the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, in particular, a consideration of Nietzsche as a metaphysical thinker. This chapter is divided into three main sections: (1) a discussion of Nietzsche's philosophy of science vis-à-vis his atheism, (2) a discussion of Nietzsche's metaphysics through the lens of Martin Heidegger; and (3) a discussion of Nietzsche's overcoming of metaphysics in the context of art. The goal of this chapter is to establish Nietzsche's thinking on the materialist side of the Gigantomachy.

**Keywords** Nietzsche · Atheism · Theism · Philosophy of science  
Heidegger

### NIETZSCHE

According to Gianni Vattimo, it is precisely Heidegger's insistence upon identifying Nietzsche as a metaphysician that makes Heidegger's reading(s) of Nietzsche so unique for their time period.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the basic and continual theme running throughout all of Heidegger's thinking on Nietzsche is an attempt to think and rethink how Nietzsche conceived of "being," and thus to identify Nietzsche's "fundamental metaphysical position." Nietzsche is, therefore, for Heidegger, a thinker concerned with the *Seinsfrage*, the being question, at least insofar as metaphysics is capable of thinking such a question. Moreover, Nietzsche's

metaphysics is a thinking on being that presents itself quite strangely and uniquely vis-à-vis the history of metaphysics, in that it is a metaphysics that attempts to destroy “metaphysics” (and thus “being” itself). Yet, for Heidegger, Nietzsche’s thinking about being marks the essence and ground of Nietzsche’s thinking overall, such that if one were to understand precisely how and in what way Nietzsche understood the term “being,” then the concealed truth of Nietzsche’s thinking could finally, and for once, be *thought*. Nevertheless, better insight into Nietzsche is not quite what Heidegger seeks as his ultimate intent, for Heidegger uses Nietzsche as a *means* toward better insight into modernity. Indeed, Heidegger argues that Nietzsche’s thinking speaks the very essence of the metaphysics of our current time. However, before we can say why and how Heidegger undertakes such a project, we first need to understand what Nietzsche’s fundamental metaphysical position in fact is; that is, how does Nietzsche understand the being of beings?

In order to inquire into Nietzsche’s fundamental position on being, we need to understand how such a position arises out of his understanding of modernity, namely out of the rise of modern science and the death of God. This involves a discussion of truth, in particular, of what Nietzsche sees as truth’s failure in modern science, which is, in the end, the failure of modern science itself. Yet how does modern science fail for Nietzsche? As we shall see, it fails precisely because it cannot disentangle itself from theism, which seems quite ironic, since science is ostensibly responsible for the very death of theism. But for Nietzsche, modernity lies in the wake of nihilism precisely because it cannot wake up from its theistic dream; it cannot untether itself from theism. Exactly why this is the case will be explored in what follows.

It should be noted that the literature on Nietzsche, particularly on his critique(s) of science and metaphysics, is quite vast. It would be impossible to deal here with the many nuanced readings of Nietzsche’s critique without losing sight of our goal, namely Heidegger’s engagement with and appropriation of Nietzsche so as to use Nietzsche’s metaphysics to speak the metaphysics of modernity/postmodernity. Furthermore, it proves quite difficult to study Nietzsche as a systematic or consistent thinker by any stretch; thus, differing and contentious interpretations of Nietzsche are to be expected. Nevertheless, I find Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche largely correct, and this will require some defense on my part. Thus, recourse to commentary on various contemporary Nietzsche readings will prove necessary. However, for the most part, I will offer a

reading of Nietzsche through the texts that Heidegger himself engages, texts that include the controversial *Will to Power*. We shall find then, in the following selections from Nietzsche, what Heidegger thought to be the metaphysics of our contemporary world, a metaphysics oscillating between scientific naturalism and postmodern subjective-relativism. My goal(s) then in what follows will be simply to show that the postmodern or subjectivist reading of Nietzsche (Heidegger's reading, in the end) is largely correct, and, furthermore, to link this reading to Heidegger's attempt both to appropriate and overcome Nietzsche.

My argument initially will be that the Nietzschean position (by Nietzsche's own admission) is the *truth* of naturalism, of all types, in that this position makes the *metaphysics* of naturalism explicit, and thus brings the logic of naturalism to its (logical) conclusion. Thus, I argue, Nietzsche's naturalism lies inchoate in any and all naturalisms. This, I believe, is the essence of Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche, namely that Nietzsche remains within the metaphysical and the Platonic system, and thus within the modern scientific project as well. I will show that to argue for any intelligibility, i.e., "being" or "truth," is to place oneself within the realm of metaphysics, and thus in the Platonic realm *ipso facto*. As we shall see, Nietzsche himself is well aware of this problem, and indeed struggles greatly to resist it by nevertheless attempting to destroy the very notions of being and truth in favor of the will to power.

## NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

"Science," or "modern science," is a term consistently employed by Nietzsche to denote the entire project of *scientia* writ large, that is, the search for knowledge of objective truths in nature. This search for truth had its origin in Greek thinking and reaches its climax in modernity ("modern science") with the emphasis upon method in Descartes and Bacon, the mathematization, and thus mechanization of nature in Galileo and Newton, and finally in Darwin's theory of evolution. Nietzsche thinks that although there are many facets and common threads underlying science and its modern instantiation, there nevertheless remains one central motive behind science qua *scio* or *scientia*, namely the *will to truth*. Thus, as we shall see, modern science for Nietzsche is a project that not only began with Plato, but fails to realize that it is still utterly Platonic, and thus theistic, for it fails to realize that it

not only values but *believes* in objective truth and intelligibility, of which it thinks it can have knowledge (*scientia*).

Thus, for Nietzsche: *modern atheism remains just as theistic as the theism it denies*. In my estimation, this amounts to Nietzsche's most overlooked thought and one of the most underappreciated ideas in the history of philosophy, as it concerns the absolute hypocrisy of modern atheism. Modern atheism (or "pale atheism" as Nietzsche calls it),<sup>2</sup> generated by modern science's "death of God," remains ultimately unable to free itself from its entrenchment in theism. Why? Precisely because it still puts faith in the primary theistic value: *truth*. For Nietzsche, insofar as modern atheism believes no longer in the truth of theism, but in the truth(s) of modern science, it remains ever more fixed in theism and its values. Thus, modern science (and its atheism) has failed to realize that in "killing God" it has, in one fell swoop, also killed itself. That is, the "death of God," caused *by* the birth of modern science, has also proved to be the death, the suicide, of modern science, for science has killed the need for truth, for being, and ultimately for rationality. In what follows, I would like to discuss the implications of this remarkable and often ignored insight of Nietzsche.

We could state Nietzsche's argument in a slightly different way: the will to truth in modern science has *destroyed itself*. How? By the revelation, by way of Darwinism, that the human being is a mere animal, that is, an irrational animal seeking not truth but *power* in the form of survival and adaptation.<sup>3</sup> "Rationality" represents the farce that the human intellect can actually know truth about the world. Reason, if the Darwinian anthropology proves correct, is merely a useful means toward life, the enhancement of life.<sup>4</sup> The human intellect then, serving our adaptive biology, has no real interest in truth, in what is actually true, but rather seeks only life, or power—power over its environment in order to ensure life, adaptability, survival, etc. Thus, the logic of Darwin shows that *the will to truth* has revealed itself *as* the *will to power*. That is, the very desire for truth is, in reality, a desire not for truth, but for power. Truth is simply the guise under which power operates. Now, if Darwinism is right, then this pursuit of power (over truth) applies self-referentially, that is, to the truth(s) of Darwinism and (and all so-called truths in modern science). Thus, for Nietzsche, the very ideal or value of truth itself must be called into question.

Now, with Darwinian evolution by natural selection, belief in God becomes ultimately incredible insofar as God is no longer needed to

explain the origin and *meaning* of the human being. Yet, for Nietzsche, we have still not realized the radical implications of Darwinism, namely that truth itself becomes obsolete and subservient to adaptability; truth becomes a fiction, a mere biological mechanism designed to increase our survival. Not “the truth,” but the *value* or *belief* in truth, is what proves useful, valuable, for survival. In other words, if *all* human behavior is adaptive, this must include the very search for truth itself, in which case, truth itself would no longer be true, but adaptive. There is then no truth, rather only power. Truth, in a sense, defangs the world and makes it easier to dominate, but truth is not actually “true.” Nietzsche writes, “Truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The value for life is ultimately decisive.”<sup>5</sup> The truth then is, in a sense, the ultimate lie.

Nietzsche’s contentious text *The Will to Power*<sup>6</sup> contains many notes, under the heading “Biology of the Drive to Knowledge,” that furthers this instrumentalist approach to truth and science (*scientia*). Indeed, for Nietzsche, “the criterion of truth resides in the enhancement of the feeling of power” (WP 534). Knowledge, or *scientia*, propelled by power, by life, seeks not the truth, but simply more life, more power, and in order for it to do so, the mind must take control of its environment: “[t]he entire apparatus of knowledge is...directed not at knowledge but at taking possession of things...” (WP 503). Nietzsche even goes so far as to liken the intellect, and its schematization of the world, to Procrustes and his bed, insofar as it stretches, cuts, and ultimately distorts reality in order to fit it into the mind’s specific projects and plans, namely those that are useful for enhancing of life (WP 499).

Yet—and Nietzsche is well aware of this—if indeed truth were merely a function of power, of adaptation, then *any* predication concerning the truth would not be “true” but merely adaptive. This includes the idea of Darwinism itself, namely that “the truth is adaptive.” In other words, Darwinism itself, like the metaphysical value of the truth, would prove to be self-referentially unintelligible. Much like the classical “Liar’s Paradox,” where the liar claims that “everything” he says “is a lie,” which would itself be a lie, and thus ultimately unintelligible and meaningless, so also does the fundamental truth of modern science prove to be unintelligible and itself a lie, insofar as it claims that humans are animals who adapt at the expense of the (necessary) fiction of truth. Thus, it could simply be *beneficial* for us to think that Darwinism (and any truths of modern science for that matter) were true.<sup>7</sup> Thus, even if reason, as

successful adaptive function, could “track reality,” we nevertheless would have no way of knowing that it could (other than, as we shall see, by assuming it does so based upon our ability to control it), for once truth becomes subsumed by utility and power, veracity cannot be discernible. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, in the end, according to Nietzsche, there remains no static reality (i.e., being) for the mind to “track.” Therefore, reason itself, as the very ground of the will to truth, is ultimately proven to be a sham, and proven such by itself, for the very will to truth itself has led to the truth of Darwinism. This truth, it seems, has turned against itself.

Nietzsche’s “logic” here is no doubt circular. Yet, it is precisely this circular logic to which modern atheism remains oblivious. Modern atheism is still, for Nietzsche, “pious.”<sup>8</sup> Why? Quite simply, modern atheism still believes in truth, and such belief is a *metaphysical* belief in the value of truth, namely that truth is not only “true” and “real,” but that truth is “good” and “better” than what is false (GM 3:24). Nietzsche notes, thus:

Unconditional honest atheism...is therefore *not* the antithesis of that ideal [theism, the ascetic ideal of religion], as it appears to be; it is rather only one of the latest phases of its evolution, one of its terminal forms and inner consequences –it is the awe-inspiring *catastrophe* of two thousand years of training in truthfulness that finally forbids itself the lie involved in belief in God. (GM 3:27)

Atheism, with its convictions of the truths of modern science, insofar as it still has *faith* in the truth, is, therefore, still a species of theism. Atheism of this kind, “pale atheism,” remains the latest phase in theism’s—or as we shall see shortly, Platonism’s—evolution.

Furthermore, we could add, modern atheists fail to see that behind faith in truth lies faith in the idea that the world is ordered, discoverable, and ultimately ordered by an *orderer*, a designer. Why else should our intellect “link up,” so to speak, with reality? On what basis do I trust in my rational faculties? Like Descartes, Nietzsche sees the problem of linking the mind with reality as requiring God as the “epistemological guarantor” to guarantee that my ideas about the world are really true. Yet once God dies, recourse to such a guarantor, or any guarantee for that matter, proves futile. Nietzsche therefore writes,

It is still a *metaphysical faith* that underlies our faith in science – and we men of knowledge of today, we godless men and anti-metaphysicians, we, too, still derive *our* flame from the fire ignited by a faith millennia old, the Christian faith, which was also Plato's, that God is truth, that truth is *divine*. But what if this belief is becoming more and more unbelievable, if nothing turns out to be divine any longer unless it be error, blindness, lies – if God himself turns out to be our *longest lie* ... Science itself henceforth *requires* justification (which is not to say that there is any such justification)...The will to truth requires a critique – let us thus define our own task –the value of truth must for once be experimentally *called into question*.... (GM 3:24)

Only when the will to truth is subjected, or perhaps subjects itself, to an immanent critique can the nihilism of theism be finally overcome. Nietzsche thus later writes, “There are many kinds of eyes...and consequently there are many kinds of ‘truths,’ and consequently there is no truth” (WP 540).

In summary, we could say that Nietzsche's naturalism, i.e., his radical Darwinism, leads eventually to his postmodernism, or metaphysical relativism.<sup>9</sup> That is, Nietzsche's commitment to a seemingly “anti-metaphysical” world leads logically to its own self-destruction in a postmodern worldview that denies the very possibility of truth itself. Therefore, every truth, including the truth of Nietzsche's own predications proves to be a lie. Nietzsche's metaphysical relativism (a relativism that remains relative to the subject's will to power, as we shall see) is the result of his suspicious hermeneutics, which shows that behind the will to truth *lies* the will to power. Thus, we enter into a strange paradox when taking Nietzsche's thoughts on truth seriously, for these thoughts are ultimately self-destructive, as they are self-referentially incoherent. If Nietzsche is right, then he cannot be right (since “being right” would be mere fiction of the will to power). Nietzsche's philosophy then deconstructs to the point of self-destruction.

This self-referential unintelligibility and self-destruction mark the heart of Nietzsche's madness. Yet, it simultaneously, according to Nietzsche himself, marks the madness of modern science as a whole! Indeed, what ultimately concerns us, for our purposes, is not a simplistic interpretation of Nietzsche as a relativist, but rather the essential insight into Nietzsche's thinking concerning modern science, namely modern science's own self-referential deconstruction at its own hands

(i.e., its own suicide). The very will to truth itself, which led to the truths of modern science, led simultaneously to its own self-destruction in uncovering the “truth” that truth is merely a servant of the will to power. Modern science, therefore, for Nietzsche, necessitates an abandonment of truth in favor of power.

But, if the “truths” of modern science are merely fictitious, how is it possible to explain modern science’s success, in particular, the success of modern technology? For Nietzsche, the fact that modern science is successful via modern technology proves not that it reveals any truth about the world, but rather that modern science has invented a successful way merely to control the world. Modern science is successful precisely *not* because it is true, but because it “works,” and it works by, as Descartes once prophesied, “mastering and possessing nature.” In other words, there need not, for Nietzsche, be any direct correlation (causation) between our ability to control the world and our ability to actually “know” it. “‘Explanation’ is what we call it, but it is ‘description’ that distinguishes us from older stages of knowledge and science. Our descriptions are better – we do not explain any more than our predecessors” (GS 112). That is, we merely describe the world so as to master it, *so that* we can master it. Explaining the truth of “what is” is of little “use” when one can merely describe it better so as to master it. “It is perhaps just dawning on five or six minds that physics too is only an interpretation and arrangement of the world...and *not* an explanation of the world.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed for Nietzsche, the fundamentals of science (and of reason as well), namely causality, substance, and measurement (mathematics) all are called into question and are hypothesized as mere fictions that enable better mastery, control, and domination of reality: “Science [is] the transformation of nature into concepts for the purpose of mastering nature....” (WP 610).

Concerning cause and effect, Nietzsche writes that such a relation “probably never occurs — in reality there stands before us a continuum of which we isolate a couple of pieces...an intellect which saw cause and effect as a continuum ... would reject the concept [itself] ...and deny all conditionality” (GS 112).<sup>11</sup> Causality is again an instrumental fiction of the intellect. Nietzsche’s critique of causality is well documented in the literature, with some scholars arguing for softer or harder versions of his critique.<sup>12</sup> Regardless, Nietzsche’s critique of causality at the very least mimics Hume’s, who disputed the idea of a necessary connection between effect and cause. Furthermore, Nietzsche’s critique of causality

is not isolated, but rather, part of a larger critique of rationality in general, which includes logic, number, substance, and reason itself.<sup>13</sup>

Concerning logic, number and categories of rationality in general, Nietzsche questions the Cartesian correlation and application of these categories to reality and seems to suggest, at times, that they do nothing more than falsify sense data (BGE 4). Nietzsche writes,

*Logic*, too, rests on assumptions that do not correspond to anything in the real world, e.g., on the assumption of the equality of things, the identity of the same thing at different points of time...So it is with *mathematics*, which would certainly not have originated if it had been known from the beginning that there is no exactly straight line in nature, no real circle, no absolute measure. (HA 11)<sup>14</sup>

Logic as the science of reason and reason's application of categories has little to do with the "real" world (although one wonders what such "reality" could mean here), for there exist no changeless identical objects, i.e., substances, to which these categories could apply.<sup>15</sup> Like mathematics, reason operates by the use of prescribed, regulative fictions, whose sole aim remains to control the world:

*Number* –the invention of the laws of numbers was made on the basis of error, dominant even from the earliest times, that there are identical things (but in fact nothing is identical with anything else)...When Kant says 'the understanding does not draw its laws from nature, it prescribes them to nature,' this is wholly true with regard to the *concept of nature* which we are obliged to attach to nature...but which is the summation of a host of errors of the understanding. –To a world which is *not* our idea the laws of number are wholly inapplicable.... (HA 19)<sup>16</sup>

Again, for Nietzsche, the "reason" for this falsification lies in our ability to control and dominate the world around us, the world that remains, as we shall see, in a perpetual state of chaos, or at least of becoming. In other words, the will to power is at the heart of the will to truth and is the primary motivating factor toward finding truth. The will to power falsifies and distorts the world of *becoming* into the world of *being*, so that we can live and thrive. Nietzsche, therefore, says of science that

Ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them: the finding is called science...[and thus in] *summa*, science is

preparing a sovereign ignorance, a feeling that there is no such thing as “knowing,” that it was a kind of arrogance to dream of it, more, that we no longer have the least notion that warrants our considering “knowledge” even a possibility –that “knowing” itself is a contradictory idea. (WP 606, 608)

It seems then the only conclusion that can be drawn from Nietzsche’s philosophy of science is that science represents the fictions of the will to truth driven by the will to power. Science’s desire for truth is motivated solely by life, by power, by the will to power. It is Nietzsche’s commitment to a naturalistic, non-metaphysical understanding of the human being that leads to such conclusions. However, as argued above, it is precisely Nietzsche’s naturalism that inevitably leads to his postmodernism, or his commitment to the perspectival relativism and the idea that “there is no truth” (WP 540).

Brian Leiter explicitly rejects this “postmodern” interpretation of Nietzsche, that argues for a radical, relativistic reading of Nietzsche’s conception of truth, which ultimately, as we have seen, proves self-referentially inconsistent, and thus collapses into mere aestheticism. Instead, Leiter views Nietzsche’s philosophy as naturalistic plainly and simply. Leiter’s Nietzsche is a philosopher who “knows certain truths that others –Christians and most philosophers, moralists –fail to comprehend.”<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche then is not a relativist, at least concerning the naturalistic truths of modern science, but rather a staunch naturalist who indeed believes in the truth of modern science. Yet, Leiter’s only argument for this reading is the fact that Nietzsche, in practice, speaks *as if* he is telling the truth. That is, Leiter correctly notes that Nietzsche privileges certain claims about the world over others, e.g., that “all evidence of truth comes only from the senses” (BGE 134), for which, Leiter thinks, it would be impossible to account if Nietzsche were simply a relativist, as claims can only be privileged if they are objectively truer than others.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, Leiter argues that even Nietzsche’s critique of causality cannot be toward causality *simpliciter*, since Nietzsche’s own hermeneutics seeks the deep and hidden causal explanations and motivations to human behavior, i.e., the will to power.<sup>19</sup>

As said above, for our purposes, what Nietzsche himself really believed is somewhat irrelevant—as it may be impossible to find that kind of precision and consistency in his writings. It is rather more important that we follow his thoughts to their ultimate philosophical implications.

However, it is precisely here where Leiter's reading fails. That is, Leiter fails to follow the implications of Nietzsche's own logic, and simply avoids or stretches passages that clearly indicate Nietzsche's relativistic views on truth, whether naturalistic truths or metaphysical. Leiter certainly wishes to keep Nietzsche consistent by avoiding the move that I have made from Nietzsche's naturalism to his postmodernism. Indeed, it has been my contention that it is precisely Nietzsche's naturalism and his naturalistic interpretation of the world—his qualified "Darwinism"—that eventually (d)evolves into postmodernism just by taking the truths of naturalism to their self-referential and self-destructive conclusions of incoherence. That Nietzsche himself recognized such a movement in his own thinking seems apparent in his hostility toward modern atheism and its "faith" in "truth." Moreover, it becomes very difficult to maintain a naturalistic reading of Nietzsche vis-à-vis the host of instrumentalist passages I have cited above, that is, passages where Nietzsche outright claims that science offers no "knowledge" of the world, but rather mere domination of it. Given Nietzsche's vehement critiques not only of science, but of the very conceptual categories that make science possible—logic, mathematics, causality, substance, and even reason itself—I find Leiter's naturalistic interpretation of Nietzsche untenable.

That Nietzsche was indeed a full-blown relativist, postmodernist, is currently not in vogue (Continentalists tend to ignore it,<sup>20</sup> Analyticians tend to deny it), and thus invites some contention. Again, rather than holding fast to "the postmodern Nietzsche," it may be simply impossible to find consistency in his writings, and perhaps purposefully so. Nevertheless, there are several passages in his writings that deserve some attention, for they point to a kind of radical perspectivism that goes beyond a mere "hierarchy" of better or worse perspectives, or interpretations. For example, in *Beyond Good and Evil* 22, Nietzsche openly mocks those who disdain philology in favor of the "hard science" of physics, and quickly reminds us that it is indeed possible for all to be the mere interpretation of the will to power. Yet, he realizes that if indeed everything is a perspective, an interpretation, then his interpretation would only be "an" interpretation, and thus self-defeating: "Granted this [Nietzsche's critique] too is only interpretation –and you will be eager enough to raise this objection? –well, so much the better" (BGE 22). In other words, Nietzsche is aware of the self-referential predicament in which he has put himself. He simply does not care. Furthermore, Nietzsche at times flatly states that there, in fact, is "no truth." In several passages from the

*Will to Power*, all composed around the same time period (1885–1886), Nietzsche writes of the vapidness of truth:

The world with which we are concerned is false, i.e., is not a fact but a fable...it is 'in flux,' as something in a state of becoming, as falsehood always changing but never getting near truth: for *–there is no 'truth'.* (WP 616, emphasis mine)

And again,

'Interpretation,' the introduction of meaning –not 'explanation' ... There are no facts, everything is in flux, incomprehensible, elusive; what is relatively most enduring is –our opinions. (WP 604)

And finally,

Reverence for truth is already the consequence of an illusion –and that one should value more than truth the force that forms, simplifies, shapes, invents [i.e. will to power]. 'Everything is false!' 'Everything is permitted!'. (WP 602)

Nietzsche, in these three passages from *Will to Power*, seems to present a strangely “consistent” view of the “inconsistency” of having a view, a *true* view at least: there is no truth, and everything is in a state of becoming, of flux. Such a self-aware, self-referentially defeating perspective fits quite nicely into our claim that because of his naturalism, Nietzsche winds up inevitably in postmodernism, the latter an eventuality of the former. Nietzsche is then not “just” a relativist in any simplistic sense. Rather Nietzsche’s relativism is the result of his anti-metaphysical commitments to naturalism. Nietzsche’s relativism flows from his naturalism. Science then, modern science (à la Darwin) at least, leads to relativism (that is, if it is taken to task concerning its implications). Of this, Nietzsche is well aware, and thus has little problem arguing that truth is an illusion of will to power and *everything* is false.

It is worth noting that David Story argues that Nietzsche presents at times elements of a “non-reductive naturalism,” i.e., a naturalism that remains committed to the belief that the natural world is the only real world, but nevertheless does not seek to *reduce* the “higher” elements of human experience (e.g., values) to the lower (e.g., physical mechanisms).

While Storey clearly concedes that Nietzsche often speaks as indeed a *reductive* naturalist, Storey argues that there nevertheless remain significant portions of Nietzsche's thinking that are nonreductive.<sup>21</sup> The argument here for Nietzsche's "non-reductionism" hangs on, I believe, an equivocation of what is meant by there being "no values" for Nietzsche. Storey contends that the dependence of valuing upon the human subject does not mean that there are *no values* (we could just as easily replace value here with intelligibility), but merely that they are not *objective*; in other words, values are *real*, for indeed we find ourselves in a world of values historically handed over to us; moreover we are the beings that create values, whether knowingly or unknowingly.<sup>22</sup> Values, thus exist and are real; they are just not *objectively* real. Now, I certainly agree that Nietzsche thinks values are "real" in the subjective and experiential sense. However, my contention is that if for Nietzsche values hold no *objective* ground, then regardless of their subjective reality, certain implications follow, namely that values can be *reduced* to merely functions and aims of the will to power. Thus Storey's defense of Nietzsche, at least for my (and Heidegger's) purposes, fails to adequately counter the hard reductionism that Nietzsche's philosophy almost demands. I see still no reason why values are not merely subjective byproducts of the will to power and the subject's value positing.

Storey does note that Nietzsche at times speaks of values as not so much relative to the human being, but rather to *life* itself, that is, to life's preservation and enhancement. Thus, something like "life" would be the objective, or at least the relative, "ground" of value. However, given Nietzsche's commitment to the relativity of truth and fact (e.g., "there are no facts, only interpretations"), Nietzsche's thought demands that one still apply his critique of truth self-referentially to even his own thinking on value and life, which would, in turn, relativize even the value of life and, as we have seen, will to power, to mere subjective whim. As we have seen, Nietzsche himself notes he too only offers an interpretation (and not the truth), and thus remarks "so much the better" (BGE 22).<sup>23</sup>

## NIETZSCHE'S METAPHYSICS

If what lies behind modern science's will to truth is will to power, how is such will to power masquerading as truth related to theism? That is, how is science's commitment to truth ultimately theistic? We have seen

that this has much to do with truth's being conceived as a "value," i.e., as a "good." But, for Nietzsche the problem runs deeper, and, therefore, Nietzsche's critique of science goes even further, namely toward the understanding of "being" operative in modern science. Implicit in what was said above, modern science (and science in general) quite simply engages in the ultimate falsification of reality by changing *becoming* into *being*. Science freezes becoming and distorts it into being, and such is the *conditio sine qua non* for not only science, but also "reason," as we have come to understand it. Yet, such a distortion of becoming is much older than science. This distortion is as old as metaphysics; in fact, this distortion is the essence of metaphysics, which is best expressed, for Nietzsche, in the philosophy of Platonism. And, of course, Platonism is at the root of theism, of Christianity, which is nothing more than "Platonism for the masses" (BGE, preface).

Platonism is metaphysics. Meta-physics, as the name suggests, is *meta ta phusika*, that which "goes beyond" the physical to the metaphysical, beyond beings to their "being." Platonism, and thus all subsequent metaphysics, simply splits the world in two (HA 5). Platonism divides the world into the sensible world of appearances, of change and becoming, on the one hand, and into the invisible, supersensible world of truth and being, of what does not change, on the other; this latter "true" world constitutes what things truly "are," despite their chaotic oscillating appearance as becoming. This division of worlds marks the primary falsification, for Nietzsche, at the root of Platonism and of all metaphysics proper that follow, including theism and science. Theism operates with a divided world of heaven and earth, the eternal and the temporal, the infinite and the finite. So too does science operate concerning the world of appearances and the world of "truth" that the human cognitive apparatus discovers or uncovers. At the heart of science is the same element that is at the heart of theism, namely metaphysics, Platonism, a division of the world into two. Nietzsche's "hermeneutics of suspicion" thus seeks to understand precisely why and to what end Platonism originally divided the world. It is here that Nietzsche uncovers what he thinks marks the birth of "the ascetic ideal."

Broadly speaking, Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, like the metaphysics it criticizes, splits the morality of human beings into two kinds: masters and slaves. The masters are those powerful and ordinary creators of value who affirm life, say "yes" to life, while the slaves are those weak and reactive "deniers" of life, who create values out of

a defensive, reactionary weakness. Both masters and slaves are driven by will to power, by a will to life, to live, and to thrive. The difference between them lies in the way in which they employ will to power: actively or reactively. Quite simply, masters affirm life; slaves deny it. It is this “denial of life” that constitutes the ultimate origin of not only Christian morality, but of metaphysics (Platonism) itself, and, therefore, of all the various metaphysical configurations that follow, including science. And this “denial of life” is *nihilism* itself in the form of what Nietzsche calls the “ascetic ideal.”

Characteristic of the ascetic ideal’s denial of life is *ressentiment* (resentment). The weak, or those in a threatened position of less power, resent the masters, and, therefore, seek revenge against those more powerful than they. Yet, resentment runs deeper than morality and resents all life itself; this resentment, or *will to revenge*, toward life as a whole is the hallmark of the ascetic ideal. As a reactive form of will to power, resentment resents life itself, reality itself, and as such gives birth to metaphysics proper, to the diving of the world in two. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche provides a somewhat deeper insight into the meaning of revenge and resentment. “This, yes, this alone is revenge itself: the will’s repugnance against time and its ‘it was.’”<sup>24</sup> Revenge hates time. In particular, revenge hates, revolts against, time’s passing, time’s “it was.” In short, the human being takes revenge on becoming, for it cannot stand becoming’s lack of permanency, i.e., that things change. Moreover, things change in such a way that we resent the way in which they did change and how such changes cannot be undone, for they lie in the past, in the “it was,” and thus things now “are not.” Metaphysical resentment or revenge goes, therefore, one could say, a step deeper than merely moral revenge that seeks to punish those in power. Metaphysical revenge revolts against reality itself, insofar as reality “is” not permanent, but is becoming, that is, insofar as it lacks the constitution of “being,” of “isness,” of staticness. Metaphysics then, driven by revenge, hates reality qua becoming and creates, out of this revenge, the other “true” world. Thus “the *ressentiment* of metaphysicians against actuality is here creative,” in that it creates the other world (WP 579). Revenge splits the world in two.

Indeed, according to Aristotle, metaphysics has as its object of study “being,” or “being qua being.” Such an object is fitting for Nietzsche, since it is metaphysics that needs and necessitates that reality be fixed and permanent vis-à-vis change and movement. Furthermore, reality must

not only “be” but be self-same and identical, for such identity marks the essence of substance, and the essence of “essence” too for that matter, as well as the conditional relations between substances. In short, the concept of “being” enables substance and measurement, as well as causality, as the very faculties and categories of reason. It is being as a static, fixed reality that enables anything like “truth,” for truth is nothing more than “what is,” what is “actual” or real; and truth, as the “correctness” of the correspondence of an idea to reality, implies that reality is standing still, so to speak, for such correspondence to be possible. Without being, then, “reason” itself collapses.

There is a sense in which Nietzsche’s critique here is twofold, applying at once to Platonism and metaphysics, and even more broadly to reason and cognition in general. Nietzsche notes that whether the former or the latter, both as forms of “knowing” come out of the will to power as conditions for “life” and “survival.” For this reason, Nietzsche at times speaks more positively about such conditions for life. For example, Nietzsche writes,

The falseness of a judgment is to us not necessarily an objection to a judgment...the question is to what extent it is life-advancing, life-preserving, species-preserving...and our fundamental tendency is to assert that the falsest judgments ...are the most indispensable to us, that without granting as true the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of unconditional and self-identical, without continual falsification of the world by means of numbers, mankind could not live –that to renounce false judgments would be to renounce life, would be to deny life. To recognize untruth as a condition for life.... (BGE 4)<sup>25</sup>

Here Nietzsche seems to conflate the “invented world” of metaphysics with the rational faculties themselves, arguing that regardless of their falsifications they, nevertheless, were employed as survival mechanisms of the will to life and power. That is, out of practical needs, even the practical needs of the weak, reason and logic were formed so as to order a fundamentally disordered world:

Not ‘to know’ but to schematize –to impose upon chaos as much regularity and form as our practical needs require. In formation of reason, logic, the categories, it was *need* that was authoritative: the need, not to ‘know,’ but to subsume, to schematize, for the purpose of intelligibility and calculation ... No pre-existing “idea” was here at work, but the utilitarian fact

that only when we see things coarsely and made equal do they become calculable and usable to us... The categories are “truths” only in the sense that they are conditions of life for us.... (WP 515)

The world itself is ultimately then not *intelligible*, but unintelligible; intelligibility comes from the human being’s need to schematize so as to secure. Intelligibility is a *useful* fiction. Earlier, I spoke of Nietzsche as primarily a Darwinian, yet what Nietzsche strikes against in Darwin is precisely Darwin’s failure to see that the weak overpower the “fit” by the employment of cleverness (reason, religion, logic, science, etc.). In *Twilight of the Idols*, in a section entitled *Anti-Darwin*, Nietzsche chides Darwin for his failure to recognize such cleverness, namely that

Species do *not* grow more perfect: the weak dominate the strong again and again – the reason being they are the great majority, and they are also *cleverer*... Darwin forgot the mind...*the weak possess more mind*...To acquire mind one must need mind...<sup>26</sup>

Thus, reason and its metaphysics are the result of the weak cleverly overpowering not only those more powerful than they, but also overpowering reality (qua becoming) itself!

Now it is precisely this revenge against life and its creation of being and truth, that also gives rise to “God,” for God is nothing more than a mythical stand-in for the supersensible, true world of being. Indeed, the God of metaphysics is precisely being itself as the *ens causa sui* or the *ens realissimum*, that is, the self-caused being or the most real being. God is moreover that which metes out “justice” (another form of revenge) for the oppressed, and grants a life beyond temporality in eternity. Therefore, being, truth, and God are one and the same for Nietzsche, not only conceptually, but also in origin, insofar as they all arise out of the spirit of revenge, revenge against time, becoming, and reality itself. Such marks the essence of the ascetic ideal. The spirit of revenge, for Nietzsche, has until now been the human being’s “best thought” (*bestes Nachdenken*), for it is, in a sense, the origin of “thought” itself (Z 2:20).

It is the revolt against becoming and its creation of being then that makes God and the truth ultimately the same value, at least in origin, and it is precisely for this reason that the modern atheist, with his faith in the truth of science, remains a theist, a Christian Platonist even. Modern

atheism is, therefore, just as theistic as the theism it denies. Thus we arrive at Nietzsche's "fundamental metaphysical position."

Strangely, this nihilistic ascetic ideal, itself nihilism qua the denial of life, is the very cause of the current, cultural nihilism that results from the death of God. Nietzsche, in announcing the death of God, announces the current climate of nihilism. The highest values—God, truth, morality, etc.—have collapsed. "What does nihilism mean? *That the highest values devalue themselves*" (WP 1). Precisely, as we saw earlier, the will to truth destroys itself in and through its own search for truth. Nietzsche, as an untimely man, however, is the only one who seems to be aware of this nihilism, as the champions of modern science seem most oblivious to it. The will to truth has effectively "unchained the earth from the sun" without even realizing it (GS 125).

As this nihilism sets in, recourse to the truth will become more and more impossible. God will become more and more unbelievable. This is Nietzsche's diagnosis. What then is his cure? It is here, concerning Nietzsche's "cure" for nihilism, that we can begin to discuss explicitly Heidegger's reading. In a lecture course entitled *Was Heisst Denken?* ("What is Called Thinking?" 1951–1952), Heidegger attempts to distill Nietzsche's entire thinking into one thought: *the overcoming of revenge*. Heidegger cites a passage from *Zarathustra*,

*For that man be released from revenge: this is for me the bridge to the highest hope, and a rainbow after long storms. (Z 2:7)*

This thought, for Heidegger, marks the summation of Nietzsche's entire philosophy and, therefore, his entire metaphysical position concerning the being of beings. This thought, that of overcoming or being released from revenge, is for Heidegger Nietzsche's "true one and only thought, which he thought even if he did not announce on every occasion or always in the same way."<sup>27</sup> If revenge, *ressentiment*, against time and becoming, is the very source of metaphysics, then to overcome such revenge would be at the same time to overcome metaphysics. Nietzsche's fundamental *metaphysical* position is, therefore, at the same time an attempt to overcome *metaphysics*, to overcome Platonism. Such overcoming of metaphysics represents then an all out assault on "being" insofar as "being" is that which is posited, vis-à-vis becoming, in and through the spirit of revenge. We place being over and against becoming due to the revulsion we feel toward becoming qua time and its transitory

nature, namely the “it was.” Therefore, for Nietzsche, to overcome revenge, being must be replaced (and overcome) with becoming. This replacement is *ipso facto* the overcoming of revenge, for it is revenge that enables the *meta* in metaphysics.<sup>28</sup> That is to say, revenge motivates the transcendence from the physical, sensible world of becoming to the metaphysical, supersensible world of being. So then, to overcome revenge is to overcome being, and vice versa.

Yet how is such an overcoming possible? Where even to begin? According to Heidegger’s Nietzsche, the key to this overcoming resides in Nietzsche’s doctrine of the Eternal Return of the Same. This doctrine for Heidegger is no mere psychological doctrine, but an absolute doctrine concerning the being of beings, and, therefore, the content of Nietzsche’s fundamental metaphysical position. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Eternal Return contains, for Heidegger, a psychological component, albeit one that is contingent upon the deeper, metaphysical ground. Therefore, in order to fully understand Heidegger’s conception of this doctrine in Nietzsche, we must first explore its psychological dimension, so as to necessitate a fuller exploration of its deeper, metaphysical ground.

If revenge is the will’s “revulsion” or “repugnance” against time and time’s “it was,” then deliverance from revenge means a transition from the will’s ill will and denial of time to an affirmation of it. It means “unchaining” the will from the “it was.” This occurs in and through the “it was” not only continuously passing by (in the past), but also by continually coming again (in the future), i.e., by the willing affirmation of the “it was” continuously in that one wants and desires such “it was” to occur again and again, to eternally occur and reoccur. The past no longer freezes in the “it was,” and thus the will can be liberated from its being chained to it. “The will becomes free from what is revolting in the ‘it was’ when it wills the constant recurrence of every ‘it was’”<sup>29</sup> (WCT 105). In willing the eternal recurrence of the “it was,” of the same, the will then can finally will in reverse. As such, the will is free to be itself, to will what it essentially *is*, namely, the will itself. Thus, for Heidegger, in the Eternal Return of the Same the will wills itself as will, as the being of beings, which is itself becoming. This “metaphysics” of the will and of the Eternal Return requires some unpacking. That is, it requires a discussion of Heidegger’s understanding of Nietzsche’s fundamental metaphysical position concerning being.

## HEIDEGGER'S NIETZSCHE AND BEING

Earlier we noted the peculiarity of Heidegger's reading(s) of Nietzsche, namely that for Heidegger Nietzsche is fundamentally a thinker of being, and as such, maintains a fundamental metaphysical position concerning the being of beings. Nietzsche, for Heidegger, is a metaphysician *par excellence*. In order then to fully understand Nietzsche, we must think through his metaphysics. What then is Nietzsche's metaphysics? We saw that according to Heidegger Nietzsche has one basic thought, overcoming revenge, and yet this one thought is still not in itself his fundamental metaphysical position. However, behind this one thought and within this one thought is contained his deeper thinking of being: the will to power and the Eternal Return. These are for Heidegger Nietzsche's fundamental thoughts on being, and they are the *same* thought, albeit expressed in slightly different ways. It is the task of Heidegger, one could argue (and I, in fact, will), to sublimate and reconcile, in a Hegelian manner, these two concepts into one. Indeed, if the four volumes of Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures contain any underlying, systemic theme, it is precisely this reconciliation between will to power and Eternal Return. Moreover, not only does Heidegger seek to unite will to power and Eternal Return in Nietzsche's metaphysics, but he seeks to do so such that both, as one, name becoming over against being. Such a task is not easy, even for Heidegger. Nevertheless, we will attempt to follow Heidegger's thought along the way toward this sublation into becoming.

For Heidegger, Nietzsche's metaphysics, like all metaphysics, employs two basic categories concerning the being of beings, namely essence (*essentia*) and existence (*existentia*), or whatness and thatness. Will to power says *what* essentially beings *are*, as to their essence.<sup>30</sup> Eternal Return says *how* beings are (as a whole, thus corresponding to *thatness*), in their existence. That is, "what is" is essentially will to power, as the fundamental ground or substrate of reality. Yet beings are in such a way *that* they exist in the cycle of eternal return. How is this possible? Moreover, what does it mean to say that "what is" is will to power, since Nietzsche's whole philosophy, according to Heidegger and Nietzsche himself, is an assault on "what is," on being itself? How can this "be"? These questions necessitate first a further inquiry into what is thought in the idea of the "will to power," and secondly how such thinking relates to the becoming of the Eternal Return.

What is the will to power? Why not simply power, rather than *will* to power? What is power? What is power's end? It is nothing more than power. Power "wants" more power. Power "wants" control, and thus "wants" and wills its own will, for control is nothing other than dominance of the will. Power is the exercise of the will over something, and such exercising is domination, control. Thus, power is will, that is, to want power is to want to exercise your will, to will over. Power is, therefore, *will to power*, will is, therefore, *will to power*. Power and will are inextricably linked such that they are the same, namely, will to power. How does will to power do this? How does the will to power *will* toward power? Essential for Heidegger's reading is a quote from Nietzsche's *Will to Power*:

The standpoint of 'value' is the standpoint of conditions of preservation and enhancement for complex forms of relative life-duration within the flux of becoming. (WP 715)

We have seen earlier that will to power operates fundamentally by positing and stabilizing reality insofar as this promotes life. Will to power schematizes reality so as to live and thrive. In other words, will to power posits values. Yet these values are posited only so as to be overcome. They are challenges, resistances, to be overcome for the preservation and enhancement of life. The feeling of overcoming these values qua resistances is the feeling of life, of more power. So will to power wants more power and challenges itself toward ever more power by positing values as resistances in order to overcome them. Will to power then stabilizes so as to destroy and increase its power. There is no *telos* to will to power's drive toward enhancement; the only *telos* is simply more power. Heidegger likely also has in mind Nietzsche's *Anti-Christ*:

What is good? –All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man. What is bad? –All that proceeds from weakness. What is happiness? –the feeling that power *increases* – that a resistance is overcome.<sup>31</sup>

Values are posited so as to be overcome; they are posited *in order to* be overcome. This itself is the will to power, namely the positing of values as resistances to be overcome for the preserving and enhancing of life. They are posited for life's preserving and then overcome for life's enhancing.

This is the activity of will to power itself. Will to power is the movement through ossification and petrification of reality to its destruction and deconstruction so as to feel power. This activity is named by Nietzsche: “To stamp becoming with the character of being –that is the supreme will to power” (WP 617).

Heidegger asks, vis-à-vis the aforementioned quotation, why is such the *supreme* will to power? Precisely because the meaning of will to power is to bring becoming to presence, and to bring becoming to presence is the creation of value. It is the creation of art itself, namely to stabilize becoming as presence, to bring becoming to a standstill in presence. Yet for Heidegger, the stamping of becoming as being goes beyond mere value creation and destruction as the preserving and enhancing of life, but rather pertains to the very essence of Nietzsche’s philosophy, namely the overcoming of metaphysics, or in this case, the inversion of metaphysics. That is, when “becoming” is stamped as “being,” Platonism itself is fundamentally overturned by an inversion from the ground up. Being now *becomes* becoming. “What is” is what becomes; being is itself becoming. There is no “being,” but rather paradoxically only “becoming” *is*. To say then that becoming “is” is to stamp becoming as a whole with being, and not merely aspects or “perspectives” of becoming as in the value creation of preservation and enhancement. No, the ultimate “value” to be created was created by Nietzsche in the very stamping of becoming itself, writ large, as being. Being is becoming; becoming is being. The true world becomes the apparent world, and vice versa. In other words, the metaphysical world of Platonism collapses in this very stamping of becoming with being, for such stamping proves to be the very flipping of Platonism upon its head. This inversion of Platonism is for Heidegger the very essence of Nietzsche’s philosophy.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this inversion of Platonism remains precisely the reason why, for Heidegger, Nietzsche cannot escape the very essence of Platonism.

Yet, for Heidegger, something more occurs when becoming as a whole is stamped as being: the fundamental character of will to power is revealed. It is revealed in this very activity. That is, in the naming of being as becoming the supreme activity of will to power occurs, and at the same time, will to power itself is revealed to be what it *truly is*: becoming itself. The point here then is twofold. Will to power is becoming, but it is revealed as such in the very naming of being *as* becoming. Will to power is becoming itself; becoming is will to power. Moreover,

the being of beings is revealed—as the will to power, as becoming. Becoming and will to power then share an identity, for they name being itself. The essence of being, of “what is,” is becoming; what is becomes, and precisely because it becomes, it is will to power.

Yet how exactly is will to power becoming itself? How is this identity constituted? Furthermore, how is the naming of this identity the supreme activity of the will to power? Will to power’s identification with becoming occurs for Heidegger by way of a quasi-Hegelian dialectical movement whereby will to power, upon reflection upon its essence, passes over into becoming, conceptually and actually. That is, when one thinks will to power, as the essence of beings, in its own essence, one inevitably thinks becoming itself in its very essence.

Will to power’s essence is the wanting of more and more power, that is, “power is only power only if and as long as it is enhancement of power...”<sup>33</sup> The essence of will to power is power that seeks to overpower the previous stages of posited values for the enhancing of life. Will to power is the overpowering of power, yet without a goal. It is rather the continual ossification and destruction of various stages posited by the will to power. Thus, the will to power is advancement through sundry stages of power, toward no goal, and is, therefore, *ipso facto* the very definition of becoming. Heidegger writes,

For Nietzsche, the pallid term *Becoming* is replete with a content that proves to be the essence of will to power. Will to power is the overpowering of power. *Becoming* does not mean the indefinite flux of an amorphous alternation of fortuitously occurring states. But neither does *Becoming* mean “development” toward a goal. Becoming is the power advancement through sundry stages of power. In Nietzsche’s language, *Becoming* means animation—holding sway on its own terms—of will to power as the fundamental trait of beings. Hence all Being is “Becoming.”<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, being is becoming, insofar as being is will to power, and will to power is the process of becoming as the “advancement” toward more and more power, albeit devoid of any *telos*. Becoming is change, as opposed to being as permanence, presence; becoming is “organized” change and not mere chaos, but organized in such a way as to be without a goal. One is tasked with imagining Aristotelian change, as the reduction from potency to act, in a being’s entelechy, as it becomes itself guided and caused by its *telos* as its teleological cause. Becoming is

precisely this change without the guidance of a teleological cause, but rather merely the advancement of power as the sole causal motivation. Thus, becoming is not mere chaotic randomness, but has a kind of non-teleological organization to it, namely the advancement of power itself toward no goal other than more power.<sup>35</sup> Becoming is then the process of overpowering power, and as such, is the will to power itself. Becoming is the essence of will to power, and will to power is the essence of becoming, for both name the process of the overpowering of power, of power's advancement toward no goal other than more power. Therefore, in a dialectical manner, to think will to power in its essence necessarily leads to thinking becoming. They are the same thought, for they name the same reality.

Becoming then is the continual process, not of randomness, but of stabilization and destabilization, of petrification and destruction. Becoming is will to power stamping becoming with the character of being as it continually seeks to enhance itself. Being then is a mere "vapor" grounded in the temporary ossification of becoming wrought by the will to power. Being has no ontological status of its own, but rather takes its "life" from the will to power's own becoming. Nietzsche's stripping of being of any ontological status marks again, for Heidegger, Nietzsche's overturning of Platonism, for being has now been made becoming; "what is" is "what becomes," i.e., will to power. As Nietzsche himself writes, "[t]hat *everything recurs* is the closest *approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being*" (WP 617). Time (becoming) is a flat circle.<sup>36</sup>

However, the will to power as becoming names only one side of Nietzsche's fundamental metaphysical position, namely the *essentia* of being. The *existentia* or the *how* of beings as a whole, for Heidegger's Nietzsche, is the Eternal Return of the Same. Thus, in the will to power's passing over into becoming, we find that it has really disclosed itself as the Eternal Return; thus we could say, in Hegelian terms, the Eternal Return appears to be the "truth" of will to power. In a lecture entitled "The Five Major Rubrics of Nietzsche's Thought," Heidegger presents this dialectical thought quite succinctly:

Every being, insofar as it *is*, and is *as* it is, is 'will to power'... But power is power only as enhancement of power. To that extent that it is truly power, alone determining all beings, power does not recognize the worth or value of anything outside of itself. [Will to power] ...tolerates no end outside

of beings as a whole. Now, because all being as will to power –that is, as incessant self-overpowering –must be a *continual “becoming,”* and because such “becoming” cannot move “toward an end” *outside* its own “farther and farther,” but is ceaselessly caught up in the cyclical increase of power to which it reverts, then being as a whole too, as this power-conforming becoming, must itself always recur again and bring back the same.<sup>37</sup>

Heidegger sublates the apparent contradiction in Nietzsche’s metaphysics between the will to power and the eternal return as the “essence” of the being of beings in and through the mediation of becoming, thereby turning Platonic metaphysics upon its head. That is, in and through Nietzsche’s inversion of Platonism where the true world of being becomes the apparent world of becoming and vice versa, becoming itself is named as “what is,” is stamped as a whole with the character of being. To say that “what is” is “what becomes” is to say, at the same time, that becoming “is.” In doing so, the supreme activity of the will to power is reached in the very naming of becoming as being! This process of stamping is then to name becoming as “what is,” and name it as that which recurs over and over again. Therefore, the supreme activity of the will to power is the activity of the discovery of the Eternal Return, for it is the Eternal Return that names the ultimate activity of stamping becoming with the character of being. What is the doctrine of Eternal Return then? To stamp becoming with the character of being—this is the supreme will to power, will to power itself. Will to power *is* becoming’s eternal recurrence as the *same*.

There are, therefore, two points Heidegger has made here, one explicit, the other implicit. First, to stamp becoming with being makes becoming “be” permanent, and such permanentizing of becoming is the eternal return as the supreme act of will to power. Second, implicitly Heidegger attempts to mediate the psychological and metaphysical meanings of Eternal Return by arguing that only in the Eternal Return can the psychological element of revenge be quelled; that is, the will’s ill will toward time is removed by stamping becoming with being; the permanentizing of becoming destroys any revenge against reality (becoming, time) by making all becoming “be.” Therefore, in understanding Eternal Return metaphysically, Heidegger simultaneously grounds the psychological element of it by allowing the metaphysical doctrine to be *that which* is responsible for quelling revenge. In other words, revenge can only be quelled by an understanding of being *as* becoming, as

eternally recurring. This brings us to the place where an answer can finally be given as to *why* the stamping of becoming with being marks the “supreme will to power.”

The *how* of beings as a whole, in their *existentia*, then *is* as eternally recurring. Beings *are* as the eternal reoccurring of themselves. The stamping of becoming with being in the Eternal Return is the supreme will to power. Yet such “stamping” implies a “stamper,” i.e., a subject, a value-poser, who from a certain perspective evaluates being or “what is” in such a way as to name it becoming, and paradoxically, in naming being becoming, the subject stamps becoming with “being.” There exists here a strange reflexivity, which can only be mediated by way of reference to the subject as the one who posits values in and through the will to power and *as* will to power. The subject then, and Nietzsche’s subjectivism, comes to the fore as the ground for all value positing in the will to power, and, therefore, as the ground of the very metaphysics of the will to power as Eternal Return. In other words, Nietzsche’s perspectivism is revealed as subjectivism. It must be the *subject*, in the end, who evaluates—value posits—being *as* becoming, and thus becoming *as* being in the Eternal Return. As such, Nietzsche’s metaphysics is dependent then upon this subject, for it is the subject who posits values. Nietzsche operates under a “metaphysics of the subject.” For this reason, for Heidegger, Nietzsche’s overcoming of metaphysics is as metaphysical as the metaphysics it attempts to overcome.<sup>38</sup>

Nietzsche still remains within metaphysics despite his attempts to overcome it. Just when one had thought Nietzsche was attempting an objective, metaphysical project, one that would be “true” vis-à-vis all other falsities, he notes that the *stamping* by the subject of becoming with being is the supreme will to power, that is, the supreme rush of life, the supreme feeling that a resistance has been overcome. Recall, that in *The Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche named the “good” as that which increases power, and happiness as that feeling that occurs when a resistance is overcome. Power overcoming power is then the feeling one gets in the supreme act of will to power, namely willing the Eternal Return as the stamping of becoming with being. The Eternal Return then marks the supreme act of the metaphysical subject; it is the supreme *subjective* act, which thereby grants the ultimate feeling of life, of will to power. All depends upon the subject and its positing of being as value, and it is precisely Nietzsche’s conceiving of being (and of truth) as values that Heidegger resists.

Thus, Nietzsche's overturning of metaphysics remains just as metaphysical as the metaphysics it attempted to overturn, precisely because the distinction between the split world maintains itself in the subject vis-à-vis the world, and *despite* Nietzsche's attempt to fuse becoming with being. What determines the world is still a metaphysical, supersensuous ground: the subject acting in and through the will to power. Heidegger writes,

Despite all his overturnings and revaluings of metaphysics, Nietzsche remains in the unbroken line of the metaphysical tradition when he calls that which is established and made fast in the will to power for its own preservation purely and simply being, or what is in being, or truth. Accordingly, truth is a condition posited in the essence of the will to power, namely, the condition of the preservation of power. Truth is, as this condition, a value. But because the will can will only from out of its disposal over something steadily constant, truth is a necessary value precisely from out of the essence of the will to power, for that will... Truth is now... that which –making stably constant –makes secure the constant reserve, belonging to the sphere from out of which the will to power wills itself.<sup>39</sup>

In essence, Nietzsche is the very product of the underlying metaphysics of modernity, namely modern science and technology, and not the creator of it. Nietzsche's philosophy is the *effect* and not the cause of the metaphysics of the subject. Nietzsche is nothing more than a Cartesian, albeit an atheistic Cartesian for whom God as the link between the mind and world is removed. Thus knowledge, and intelligibility as such, without God to "guarantee" them, become nothing more than movements of the will to power, that is, of domination and mastery. Nietzscheanism is then atheistic Cartesianism. Atheistic Cartesianism is the radicalization of Descartes's original goal that sought to "master and possess" nature. In Nietzsche, the gloves are off, and knowledge in the Cartesian sense is shown to be what it always and truly was, namely will to power. Knowledge truly is now nothing but power.

The idea that "knowledge is power" is quite simply, for Heidegger, the underlying metaphysics of scientific modernity, which is both atheistic and technological. Nietzsche devolves into a relativism that enables the will to power in scientific and technological modernity as the only "meaning" of being. Heidegger attempts to think through Nietzsche's fundamental metaphysical position precisely because it is the

fundamental metaphysics of our time. That is, Heidegger thinks through Nietzsche's conception of being, in its essence (will to power) and existence (Eternal Return), and then inquires into the conditions for the possibility of such a conception of being. Heidegger as always is doing *meta*-metaphysics, that is, the condition for the possibility of a certain kind of metaphysics, a certain kind of conceiving of being. Heidegger's question then is simply: what is the historical reason for the upsurge of this metaphysics, this understanding of the being of beings and beings as a whole? In Nietzsche's case, it is the radicalization of the subjectivism of Descartes, coupled with (necessarily so) the birth of modern science's "subjectivism," which is nothing more than the death of God, and consequently the death of truth itself. Therefore, Nietzsche's metaphysics is the true mouthpiece for what is happening in the West concerning modern science and technology. Indeed, Nietzsche's metaphysics *is* the underlying metaphysics of science and technology.

To put the matter in a slightly different way: Nietzsche's subjectivism is really a form of relativized and unhinged Kantianism, insofar as the subject imposes a schema upon the world in order to "know" (i.e., master) the world. But, for Heidegger, such Kantianism is rooted ultimately in the metaphysics of a radicalized Cartesianism, which thinks the human being as a subject who thinks, i.e., as an "I" who represents. In Descartes, the turn toward the subject occurs when the subject displaces the metaphysical, supersensuous world of truth and being; the metaphysical world is internalized in the subject who represents. The subject becomes the author of truth, of course not in Cartesianism proper, but in a Cartesianism after the death of God.

Heidegger's logic concerning Nietzsche's metaphysical tie to Descartes at first may seem like a stretch. However, Heidegger is merely noting that Descartes' own thinking flirted dangerously close with subjective relativism, and avoided it only on the basis of recourse to God. Thus, a Cartesianism without God necessities Nietzscheanism, as truth becomes not objectively true, but rather a mere value posited by the subject; being becomes a mere ossification of the subject's value positing. Truth and being become a function of the will. Knowledge becomes not knowledge, but power, for I know not what I control (e.g., if my scientific experiments are true) but merely that I can control it. There remains no God to guarantee that my cognitions are anything more than mere mastery and control of the world.

The question as to how the subject relates truly to the world, and thus knows the world is not a question that seems particularly urgent for the modern scientist. Rather, he or she only cares about “what works.” Truth then is implicitly thought as tantamount to what works, what can be controlled or predicted. Modern science works according to the hypothetical-deductive model, which tests and experiments based upon a hypothesis, a model. Whether or not I have a false or true model is irrelevant so long as the model makes accurate predictions. That is, as long as the predictions in the model match up to the data from the experiment, the model is “true.” The question of truth is assumed, for the model works, that is, predicts, or we could say, masters, controls. This, for Heidegger, is the essence of the metaphysics of will to power’s eclipse of truth at work in modern science. Truth, and thus being, are forgotten, in that they are ultimately irrelevant.

Moreover, because of this eclipse and forgetting of being and truth, modern science is the mere slave of modern technology and its essence of imposition upon the world in attempts to control the world, to stock-pile beings into standing-reserves (*Bestände*). This marks the nihilism of modernity for Heidegger, which Nietzsche’s metaphysics announced. Nietzsche remains then the voice for modernity’s metaphysics, that is, the understanding of “being” and “beings” underlying modern science and technology, namely the will to power.

Nietzsche, therefore, remained within the same logic of Platonism, despite his efforts to escape it, and as such remained within the very logic of nihilism as well. Heidegger, therefore, writes,

Nietzsche’s metaphysics is not an overcoming of nihilism. It is the ultimate entanglement in nihilism. Through value thinking in terms of will to power, it of course continues to acknowledge beings as such. But, by tying itself to an interpretation of being as value, it simultaneously binds itself to the impossibility of even casting an inquiring glance at being as being. By means of the entanglement of nihilism in itself, nihilism first becomes thoroughly complete in what it is. Such utterly completed, perfect nihilism is the fulfillment of nihilism proper [*eigentlichen Nihilismus*].<sup>40</sup>

Heidegger’s implication here is that Nietzsche’s attempt to overcome nihilism amounted to nothing more than simply the dissolution of the meaning and intelligibility of the objective world in favor of a subject who imposes, via will to power, such meaning and intelligibility upon

a meaningless world. For Heidegger, this is tantamount to an all out assault on being and truth, for Nietzsche's attempt to salvage meaning and intelligibility, i.e., truth itself, by value positing, ultimately failed and inevitably destroyed any possibility of objective meaning or truth. Meaninglessness is the very presupposition now of Nietzsche.

Meaninglessness, for Heidegger, is the flipside of the will to power's value positing, i.e., the will to power's implicit subjectivism. If will to power must posit value in order for there to be meaning, then presumably meaninglessness is the a priori state of things. Once total meaninglessness reigns in apposition of subjectivity, will to power, in the guise of global technology, seeks to dominate the earth. If Nietzsche's philosophy is indeed the metaphysics of modernity, then relativism is what is running modern science, but more a pernicious relativism than mere philosophic relativism that one might "think up" while in one's armchair; no, this kind of relativism, a relativism of value, knows no other "value" than power, and thus devolves into a metaphysics of power, and thus a mastery and domination over the world. In other words, once being and truth are abolished in favor of the value-positing subject, power remains all that is left as a fundamental "ground" through which to understand the world. This ground nevertheless remains within the purview and logic of metaphysics, even the utmost entanglement in the nihilism of metaphysics, for its own metaphysics remains concealed to itself. That is, modern metaphysics mistakenly thinks itself as "free" from any metaphysical or Platonic hangover from a bygone theistic era. As Nietzsche pointed out to science that it remains theistic, so too does Heidegger point out to Nietzsche that he remains metaphysical, for he fails to see that his metaphysics of the will to power as the ground and fundamental understanding of the being of beings is just as metaphysical as the metaphysics it sought to destroy. Nietzsche's metaphysics of the subject represents the final exhaustion of metaphysical possibilities, and thus the complete inversion of Platonism, to the point of utmost saturation. Nietzsche is, therefore, for Heidegger the *last* metaphysician.

### ART AND ITS FAILED COUNTERMOVEMENT TO NIHILISM

For Heidegger, Nietzsche's failure to wrest free of metaphysics and Platonism extends to areas beyond the philosophical and scientific, in particular, into the realm of art. Art, for Nietzsche, is the countermovement to nihilism. Art alone is where salvation could be found, for art

represents the very activity of will to power in its creative and life altering force. That is, art *is* the very activity of will to power's creation qua the stamping of becoming with being. It is in and through art and artistic formation that will to power names and shapes becoming and gives meaning to an otherwise meaningless canvas. Indeed, as Nietzsche writes, "we have art so as not to perish from the truth" (WP 822), for art is "worth more than the truth" (WP 853). The reason art proves salvific for Nietzsche concerns then not only its relation to will to power but its relation precisely to the degraded form of will to power, namely "the truth."

Will to power is to be thought as the creative process of stamping becoming with the character of being, of painting meaning upon the meaningless canvas of becoming. Art is this very process of the originary creation and formation of the activity of will to power. Truth, however, represents a secondary, degraded form of will to power in that truth represents reality as *already* formed, shaped, and stamped; that is, truth is becoming petrified and ossified into something to which we take a secondary relation, namely "correctness." Naming something as "true," as we saw earlier, requires that an idea adequately corresponds to "reality." For Nietzsche, this means that we do not form or create reality but merely abstract and reflect upon a reality already formed; this abstraction and reflection is always vis-à-vis the true. But if this is the nature of the true, then art, as a creative forming, is always then a *lie*. Art is a lie, insofar as the truth is what remains ossified, whereas art pertains to what becomes. Art as lying then represents a countermovement to "truth," a countermovement to the denial of life present in metaphysics, insofar as metaphysics in and through the ascetic ideal "denies life." Furthermore, art, as divorced from the truth, concerns itself not with the supersensuous world of truth, but rather with the sensuous world of mere appearance. In other words, art as such is concerned not with being, but becoming, and as such represents the liberation from metaphysical constraints, particularly constraints of the truth.

Art is a lie, but truth is also a lie, for there is no "truth." However, truth is a twofold lie in that it is forgets that it is a lie—a lie about becoming as being—and, therefore, mistakes itself as true. Art, on the other hand, remains conscious of its deception, i.e., its creation of becoming as being. While art remains conscious of its petrification of becoming, truth mistakes this petrification for being and forgets becoming. There is, as we shall see, an analogue here in Nietzsche

between such forgetting of becoming and Heidegger's notion of the forgetting of being.

Nevertheless, through art one can overcome the twofold lie that is the truth, and thus overcome metaphysics by affirming the sensuous world of becoming, thereby displacing the "other world" by simply inverting it. Art is then quite simply the inversion of Platonism. Art overturns Platonism by affirming precisely what Platonism denied, namely becoming vis-à-vis being. Art affirms becoming, and the supreme work of art then pertains to the supreme act of will to power: the absolute and unconditional stamping of becoming with the character of being in the Eternal Return. The Eternal Return then marks Nietzsche's ultimate aesthetic creation. It is not "true" but rather a "lie," for it marks the height of the activity of willing and affirming life, of overcoming revenge, and thus of the will to power itself. Will to power is becoming, which is an artistic creation in and through the will to power's identification of becoming in the aesthetic of the Eternal Return of the Same. Heidegger summarizes this point in Nietzsche quite nicely in his first volume on Nietzsche entitled *The Will to Power as Art*:

Art as a will to semblance is the supreme configuration of will to power. But the latter, as the basic character of beings, as the essence of reality, is in itself that Being which wills itself by willing to be Becoming. In that way Nietzsche in will to power attempts to think the original unity of the ancient opposition of Being and Becoming. Being, as permanence, is to let Becoming *be* as Becoming. The origin of the thought of "eternal recurrence" is thereby indicated.<sup>41</sup>

According to Heidegger, this activity, of transferring being into becoming and of thereby stamping becoming with the character of being in the supreme aesthetic act of will to power—Eternal Return of the Same—marks an even deeper philosophical move for Nietzsche, namely the subsuming of all knowledge (philosophy, science, etc.) into the subjective realm of art. That is, Nietzsche attempts, for Heidegger, "to see science under the optics of the artist..." i.e., under the auspices of the subjective. This subsumption of all knowledge under the domain of art, for Heidegger, represents even more so Nietzsche's tethering to the subjective, and thus to the Cartesian.

Moreover, Nietzsche's critique of truth in favor of art may be a hasty oversimplification of Platonism, or at least of Plato. Indeed, this

attempt to divorce art from truth, and thus overturn Platonic metaphysics proves problematic when art is considered with respect to the beautiful. Nietzsche, in *The Will to Power*, stresses a fairly straightforward Darwinian conception of the beautiful, namely that it represents, again, the biological “value” of life and power, i.e., in this context, health. That which is beautiful and experienced as beautiful indicates a heightened sense of life, of health, and consequently, of rapture and intoxication. In short, the beautiful indicates an increase in our will to life and power. The ugly, by contrast, indicates a decrease or depression in power and life. Beauty is felt as strength, ugliness as weakness. “Thus the beautiful and the ugly are recognized as *relative* to our most fundamental values of preservation” (WP 804). In other words, that which increases will to power is experienced as pleasing, as beautiful, and that which decreases will to power is experienced as painful, as repulsive and ugly. However, does such a conception of the beautiful—that is dependent upon and relative to will to power—suffice to act as a countermovement to Platonism and overturn it?

In one sense, we can answer this question in the affirmative, insofar as Platonism represents a revenge and *ressentiment* against life (becoming). That is, art, conscious of itself as a lie, and, therefore, as a creative act whereby will to power is increased, amounts to an affirmation of life, rather than a revolting denial. In art, one is forced to face the world of becoming and remain conscious of the will to power’s activity of lying and ossifying of becoming into being, whereas, in metaphysics—or, we can now say, philosophy writ large—one posits such being *over and against* becoming as a means of escaping becoming, as a means of denial and revulsion against becoming. Only in and through art then can the unconditional affirmation of life, and thus the heightening of the intoxication of will to power take place. Only through art can the will to revenge be overcome by way of becoming conscious of the will itself in its ossifications as fictions, rather than truths. Art then makes us honest, for we face the fact that we are fundamentally liars.

Nietzsche’s countermovement to Platonism then certainly succeeds insofar as it runs counter to the Platonic understanding of art as a kind of *mimesis*, thrice removed from “true being,” as presented by Plato’s *Republic*. That is, in *Republic X*, art as kind of *mimesis*, is nothing more than a copy of a copy, a copy of a sensible object, which in turn copies the truth, the Idea. In this kind of Platonism, there remains a great gulf and distance between truth and art; art is a lesser representation,

the least and worst representation even, of the truth. Thus Nietzsche's radical divorce of art from the truth understood in this Platonic sense indeed accomplishes the inversion of Platonism that Nietzsche sought. However, Plato presents a slightly different take on the relationship between art and truth, or at least *beauty* and truth, in his *Phaedrus* (250c–d). Here the beautiful resists Nietzsche's critique. That is, in the *Phaedrus*, beauty and truth enter into a role much different than the hierarchical one presented in *Republic X* (Heidegger's first volume of *Nietzsche* devotes two chapters to this difference).<sup>42</sup> In the *Phaedrus*, beauty is thought as that which provokes and incites the very possibility of movement toward the truth; beauty conditions the very possibility of metaphysics as *meta ta phusika*. Plato writes,

Now beauty, as we said, shone bright amidst these visions, and in this world below we apprehend it through the clearest of our senses, clear and resplendent. For sight is the keenest mode of perception vouchsafed us through the body; wisdom, indeed, we cannot see thereby...nor yet any other of those beloved objects, save only beauty; for beauty alone this has been ordained, to be most manifest to sense and most lovely of them all (250c–e).<sup>43</sup>

The form of the beautiful is thought by Plato as a *sui generis* form, at least insofar as it is the beautiful itself which not only gathers together many beautiful things into and under one Idea, but also gleams in such a way as to show itself among sensible things themselves, indeed *as* sensible things themselves. John Sallis summarizes this point quite nicely within a Heideggerian register:

It is not simply a matter of its [the beautiful's] shining more or less brilliantly but rather a matter of its shining in a radically different way. To men the beautiful itself shines, not simply by itself, not immediately, but only through beautiful things, only through its "earthly" images. What distinguishes the beautiful is that it shines in the region of the visible, the "earthly," and thus renders being accessible to man in his condition of being bound to the visible through his body...the beautiful is that *eidōs* [form] which is most manifest to man in his embodied condition, that *eidōs* which shows itself as such, which shines forth, in the midst of the visible. The beautiful is that "original" which shines amidst images in such a way as to open up and make manifest for man the difference separating image from "original." Still more fundamentally regarded, "the beautiful"

names the way in which being itself shines forth in the midst of the visible. An openness to this shining forth belongs among the most basic conditions pertaining to the beginning of philosophy.<sup>44</sup>

The beautiful, beauty itself, is the only form that actually appears sensibly. The beautiful is the form that is “most radiant,” and thus shines amidst the sensible realm of becoming. Being then actually appears *as* becoming, or at least amidst becoming in such a way as to mark itself different from all other Ideas which in no way can subject themselves to becoming in this way. Insofar then as the beautiful appears in the realm of becoming, as a being, and yet nevertheless remains the being of such a being in the true realm of being, the beautiful shows itself both as it *is* and as it *is not*. Furthermore, and most importantly such a bivalent showing occasions the very possibility of philosophy as metaphysics, insofar as this bivalency allows the *difference* to open up between a form and its appearance, and thus between being and becoming. The beautiful then in showing itself in a twofold way shows also the very difference between being and becoming, and thus offers a standard and measure for being itself. As such, it then allows and allures one “up the line” so to speak into the other world. In short, beauty provokes an *eros* for the truth. The relationship between art and truth then remains further complicated, not only due to beauty’s provocation toward truth, but furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, beauty’s necessitating of truth’s—and thus being’s—admixture with becoming. Indeed it is this admixture of being and becoming in the artwork, as we shall see, that will later preoccupy Heidegger.

We are now in a position to inquire again as to whether or not Nietzsche’s philosophy, at least in part, overcomes, or at least comes close to overcoming, Platonism. Does it even have to, since Plato himself presents a much more complicated relationship between art and truth (and thus being and becoming) than originally thought? That is, if being, truth, can be *as* becoming, as is the case with the beautiful, has this Platonic understanding of truth and beauty named the very thing Nietzsche sought in his inversion, namely the rebalancing of truth and art? Certainty not, insofar as the hierarchy of the split world remains, for to admit of admixture between being and becoming in such a way as to say that being shows itself as becoming would leave one with the question as to which of the two—being or becoming—takes ontological priority. For Plato, certainly being, in the end, must be prioritized, and for

Nietzsche, becoming. This question, the question of “ontological priority” between being and becoming, then ultimately determines the difference between Platonism and Nietzscheanism, even if both philosophers admit to an admixture.

Nevertheless, within Plato, Heidegger finds a path toward rethinking the relationship between the visible and invisible worlds, a path that he thinks Nietzsche nearly broached prior to his madness. This path would rethink the relationship between art and truth in such a way as to configure the hierarchy between truth and beauty to allow for the beautiful to be, for Heidegger, the process of truth or truthing itself, as *aletheia*, or unconcealment. Regardless, it is Heidegger’s contention that Nietzsche’s thinking never quite reaches this reconfiguration precisely because of its all too radical commitment to the value positing of the will to power, and thus to subjectivism.

Nietzsche’s thinking concerning the overcoming of nihilism in the form of Platonism certainly does present a response to Platonic thinking, albeit only one aspect of Platonic thinking, namely the view that art and the truth are sundered by a great distance, as presented in the *Republic*. It is not clear how Nietzsche’s critique of the ascetic ideal would bode vis-à-vis the conception of the relationship between art and truth in Plato’s *Phaedrus*. However, Nietzsche did not remain naively unaware of this conception of beauty in Plato, for in his *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche offers Plato a nod of praise for exposing this “erotic element” of philosophy caused by beauty. Nietzsche initially praises Plato for contradicting Schopenhauer’s ideal that beauty would divest one of the will and of sexuality. Nietzsche then writes,

Fortunately a philosopher also contradicts him [Schopenhauer]. No less an authority than the divine Plato maintains a different thesis: that all beauty incites to procreation – that precisely this is the *proprium* of its effect, from the most sensual regions up into the most spiritual... Plato goes further. He says, with an innocence for which one must be Greek and not ‘Christian,’ that there would be no Platonic philosophy at all if Athens had not possessed such beautiful youths: it was the sight of them which first plunged the philosopher’s soul into an erotic whirl and allowed it no rest until it had implanted the seed of all high things into so beautiful a soil... Philosophy [then] in the manner of Plato should be rather defined as an erotic contest.... (T 91–92)

Thus, Nietzsche remained well aware of this erotic element to Platonic philosophy, and thus praised it, only taking issue, we could imagine, with the flights of fancy to the other world of being over and against the world of becoming. Yet the idea that the sensuous world would provoke the very desire for truth seems to run contrary to Nietzsche's argument that the will to truth arises from will to power's revulsion against becoming. Indeed, here we are presented with a Platonic conception of truth that Nietzsche seems to tacitly consent to as, at the very least, not life-denying, and at the most, perhaps, life affirming, so far as *eros* and not revenge proves to be the motivation for philosophical truth.

### NIETZSCHE'S ATHEISM

In summary, we could say that Nietzsche's entire philosophical endeavor is an attempt honestly and truly to "think" atheism at its core, that is, to follow the "hypothesis of atheism" to its inevitable conclusions, which include overcoming truth itself as the last remnant of Platonism, and thus of Christian theism. That is, Nietzsche realizes he must rid himself of any and all semblances of Platonism, and thus must overcome the fundamental elements of Platonism that trickle down in all of Platonism's various configurations, in order to truly think atheistically. The fundamental element of Platonism is, of course, being, or truth, for as we have seen earlier, both being and truth are interrelated concepts, contingent upon each other. To keep one is to retain the other; to destroy one is to abolish the other. Nietzsche's atheism drives his entire philosophic mission against Platonism, Christianity, and any subsequent versions of metaphysics that include the terms "truth" and "being" in any meaningful, objective sense. But why? Why does Nietzsche go through such great pangs to rid himself of truth? Quite simply, because Nietzsche recognizes that to allow for truth (or being) in any sense would inevitably lead again to theism. He realizes that if he allows for any objective intelligibility, that is, any truth that is both universal and necessary, he, in turn, welcomes theism in through the back door—the very crime of which he believes modern science still remains guilty. For this reason, then Nietzsche argues that modern science, with its faith in the truth and its faith in the objective "intelligibility" of the cosmos, still remains within the orbit of theism, for it believes in being, in truth. In a word, modern science still believes, whether knowingly or not, in the objective (i.e., nonsubjective) ontological independence of intelligibility. For

modern science, the world is intelligible, ordered, and thus still able to be thought and *known* by the human intellect. Thinking and knowing still then apply objectively to the world. Science still reveals truth as an absolute good, and insofar as it does so, it still remains Platonic, meta-physical, and thus theistic.

In other words, once one admits of intelligibility, of truths that are universal and necessary, one admits of the stability being and of the independence of intelligible truth that simply cannot be contingently reduced to materiality. For example, mathematical and logical truths (the truths upon which natural science is based), *if* they exist, are *ipso facto* non-physical, *meta*-physical, truths, and moreover, noncontingent. For what would it mean to say that they were contingent? Could “ $2 + 2 = 4$ ” or *modus ponens* be merely contingent truths? Was there a time at which they were not true? Will there be a time in the future when they will no longer be true? These truths—the very truths that govern scientific reasoning, if *true*, must, therefore, be timeless, eternal and the world must again be Platonically split in two. In a passage from *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche cites an earlier passage from his *The Gay Science* (showing just how important this passage is for Nietzsche):

The truthful man, in the audacious and ultimate sense presupposed by faith in science, *thereby affirms another world* than that of life, nature and history; and insofar as he affirms this ‘other world,’ does this not mean that he has to deny its antithesis, this world, *our* world... It is still a *meta-physical faith* that underlies our faith in science – and we men of knowledge of today, we godless men and anti-metaphysicians, we, too, still derive *our* flame from the fire ignited by a faith millennia old, the Christian faith, which was also Plato’s, that God is truth, that truth is *divine*. (GS 344, GM 3:24)

Science rests upon the *metaphysical* faith in the other world (a world, we could say, of mathematics, of logic, of rationality, etc.), a faith in *truth* itself, which makes science utterly Platonic and, thus utterly theistic. For these reasons then Nietzsche sought and fought for a philosophy that would reduce all truth, being, intelligibility, meaning, etc. to the will to power, thereby eliminating any possible recourse to God. It is a question then as to whether one simply has the courage to face Nietzsche’s kind of atheism, an honest or “true” atheism that would follow the atheist

hypothesis wherever it would lead, even if it were to lead to nihilism, absurdity, and ultimately madness.

Heidegger too acknowledges that Platonism—and all metaphysics for that matter—is *eo ipso* onto-theo-logical, as all metaphysics inevitably leads to theology, as Aristotle originally suggested, due to the specific way in which “being” is conceived in any metaphysical system, namely as “ground,” “essence,” or “cause.” Being, as the being of beings, is the ground of beings, the essence of beings, and thus the cause of beings, and beings (*die Seienden*) are, therefore, conceived conditionally, i.e., grounded upon a condition. Things must be grounded, explained, by their conditions, and yet, their conditions must further be explained and grounded, leading to a regress that eventually must have a *terminus* so as to ensure the system’s completion. This *terminus*, functioning as the “unconditioned condition” or *causa sui*, occurs under the guise of the deity, who is both a being and the ground and condition for all other beings. God, thus enters the metaphysical system, every metaphysical system, in precisely this same way, namely as the highest and final explanation for beings as a whole. For Heidegger then a “cosmological argument” for God is necessarily implied once beings are conceived in a certain way, a Platonic or metaphysical way, which seeks being’s ground or essence in the Platonic sense.

In Plato, we see various versions of such onto-theology crop up depending on the particular discussion of being. For example, in *Republic VII*, Plato presents his theory of the forms in the famous “Sun Analogy,” where the forms constitute the supersensible truth and being of things that serve to gather and unify the manifold of particular sense objects. Thus the forms gather the “many” into “one” by grounding the many upon the invisible essence that is the form. And yet, a manifold breaks out even among the forms, which then requires a further grounding and unification. This unification occurs in the “form of all forms,” or the essence of all essences, namely the form of the Good. The Good then functions as the ultimate reality, the unconditioned condition, which is, even for Plato, “beyond being,” in that it dispenses truth/being so as to illuminate each form. Nevertheless, we see here Heidegger’s point concerning onto-theology, in that a metaphysical system will always terminate in a highest reality that is the functional equivalent of God.

In *Republic X* (596–597), concerning the discussion of *mimesis* (copying) noted earlier, *mimesis* is thought vis-à-vis production (*techne*). There are three kinds of productions corresponding to the three levels

of truth or illumination: the Idea, the sensible object, and the mimetic copy of that object; and to each production there corresponds a producer: God, the craftsman, and the artists (597b). The craftsman, when making an object, fixes his intellect upon the form and instantiates it in the matter. It is thus a copy of the “truth” that is the form. Art, as a depiction of a perspective of the sensible object, is a copy of a copy; the artist is then a producer of copies, of the craftsman’s products as copies of the form. Yet, Plato strangely suggests that it is God who is the producer of the forms themselves, the producer of “real being” (597d). God “by and in nature” (*phusis*) has produced each form (597d). Plato then seems to suggest that it is God who is responsible for the very creation in “nature” of the forms, which would mean that “nature” must be taken in the sense of nature qua essence. Recourse to God then proves necessary for Plato in order to justify his theory of *techne* as the production of things that *are* or *are true* to a greater or lesser degree. It is worth noting that Heidegger reads these passages quite carefully in his first volume of *Nietzsche* and argues that the greater and lesser degrees of being and truth stand simply for greater or less degrees of illumination, of *aletheia*. That is, for Heidegger, beings show themselves as illuminated in their being to a greater or lesser extent depending on the way in which they presence. John Sallis’s famous *Being and Logos* attempts, quite successfully, to read the entire Platonic corpus in this way. We shall return to this topic later when discussing Heidegger’s *Origin of the Work of Art*.

Again then Platonism has led to God, this time as the producer of the nature of the Ideas themselves, but again as the “ground” or “cause” of what is most real or true (and thus in keeping with Heidegger’s notion of onto-theology). Thus, all begins from a theory of reality, a metaphysics, which understands being and truth to be objective and mind independent. That is, the forms are extra-mental beings that serve to make the world objectively intelligible (i.e., able to be thought and known) and objectively ordered. Consequently, such order necessitates an Orderer; such intelligibility necessitates a Mind to think, know, and conceive it. In other words, mind, on the subjective side, and intelligibility, on the objective side, prove to be the higher order of reality from the sensible and changeable. This is the very essence of Platonism, which Aristotle too found himself unable to escape. Aristotle also posits an ultimate, unchangeable being, a being that is pure actuality, as an immaterial substance, which serves to explain and ground the causal relations understood in terms of potency and act in a final end, God, who moreover

is synonymous with thought or mind itself (*nous*).<sup>45</sup> In both cases, the world is again split in two.

Therefore, Nietzsche understood quite well that if one allows for *any* theory of reality, *any* metaphysics, that makes truth objective, and thus allows for being to be real, theism inevitably eventuates. Nietzsche's atheism remains, therefore, the most consistent kind of atheism one could envision, for such atheism holds true to the ultimate unintelligibility of reality and the absolute nonexistence of truth itself. These "truths" for Nietzsche are precisely what science has not the courage to face. However, Nietzsche's commitment to the impossibility of truth and being leads him to a radical position, perhaps the most radical position possible, namely a self-referentially inconsistent "metaphysics." Was this perhaps Nietzsche's intention from the beginning? That is, to show that a reduction of truth to will to power leads to a freeing from the shackles of truth, one that would allow for art to be "worth more" than the truth (WP 853)? Indeed, this valuing of art over and against the truth would allow Nietzsche to be saved by art "so as not to perish from the truth."

John Sallis rightly describes the relation between Plato and Nietzsche as "a battle in which being is at stake."<sup>46</sup> These stakes are not new to modernity, but rather resurrect an ancient quarrel that Plato termed in his *Sophist* a "battle between giants and gods" (246a–c). This battle is between the giants of materialism, who seek "to drag everything down to earth out of heaven and the unseen....and affirm that real being belongs only to that which can be handled..." and the "gods" who are friends of the forms, who maintain that "true being consists in certain intelligible and bodiless forms" (246a–b). According to Plato, this battle is unending. Thus, it is not surprising that we again find ourselves in the midst of this battle, this time the two camps reconfigured as Nietzsche and Plato. Modern science then remains "stuck" halfway between Nietzsche and Plato, insofar as science wants to dispense with God and the other world altogether, while nevertheless seeking to save truth and intelligibility. For Nietzsche, modern science need only be honest with itself and with the courage of its convictions and finally shrug off the burdensome value of truth, the "long storm" that, according to Zarathustra, so plagued humanity. Whereas, for Platonists, modern science must repent and embrace its philosophical and theological foundations and anchor itself firmly in a metaphysics that would seek to ground metaphysical "values" of truth and being that it employs.

Heidegger, however, seeks a third way, another alternative to the two camps in the ancient battle that would circumvent the Nietzschean-Platonic polarity. Heidegger names this original battle “metaphysics,” which he distances himself from and attempts to overcome by a middle or third way. Is such a third way possible? That is, is it possible to “twist free” of metaphysical thinking in such a way as to transcend the categories of Nietzscheanism and Platonism?

## NOTES

1. See Gianni Vattimo, *Introduzione a Nietzsche* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 1985) 3–7.
2. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1989) chapter 3, section 24 (Further references to this work will be indicated by GM and chapter and section number).
3. Nietzsche’s philosophical relationship to Darwin is quite complicated, as it includes both an obvious influence, as well as an explicit critique. Regardless of the precise nature of Nietzsche’s “Darwinism,” the point here remains the same: once truth is grounded not upon intelligibility, but upon power, life, survival, etc., reason itself becomes susceptible to an immanent critique (See GM 3:25). Darwin famously recognized this very problematic in a letter to W. Graham, “...with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of a man’s mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey’s mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?” Charles Darwin, “To W. Graham.” 3 July 1881. *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*. Ed. Francis Darwin. Vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton, 1896) 285. Furthermore, John Richardson has recently argued that Nietzsche, despite his harsh criticisms of Darwin, nevertheless remained a Darwinian. See John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s New Darwinism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
4. Peter Poellner considers in detail the strong elements of Nietzsche’s Darwinian or “evolutionary epistemology” vis-à-vis utility and life. He concludes, as do I, that ultimately Nietzsche’s reliance on such epistemology results in metaphysical incoherence. See Peter Poellner *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) 137–149, 288–305.
5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1968) paragraph 493. Further references to this text will be indicated by WP and paragraph number.

6. This text proves contentious for a number of reasons, one of which being the manner in which the text itself was compiled and edited, namely by Nietzsche's sister Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche and Peter Gast from Nietzsche's posthumous journals. The question of the authenticity of the text remains disputed by some Nietzsche scholars as to whether it represents the "authentic Nietzsche." As noted, for our purposes, the question of "what Nietzsche actually believed" is irrelevant and may in fact be impossible to ultimately determine. Moreover, Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche heavily engaged *The Will to Power*, as Heidegger considered this text, and Nietzsche's posthumous fragments, to be the place for an original encounter with Nietzsche as a "metaphysical thinker." See Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume 1: The Will to Power as Art*. Edited by David Farrell Krell (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1991) 7–17.
7. Alvin Plantinga has dubbed a version of this argument "the evolutionary argument against naturalism." See Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
8. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974) section 344. Further references to this text will be indicated by GS and section number.
9. As to be expected, Nietzsche scholarship does not take kindly to the idea that Nietzsche in the end is simply self-referentially incoherent. Alexander Nehamas argues that at least Nietzsche's own metaphysical "perspectivism" does not *ipso facto* exclude the possibility of some perspectives being true. See Alexander Nehamas *Nietzsche: Life As Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 65–67. Brian Leiter argues for a naturalist reading of Nietzsche that excludes, to an extent, scientific and empirical truths from Nietzsche's "metaphysical" critiques. See Brian Leiter, *The Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Nietzsche on Morality* (London: Routledge 2002) 264–279. Matthew Meyer also argues that Nietzsche avoids the charges of self-referential incoherence by way of discussion of the Protagorean *homo mensura* doctrine in the Theaetetus, first vindicating Protagorean relativism from the self-referential paradox, and then doing the same for Nietzsche. Meyer's claim essentially is that the *homo mensura* claim ought to be limited in scope such that there could be at least one thing that man was not the measure of, namely the *homo mensura* doctrine itself. Such limitations allow for Meyer to argue that Nietzsche's "ontology" (the negation of substances in favor of the mere play of forces, for Meyer) also escapes the problem of self-reference. See Matthew Meyer, *Reading Nietzsche Through the Ancients* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014) 199–200.

10. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin Book, 1995) section 14. Further textual references will be indicated by BGE and section number.
11. Translation by R.J. Hollingdale from Friedrich Nietzsche, *A Nietzsche Reader* (London: Penguin Books, 1977) 61–62.
12. The debate about how to understand Nietzsche’s so called “naturalism” takes many sides, and has many forms. Maudemarie Clark and Brian Leiter stand on one side of the debate arguing for a strict naturalism in Nietzsche, which would preserve the “truths” of modern science over and against more metaphysical truths like truth or goodness itself. See Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Other readers, e.g., Alexander Nehamas and Richard Rorty, align more with a postmodern and “aesthetic” reading of Nietzsche that focuses on his critique of truth, or his aesthetics at the expense of truth. See Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Finally, readers like Matthew Meyer hold to a more moderate position between the two sides. See Matthew Meyer “Nietzsche’s Naturalized Aestheticism” in *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 23:1 (2015): 138–160.
13. Concerning Nietzsche’s critique of causality, See Justin Remhof “Naturalism, Causality, and Nietzsche’s Conception of Science” in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 46:1 (Spring 2015): 110–119, and Joshua Rayman “Nietzsche on Causation” in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 28:3 (2014): 327–334.
14. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, translated by Marion Faber, with Stephen Lehmann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996) section 11. Further textual references will be indicated by HA and section number.
15. Against this reading, and in order to preserve some truths of natural science, Matthew Meyer has argued for a reading of Nietzsche that embraces a Heraclitian view of the world by way of Nietzsche’s engagement with contemporary physics of his time. In particular, Meyer conceives of Nietzsche’s “metaphysics” as one of substanceless forces, that is, forces devoid of and that precede substances, which continually interact in a perpetual state of becoming and flux. See Meyer, *Reading Nietzsche Through the Ancients*.
16. Translation by Hollingdale from Nietzsche, *A Nietzsche Reader*, 56–57.
17. Leiter, *Nietzsche*, 14.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 22.

20. Yirmiyahu Yovel, whom I regard as a leading Continental thinker, makes explicit mention of Nietzsche's problematic relationship with truth, namely Nietzsche's apparent self-referential inconsistency. Yovel writes, "Nietzsche's notion of truth, however, is one of the most difficult issues in his writings. Given the lack of objective truth and a disinterested 'will to truth,' all modes of knowledge are only perspectives, which are subject to certain kinds of life preferences. Yet, like any sweeping skeptical claim, this one too refers back to itself. What then is the status of Nietzsche's own view? Apparently he takes it to be another perspective on the world which is linked (as its necessary condition) to the Dionysian way of living." Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998) 113.
21. David Storey, *Naturalizing Heidegger* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2015) 208.
22. *Ibid.*, 163, 209.
23. For these reasons, it is fair to point out that Storey's concerns are not mine. Storey's concerns lie with developing a nonreductive naturalism within the purview of an environmental ethics that can avoid metaphysical as well as naturalistic pitfalls. My concerns are with the absolute ground of values, whether they actually exist independently of the human being. Indeed, Storey finds what he needs in Nietzsche (and Heidegger) in order to develop a nonreductive naturalistic ethics, but in doing so, he avoids, though acknowledges, the major metaphysical and epistemological objections in Nietzsche to his own project, namely the radical perspectivism (in this sense relativism) to which Nietzsche remains committed. For a more "spiritual" reading of Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics, see Bruce Ellis Benson, *Pious Nietzsche* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008). It is worth noting that while Benson's concerns are not mine, and that while I do not agree with any spiritual reading of Nietzsche that makes him favorable in anyway toward theism, nevertheless highlighting Nietzsche's hostility toward "scientism" and "reductionism" is indeed an essential aspect of my thesis concerning Nietzsche's naturalism (d)evolving into postmodernism.
24. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 1995) chapter 2, section 20. Further references will be indicated by Z and chapter and section.
25. Trans. by Hollingdale from Nietzsche, *A Nietzsche Reader*, 63.
26. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin Books, 1990) 87. Further references will be indicated by T and page number.
27. Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 85.

28. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1984) 221. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, 98.
29. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, 105.
30. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*. Edited by David Farrell Krell (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1987). 170, 189; See Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Translated by William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 82.
31. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, 127 (*The Anti-Christ*, section 2).
32. Heidegger, *Nietzsche I*, 154.
33. Heidegger, *Nietzsche III*, 195.
34. Heidegger, *Nietzsche III*, 197.
35. Heidegger, *Nietzsche III*, 214 concerning Chaos.
36. For Nietzsche's referring to time as a "circle" without goal, see WP 1067: "[T]his my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying, this mystery world of the twofold voluptuous delight, my 'beyond good and evil,' without goal, unless the joy of the circle is itself a goal' without will, unless a ring feels good will toward itself – do you want a *name* for this world? A *solution* for all its riddles? A *light* for you, too, you best-concealed, strongest, most intrepid, most midnightly men? – *This world is the will to power—and nothing besides!* And you yourselves are also this will to power – and nothing besides" (WP 1067).
37. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche. Volume IV: Nihilism* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1982) 7.
38. Didier Franck, against Heidegger's reading, boldly argues that it is impossible to consider Nietzsche's thinking as a mere reversal of Platonism that remains with its same logic. Franck argues this point by noting that for Nietzsche there remains an explicit distinction between Greek thinking and Roman thinking, and that Nietzsche clearly favored the latter over the former. Yet Franck thinks that since Heidegger argued that the Romanization of Greek thinking was simply another step along the Platonic path of the metaphysics of presence, any separation between Roman and Greek thinking, for Nietzsche, amounts to a misreading of Nietzsche on Heidegger's part. I disagree with Franck's argument for several reasons: (1) Heidegger's point is that despite whatever Nietzsche may think he thinks, he nevertheless cannot see his blind spot that Heidegger's own "hermeneutics of suspicion" has unearthed, namely Nietzsche's fidelity to the inner logic of Platonism (i.e., the metaphysics of ground). (2) Moreover, Nietzsche himself in the *Genealogy* (3:24) acknowledges himself as a "pale atheist" and, therefore, just

- as “pious” and theistic as the theism he attempts to overcome precisely because he, as well as other atheists of the time, still has faith in the “value of truth.” Moreover, and most importantly, (3) Franck simply brushes off Nietzsche’s own acknowledgement that his philosophy is “inverted Platonism.” Franck’s theses are bold and interesting. However, Franck’s concerns are not mine, as I do not intend to call into question the authenticity of Heidegger’s “Nietzsche,” but rather situate both Heidegger and Nietzsche in the context of the larger concern of the Gigantomachy. See Didier Franck, *Nietzsche and the Shadow of God* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2011).
39. Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, 84.
  40. “Nietzsches Metaphysik ist demnach keine Überwindung des Nihilismus. Sie ist die letzte Verstrickung in den Nihilismus. Durch das Wertdenken aus dem Willen zur Macht hält sie sich zwar daran, das Seiende als solches anzuerkennen, aber zugleich fesselt sie sich mit dem Strick der Deutung des Seins als Wert in die Unmöglichkeit, das Sein als das Sein auch nur in den fragenden Blick zu bekommen. Durch diese Verstrickung des Nihilismus in sich selbst wird er erst durch und durch in dem, was er ist, fertig. Der so durch-fertigte perfekte Nihilismus ist die Vollendung des eigentlichen Nihilismus.” Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 6.2: *Nietzsche II* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1997) 340–341; Heidegger, *Nietzsche IV*, 203.
  41. Heidegger, *Nietzsche I*, 218
  42. See Heidegger, *Nietzsche I*, chapters 22–23.
  43. Translation by R. Hackforth from Plato, *The Collected Dialogues*, 497.
  44. John Sallis, *Being and Logos* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996) 156.
  45. Lloyd Gerson argues that Aristotle’s defining of God as seemingly contentless thought of thought is Aristotle’s last attempt at distancing himself from Plato, as Aristotle is well aware that if God as thought thinks anything other than himself as pure thought, e.g., the Ideas, then Ideas gain ontological independence in precisely the same way as for Plato. See Lloyd Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005) 188–200.
  46. Sallis, *Platonic Legacies*, 7.

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Armitage, D.

2017, XI, 118 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-67578-7