

Nietzsche's Ascension

So the soul of immensity dwells in minutia
And in the narrowest limits, no limits inhere¹

Introduction

In this paper we will analyze a series of dominant foundational concepts from the history of philosophy immediately leading up to the writings of Nietzsche that therefore also arise over the course of his own critical project. This will allow us to come to a better understanding of whether he values a certain sense of ascension or if it is identified with transcendence² for him and therefore gets relegated permanently to the category of religious illusion. It will take us through readings of Hume's skeptical attack on causation, Kant's transcendental rejoinder, and finally the surprising idealist conclusions reached by Hegel, in the process working through the question of what it means to "get outside" of the apparent confines of some inner space, or for the most part more particularly that of the world's.

Additionally, we will look at whether such a notion of ascension can be dissociated of its supposedly Christian imagery-laden origin. The website Nacht Kabarett, dedicated to the study of the occult, makes note of a peculiar part of Nietzsche's work³ that, "The closing of each chapter's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is akin to a mass' 'So Let It Be Done.'" Although this in effect constitutes a spirituality, "absolutely divorced from the Christianity of the herd," it serves only as symbolic ascension and with a notably ambiguous relation left between the parallel notions of the soul and the Will. Nietzsche is known for his polemical arguments attacking Christianity⁴. They are only as successful though as he has managed to develop an alternative logic internally consistent with itself independent of reference made back to the fundamental notions forming a constellation around Christianity that still to this day presently exert cultural dominance. Orthodox Christianity itself, as it is attacked by Nietzsche, famously recognizes ascension exactly in the way that one transcends to the afterlife in the moment of dying in this one. These need not be the only type of ascension we may be said to undergo, however. In this passage from his essay "Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense", Nietzsche remarks about the schemata of his envisioned new world⁵:

¹Jakob Bernoulli, "Treatise on Infinite Series," in *Strange Attractors: Poems of Love and Mathematics*, ed. Sarah Glaz and JoAnne Simpson Growney, translated by Helen M. Walker (Wellesley, Mass: A K Peters, 2008), 130.

²Nietzsche, Friedrich. "What Is Religious." In *Beyond Good & Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, translated by Walter Arnold Kaufmann, 71. Toronto: Random House, Vintage Books Edition, November 1989, 1966.

³Kushner, Nick. "The Nietzsche of the Occult | Zarathustra, Alchemy & Kabbalah." *The Nacht Kabarett: Marilyn Manson, Art & The Occult*. Last modified 2002. <http://www.nachtkabarett.com/nietzscheoccult>.

⁴Nietzsche, 60.

⁵Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense." In *Truth: Engagements*

Everything which distinguishes man from the animals depends upon this ability to volatilize perceptual metaphors in a schema, and thus to dissolve an image into a concept. For something is possible in the realm of these schemata which could never be achieved with the vivid first impressions: the construction of a pyramidal order according to castes and degrees, the creation of a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, and clearly marked boundaries—a new world, one which now confronts that other vivid world of first impressions as more solid, more universal, better known . . .

There are multiple places to be found in Nietzsche's writings where he has somewhat surprising things to say about the philosopher, as when he says that philosophy is⁶, "A life lived freely in ice and high mountains - visiting ... everything banned by morality so far." Given his other writings on war, the warrior⁷, the Dionysian, animality, the exertion of the Will to power, and along with all his hatred for the unnecessarily abstract. Of course, all this only represents one regime of philosophy – dominant as it has been in the whole history of Western culture, as Nietzsche pinpoints from its very beginnings with Socrates⁸ and Plato, but never absolute. In Book V of the *Gay Science*, he declares his comradery with the philosopher⁹ in calling out, "Indeed, at hearing the news that 'the old god is dead', we philosophers and 'free spirits' feel illuminated by a new dawn." And while no historical institution will pass the test for Nietzsche, have individual philosophers not been the ones to occasionally stick their heads out from the rest of the crowd?

Humean Skepticism

The 18th century British empiricist philosopher David Hume is considered to rank highly among the tradition of skeptics, wherein all categories of things including causes are attempted to be read as fictions in search of error. We might wonder whether we are to be skeptical enough regarding the limits of what we can say about causation in the first place, which Hume regards¹⁰ as, "One of the most sublime questions in philosophy". Hume presents a thought experiment¹¹ wherein we are supposed to predict what will take place when we

Across Philosophical Traditions, edited by David Wood and José Medina, 19. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2008. doi:10.1002/9780470776407.

⁶Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, Aaron Ridley, and Judith Norman. "Ecce Homo – How to Become Who You Are" In *The Anti-Christ, Ecce homo, Twilight of the idols, and other writings*, 72. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

⁷Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. "What Is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?" In *On the Genealogy of Morals / Ecce Homo*, translated by Walter Arnold Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, 97. New York: Vintage, 1989.

⁸Nietzsche. "Natural History of Morals" In *Beyond Good & Evil*, 103.

⁹Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *The gay science: with a prelude in German rhymes and an appendix of songs*, translated by Bernard Williams, Josefine Nauckhoff, and Adrian Del Caro, 199. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

¹⁰David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 112.

¹¹Hume, David. *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch, 71. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.

hit a billiard ball. Somebody who is an expert at the game has many memories available to themselves of past experiences playing. For Hume, these memories are impressions of sense equally so as any immediate perception that may take place of balls actually colliding. In this way, we develop an intuition of causation as a form of natural association¹² in which, "...all this is independent of and antecedent to the operations of the understanding". Lastly, sense perceptions can be differentiated by the force of their impression as compared with memories, or the imagination, with the latter two commonly being possessed of less visceral intensity in their presence.

Nietzsche takes up in part from Hume's skepticism, however he imagines a slightly modified beginning to memory. While perceptions do accumulate in the same way, as described in second essay of the *Genealogy of Morality*¹³, it is not so much the commonality of some memories that makes them more apparent, but the painfulness of suffering in the immediate, in combination with a practice of constantly reimagining such tragedy that impresses those memories on to ourselves with much greater weight. This does not leave us with a definite impression of power at work causing something to happen, there is still just the apparent sequence of moments and whether they have been accompanied by a striking feeling of pain.

The billiard game only has meaning if we assume that the next case of hitting a ball will be a representative case of this population. Hume refers to this as a¹⁴, "Secret tie or union among particular ideas, which causes the mind to conjoin them more frequently, and makes the one, upon its appearance, introduce the other." Many empiricists, who see themselves as following in a certain tradition of Hume deliberately assume this subjective mode of probabilistic thinking as one of the shining virtues of their practice. What the meaning of these frequencies is besides that they are seen to exist cannot be said. To put this another way, no number of past experiences of playing billiards should lead to definite knowledge about such causation. We may only arrive at different extents of an understanding regarding these statistics, namely by accumulating more and more cases, and not go beyond them. Players will continue to boast of certainty, and some will often appear to be correct.

Viewed as a radical empiricist in one light, we may wonder what reason Hume could have had for believing that there should be any regularity in life. From a perspective of total skepticism, there should be neither regularity nor experience in the first place. Each one of our of experiences is suspect in itself, and none of them should result in the emergence of an idea of 'experience'. What could really be said inside an experience is that some impression of sensation was had, and there would not be the time to say it. It may be a total absurdity to abuse the notion of 'fiction' as foundational theory of identity underlying an

¹²Hume, *Treatise*, 121.

¹³Nietzsche. "Guilt," "Bad Conscience," and the Like," In *On the Genealogy of Morals / Ecce Homo*. 61.

¹⁴Hume, *Enquiries*, 24.

entire philosophy. Even other radical empiricisms attempt not to undermine themselves right off the bat in such a way, being rather more ambiguous in their first formal principles.

In an initial attack on innate rationalism¹⁵, he declares that, “All ideas, especially abstract ones, are naturally faint and obscure: the mind has but a slender hold of them: they are apt to be confounded with other resembling ideas.” This should be read as a naturalist’s demand to subject each and every one of our beliefs to the potential force of critical measure. Viewing ideas as fictions allows us to treat them in a manner which could lead to our personally-invested belief in each one of them being found to have been arrived at in error. Whereas distinctively for the player, there comes a time in the game when the decision to hit the ball must be made based on whichever set of factors and outweighs the desire for any further speculative quandary as to what might be the case.

The transition for the most part is seen to take place spontaneously, but if it can be said to be of anything further it is subject to the category of causation first without any primary claim to reason. Impressions absolutely cannot arise purely out of reason as¹⁶, “That would require the principle of the uniformity of nature ... which is provable neither demonstratively, nor probably...” Are the principles of association which produce the sense of causation completely random then? Hume says they cannot be¹⁷, “...were ideas entirely loose and unconnected, chance alone would join them”.

What he tells us of chance is that¹⁸, “There be no such thing as chance in the world”. But more interestingly, what he says of probabilities is, “The case is the same with the probability of causes as with that of chance”. Chance is not of nature because the existence of things is not doubttable necessarily in the way that our ideas about them are. In fact, each thing either definitely exists or does not exist and there can be no in between. Hume says of chance that it is¹⁹, “...nothing real in itself, and, properly speaking, is merely the negation of a cause, its influence on the mind is contrary to that of causation”. The regularities in the mind are generally more representative (and this is both of sensations and of reflective impressions and ideas), than they are purely imaginative. All of our imaginations would seem to amount to a complex bundle which begins with the simple impressions we first encounter. We should see then that chance must, “...leave the imagination perfectly indifferent, either to consider the existence or non-existence of that object, which is regarded as contingent”.

Nietzsche carries this type of argument much further than any bizarre situation that occurred to Hume when he writes²⁰ in part IV of *Beyond Good & Evil*

¹⁵Ibid, 15.

¹⁶Hume, *Treatise*, 648.

¹⁷Ibid, 10.

¹⁸Ibid, 43.

¹⁹Ibid, 90.

²⁰Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. “Epigrams and Interludes.” In *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, translated by Walter Arnold Kaufmann, 88. New

that, “When we are awake we also do what we do in our dreams: we invent and make up the person with whom we associate- and immediately forget it.” So, for Nietzsche, the vigor with which the impression of a sensation carries cannot even in any way help us to discern whether it is real or dreamed. He then continues in part V on dreaming²¹: “What we experience in dreams ... belongs in the end just as much to the over-all economy of our soul as anything experienced ‘actually.’” It is left for another essay to determine whether Nietzsche has a working notion of a soul or if it is only deployed here purely for rhetorical purposes, knowing that his audience would hold serious commitments to such a thing. Later in *Ecce Homo*, adopting a more explicitly polemical style, he writes that the soul was²², “invented in order to make the body despised,” but identifies based on this reading of it the very issue of whether ascension takes place within the, “earthly reality of any goal,” that may conceivably be deprived by an illusory notion of a beyond. In any case, beyond all of that even in regard to the matter we are addressing, it is not just that the two realms previously separated by a strict division have become more ambiguous, but that the way we dream most certainly effects the structure of the experience of our assumed waking life, since Nietzsche asks of us, “How could a human being who had had such dream experiences and dream habits fail to find that the word ‘happiness’ had a different color and definition in his waking life too? How could he fail to - desire happiness differently?”

Hume deals with the non-being of the soul in terms of futurity. The premise is that merely because the significant part of a relation between the soul and nature has not yet existed does not mean we will not through discovery end up with some way of actually relating to nature. That part to be sure has so far gone undescribed by all of the great theorists of personal identity from history. Therefore, Hume’s own theory is one of belief and action, about what we may hope and what we may do. He argues²³ that, “This identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is only a fictitious one,” and furthermore that, “The non-identity of the soul with nature, in so far as there is not a soul, results in human freedom from the absolutizing constraints of nature.” It is not clear whether Nietzsche’s notion of the Will to power moves beyond a relabeling of terms deployed in this argument. Up until Hume, necessity in causality had been a matter of faith and miracle but from then on it would rather be one of error and limitation.

Nietzsche mentions a book by Cornaro²⁴ called the *Art of Living Long*, from around the year 1500. Cornaro claimed to live a long life of 102 years by eating very little food as selected from a strict diet each day and drinking wine, because he could not enjoy water. Nietzsche responds that such a diet would be helpful but only for some people with bodies very much like that of Cornaro’s. He points

York: Vintage Books, 1989.

²¹Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*, 106.

²²Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, Aaron Ridley, and Judith Norman. “Ecce Homo – Why I am a Destiny,” 150.

²³Hume, *Treatise*, 187.

²⁴Nietzsche, “Twilight of the Idols - The Four Great Errors.” 176.

out that modern academics who gorge too much now on nervous energy would end up suffering from the attempt of following it. A diet can only properly be examined in the context of its interactions with surrounding cultural phenomena, including newspapers and music, and to view it otherwise as purely biological leads to error.

This kind of error is a classical result of having confused cause and effect, the first of Nietzsche's Four Great Errors. Cornaro required the diet he ended up formulating after some experimentation in order to live long. He did not live long only because of having decided to consume that particular diet and none other, let alone compounding decisions made in regard to other aspects of life altogether. In Book III of the *Gay Science*, he goes on to say about causation²⁵ that:

The suddenness with which many effects stand out misleads us; it is a suddenness only for us. There is an infinite number of processes that elude us in this second of suddenness. An intellect that saw cause and effect as a continuum, not, as we do, as arbitrary division and dismemberment — that saw the stream of the event — would reject the concept of cause and effect and deny all determinedness.

Both the second²⁶ and final error involve introducing underlying motivations behind the event of every human action and additionally all other things. It appears to us we have an inner world constituted by our own thoughts we unconsciously imagine are always intentionally being produced by ourselves. This process presumably allows us to make decisions about the world in regard to how we are going to act in response to the stimulus it is feeding us. In this way, every person is responsible for both the event and the intended outcome of their actions. Furthermore, since we have developed a general understanding of causation in such a way, we attribute a similar kind of subjective ground to all other beings outside of ourselves as equally active agents in the world, no less or moreso than ourselves.

Kant and the Transcendental Categories

Nietzsche tells a joke about Kant²⁷ in the *Gay Science* that he, “Wanted to prove, in a way that would dumbfound the whole world, that the whole world was right: that was the secret joke of this soul.” Concerning those standard arguments in metaphysics and theology previously taken up by Hume, Kant believes we should treat the ground of the concept of a possible God²⁸, and not the assumed existence of an actual one. However, he has taken the ground of the concept out from under God exactly so much as he has done so for Man, and

²⁵Nietzsche, *The gay science*, 343.

²⁶Nietzsche, “*Twilight of the Idols – The Four Great Errors*,” 177-181.

²⁷Nietzsche, *The gay science*, 193.

²⁸Kant, Immanuel. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward As Science: With Selections from the Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Gary C. Hatfield, 107. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1997. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139164061>.

thinking is done, “Only directly on the boundary of all permitted use of reason.” These make up the grounds for the advent of a new radically experimental attitude toward the functioning of all concepts, including that of God. There is not a naturalistic attitude governing metaphysics to fall back on and measure claims made about God against those more reasonable ones made about Man and his natural relations to the world, because natural science only ever is presupposed by metaphysics in the Critical philosophy he has defined. From here, we might dare to undermine the naively assumed presence of both God and of nature. As we should not, “Look upon the field of possible experience as something that bounds itself in the eyes of our reason,”²⁹ the possibilities for any given concept to fall under are not necessarily enclosed within the field of all total possibilities immediately present before us.

At the end of the Prolegomena, Kant shows that the commonly shared hope for a life that will follow this in another world authored by an intelligent being is grounded in the very structure of transcendental reason³⁰. It is just that we can now know this to be a necessary possibility on the condition of life, rather than being an empirical discovery about some way the world seems to actually be. We should not expect the structure of this situation to change in the future; the hope will neither be abandoned nor will it become fulfilled. Kant argues emphatically about any posited substantial notion of the soul³¹ that, “It cannot teach us any of the usual conclusions of the rationalistic doctrine of the soul, such as, e.g., the everlasting duration of the soul through all alterations.” It is not given to the intuition with the feeling of certainty except as a sometimes materially manifest illusion.

This will be the case for us so long as we are essentially constituted by the form of transcendental subjectivity. One might be quick to give that up, but it is the ground of both past experience and of all possible experience. At the same time Kant also wants to deprive³² the dialectic wherever possible. In this way discourse is subsumed by reason, rather than reason in dialectic. The distinction between things as objects of experience and things in themselves³³ for instance is shown to be necessary. Mere objects of possible experience can’t bring us to God, freedom, or immortality. In criticism, we overcome³⁴ materialism, fatalism, atheism, unbelief, enthusiasm/superstition, and finally both idealism & skepticism. A priori cognitions are in the common understanding, which is not represented by any of these narrow programs. Criticism also is not merely opposed to the a priori outcomes of science which can be construed as dogmatic, but rather is set against unwarranted dogmatism that fails to obey a discipline of self-critique.

²⁹Ibid, 111.

³⁰Ibid, 152.

³¹Kant, Immanuel. Critique of pure reason, translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, 417. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

³²Ibid, 117.

³³Ibid, 115.

³⁴Ibid, 119.

The synthetic a priori can't proceed by way of law of non-contradiction³⁵, as with the determination of analyticity. The faculty of sensibility is described by the doctrine of elements³⁶, in which a great multitude gets presented to the senses. The faculty of understanding is described by the doctrine of method, in which the elements are organized by cognitive function. Transcendental philosophy has no empirical content of its own, but proceeds synthetically in this sort of manner.

Why do we begin with aesthetic, then move to the logic? The apprehension of sensation is followed by the rational procedure of logic, the sensible precedes the reasonable. Pure intuitions removed of all trace of the sensible are represented in the mind a priori. The science of all such principles constitutes the transcendental aesthetic.

Transcendental freedom is an unconditioned event which can only be posited³⁷, because every event which gets experienced does so as having been caused in time by something else prior to it. Practical freedom therefore is only the convenience of not being driven by the various pathological impulses pervading nature. Though this would similarly be posited, being a matter of sensation it is instead assumed in a sort of way as given. And we can of course verify all the time that there is some or another given sensation.

We can determine that an action was free of this impulse or that one, but we could only know with certainty that it was free of all impulse if we had determined that it was entirely an unconditioned event. There would be no way of perfectly dividing up all pathology otherwise, and this practice is only an imperfect affair. But to do so would free it of all content that could characterize it as an event. If there is no free action every event has no beginning, because it must be a consequence of something other than happening itself freely. Freedom is necessary in addition to consequences of laws of nature. But consequences do not make their conditions possible. It is not only possible but necessary to reach the idea (not the appearance) of the unconditioned. Even if the intelligible cause of each appearance is inaccessible each one of their effects as appearances can be seen. The mistakes which arise as a result of this dialectic Kant calls transcendental illusion.

Nature and freedom will be attributable without contradiction to the very same thing, but in different respects³⁸, in the one case as appearance, in the other as thing in itself. In our investigations we will often fail to fully take into consideration one side or the other. This pre-synthetic unity is constituted in the place of the imagination, but it cannot be reached directly there through rational understanding and must be posited. Kant speculates quite openly about the very possibility for the persistence of a kind of diminished life enduring after death when he wonders about the possibility that, "If the mode of sensibility through

³⁵Ibid, 148.

³⁶Ibid, 151.

³⁷Ibid, 465-486.

³⁸Kant, *Prolegomena*, 96.

which transcendental (and for now entirely unknown) objects appear as a material world should cease, then not all intuition would thereby be terminated.” He carefully recognizes, “It might well be possible for the very same unknown object to continue to be cognized by the thinking subject,”³⁹ because this constitutes the dangerous continuation of an entirely passive series of intuitions

occurring without unification being done by some form of apperception with a sovereign faculty of understanding even if not that one of our own.

Hegel’s “Phenomenology of Spirit”

Hegel describes his vision of the original formation of the civil state⁴⁰ through a sort of philosophical anthropology. He also is driven to secure the openness of the future for the human as an animal. This is from philosophy largely having noticed around this time that we are at terrible of risk biological determinism closing off our actual freedom from us. Even though we give up a lot of the freedom we once imagined we held very deeply in order to form the bonds of a state, it also is the only way for a new kind of cultural/social freedom to become realized. Our own values we hold to ourselves are always at risk of becoming challenged from those deployed by another.

Consciousness realizes that in order to earn a true spiritual character it can’t take this shortcut but must go through a process that Hegel refers to as “bildung,”⁴¹ or the cultivation of a self through participating in a practice of one’s culture. Through their obedience and work, one participates in the life of the state and takes on the universal skills that allows one to participate in it. Although consciousness continues to participate in this world, at the same time it forms a faith in another second world in which salvation can finally be brought to it. In *Beyond Good & Evil*, Nietzsche refers to this as the “Salvation Army,”⁴² and says that when it arises, “one cannot decide with certainty what is cause and what effect., and whether any relation of cause and effect is involved here,” and it is in another sense, only the alienation of the workers from their own Will. Everything works, but it works toward death as its distant semi-conscious end in order to finally pass over into the second world. It has to regard its own individuality as inessential in order to become at one with the universal. The split of the two worlds is so disastrous that it finally results in the French Revolution.

The universal cultural content that gets arrived at here has something that’s not present in the earlier merely legal personhood. For instance, the notion of the good is what is at one with itself in the universal, whereas the bad is what is opposed to itself within it. But why isn’t this arbitrary, couldn’t the good and bad be something independent? We realize that language allows

³⁹Kant, *Critique*, 438.

⁴⁰Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Phenomenology of spirit*, translated by Arnold V. Miller and J. N. Findlay, 140-185. Oxford [England]: Clarendon Press, 1977.

⁴¹Ibid, 294-327.

⁴²Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*, 62.

us to redefine everything, even the very terms we thought were indestructible, like good, bad, and truth, or lies. It is our responsibility to take part in this interplay of redefinitions of what it means to be in the world as defined by the terms that it involves. But what is shared between the honest person, and the perverse who deliberately corrupts language, is a truth that is retained in the notion, no matter whether the content is of a lie. A lie, of course, is only a merely rhetorical opposition to some deeper truth, that may always potentially be arrived by following through the path of all the errors.

During the aftermath of the battle to the death over what is right in morality, we come to try and express to each other our duties.⁴³ In this way, we attempt to impress on one another that our own duty has actual force as a moral law. Such public expression, that one's duty must be adequated by others, becomes to be seen as the very essence of conscientiousness.⁴⁴ The validity of our conduct was only internal before, there was in fact no necessary essential content to it. In mutual forgiveness, out of reconciliation, each party rescinds their judgment on the evil of the other. One has taken oneself outside of the problem of the conflicting laws of the state, and opinions over good and evil, and who is in the wrong. The individual extracts themselves from these dilemmas, and understands themselves in a different way than how they had in the realm of the moral. Every dimension that seemed alien is no longer so, it gets viewed now as a rational component to the self. In the religious community each recognizes that the other has realized their absolute pure essence. But, how we relate to this absolute will still play out through a problematic form of representation.

Spirit that merely knows itself as spirit is for Hegel, of course, experienced with too much immediacy⁴⁵ to sustain a relation to. This is why he holds the artist that is member of the state and a religious community in such high esteem.⁴⁶ They are not only able to understand themselves as spirit, but shape its very character in the fashion of their own rational being. This too is not enough. The third form of religion, true religion, always has a metaphysically representative form⁴⁷. For even an artist's work of art that is considered by all to be a perfect depiction, is also at the same time only viewed as an impossible grasping toward the beyond. In nearly all world religions, one is given their relation to the divine through such representative forms as heirarchical communities, forming works of religious art, or in philosophy by way of demonstration through a priori argument that secretly and very presumptuously does the duty for us of making adequate our relation with nothing other than absolute being.

Hegel also explains that need and drive are examples most ready at hand⁴⁸ for the case to be made against a materialist theory of already closed-off finitude.

⁴³Hegel, 364-373.

⁴⁴Ibid, 383-409.

⁴⁵Ibid, 418.

⁴⁶Ibid, 424-478.

⁴⁷Ibid, 439-452.

⁴⁸Ibid, 281.

We are often found to be carrying ourselves well past the point of simple ‘satisfaction’ of desire, which even if actually fulfilled as it turns out always reproduces itself immediately again - whether of some other form or the same. Why would we not simply exist in a state of peace with our desires if they held the “stability and invincibility” that is suggested by simplistic theories of satisfaction meted out by acting merely on the basis of desire or need?

This is the way in which the problem of fully internalizing a meaningless death becomes resolved. The subject becomes involved in works of art, but a bid must always be made to God that the work will somehow become completed. We have only our own broken nature to carry the project out on ourselves. This is the connection to the infinite, which is not so much the eternal ground of everything as it is a merely empty but necessary remainder.

The spectacle of genius everything is supposed to be in order for requires a complex, populous state the ranks from which this particular individual gets drawn. Immense amounts of skilled labor is required to go to waste so that we can do anything besides persisting in the most bare, vulgar life. The wiping out of most of the herd in this way is not just possible but necessary and also highly dangerous to the possibility of producing genius. Nietzsche elaborate about the artist along similar lines⁴⁹ himself in *Twilight of the Idols*: “Without intoxication to intensify the excitability of the whole machine, there can be no art.” constantly dance its way around anaesthetization which is lurking at every turn. Nietzsche speculates about whether we will always be able to produce new celebrations and what they might look like. How much different will they have become if this demand is forever to be met?

Conclusion

In the process of collecting empirical evidence, we have circled around and found these theoretical constructs to be exactly as empty and fictitious as they were when we failed to notice we had invented them. It is only the passing of time and the cementing of these concepts into the cultural imagination that allows them to persist as misleading mental phenomena with such great force. They were founded in a very ancient psychology⁵⁰ and passed down to us, and we relish in the longest traditions as being those ones that are not able to be overcome.

In a parody of these kinds of adored fables, Nietzsche contrasts the hardness of diamonds against the comparative softness of coal.⁵¹ Coal is referred to as brothers in the plural while diamond is personified as a singular individual. The coal appeals to the diamond to become softer, to become weaker. The diamond responds that the coal has denial in its heart, that it lacks destiny in its gaze, that hardness is a precondition for the triumph of new values and any creation that would follow. Nietzsche here counters the common refrain that bliss is

⁴⁹Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 195.

⁵⁰Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. “Science.” In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, translated by Walter Arnold Kaufmann, 217. New York: Modern Library, 1995.

⁵¹Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 229.

found through acceptance of the present moment. For the true nobility, bliss could be expected for millennia in just the same way as deeply engraved writing remains on bronze.

Toward the end of his writing in *Twilight of the Idols*, after much charged rhetoric in earlier texts, Nietzsche makes the reasonable case that what is required of the overman⁵² is a shift within reach of human instinct and not so much a great leap depicted as beyond our means. This goes in line with the perspectivism which becomes fully developed during this late period of his life, and as included in the introductory part of that text. From another perspective a great leap is just such a shift. How far will it be able to impress itself on to very boundaries of our existing perspective remains to be seen, this is precisely what Nietzsche had began to explore. All kinds of means will be searched for in order to negate the Critical philosophy of its potential for relentlessly rooting out conditions of possibility, under the hidden banner of a return to the traditional. The destruction of values is realized as a philosophical project that spans centuries rather than a militaristic one, led even by a great figure like Napoleon who Nietzsche offered much acclaim.

Nietzsche argues though that he had come from a different breed of individuals than the type needed for the future⁵³, who would do best first by cultivating solitude rather than leadership. It is no longer a consideration of the resources under conditions of scarcity that would allow for a material leap to take place, but to realize a distinct and new kind of life fully in recognition of the consequences of each relative end of all possible perspectival shifts. They are many in that they constitute all the differences of life, and have mostly gone unnoticed so far – masked by their appearance to us as sets of causally distinct, individual beings existing as removed and outside of ourselves. Near the end of Book III of the *Gay Science*, where Nietzsche is exploring his own values and in this instance his feelings in regard to the status of the home⁵⁴, he says that, “One day we reach our goal - and now we point with pride to the long journeys we took to reach it. In truth we did not notice we were travelling. But we got so far because at each point we believed we were at home.” We would be able to tell we were undergoing ascension if it were presently taking place so much so that it couldn't be understood in any other way, it is never about examining life and deciding whether it is the case through evaluation – it would feel just like being at home.

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⁵²Ibid, 220-223.

⁵³Nietzsche, “*Beyond Good & Evil – Natural History of Morals*”, 111-117.

⁵⁴Nietzsche, *The gay science*, 149.

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