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Nietzsche on Individual *Autopoiesis*

Critical Dialogue with Ethno-philosophy of *Shienyu Ni Shienyu* and
Cosmopoeisis

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Nietzsche's works and abbreviations

The main critical German editions

KSA: *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe*. 15 volumes. Ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari.

Berlin: Verlag de Gruyter, 1967.¹

KSB: *Sämtliche Briefe: Kritische Studienausgabe*. Ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari. Berlin:

Verlag de Gruyter, 1967.

SA: Karl Schlechta, *Werke in drei Banden*. Munich, Hanser, 1956.

Individual works with titles in German and year of publication

GT: *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, 1871.

PHG: *Die philosophie im Tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen* 1873.

MAM: *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, 1878.

S: *Der Wanderer und sein Schatten*, 1880.

M: *Die Morgenröte*, 1881.

FW: *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 1882 Books 1 to 4 while Book 5 done by 1887.

Z: *Also sprach Zarathustra* 1883-1884.

JGB: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* 1886.

GM: *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, 1887.

GD: *Götzen-Dämmerung, oder: Wie man mit dem Hammer Philosophiert*, 1888.

AC: *Der Antichrist*, 1888.

English translations

BT: *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Douglas Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

PTAG: "Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks," trans. Duncan Large *The Nietzsche Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing House, 2006).

¹ The Colli-Montinari is the German critical edition of Nietzsche's works (KSA) which covers the published and the unpublished texts in 15 volumes. Volumes one to six of KSA covers Nietzsche's published works while volumes seven to thirteen comprise of unpublished materials ranging from 1880 to 1885. The unpublished materials are mainly Nietzsche's notes, plans for possible works that never materialized, titles, table of contents for works and even extensive quotations and comments from/on some authors that were being read at the time. The Stanford University Press has embarked on the translation of Colli-Montinari's edition into English as: *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* which is currently underway and is planned to have 19 volumes. Already some volumes have been completed, such as *Unpublished Writings from the Period of Unfashionable Observations*, *Human All Too Human* and *Dawn*.

- DS: “David Strauss, the confessor & Writer” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- HL: “On the Uses & Disadvantages of History for Life” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- SE: “Schopenhauer as Educator” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- RWB: “Richard Wagner in Bayreuth” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- HAH: *Human All Too Human, A book for free spirits*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- AOM: “Assorted Opinions and Maxims” in *Human All Too Human, A book for free spirits*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- WS: “The Wanderer and his Shadow” in *Human All Too Human, A book for free spirits*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- D: *Daybreak Thoughts on the prejudices of morality*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
- GS: *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).
- Z: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for Everyone and Nobody*, trans. Graham Parkes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- BGE: *Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a philosophy of the future*, trans. Judith Norman, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- GM: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- TI: *Twilight of Idols in Twilight of Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1990).
- AC: *The Anti-Christ in Twilight of Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1990).
- NCW: *Nietzsche Contra Wagner in The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1982).
- EH: *Ecce Homo, How one Becomes what one is*, trans. Duncan Large (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

WP: *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968). The Notes in this work are mainly found in KSA volumes 11 to 13.

Citing of Nietzsche's works

The standard practice is that Nietzsche's works are cited according to sections. The section refers to an aphorism which ranges in size from a sentence to a paragraph or paragraphs. Hence, in this dissertation Nietzsche's works are cited by number of the aphorism. For instance, *SE*, § 3 implies *Schopenhauer as Educator*, aphorism number 3 or *BGE*, § 256 refers to *Beyond Good and Evil*, aphorism 256. Such mode of citation affords easy reference notwithstanding the edition of Nietzsche's particular work at one's disposal. The exception to this procedure pertains to the citation from the Colli-Montinari critical edition of Nietzsche's works. With Colli-Montinari two modes of references are employed: 1) In relation to the published works, the reference is made to the Volume and page. For instance, KSA,1, 420 implies KSA, volume 1 and page 420. 2) In relation to the unpublished materials from the Notebooks and notes, reference is made to the volume, the Notebook number, and notes in square brackets. For instance, KSA 9, 11[141] implies volume 9, Notebook 11 and note 141. For SA, *Dritter Band*, §1, 313 implies Volume 3, aphorism number and page.

Special note on the citations of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Twilight of Idols* and *Ecce Homo*: For *Zarathustra* I have consistently referred to the book, title of the section and where relevant to the aphorism number. For instance, Z, III, (On the Vision and Riddle, 1) implies Zarathustra, Book three, section title and number. For *Twilight of Idols*, reference is made to the title of the section and the aphorism number as follows: TI "Skirmishes", §39. And finally, for *Ecce Homo*, the sub-title within this work is given followed by the aphorism number. For instance, *EH*, "clever," § 9 stands for *Ecce Homo*, section "Why I am Clever" and the aphorism number. There is also *EH*, "BT," §2 implying *Ecce Homo*, sub-title "Why I write such good books" where Nietzsche avails prefaces to his works, like "BT," "HAH," "GS" i.e. *The Birth of Tragedy*, *Human All Too Human*, and *The Gay Science*.

Introductory Chapter

I. The Research setting and question(s)

The argument in this dissertation revolves around a positive reading of Nietzsche on the tragic nature of existence. The specific narrative being advanced is that for Nietzsche, the task of individual fashioning must be conceived and examined within the tragic nature of existence. In fact, it can be claimed that, on Nietzsche's account, existence properly conceived as tragic *ipso facto* demands a qualitative individual response. I argue that the qualitative response amounts to an affirmation of life via cultivating singular individuality. These assertions respond to two related questions: What accounts for Nietzsche's conception of singular individuality as a task? And how to create the necessary conditions for singular individuality? Nonetheless, this dissertation also toils with the question of communality and tragic existence. If existence is tragic within Nietzsche's scope, then is a communal response tenable enough? Does the *aporia* of existence fundamentally demand an individual or communal response? These questions are precisely engaged with under Nietzsche's *Übermensch* as the type which properly affirms existence as tragic.

This research is conceived within two supposedly unrelated settings: Nietzsche's philosophy of the type *Übermensch* and African ethno-philosophy. The two settings inevitably are responding to the same reality, the *aporia* of existence.

Within Nietzsche scholarship there are two competing responses to the question of what Nietzsche is committed to. The first group of scholars, non-individualists, contend that Nietzsche is committed to the enhancement of the human species in general. In an attempt to support their human-enhancement stance, they refer among others to a text in *Beyond Good and Evil* where Nietzsche alleges: "everything evil, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and snakelike in humanity serves just as well as its opposite to enhance the species 'humanity.'"² Here, Nietzsche apparently addresses himself to optimum conditions for human enhancement. It is worth noting that these non-individualists draw their supporting claims largely from Nietzsche's *Nachlass* material. But this may not necessarily invalidate their stance.

The non-individualists also claim that Nietzsche is concerned with a form of human existence in terms of culture. Their notion of culture entails societies and states that lie between

² *BGE*, § 44.

individual human and humanity. They augment their argument by alleging that Nietzsche values culture as culture, and not instrumentally, by appealing to Nietzsche's praise of the Roman Empire.³ The proponents of the human-enhancement thesis hold that the passage says nothing explicit about the production of singular individuals. They hold that Nietzsche's valorisation of the achievement of the Roman Empire must be taken in its own right, as the most grandiose form of organization under difficult conditions.⁴ Their overriding assertion is that cultures can be valued in their own right without necessarily appealing to the enhancement of singular individuals. The non-individualists apparently do not present a compelling argument contra the largely accepted position of Nietzsche that, the locus of value is ultimately the singular individual.

The second group of scholars believe that Nietzsche envisages the attainment of individuality (the singular individual) or the life of the type *Übermensch* as the ethical task of his philosophy. This group relies partially on Nietzsche's strong polemics against the state as a justification for their standpoint. To counter the claim of cultural valuation as an end in itself they appeal to Nietzsche's observation that the individuals, not the masses, "form a kind of bridge across the turbulent stream of becoming."⁵ Then, the task of critical history is spelt out as the mediation between individuals, inspiring the production of the great man. The proponents of this individuality stance rely partly on Nietzsche's assertion that "the *goal of humanity* cannot lie in its end but only *in its highest exemplars*."⁶ The highest exemplars as Nietzsche alleges from *Schopenhauer as Educator* onwards, are inseparable from individual's response to life as tragic. Hence, I can claim that Ultimately, the overarching concern from Nietzsche's standpoint is how to honestly respond to existence. This question demands a positive engagement with Nietzsche's narrative on the *aporia* of existence. Hence, I will

³ The text in question is from *AC*, §58: "That which stood *aere perennius*, the *Imperium Romanum*, the most grandiose form of organization under difficult conditions which has hitherto been achieved, in comparison with which everything before and everything since is patch-work, bungling, dilettantism . . . Christianity was the vampire of the *Imperium Romanum* —the tremendous deed of the Romans in clearing the ground for a great culture *which could take its time* was undone overnight by Christianity . . . this most admirable of all works of art in the grand style, was a beginning, its structure was calculated to *prove* itself by millennia—to this day there has never been such building, to build in such a manner *sub specie aeterni* has never been so much as dreamed of!"

⁴ Joe Ward, "Nietzsche's Value Conflict: Culture, Individual, Synthesis" in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Penn State University Press, Spring 2011): 7.

⁵ *HL*, § 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, § 9.

largely confine myself to the tragic aspect of Nietzsche's thought as the justifier for singular individuality or otherwise.

In his first published work, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche references Silenus' enigmatic response about existence: "not to have been born, not to *be*, to be *nothing*. But the second-best thing for you is—to meet an early death."⁷ The terrors and horrors of existence are at the heart of Greek religion according to Nietzsche. Thus, religion served as a response to such existence. But Nietzsche wants to pose a radical question: how can man face existence on its own terms? One of the principal aims of this dissertation is to demonstrate that Nietzsche's development of singular individuality, through the process of individual cultivation, is an attempt to solve the tragic *aporia* of human existence. It is on these tragic grounds and the ensuing singular individuality that I will critique aspects of African philosophy of sociality.

Hence, this dissertation also seeks to evaluate the ethno-philosophical conditions of African thought that apparently privilege the communal over the individual. On the communal account, I will be arguing, firstly, that African communal tendencies are not first and foremost given, but are a response to the tragic nature of existence; secondly, that African philosophical discourse on sociality is partly reactionary in relation to Western discourse about Africa. In being reactionary, African philosophy of sociality largely fails on the existential aspect of appropriating the sense of the tragedy. This dissertation attempts to deconstruct some assumptions of African philosophy of sociality. One such assumption is the cliché that Africans are communal by nature. One ethno-philosophical communal phenomenon central to this dissertation is expressed in one ethnic group's moral maxim as *shienyu ni shienyu*. This is a communal moral maxim among the *Abaluyia* ethnic group of Western Kenya which literally translates 'your own is your own.' However, what it stands for is far more than what it expresses. Fundamentally, this notion originates in the understanding of the African philosophy of sociality. In engaging with African philosophy of sociality the underlying question is: How tenable are the projections of communal moral maxims in facing existence in its actuality as tragic?

⁷ *BT*, § 3.

The position of the philosophy of sociality is that the terrors of existence can only be encountered communally. However, this dissertation shows that the stance of African philosophy of sociality is challengeable even within the evolving African philosophy itself. Proponents of African philosophy of sociality, in their hasty search for identity-oriented approach to existence, imposing moral maxims are sought, and existential problems generally glossed over. The nagging question in Nietzsche's narrative of existence as tragic is whether he has any social development parameters. Within what schemes could the communal or institutions be envisaged by Nietzsche? These questions are raised against the backdrop of a common belief that Nietzsche lacks a plausible social program. (Nietzsche talks of the great world of action). However, this dissertation will show that a credible social program could accrue from the commitment to existence as tragic. In addition, it will be shown that, when life is valorised from its existential demands, communal approaches as starting points could be inadequate. Having stated the underlying questions and context of the research, I now reaffirm the thesis as follows: Nietzsche's stance on existence as tragic is the *conditio sine qua non* for individual *autopoiesis* and any critical dialogue with ethno-philosophy and *cosmopoiesis*.

II. The objectives of the research

The first and very basic objective of this study is to understand Nietzsche's position on singular individuality, how it can be undertaken and sustained within the conditions of the type *Übermensch* as the affirmer of life as tragic. The type *Übermensch* as the quintessence of the possibility for singular individuality will be studied with its allied themes of the will to power and the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. Nietzsche problematizes the modern culture based on how they enhance or limit individual perfection through *autopoiesis*.

Secondly, the study seeks to show that, in dialogical terms, Nietzsche's process of producing the singular individuality could be a valuable tool for evaluating some aspects of the African ethno-philosophy, particularly the communal aspect. It is demonstrated that fellow-feeling is largely meant for the preservation of the ethnic group. Thus, moral maxims for fellow-feeling like *shienyu ni shienyu* are largely responding to an existential problem. The positive appropriation of Nietzsche's affirmation of life as tragic requires moving beyond the philosophy of sociality. That movement entails seeking to engage with life beyond the

communal identity schemes, which demands embracing the uncertain world. Hence, a movement is made from *shienyu ni shienyu* to *shienyu ni shibala*.

And finally, given the experimental nature of Nietzsche's critique, this study envisages individual *autopoiesis* as the enabler of *cosmopoiesis*. This innovation here is in the realization that Nietzsche's philosophy of tragedy contains a highly compelling philosophy for social change through culture. Nietzsche's commitment to the singular individual is not an end in itself. The cultivation of singular individuality could enable the transformation of customs and institutions of nations. Therefore, singularity/individuality is Nietzsche's ground for values and as such is apparently central for responding to the complexities of human existence. These objectives are realized in five chapters divided into two parts: I. The conditions for individual *autopoiesis*, which entails chapters one, two and three. II. Dialogue with ethno-philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* and *cosmopoiesis*, covered under chapters four and five. But before the systematic presentation of these two parts, clarification of terms is needed.

III. Pertinent terminology and usage

Autopoiesis

In Nietzsche, the term *autopoiesis* as defined by the Greek Lexicon implies: 'doing it of oneself; freely, spontaneously.' For Nietzsche, the process of self-cultivation/*autopoiesis* entails overcoming. In this dissertation, *autopoiesis* implies self-cultivation/self-production/self-making through the psychology of the *Übermensch*, which is overcoming. This is opposed to the prevailing sense in biological sciences where the underlining objective for *autopoiesis* is self-preservation.

In the contemporary literary sense, *autopoiesis* is properly speaking a biological science concept. As such, *autopoiesis* is associated with living systems as autonomous self-interpretative beings. In early 1970s, there arose academic interests on the link between biology and cognition. Two Chilean biologists, H.R. Maturana and F.J. Varela, sought for the relationship between cognition and living organisms. They realized that the main character of organization in living things is autonomy. The two biologists referred to the phenomenon that

takes place in the dynamics of autonomy proper to living organisms as *autopoiesis*.⁸ Furthermore, they affirmed what biology already knew, that the self-regeneration of the living organism is within a cultural, historical, and social context. What apparently intrigued them in their work with individual cells was the rationale behind the autonomy perceptible in the cells' generation, remaking, and reformation. The whole process of continual self-making (described as generation, remaking and transformation) seems to be the very definition of life.

Maturana explains that the origin of the term *autopoiesis* is from the dilemma in Don Quixote's *de la Mancha*, whether to follow the path of praxis/arms or the path of *poiesis* /creation, production.⁹ *Poiesis* is selected as the description of the dynamics of autonomy in the living organisms. Hence, Maturana and Varela argue that an *autopoietic* system remakes itself through continual self-recreation, reproduction, reinvention, and renovation. As a system, an *autopoietic* structure "pulls itself up by its own bootstrap and becomes distinct from its environment through its own dynamics, in such a way that both things are inseparable."¹⁰ These dynamics of living systems are mostly for self-preservation, which is not the objective of individual *autopoiesis* in the case of Nietzsche, who privileges overcoming.

Cosmopoiesis

Cosmopoiesis is an architectural terminology understood as the action of "world-making."¹¹ It starts from the world already in existence; thus, *cosmopoietic* making entails re-making. The usage of this term in this dissertation implies the gradual transformation of the world envisaged through *autopoiesis*. *Cosmopoiesis* in this dissertation has connotations of social change as envisioned through Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche's conception of social change is that it must be in tandem with the cultivation of the tragic attitude towards existence. Individual *autopoiesis* and *cosmopoiesis* are correlates since self-making and world-making are inseparable.

⁸ H.R. Maturana and F.J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The realization of the living* (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing, 1980), XVII.

⁹ H.R. Maturana, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, XVII.

¹⁰ Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge: the biological roots of human understanding*, trans. Robert Paolucci (Boston: Shambhala, 1998), 46–47.

¹¹ Marco Francari, *Eleven Exercises in the Art of Architectural Drawing: Slow Food for the Architect's Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2011), 94.

African Ethno-philosophy

The earliest trend associated with African philosophy is ethno-philosophy. Ethno-philosophy is a neologism associated with Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah used the term ethno-philosophy as an academic discipline. However, the association of the discipline of ‘ethno-philosophy’ with African philosophy elicits serious critique. One basis for such critique is when African ethno-philosophy is presented as strongly normative and too broad in scope.¹² In so doing, such African ethno-philosophy tends to neutralize or erase contradictions and internal tensions in an ethnic reality. In this dissertation, the moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* fits such designations of ethno philosophy. *Shienyu ni shienyu* represents the normative notion of fellow-feeling where strong unanimity is highly espoused.

Shienyu ni shibala is meant to be the opposite of what *shienyu ni shienyu* espouses, especially the erasing of existential contradictions. Instead, *shienyu ni shibala* implies ‘one’s own is the world.’ *Shibala*, as world, in this dissertation embodies the actuality of life as tragic, where existential enigma is not glossed over, but encountered.

Négritude

This term is derived from French ‘*nègre*.’ The African-Caribbean students in Paris, especially Senghor and Césaire, appropriated its noun form ‘Negro’ into a black consciousness movement called Négritude. In this dissertation, when implying a movement, I have constantly used ‘Négritude’ with an upper case. However, when it is simply used as a notion of either identity based on colour or expression of the existential reality of a people, I have used *négritude* with a lower case unless it is the beginning of a sentence.

*Individual, individuality, singular and singularity*¹³

Individuality/*Individualité/Einzelheit*: psychological nuance, the quality of being differentiated as a unique person. Individuality as being differentiated is related to what

¹² On the development of the concept ethno-philosophy and its weaknesses as a ‘philosophy’ see Marcien Towa, *Essai sur la Problématique philosophique dans l’Afri que actuelle* (Yaounde: Editions CLE 1971); Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1957).

¹³ One can refer to the following dictionaries for a more nuanced understanding. Raymond J. Corsini, *The Dictionary of Psychology* (Philadelphia: Brunner/Mazel, 1999); James Mark Baldwin, ed. *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (in three volumes), Volume 1 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1901). It has an elaborate entry on the individual and the allied terms, and then, Mairi Robinson, ed. *Chambers 21st Century Dictionary*, (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1999). It is mainly for general use and has a short entry on the Singular.

psychologists call individualization. Generally, psychologists understand individuation as the process whereby an individual becomes distinguished from one or more others. In philosophy, individuality is understood as the quality or character belonging to an individual as a single entity. Philosophy throughout its history has attempted to define what constitutes individuality. Dun Scotus held individuality as a special form (*haecceitas*) responsible for individuation of every being, corporeal or incorporeal. The *haecceitas* is fused with common nature and accounts for the difference in everyone.

The term individual has a long philosophical history and is rendered as *individuus* from Latin, implying undivided/indivisible, and in German as *einzel*. An individual is also understood as a single being, distinct from a collection of beings or from a logical object of the general concept, or a being at least numerically distinct from all other beings. However, individual can technically imply singular and unique. “Singular,” from the Latin *singulus* (separate), signifies a single individual, unique, extraordinary, exceptional, or even unusual or strange and, from it, “singularity” (Latin, *singularis*) is derived as a reference to being singular, as are “peculiarity” and “individuality.”

In this dissertation, singular individuality is mainly used and refers to the exceptional quality of being differentiated as an individual. And then the singular individual will imply the exceptional individual which Nietzsche designates as one marked with singularity.¹⁴ For Nietzsche, it is through the quality of singularity that individual uniqueness is manifested. In this dissertation the terms singularity/particularity/individuality; and singular one/singular individual are employed interchangeably.

Type and typology

A type in this dissertation is generally presented as an entity exemplifying some qualities of a higher or lower species. One of the entries in *New Webster's International Dictionary* describes a type as determinable characters held in common of a homogenous human group.¹⁵ Then typology becomes a theory of types. However, more pertinently for Nietzsche, typology is about differences of value. There are two contrary types compared in this dissertation: the type last human being (*Letzte Menschen*) and the type *Übermensch*. When

¹⁴ *SE*, §3.

¹⁵ Philip Babcock Gove, ed. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, unabridged (Massachusetts: Merriam Webster, 1993).

the two are compared, the last human being is considered the despicable type, while the *Übermensch* is viewed as the best type. The type last human being is despicable given that it fails to penetrate the basic problem of morality, which in Nietzsche's purview is supposed to be life. In its failure, the type last human being resorts to universal-rationalistic principles. On this account the type last human being is also called the moral type. This type may not advance the course of individual *autopoiesis*.

Contra the type last human is the type *Übermensch* which, on Nietzsche's account, penetrates the basic problem of morality without seeking overarching principles. The type *Übermensch* is a psychological type, since it espouses the will to power as the guarantor of the nature of life. Such psychology of types cherishes reality as becoming, thus promising multiple possibilities. Throughout this dissertation, the term type when applied to the *Übermensch* designates the psychological type. Nietzsche's term *Übermensch* has been left deliberately untranslated for lack of a proper English equivalent. The closest equivalent could be over-human given the *Mensch*, but some opine that it is overman which is itself not without contestation.¹⁶

IV. The Systematic presentation of the dissertation

In *Schopenhauer as Educator* (1874), Nietzsche alleges that anyone who does not wish to belong to the mass needs only to cease taking himself easily. He goes on to demand that such a one ought to follow 'his conscience' which calls on him to follow this maxim: "Be yourself! All you are now doing, thinking, desiring, is not yourself."¹⁷ Then later in the same work, Nietzsche claims that: "Each of us bears a productive uniqueness within, as the core of [our] being."¹⁸ The awareness of this uniqueness necessitates the realization of what Nietzsche calls 'a strange penumbra which is the mark' of singularity. This singularity/individuality apparently is the antithesis of those who belong to the mass. One of the immediate questions could be, is being oneself equivalent to the attainment of individuality, assuming that individuality is related to uniqueness? In *The Gay Science* (1882) Nietzsche poses: "What does

¹⁶ The translators involved in the project of *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* hold the position that *Übermensch* could be rendered in English as super-human. Part of their rationale is drawn from *BGE*, §294 where the adjective *Übermenschlich* is used.

¹⁷ *SE*, §1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, §3.

your conscience say? – ‘You shall become the person you are.’”¹⁹ The meaning of ‘conscience’ here is not immediately clear.

But from the various references about the ‘conscience,’ it is correlated to honesty and human instinctual nature. In fact, Nietzsche talks of the ‘intellectual conscience’ which he considers as a rarity. He claims “the great majority of people lack an intellectual conscience.”²⁰ Later in the same work, Nietzsche further inquires, “But why do you listen to the voice of your conscience? [...] Have you never heard of an intellectual conscience? A conscience behind your ‘conscience.’”²¹ The intellectual conscience in Nietzsche must be linked to the basic constitutive element of the human beings, the drives. This conception of the human beings as drive-centred leads to Nietzsche’s fundamental drive, the will to power.

Intellectual conscience as honesty obtains when one examines ‘oneself’ and realizes that there is no given unified ‘self’ but a multiplicity of drives that are in need of organization. For Nietzsche, the human being is “the animal whose nature has not yet been fixed.”²² The lack of a fixed nature is what characterizes the drives in general but more so the fundamental drive, the will to power, life. Hence, the task of giving style to oneself hinges on such a nature. The description for not being fixed or not already organized is chaos, change or simply becoming. Nietzsche claims: “We, however, *want to become those we are* – human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves.”²³ Having a nature not yet fixed implies also some leeway of experimenting with oneself. Individual *autopoiesis* must then be founded on the chaotic/tragic nature in the sense of the indeterminate aspects of the human reality, the drives.

Schopenhauer as Educator offers Nietzsche’s philosophical scheme owing to the pertinent theme of singularity and its underlying questions: How can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? How can we find ourselves again? Nietzsche follows up these questions with what seems like his response: “Certainly only by your living for the good of the rarest and most valuable exemplars, and not for the good of the majority, that is to say those who, taken individually,

¹⁹ *GS*, §270.

²⁰ *GS*, §2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, §335.

²² *BGE*, §62.

²³ *GS*, §335.

are the least valuable exemplars.”²⁴ Nietzsche calls the exemplars ‘the rarest and most valuable.’ These are likely not particular human beings but a type which individuals strive to live by in response to the above questions. However, though we may have the type *Übermensch* as the ‘inducer’ to become what one is, such an ethical task is individually determined. This plethora of ‘hows’ does not end with early Nietzsche.

Nietzsche’s last work *Ecce Homo* (1888) is subtitled ‘How One Becomes What One is.’ The standard entry point into this work is largely from some of its claims in the preface: “it seems to me essential to say who I am.”²⁵ Nietzsche conceives who he is as a task. Above all, he embarks on such a task since he does not want to be mistaken. Hence, *Ecce Homo* has been mostly understood as Nietzsche’s self-explanation and self-justification.²⁶ In the light of self-explanation and self-justification, the subtitle of the work could point to Nietzsche’s agenda: ‘How one becomes what one is,’ where the emphasis must be on the ‘how.’ Nevertheless, this ‘how’ is not a pointer to the work being a blue-print or a promising to be an ideal. In the work, Nietzsche alleges: “The last thing I would promise would be to ‘improve’ humanity. I do not set up any new idols; let the old ones learn what it means to have legs of clay.”²⁷ The work is not offering a recipe since the author claims: “I don’t want any ‘disciples.’”²⁸ In furtherance of the claim that the book is not a hand-book, Nietzsche alleges, he never addresses crowds. In addition, Zarathustra advises his supposed disciples: “Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves.”²⁹ It is my considered position that in *Ecce Homo*’s subtitle, Nietzsche manifests consistency about the need for exemplars.

An exemplar as opposed to a model challenges one to become who he is by being faithful to one’s own path beyond the age. The exemplar induces or lures. Zarathustra plays the role of an exemplary figure. However, in Nietzsche, the greatest exemplary figure is the type *Übermensch*. Through the type *Übermensch*, Nietzsche envisions how the individuals could be induced to singular individuality through perpetual overcoming. In this regard, *Ecce Homo*’s ‘what one is’ could be largely about the type *Übermensch*. It through the type *Übermensch* that singular individuality could be justified and the conditions for individual

²⁴ *SE*, §6.

²⁵ *EH*, Preface, 1.

²⁶ Duncan Large, “Introduction” in *Ecce Homo How To Become What You Are*, XV.

²⁷ *EH*, Preface, 2.

²⁸ *EH*, “Destiny,” Preface, §1.

²⁹ *EH*, Preface 4.

autopoiesis envisaged. Such conditions are closely linked to the type *Übermensch* through the fundamental will, as will to power and the extra-moral life of the same as the affirmation of the Eternal Recurrence. The type *Übermensch* as the exemplary figure stands above drawing individuals onward and upward through self-overcoming to singular individuality. That overcoming demands espousing a basic drive to life as the will to power.

Thus, the basic standpoint in this dissertation is that Nietzsche's problematic claims about becoming who we are and the 'how' questions must be interpreted in the realm of life as will to power, in other words, espousing existence as tragic. The type *Übermensch* essentially epitomizes such an existence. However, whereas the type *Übermensch* demands individual response, some aspects within ethno-philosophical trends envisage communal response to existence as tragic. The weaknesses inherent in communal approaches can be discerned from Nietzsche's own examples about the Greek and the Renaissance period and their ensuing institutions. The underlying position in Nietzsche is that singular individuality through individual *autopoiesis* is the guarantor of new world-making, *cosmopoiesis*. This is because singular individuality properly embarked on "does not close back upon itself, but transports itself beyond into the world."³⁰ In this regard, this dissertation presents: I. Nietzsche's conditions that induce individual *autopoiesis* in the first three chapters, and II. The possible dialogue with ethno-philosophy and *cosmopoiesis* is developed in chapters four and five, respectively. The five chapters and their summative claims are as follows:

Part I: Nietzsche Conditions for Individual *Autopoiesis*

Chapter One, entitled 'Nietzsche's singular individual and the type *Übermensch*,' focuses on two main aspects of the research, singular individuality, and the type *Übermensch*. The first part of this chapter is on one of the early works of Nietzsche, *Schopenhauer as Educator*. In this work, Nietzsche's main theme is singularity as the adequate response to the *aporia* of existence. Allied to singularity are the conditions that may or may not promote such a task. For instance, the facilitating conditions include the need for taskmasters, exemplars, breeders, solitude, helmsmen of one's life, honesty, and inducement to indeterminateness/untimeliness. The pertinence of these conditions is founded on the fact that

³⁰ Michael Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, trans. Michael Gendre (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 87.

Nietzsche considered the work *Schopenhauer as Educator* as his scheme and self-portrait. These conditions also colour the entire philosophical periods of Nietzsche. Unfortunately, these conditions have not been given sufficient weight in considering Nietzsche's later themes, such as the *Übermensch*, the will to power, and the Eternal Recurrence of the same.

The second part of this chapter shows that the conditions mentioned in many ways obtain in the role of the type *Übermensch*. The features presented in *Schopenhauer as Educator* as inimical to singular individual enhancement will, in the middle and later Nietzsche, count for the last human type. Such features include, espousing of utilitarian characters, such as desire for happiness, the masses, and morality of custom. In this regard, *Schopenhauer as Educator* could be considered as Nietzsche's programmatic work where the conditions necessary for embarking on the task of singular individuality are introduced and later tackled. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, the nature of the exemplar or taskmaster for the singular individual is not clear. On the contrary, it is largely the case later, that the type *Übermensch*, through its fundamental will as will to power, is the desiderata for the task of singular individuality.

Chapter Two, 'The Psychology of the type *Übermensch*,' explains the grounds for regarding the *Übermensch* as the *raison d'être* for the task of singular individuality. In this chapter, the type *Übermensch* is explained based on the will to power as its constitutive nature. This is done first by brief analysis of Nietzsche's understanding of psychology and will to power. Here the will to power is presented as the psychology of the type *Übermensch* and as the 'affect of command.' It is through the will as the 'affect of command' that the notion of the will to power is explained in its twin actions of overcoming and form-giving. Secondly, this chapter elucidates the type *Übermensch* under the auspices of form-giving. The considered argument here is that the type *Übermensch* in its efficacious act of form-giving sustains individuals espousing singularities. The type *Übermensch* in its pure becoming nature, requires validation. Thus, it validates itself through its possible forms which in this case are the singular individuals. Consistent with the constitutive nature of the type *Übermensch*, the ensuing forms are basically governed by the regime of drives as the basic units for realizing any individual singularity. On the grounds of how individuals organize their drives in alignment with or without the type *Übermensch*, Nietzsche's strong or weak wills ensue respectively. However,

the problem in the organization of the drives is also largely influenced by the type of morality one endorses.

Chapter Three, ‘The extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch*,’ shows the life akin to the action of the will to power as unintentional. Such life is beyond the judgemental concepts of good and evil. The life of the type *Übermensch* implies affirmation of becoming through and through, which is analysed through Nietzsche’s complex doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. Because of its complexity, this chapter retrieves and interprets the doctrine as follows: 1) The brief historical note on Eternal Recurrence. 2) The prevailing scholarly approaches to the doctrine in Nietzsche. 3) The Eternal Recurrence in Nietzsche’s corpus. 4) The interpretation of the Eternal Recurrence as the formula of affirmation. 5) The extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch*. 6) Morality of custom. This chapter entails the heart of this dissertation whereby individual *autopoiesis* demands appropriation of the tragic. The appropriation of the tragic is akin to embracing life as will to power. The question is how could one affirm life in its extra-moral sense? For Nietzsche, the response lies in the acceptance of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence as an existential-ethical imperative. The doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is traced from the ancient Greek philosophy of Heraclitus and the Stoics where there are at least two possible theories of it, as a cosmological or an anthropological theory. Embracing life in its tragic form as will to power, demands some edge over the cosmological or anthropological underpinnings of the Eternal Recurrence. Similarly, the generic prescriptive interpretation of Eternal Recurrence necessarily requires appropriation of it at the existential-ethical imperative level. It is as the existential-ethical imperative that the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence for Nietzsche becomes pertinent to individual *autopoiesis*.

Part II: Dialogue with Ethno-philosophy and *Cosmopoiesis*

Chapter Four, ‘The ethno-philosophy of *Shienyu Ni Shienyu*,’ attempts a different kind of response to existence from that envisaged by Nietzsche. One pertinent aspect of the ethno-philosophy in question here is the ‘communal.’ Hence, a sense of the communal and its consequences on singular individuality is developed as follows: 1) Ethno-philosophy and communality, which also includes examining an ethno-genesis of the *Abaluyia* ethnic group in Kenya. 2) *Shienyu ni shienyu* as ethno-philosophy and its ontology is explored. 3) The evolution of the African philosophy of sociality where two representative models are presented

with a critique. The overarching argument revolves around the understanding of the reality of the communal as a largely constructed sort of response to existential enigma. But, on the positive reading of Nietzsche's philosophy on tragedy, the challenging fact for the communal approach is the appropriation of that enigma of existence at the individual level as the prerequisite for the task of singularity. The two models of African philosophy of sociality, fronted as Négritude and *Ujamaa* (espoused by Senghor and Nyerere respectively), obtain minimal success given their weakness on the notion of existential tragedy, partly due to universalistic approaches. The point is that embarking on a social development trajectory presupposes espousing the sense of the tragedy.

Chapter Five, 'From *Autopoiesis* to *Cosmopoiesis*,' attempts to fashion Nietzsche's philosophy of social change grounded in individual response to existence as tragic. In this regard, more clarity is sought on some attempts of social change devoid of the sense of the tragic as it is envisioned in Nietzsche's philosophy. This is made operational through four themes that bring a closure to the entire thesis on individual *autopoiesis* and critical dialogue with ethno-philosophy and *cosmopoiesis*: 1) The general nature of *autopoiesis* in Nietzsche, where correlation between *poiesis* and tragedy is discerned. The very fact, of 'making' or 'cultivating' presupposes some form of chaos. 2) Nietzsche on the perfection of the social world of humanity. This is first and foremost a presentation of Nietzsche's envisaged social program that hinges on individual singularity. Then, secondly, Nietzsche's own proof from history which affirms his claim that individual singularity is a necessary condition for bettering institutions and societies. 3) The notion of *cosmopoiesis* and the type *Übermensch*. 4) The movement beyond African philosophy of sociality. Such a movement, I suggest, gives a way forward: to an existential philosophy of sorts grounded on the African experience, from Césaire and Frantz Fanon's perspectives; and the proposal to appropriate the tragedy through *shienyu ni shibala* as opposed to *shienyu ni shienyu*.

Part I: Conditions for Individual *Autopoiesis*

Chapter 1: Nietzsche's Singular Individual and the Type *Übermensch*

Each of us bears a productive uniqueness within him as the core of his being; and when he becomes aware of it, there appears around him a strange penumbra which is a mark of his singularity. Most find this something unendurable, because they are, as aforesaid, lazy, and because a chain of toil and burdens is suspended from this uniqueness. There can be no doubt that, for the singular man who encumbers himself with this chain, life withholds almost everything [...] (SE, §3).

Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on singular individuality and the type *Übermensch* from two broad approaches: (a) The development and the place of the singular individuality within Nietzsche's philosophy, especially how this notion pans out from *Schopenhauer as Educator* (which on the theme of singular individuality can be considered as Nietzsche's scheme). In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, the focus on the questionableness of man is more pronounced; Nietzsche introduces the optimal conditions for production of the singular individual, particularly the role of the exemplar, and gives Schopenhauer's traits as an exemplar/singular individual. (b) The link between the type *Übermensch* (the guarantor of the optimum conditions to produce the singular individual) and the singular individual; different nuances of the type last human and the type *Übermensch*. The overriding claim is that, though not introduced as a term at the beginning of Nietzsche's works, the notion and function of the type *Übermensch* underlies Nietzsche's commitment to singular individuality as the pivot for cultural enhancement. The full justification of this claim will entail the entire dissertation.

This chapter is structured as follows: First is the presentation of Nietzsche's theme of human existence as introduced in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, a scheme for his philosophical projections. The specific question is, how can tragic existence be encountered favourably? In his response, Nietzsche appeals to the figure of Schopenhauer as his exemplar which steadily develops into the need for breeders, taskmasters, and striving as the conditions for singular individual existence. Second is the theme of singularity in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, with the question, under what conditions is singularity envisaged? Third, I have argued that

generally for Nietzsche and not just in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, existence conceived as tragic demands singular individuality. And the final main argument is the introduction of the type *Übermensch* as the embodiment of the exemplar, striving, breeding and the affirmer of existence as tragic. In this regard, unlike the last human being who embodies self-preservation, the type *Übermensch* through overcoming seems to be the guarantor for singular individuality.

1.1 *Schopenhauer as Educator: Nietzsche's Scheme*

There is a credible consensus among Nietzsche scholars that the *The Birth of Tragedy* and the *Untimely Meditations* contain fundamental themes that he later develops as the *Übermensch* and the will to power.¹ R. Schacht claims that Nietzsche, both as a lecturer and in *The Birth of Tragedy*, is unwilling to conform to the disciplinary norms of classical scholarship and is largely anti-conventional.² Instead Nietzsche's preoccupations are with prevailing cultural, social, psychological, and philosophical issues. W. Kaufmann is more pointed in asserting that Nietzsche's first works pose the problems and announce the major themes that he deals with later.³ The themes include Nietzsche's polemics against the state and evaluations related to the pursuits of art, religion, and philosophy. For Kaufmann, Nietzsche saw the state as the archenemy of the concerns of art, religion, and philosophy.

Schacht observes that generally Nietzsche is concerned with evaluative questions (such as that of existence) "posed but not resolved by ancient and modern cultural phenomena."⁴ Nietzsche looks for justification of life within Greek culture: how the Greeks endured and affirmed existence despite its absurdity and terror. It can be claimed that Nietzsche is committed more clearly to individual existence from the period of the *Untimely Meditations* onwards. This is because in *The Birth of Tragedy*, though it is asserted that existence is only justified as an aesthetic phenomenon, the singular individual is not pointedly proposed as the appropriate response to such existence. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, individual singularity is aligned to affirmation of the tragic existence raised earlier in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

¹ The *Untimely Meditations* include: *David Straus, the confessor and the writer* (DS, 1873); *On the Uses and Disadvantages of history for life* (HL, 1874); *Schopenhauer as Educator* (SE, 1874) and *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (RWB) of 1876.

² Richard Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche: Reflections Timely and Untimely* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 154.

³ Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edition (New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1974), 122.

⁴ Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 341.

At this point in this research, it can be claimed that Nietzsche's problem is metaphysical (affirmation of existence) even though he may not be inclined to propose traditional metaphysical solutions. Such a claim is justified on the basis that Nietzsche is Heraclitean in his approach.⁵ Thus, his philosophy endeavours to affirm reality as becoming. Such a designation of reality is the radical way of expressing the nature of life which Nietzsche will later christen as the will to power. Life as will to power implies that it invents itself through its becomingness.⁶ The god Dionysus symbolizes the tragic element of reality, which in the last analysis is the one and only character in life. Ultimately the task of facing this subterranean reality of life is the individual's.

In *Schopenhauer as Educator* Nietzsche poses the question, "But how can we find ourselves again? How can man know himself?"⁷ Nietzsche poses these two specific questions after claiming that no one can construct for you the bridge of life, except you yourself. In what follows, the argument revolves around an individual response to existence as the main theme in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. M. Buber remarks that:

The questionableness of man is Nietzsche's real great theme, which engages him from his first philosophical efforts till the end. As early as 1874, in his study of Schopenhauer as an educator, he puts a question which is like a marginal note to Kant's fourth question [Was ist der Mensch? -What is man?], and in which our age is mirrored [...]: 'How can man know himself.'⁸

In this regard, the question of *der Mensch* as the singular individual is fundamental to Nietzsche's attempt at the affirmation of tragic existence. Nietzsche is basically committed to the process of cultivating *produktive Einzigkeit* (productive uniqueness) within the individual. Nietzsche holds that when one becomes aware of internal uniqueness, "there appears around him a strange penumbra which is the mark of his singularity."⁹ The theme of singular

⁵ I have presented Heraclitus's influence on Nietzsche at the end of this chapter and in a detailed manner in Chapter Three. According to Hans Urs von Balthasar, Nietzsche's interest is becoming as "a form of reality," given that reality is nothing but "pure becoming." See *Theo-Drama, Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol. 1 Prolegomena*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 233.

⁶ Nietzsche's notion of will to power is dealt with in chapter two. Henri de Lubac describes Nietzsche's reality of becoming in Dionysian terms as the "depth of being." Refer, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, trans. Edith M. Riley (London: Sheed & Ward, 1949), 37.

⁷ *SE*, §1.

⁸ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Mansfield: Martino Publishing CT, 2014), 148.

⁹ *SE*, §, 3; German text, "Schopenhauer als Erzieher" SA, §3.

individuality is fundamental to Nietzsche's project, beginning from *Schopenhauer as Educator*.

In his last published work, *Ecce Homo* (written in 1888 but published posthumously in 1908), Nietzsche references *Schopenhauer as Educator* as the bearer of his innermost history and the inscription of his becoming:

*What I am today, where I am today—at a height where I no longer speak with words but with lightning bolts—oh how far away I still was then! —But I could see the land—not for one moment did I deceive myself about the path, sea, danger—and success!*¹⁰

Generally, Nietzsche is of the view that the untimely writings point the path to greatness and world historic tasks. I hold the position that the path to greatness presupposes embracing of existence as tragic with singular individuality as an envisaged product. These assertions support the validity of the thematic importance of *Schopenhauer as Educator*.

A closely related theme to singular individuality that makes its appearance from the time of *Schopenhauer as Educator* is 'the untimely nature' of the philosopher. Nietzsche describes the philosopher as the enemy of his age, which implies being untimely. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche sets the stage for the critique of his age and its institutions. In this work, Nietzsche envisages the individual as a great peering into the future (thus untimely). Therefore, *Schopenhauer as Educator* is likely Nietzsche's own program of being untimely (singular individual). He asserts that: "it is basically not 'Schopenhauer as Educator' but his *opposite*, 'Nietzsche as Educator', who is given a chance to speak here."¹¹ Nietzsche undertakes in *Schopenhauer as Educator* to educate (*erziehen/educare*) in singular individuality. The only other time that pointed reference is made to education is about Zarathustra, Nietzsche's alter ego, as the teacher of the Eternal Recurrence. The doctrine in question is basically Nietzsche's fine explanation of the tragic nature of existence. I have engaged with the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence in Chapter Three.

The importance Nietzsche attached to *Schopenhauer as Educator* is also reflected in his correspondence. In a letter of February 19, 1888 to G. Brandes he writes: "The two essays on Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner represent, it appears to me to-day, more self-

¹⁰ *EH*, "The Untimeliness," § 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

confessions, above all, more avowals of self, than any real psychology of those masters who were both related to me as intimately as they were antagonistically.” Later, on April 10, 1888 to Brandes again, and specifically about *Schopenhauer as Educator*, he writes,

That little performance serves the purpose of a distinguishing mark; he for whom it does not contain much that is personal has in all probability nothing in common with me. The whole scheme according to which I have ever since lived is drawn up in it. It is a rigorous foreshadowing.¹²

The argument here is that later major themes such as self-cultivation and the type *Übermensch* are prefigured in *Schopenhauer as Educator* through singular individuality. The image of the philosopher in *Schopenhauer as Educator* arguably enables Nietzsche to view the person of Schopenhauer as his exemplar. This is because Nietzsche understands philosophy as a way of life and not a system of doctrines to be passed on.¹³

Schopenhauer is distinguished as a philosopher by Nietzsche, not so much by his writings, but by how he lived. Nietzsche is pointedly clear about who is an example to him. He says: “I profit from a philosopher only insofar as he can be an example. ... This example must be supplied by his outward life and not merely in his books.”¹⁴ He goes on to provide an exemplary category: “in the way, that is, in which the philosophers of Greece taught, through their bearing, what they wore and ate, and their morals, rather than by what they said, let alone what they wrote.”¹⁵ In appealing to the Greeks’ usage of exemplar—*das Beispiel*—Nietzsche intends to avoid mere imitation. Apart from the imitation, the recourse to the Greeks for Nietzsche is intended to show that the Greek character of the ordering of chaos (the vagaries of existence) is exceptional.

An exemplar is not to be taken as a model, given that, in exemplariness, there is a demand to remain faithful to one’s own path. In Nietzsche’s understanding, the role of the exemplar is the disclosure of the higher self. The higher self comes into view through the

¹² The two letters cited are from the translation by A.N. Ludovici, *Friedrich Nietzsche, Selected Letters*, Private correspondence (London: Soho Book Company, 1985), 329 and 338.

¹³ Such a view about the Philosopher is prevalent in the lecture notes of Philosophy in the age of Greek tragedy, in *Schopenhauer as Educator* and later in the *Beyond Good and Evil*.

¹⁴ *SE*, §3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

confrontation with what one trusts and admires in the exemplar.¹⁶ Thus, Nietzsche in *Schopenhauer as Educator* masks himself since he apparently does not prescribe for the readers an ideal to follow, but persuades them to a higher self. However, Nietzsche also takes Schopenhauer as the exemplar who challenged him to a conception of who he wanted to become. Brandes observes the following on Schopenhauer's influence on Nietzsche:

It was a liberating educator of this kind that Nietzsche as a young man looked for and found in Schopenhauer. Such a one will be found by every seeker in the personality that has the most liberating effect on him during his period of development. Nietzsche says that as soon as he had read a single page of Schopenhauer, he knew he would read every page of him and pay heed to every word, even to the errors he might find. ... It is true that for Nietzsche, as for any other aspirant [intellectual], there remained one more step to be taken, that of liberating himself from the liberator.¹⁷

The standard position is that it is Schopenhauer's life that educated Nietzsche to the possibility of thinking and living, not only above his age, but also independent of the exemplar. It made Nietzsche the untimely figure that he became. The figure capable of the type of education envisaged in *Schopenhauer as Educator* and later demonstrated in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* through the Eternal Recurrence. Schopenhauer serves as exemplar for Nietzsche because he was considered so thoroughly a singular one. Hence, Schopenhauer as Nietzsche's exemplar educates him to a life of fearless independence which is inherently the process to singular individuality (finding oneself).

Nietzsche gives the figure of Schopenhauer as one of the possible means of reflecting on what singularity entails. Nietzsche says of Schopenhauer's exemplarity,

[C]ertainly there may be other means of finding oneself, of coming to oneself out of the bewilderment in which one usually wanders as in a dark cloud, but I know of none better than to think on one's true educators. And so today I shall remember one of the teachers and taskmasters of whom I can boast, *Arthur Schopenhauer*.¹⁸

Schopenhauer is remembered as “*des einen Lehrers und Zuchtmeisters*” (one of the teachers and taskmasters). The term ‘Zucht’ (which implies breeding and rearing and even can refer to

¹⁶ James Conant, “Nietzsche's perfectionism: A reading of Schopenhauer as Educator” in *Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, eds. Bern Magnus and Kathleen Higgins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 203.

¹⁷ George Brandes, *Friedrich Nietzsche, An Essay on Aristocratic Radicalism* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1972), 10.

¹⁸ *SE*, §1.

cell culture) is prevalent in Nietzsche's literature. It is associated with breeding of animals and plants. In *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche talks of what type of human being "one ought to breed."¹⁹ Then in *Ecce Homo*, he talks of *Selbstzucht* (as breeding oneself).²⁰ This is another trait of the exemplar apart from being provocateur to individual self-improvement, he also breeds.

The breeding that Nietzsche probably has in mind is the one which most resembles nature. In reference to culture as liberation, he states that "it is imitation and worship of nature where nature is in her motherly and merciful mood, it is the perfecting of nature when it deflects her cruel and merciless assaults and turns them to good [...]."²¹ Culture as liberation at the moment for Nietzsche must imbibe the ways of nature. Nature's ways entail both enabling and constraining aspects leading to optimal condition for any flourishing. I think Nietzsche is attempting to understand the *modus operandi* of nature and its possible application to how a human being may flourish. It is a fine observation, but on Nietzsche's own account later, nature itself acts for no purpose (see Chapter Three). Nevertheless, the constraints act as enforcing agents, and that justifies the reference to taskmasters (*Zuchtmeister* as a sort of breeder). In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche lays out his plan on the main question: 'how can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance?' The tentative response so far is that for individual uniqueness to flourish it needs an exemplar who functions as an inducer and a breeder. Now the focus turns specifically to singular individuality and its need for exemplars in *Schopenhauer as Educator*.

1.1.1 Singularity in *Schopenhauer as Educator*

In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche talks of timidity-cum-laziness as characteristics of people of many lands. Nietzsche claims that, "The man who does not wish to belong to the mass needs only to cease taking himself easily; let him follow his conscience, which calls to him: 'Be your self! All you are now doing, thinking, desiring, is not you yourself.'"²² Nietzsche recognizes physio-psychological challenges towards the affirmation of one's uniqueness (fear and laziness). In the same text, Nietzsche is subtle: "One has to take

¹⁹ *AC*, §3.

²⁰ *EH* 'Untimeliness,' §3.

²¹ *SE*, §1.

²² *SE*, §1.

a somewhat bold and dangerous line with this existence. ...”²³ The starting point in this case for Nietzsche is that the realization of singular individuality is fundamentally a task.

On singular individuality in Nietzsche as a task, Rudolf Steiner observes that: “The single human being does not become ‘perfect’ when he denies himself and resembles a model, but when he brings to reality that within him which strives towards realization.”²⁴ Nietzsche’s concern is fear and laziness, which result in hiding behind customs and opinions. Nietzsche is arguably tackling that which constrains the individual to fear and fail embarking on the task of singular individuality. William Hubben, reading Nietzsche on the singular individual, opines that Nietzsche wants no disciples, but new “single ones” at a time when the average mass man no longer counts.²⁵ The path to singular individuality is unusually inseparable from banishment of fear and laziness. The individual acting like a member of the herd will possibly be deemed lacking in singular individuality.

Nietzsche ascribes to Schopenhauer some characteristics as the greatest exemplar of singular individuality. For Nietzsche, a true philosopher as an educator implies one “who could raise [himself] above [his] insufficiencies insofar as these originated in the age and teach [him] again to be simple and honest in thought and life, that is to say to be untimely. ...”²⁶ How did Schopenhauer educate Nietzsche to untimeliness/singularity?

Nietzsche references Schopenhauer as a teacher who raised himself above the insufficiencies of the age (the mass, the crowd). On exemplars in Nietzsche’s philosophy, Steven V. Hicks and Alan Rosenberg believe that Nietzsche’s exemplars (in this case Schopenhauer) offer a partial answer to the question, ‘How can one become what one is?’ The exemplary figure enables individuals to strive to become who they really are, their own selves. Furthermore, exemplary figures are designed to entice individuals into something “untimely.”²⁷ The exemplar in *Schopenhauer as Educator* lures one to experience the world differently and to think differently about the same. This is basically the world as becoming.

²³ *SE*, §1.

²⁴ Rudolf Steiner, *Friedrich Nietzsche Fighter for freedom*, trans, Margaret Ingram deRis (New Jersey: Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1960), 66.

²⁵ William Hubben, *Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Kafka, Four Prophets of our Destiny* (New York: Collier Macmillan Ltd, 1962), 102.

²⁶ *SE*, § 2.

²⁷ Steven V. Hicks and Alan Rosenberg, “Nietzsche and untimeliness: The philosopher of the Future as the Figure of Disruptive Wisdom” in *Journal of Nietzsche studies*, no. 25 (Penn State University Press, Spring, 2003): 8–10.

But aligning individuality with untimeliness poses a challenge about its concreteness. Since the moment individuality is attained, one becomes timely (member of the age) and as such ceases to be untimely. On this account, some Nietzsche scholars on individuality like Werner Hamacher believe individuality must oscillate between generality and specificity.²⁸ This means that even the notion of singular individuality is betrayed by generalized conceptual language. Hence, singular individuality must be conceived within the realm of becoming as ever a work in progress. The enigmatic nature of singularity is expressed by Nietzsche in *Schopenhauer as Educator*.

Nietzsche enumerates what he calls constitutional dangers that threatened Schopenhauer. He mentions isolation, despair of the truth, and discovery of some limitations within. It is in relation to these dangers that Nietzsche asserts,

Each of us bears a *productive uniqueness within him as the core of his being; and when he becomes aware of it, there appears around him a strange penumbra which is a mark of his singularity*. Most find this something unendurable, because they are, as aforesaid, lazy, and because a chain of toil and burdens is suspended from this uniqueness. There can be no doubt that, for the singular man who encumbers himself with this chain, life withholds almost everything—cheerfulness, security, ease, honour—that he desired of it in his youth; solitude is the gift his fellow men present to him; let him live where he will, he will always find there the desert and the cave. Let him see to it that he does not become subjugated, that he does not become depressed and melancholic.²⁹

The complexities of singularity in Nietzsche lie in this text. One could view it as a summary of sorts regarding Nietzsche's philosophical task of education to singular individuality. The text contains pertinent constraints for the process of singular individuality. The constraints include facing tragic existence singularly, toils, solitariness, and continuous self-cultivation. Elaboration on these aspects demands closer analysis of the italicized parts of the text.

The key word from the highlighted text is singularity. The term *Ungewöhnlichen* is used twice in the above text. In the first instance it is in relation to a 'strange penumbra' which is seen as a mark of singularity (*der des Ungewöhnlichen*), and then secondly as the singular man (*den Ungewöhnlichen*). The adjective *ungewöhnlich* communicates several nuances:

²⁸ On Werner Hamacher's conception of Nietzsche and individuality refer to Werner Hamacher, "Disgregation of the will: Nietzsche on the individual and individuality" in *Reconstructing individualism-Autonomy, Individuality, and the self in Western thought*, Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, and David E. Wellbery, inter alia (California: Stanford University Press, 1997), 106–121.

²⁹ *SE*, § 3 My emphasis.

unusual, extraordinary, particular, and even exceptional. The accusative noun form, *den Ungewöhnlichen*, apart from singularity, could also imply particularity, as in the exceptional one or the unusual one in terms of differentiation.

Being the unusual one/single one is largely unendurable. That is because singularity entails constraints that can withhold some utilitarian needs, such as happiness. The utilitarian needs mentioned by Nietzsche are cheerfulness, security, ease, and honour. Nietzsche will later critique the utilitarian notion of happiness as too limited a goal to strive for. The mentioned needs can be regarded as timely. But Nietzsche conceives Schopenhauer as his untimely teacher, and it is in this un-timeliness that the constitutional dangers are presented. Now how does the figure of Schopenhauer embody the above passage on singularity? The answer may not lie in the timely utilitarian needs.

For Nietzsche, though consisting of danger, the manifestation of singular individuality in life is an ethical task. How is Schopenhauer an exemplar in expressing that uniqueness? Nietzsche says, “I am describing nothing but the first, as it were physiological, impression Schopenhauer produced upon me, that magical outpouring of the inner strength of one natural creature on to another [...].”³⁰ The magical outpouring (*Ausströmen*) of inner strength is most likely the expression of Schopenhauer’s singularity.³¹ On the manifestation of individuality Nuno Nabais claims that Nietzsche “adopts an interior viewpoint, conceiving the individual [...] from, precisely, his individuality.”³² The linking of uniqueness (core of the human being) with singularity/individuality is considerably consistent with Nietzsche’s concern: *Aber wie finden wir uns selbst wieder? Wie Kann sich der Mensch kennen?* (But how can we find ourselves again? How can man know himself?).³³ These questions touch on the individual existential challenge: “How can the individual life (*des Einzelnen Leben*) retain the highest value (*Werth*) and the deepest significance (*Bedeutung*)?”³⁴ The answer to such a question for Nietzsche cannot be sufficiently sought in those who are fettered by fear and convention, those without liberation, but in those who strive for singular individuality.

³⁰ *SE*, §, 2.

³¹ The prefiguration of the notion and role of the will to power.

³² Nuno Nabais “The Individual and Individuality in Nietzsche” in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Limited, 2006), 79.

³³ *SE*, §1.

³⁴ *SE*, §6. For some reflection on this text, refer to Vanessa Lemm, “Is Nietzsche a perfectionist? Rawls, Cavell, and the politics of culture in Nietzsche’s Schopenhauer as educator” in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, No. 34 (Penn State University Press, Autumn 2007): 10.

1.1.2 Elements of Schopenhauer's Singular individuality

a. Honesty and Cheerfulness that Enlivens

For Nietzsche, Schopenhauer as his exemplar is compounded of three elements: honesty, cheerfulness, and steadfastness. Nietzsche's exemplary figure, Schopenhauer is "honest because he speaks and writes to himself and for himself, cheerful because he has conquered the hardest task by thinking, and steadfast because he has to be."³⁵ Concerning Schopenhauer's honesty, which in this case means being candid (*erhlich*), he is described as one who "never wants to cut a figure: for he writes for himself and no one wants to be deceived, least of all a philosopher who has made it a rule for himself: deceive no one, not even yourself!"³⁶ To understand the possible import of honesty ascribed to Schopenhauer, one must read further where Nietzsche observes,

That there is something called honesty and that it is even a virtue belongs, I know, in the age of public opinion to the private opinions that are forbidden; and thus I shall not be praising Schopenhauer but only characterizing him if I repeat: he is honest even as a writer; and few writers are honest that one ought really mistrust anyone who writes. I know of only one writer whom I would compare with Schopenhauer, indeed set above him, in respect of honesty: Montaigne.³⁷

Through Montaigne, the possible meaning of honesty as referenced to Schopenhauer and singularity can be discerned. Nietzsche scholars hold the possible reason that drew Nietzsche to Montaigne is the latter's respect for sceptics.

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche joins what he calls "subtler honesty and skepticism."³⁸ Nietzsche must have learned the link between honesty and scepticism from Montaigne. According to Richard H. Popkin, "Montaigne explicitly rejected academic skepticism. He regarded the claim that nothing could be known as just the kind of dogmatic assertion the sceptic should reject, and he did not approve of any appeal to probable judgement, as that too involves assertion."³⁹ Montaigne's thinking is based on the inability of human beings to find a satisfactory criterion of knowledge. Thus, in such a situation of inadequacy Montaigne thinks

³⁵ *SE*, §2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *SE*, § 2. On Montaigne, called Michel Eyquem, later Seigneur de Montaigne, refer to the Introduction of *The Essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne*, trans, John Florio, Vol. 1 (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1910), VII–X.

³⁸ *GS*, § 110.

³⁹ Richard H. Popkin, "Scepticism, Renaissance" in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (London: Routledge, 1998), 503.

that people should suspend judgement on all matters.⁴⁰ Apart from suspending judgement, generally custom, traditions, and social norms could be followed, but un-dogmatically, where toleration for different viewpoints is encouraged.

J. B. Schneewind writes that Montaigne “declared himself a devout Catholic and submitted his judgement in matters of faith to the church, but there was nothing in the human realm, including the practices of Christians that he did not look at afresh.”⁴¹ Considering the two testimonies (Popkin’s and Schneewind’s), it can be plausibly inferred that Montaigne’s scepticism is not about Cartesian in-dubitability of knowledge but is informed by the diverse manifestation of life. Nevertheless, the life of scepticism may not appeal to the majority. For instance, if a person is going through some turmoil in life, the last thing such a person requires is being sceptical about the situation. But as Schneewind observes, a life of sceptical tranquillity could be available at most for the privileged few.⁴² The honesty of Montaigne for Nietzsche lay in his scepticisms based on life forms. Robert Miner holds that “Nietzsche ascribes honesty to sceptics partly because he admires their resistance to those who try to force a decision on ultimate questions.”⁴³ The sceptic resists the temptation to form judgements unrelated to the nature of things. For Nietzsche, Schopenhauer understood how to express the profound with simplicity, without rhetoric, while remaining strictly scientific without pedantry (dogmatism). Hence, honesty for Nietzsche in this case is the resistance to believing errors, or simply the will not to be deceived. Montaigne’s honesty and scepticism led Nietzsche to consider him the ‘freest and mightiest of souls.’ These attributes could as well serve as the qualities of Montaigne’s singular individuality.

In Nietzsche’s estimation, honesty and scepticism are pointers to the ‘becoming nature of reality’ which is intrinsic to the nature of singular individuality. In *Human All Too Human*, convictions are explained as originating from laziness, which stifles becoming. The inertia of the spirit (laziness) lets opinions “stiffen into *convictions*.”⁴⁴ The problem of convictions is the belief in the possession of unqualified knowledge or the existence of unqualified truth which compromises the spirit of becoming. Nevertheless, Nietzsche believes the one “whose spirit is

⁴⁰Popkin, “Scepticism, Renaissance”, 503.

⁴¹ J. B. Schneewind, *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant, An Anthology*, Volume I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 16.

⁴² Schneewind, *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant, An Anthology*, Volume I, 17.

⁴³ Robert Miner, *Nietzsche and Montaigne* (Waco: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 15.

⁴⁴ *HAH*, § 637.

free and restlessly alive can prevent this stiffening through continual change. ...”⁴⁵ Some years later in *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche associates Zarathustra, the teacher of the type *Übermensch* with not being deceived: “One should not let oneself be misled: great intellects are sceptics. Zarathustra is a sceptic.”⁴⁶ The simple, unpretentious approach forms the bulk of Nietzsche's historical philosophizing where the focus is on the *Heraclitean* approach.

The Heraclitean approach in standard Nietzsche scholarship entails communicating becoming without unconditioned claims to truths, and the endeavour to understand the human being as a historical product through and through. In this regard, Jonathan Philippe, reading Nietzsche from the Deleuzian perspective, observes that the world in flux only acquires sense through values created within it by individuals in the process of becoming.⁴⁷ In Nietzsche, both scepticism and honesty operate within the realm of becoming. I hold that the realm of becoming is the ‘space’ within which Nietzsche envisages the fashioning of singularity. Nietzsche seems to express the potential of the domain of becoming under the aegis of what he calls *Versuchen wir's* espoused by Montaigne.⁴⁸ Montaigne's scepticism is experimentally based because, as Schneewind opines,

[I]t could not be cured by finding a new and unshakeable foundation. Rather, Montaigne's skepticism was much more Pyrrhonic. It arose from the contrarities that Montaigne found—and delighted in—between one opinion and another, between customs in one country and those in another, between his own opinions when young and his opinions when old, and, not least, between firm declarations on the subject of how to live and vacillating practice by those who made them.⁴⁹

This observation mirrors Montaigne's focus, which is about how to live and what to live for. Nietzsche's interests are existential and thus Montaigne must have been his natural choice in such an endeavour. The element of honesty yields another trait: cheerfulness as the fruit of what Nietzsche calls the ‘hardest task.’ From the middle period when Nietzsche introduces the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, he calls it “The greatest weight”⁵⁰ and “the *hardest* idea,”⁵¹

⁴⁵ *HAA*, § 637.

⁴⁶ *AC*, § 54.

⁴⁷ Jonathan Philippe, “Nietzsche and Spinoza: New Personae in a New plane of Thought” Jean Khalifa and Gilles Deleuze, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze* (London: Bloomsbury publishing, 2003), 52.

⁴⁸ *GS*, §51.

⁴⁹ Schneewind, *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant, An Anthology*, Volume I, 16.

⁵⁰ *GS*, §341.

⁵¹ *WP*, 1059.

among others. I will return to the theme of Eternal Recurrence in Chapter Three. For now, it suffices to observe that cheerfulness as the fruit of the hardest task is further evidence that *Schopenhauer as Educator* introduces themes which are elaborated on in middle and later Nietzsche.

As with honesty, Nietzsche links the cheerfulness that cheers with Montaigne:

Schopenhauer has a second quality in common with Montaigne, as well as honesty: a cheerfulness that really cheers. ... For there are two very different kinds of cheerfulness. The true thinker always cheers and refreshes, whether he is being serious or humorous, expressing his human insight or his divine forbearance; without peevish gesturing, trembling hands, tearfilled eyes, but with certainty and simplicity, courage and strength, perhaps a little harshly and valiantly but in any case as a victor: and this it is—to behold the victorious god with all the monsters he has combated—that cheers one most profoundly.⁵²

Before expounding on different nuances of cheerfulness, I need to establish the compelling link of cheerfulness with Montaigne. In his address to the reader, Montaigne makes it clear that his writings are basically his self-portrayal, and hence not simply for public opinion. He says, “I desire therein to be delineated in mine own genuine, simple and ordinary fashion, without contention, art or study; for it is myself I portray. My imperfections shall therein be read to the life, and my natural form discerned.”⁵³ The thrust of Montaigne’s self-portrayal is that there is a convergence between honesty and cheerfulness. This aspect is reflected in his volume, *Essais de Michel de Montaigne*, conveniently called *Essays*.

For Montaigne, the *Essays* are the essays of his form of mind, his ideas and those of the authors he read and people he met, judged against his own. Ultimately, the *Essays* become Montaigne’s signature stamp on the good and rejection of counterfeit.⁵⁴ The *Essays* signify Montaigne’s position on life’s different aspects, which include the pains that are crucially important for his self-fashioning. Thus, ‘the cheerfulness that enlivens,’ is the product of the continual striving against many trials and errors that aid in self-fashioning.

Through essaying (attempting, notion of experimenting above) Montaigne portrays who he is. In the process of attempting (which entails the pain of endless searching and uncertainty), it becomes inevitable that “Self-portrayal is inseparable from self-examination

⁵² *SE*, §2.

⁵³ “The Author to the Reader” in *The Essays of Michael Lord Montaigne*, trans, John Florio, Volume One, 15.

⁵⁴ M.A. Screech, *Montaigne & Melancholy, The Wisdom of the Essays*, new edition (London: Duckworth, 2000), 13.

and self-discovery.”⁵⁵ Genuine cheerfulness for Montaigne must be aligned to the struggles related to self-examination, where self-examination is marked by the desire not to deceive oneself. The cheerfulness that results from the process of self-fashioning (is intrinsically coupled with multiple trial and error) and is different from mere self-contentment. Nietzsche calls cheerfulness accruing from the process of self-fashioning a ‘cheerfulness that cheers,’ (which is the fruit of victory over one’s laziness). Now Nietzsche’s position on two distinct forms of cheerfulness and how they are linked to singular individuality can be explained.

Nietzsche believes that true thinkers’ cheerfulness is founded on some form of struggle. He explains that cheerfulness which cheers is not a given, it is a task that is linked to a god who must combat all the monsters (cheerfulness in this metaphoric sense implies victory over monsters). Nietzsche observes that the penumbra of singularity is found unendurable for two reasons: (a) laziness, and (b) the toil and burdens suspended on this uniqueness. And yet, the ‘singular individual,’ as the one who encumbers himself with this chain of toil and burdens and overcomes it through strength and courage, acquires cheerfulness.⁵⁶ Nietzsche applies the cheerfulness that accrues from such striving for singularity to “the works of true thinkers just as much as ... to any work of art.”⁵⁷ In this regard the works of art and thinkers will be applicable to singular individuality as a fruition of the process.

Consequently, singularity-cum-cheerfulness can be interpreted as an attempt in encountering existence on its own terms. The justification for such interpretation is that the content of cheerfulness is the striving over the dreadful, and the serious problems of life (the monsters). Cheerfulness, as the fruit of honesty about human reality, apparently supplants the ‘cheerfulness one encounters in mediocre writers.’ In the words of R. Lanier Anderson, “True cheerfulness cannot be simple happiness. It is essentially an equanimity restored.”⁵⁸ In this regard any cheerfulness that does not recognize the life monsters (nature of existence as tragic) degenerates into a mediocre, superficial form.

⁵⁵ R. Lanier Anderson and Rachel Cristy, “What Is ‘The Meaning of Our Cheerfulness’? Philosophy as a Way of Life in Nietzsche and Montaigne” in *European Journal of Philosophy* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2017), 1525. Refer also to *The Essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne*, Volume II, trans, John Florio (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd), “Of giving a lie”, 18:392.

⁵⁶ This is the real cheerfulness that Nietzsche refers to as *wirkliche erheiternde Heiterkeit*—the cheerfulness that really enlivens.

⁵⁷ *SE*, §2.

⁵⁸ R. Lanier Anderson and Rachel Cristy, “What Is ‘The Meaning of Our Cheerfulness’? Philosophy as a Way of Life in Nietzsche and Montaigne,” 1523.

b. The Deceptive Cheerfulness

The second kind of cheerfulness following Nietzsche's description is the timely type. The cheerful thinker, as opposed to the true thinker, "simply does not see the sufferings and the monsters he purports to see and combat; and his cheerfulness is vexing because he is deceiving us: he wants to make us believe that a victory has been fought and won."⁵⁹ This observation about the outlook of the cheerful thinker given the example he cites of David Strauss, mirrors Nietzsche's views in the first Untimely Meditation. One of the main concerns in the first Untimely Meditation is '*Bildungsphilister*.'

For Nietzsche the cultural philistines are generally those who do not know or simply refuse to accept that "the way toward a national culture is difficult and supremely strenuous."⁶⁰ The lack of acknowledgement of the treacherous path to culture is due to what Nietzsche calls *Zufriedenheit* (contentedness). The contentedness here applies to those who 'believe that they are in possession of a genuine culture,' (*die zufriedenen*—the happy ones). The contented, those living without much self-knowledge yield a species of man called cultural philistines (which may not be an encouraging species to singular individuality). For Nietzsche the contented ones are the antithesis "of the man of genuine culture."⁶¹ It can be discerned from Nietzsche's negative stance on cultural philistines that the powers of conventions and the lack of the sceptical spirit lead to an atrophic scenario (self-satisfaction) where one lives in delusion without much ado.

Nietzsche is critical of complacency throughout his philosophical project. In his middle period, self-satisfaction is exemplified by the fettered spirit and morality of customs.⁶² In the later period, the tendency to complacency is notable in the last man and slave morality.⁶³ Nevertheless, for Nietzsche, Strauss is a type of cheerful thinker because of what he represents.

In Nietzsche's estimation, Strauss's style in his work (*Der alte und neue Glaube, The Old Faith and the New*, 1872) represents all that is plebeian and expedient. It is projected as a hindrance to the understanding of culture as a response to the tragic. The situation of the cultural philistine is relevant to this research (on tragic existence and the singular

⁵⁹ *SE*, §2.

⁶⁰ See introduction Friedrich Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations*, by J.P. Stern, IX.

⁶¹ *DS*, §2.

⁶² This stance is mainly in the *Human All Too Human* dealing with the "The Tokens of Culture" and in *Daybreak*, Book 1.

⁶³ These themes are prevalent in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Prologue, and *BGE*, §256.

individuality). Given its tendency to promote recourse to tacit conventions about life, cultural philistinism compromises the need for individual striving. Such conventions are apparently inimical to the cultivation of the singular ones.⁶⁴ Their degeneration lies in what Nietzsche calls: “*imponierende Gleichartigkeit* (impressive homogeneity), *tutti unisomo*—everybody, together.”⁶⁵ The system of *tutti unisomo* is antithetical to culture in so far as homogeneity is valorised for its own sake. It is contrary to the conditions that are necessary for culture to flourish. For Nietzsche, culture is understood as “the child of each individual’s self-knowledge and dissatisfaction with himself.”⁶⁶ And anyone who believes in culture ipso facto holds, “I see above me something higher and more human than I am; let everyone help me to attain it, as I will help everyone who knows and suffers as I do. ...”⁶⁷ For Nietzsche, privileging contentment on the one hand and lack of self-knowledge on the other may be inimical to human flourishing. For culture to flourish, upholding the tragic aspect of life as becoming is necessary.⁶⁸

The situation of the cheerful thinkers is compromising because there is no struggle, no dissatisfaction, but complacency, and yet victory is claimed. Such a scenario simply lacks the ingredients for the cheerfulness that cheers, one founded on honesty about tragic human existence. Therefore, the cheerful thinker’s claim to cheerfulness is delusive. Nietzsche remains critical throughout his philosophical corpus of any projections of life without risks. It is in the recognition of existence as a creative risk that individual daring is plausible and pertinent. The enduring task of humankind according to Nietzsche in *Schopenhauer as Educator* is: „*die Menschheit soll fortwährend daran arbeiten, einzelne grosse Menschen zu erzeuge—und dies und nichts anderes sonst ist ihre Aufgabe.*“ (Humankind should continually work at the production of individual great human beings—that and nothing else is the task).⁶⁹ Nietzsche takes the cue from the species of the animal or plant world whose concern is supposedly nothing but the individual higher exemplar (*einzelne höhere Exemplar*) that is

⁶⁴ Such situation is evidenced in chapters four and five on African ethno-philosophy.

⁶⁵ *DS*, §2.

⁶⁶ *SE*, §6.

⁶⁷ *SE*, §6.

⁶⁸ I will be returning to this point of the becomingness of life as the expression of tragedy under the aspects of the will to power, and the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence Chapters Two, Three and Five.

⁶⁹ *SE*, §6.

more uncommon (*ungewöhnlichere*), more powerful (*mächtgere*), more complex (*kompliziertere*) and more fruitful (*fruchtbarere*).

1.1.3 Failure to Emerge from Animality

Nietzsche envisages ‘great human beings’ as “those true human beings, those who are no longer animals, the philosophers, artists and saints.”⁷⁰ In this context, the great human beings are responsible for the awakening and lifting of culture. In the context of culture, Vanessa Lemm believes that, in Nietzsche, what distinguishes “the human animal from other animals is its culture.”⁷¹ Now, this culture is largely understood as a phenomenon of life. For Jeffrey Church, Nietzsche distinguishes between good and bad culture based on their production of great human beings.⁷² This is because for Nietzsche culture is about fostering the best exemplary individuals who in a unique manner espouse existence in its own terms. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, the three images of philosopher, artist, and saint characterize those who have an inkling about the sense of life.

To live as an animal is described by Nietzsche as a harsh punishment. Two forms of suffering are discernible in Nietzsche’s corpus. One is the meaningless suffering which is ascribed to animals where the underlying fact is preservation. The second form is the affirmative type of suffering which is associated with those who seek to fashion themselves as singular individuals. The second form of suffering is redemptive and is associated with self-overcoming.⁷³ The animalistic suffering entails hanging on to life "with no higher aim than to hang on to it; not to know that or why one is being so heavily punished but, with the stupidity of a fearful desire, to thirst after precisely this punishment as though after happiness—that is what it means to be an animal. ...”⁷⁴ Nietzsche already hinted at this state of affairs in relation to self-satisfaction and utilitarianism, where number decides, yet what is truly needed is value. Animal existence, being meaningless (*Sinnlos*), needs redemption, which is only possible when it is transcended through the act of singular individuality. The process of redemption is

⁷⁰ German text „Schopenhauer als Erzieher“ SA, *Erster Band* §5.

⁷¹ Vanessa Lemm, *Nietzsche's Animal Philosophy: Culture, Politics, and the Animality of the Human Beings* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 1.

⁷² Jeffrey Church, *Nietzsche's culture of Humanity, Beyond Aristocracy and Democracy in the Early period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 248.

⁷³ Self-overcoming is a key ingredient in individual *autopoiesis* as self-fashioning. The notion of self-overcoming is dealt with in Chapter Two.

⁷⁴ SE, §5.

what the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence ultimately entails as a selective project.⁷⁵ According to Maudemarie Clark and Monique Wonderly, for Nietzsche, communal life is simply the continuation of animality.⁷⁶ This assertion must be interpreted in relation to a life of contentment coupled with a desire for happiness.

Nietzsche's commitment is that through singular individuality, life, though tragic, can be affirmed. Hence, simply desiring a life of happiness, one does not rise above the horizon of animals. Instead "he only desires more consciously what the animal seeks through blind impulse."⁷⁷ The hardest reality about happiness desired here is that, it is what the majority "do for the greater part" of their lives according to Nietzsche. Those who fail to emerge from the conundrum of simple happiness tend to remain in the domain of animality. Such a domain is characterized by the suffering that "seems to be senseless."⁷⁸ The gravity of senseless suffering is expounded on by Nietzsche in the contestation between understanding of Eternal Recurrence as cosmological and ethical-imperative.⁷⁹ In aligning animality and suffering, there is a discernible inherent demand: The justification for existence as an individual undertaking (affirmation of life).

Proper exposition of how animality ought to be understood in relation to individuality needs a brief consideration of what Nietzsche says about the morality of custom. Nietzsche appeals largely to a hypothetical situation of primitive morality as custom. In *Daybreak* he writes,

Originally all education and care of health, marriage, cure of sickness, agriculture, ... traffic with one another and with the gods belonged within the domain of morality: they demanded one observe prescriptions without thinking of oneself as an individual. Originally, therefore, everything was custom [morality understood here as obedience to customs, and customs implies the traditional ways of behaving and evaluating that is informed fundamentally by appeal to a higher authority] [...] The most moral man is he who *sacrifices* the most to custom [...] Self-overcoming is demanded, not on the account of the useful consequences it may have for the individual, but so that the hegemony of custom, tradition, shall be made evident in

⁷⁵ See Chapters Three and Five.

⁷⁶ Maudemarie Clark and Monique Wonderly, "The Good of Community" in Julian Young, *Individual and Community in Nietzsche's philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 127.

⁷⁷ *SE*, §5.

⁷⁸ *SE*, §5.

⁷⁹ The contestation forms the major part of Zarathustra (On the Convalescent). This is explained in Chapter three where part of the realization is that Eternal Recurrence understood only from the cosmological sphere can promote nihilistic attitudes toward life. Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy (BT)* calls nihilism a "terrible truth" that prompts man to see only what is terrible or absurd in existence wherever he looks. See BT, §7.

despite of the private desires and advantages of the individual: the individual is to sacrifice himself – that is the commandment of morality of custom.⁸⁰

Primitive humanity from Nietzsche's perspective is basically anti-singular individuality, given that the community hegemony takes precedence. Nietzsche acknowledges the underlying reason for such a scenario. The breaches of custom portended danger for the whole community. Hence, for the sake of the harmonious functioning of the community, deviation accruing from individual desires was discouraged. In this situation of primitive humanity (where morality is custom), Nietzsche seems simply to state the situation and reason why the community was valorised.

But interpretively, primitive humanity simply endeavoured to preserve itself. For Nietzsche, life where individual desires and advantages are undermined, and communal interests are privileged, qualifies as an animal existence. This means that the concerns raised against the morality of custom and the valorisation of the communal over and against the individual can be pertinent.

Nietzsche's assertion is that usually we fail to emerge from animality and, in such a case, our suffering seems senseless. The reason for failure is due to fear and laziness in facing existence. Nietzsche posits from the text immediately after our animality that "there are moments *when we realize this*: then the clouds are rent asunder, and we see that, in common with all nature, we are pressing towards man as towards something that stands above us."⁸¹ The immediate context of the text seems to imply, that we become aware of the need to rise above animals when life is desired not merely for the sake of happiness. However, more remotely and importantly, the realization emerges when laziness-cum-fear are overcome. This is Nietzsche's solution to the question about the constraints that make the individual (*den einzelnen*) to think and act like a member of the herd, and thus lack joy in himself.

In a later period, the polemical Nietzsche uses the term 'herd' and even 'rabble' for those devoid of singular individuality. For instance, in *On the Genealogy of Morality* he says, "[W]herever there are herds, it is the instinct of weakness that has willed the herd. ... For it should not be overlooked: the strong are as naturally inclined to strive to be *apart* as the weak

⁸⁰ *D*, §9.

⁸¹ *SE*, §5.

are to strive to be *together*. ...”⁸² It must be noted that for both the weak and the strong, there is striving. The articulation of the slave/weak and master/strong types requires Nietzsche’s psychology of types that is taken up in the next chapter. The point here is that the master type displays mastery over the self and the high form of singular individuality. On the other hand, the weak type is restrained by external forces amounting to inner enslavement since inner power is lacking (weak singularity/atrophic or lack of it thus amenable to the herd). Nonetheless, in the current context, strong and weak could be justified in terms of the cheerfulness that cheers, and the cheerful thinker that is considered above. The cheerfulness that cheers though a fruit of a painful process yields some qualitative individual.

There is a sense in which one can say that being individual empirically (as an indivisible entity in terms of spatio-temporal domains) is not in doubt. Instead the qualitative aspect of living as an individual (singular individuality) is where the task lies. Nietzsche is not only critical of the crowd, but his criticism is mostly directed at the individual members of such categories or even types, like the last man. In this regard, John Richardson’s assertion that Nietzsche favours and seeks to promote the individual who stands apart from the herd, the one who strives to be an exception and not simply like the others, can be understood as credible.⁸³ This is because the quality of an individual is what is at stake for Nietzsche. Hence, strong or weak individuals are so rendered in terms of singular individuality. The designation proper to the individual must be from the value-laden domain, which is singular individuality.

1.1.4 The Individual and Singular Individuality

There are two concurrent standpoints in *Schopenhauer as Educator* concerning the individual and singular individuality. First and foremost, Nietzsche acknowledges the existence of every empirical individual as the concrete individual over and against his neighbour. For the individual (and neighbour) as an empirical entity there is not only numerical difference (due to individuals being in the same genus and species), but also a spatio-temporal difference. It is in a such sense (spatio-temporal) that the *individuum* ought to be understood as the concrete reality. Individual as empirical refers to that which is not only indivisible, but

⁸² *GM*, III, §18.

⁸³ John Richardson, "Nietzsche, language, community" in *Individual and community in Nietzsche's philosophy*, 214.

also particular, as opposed to the logical/abstract universal. In *Schopenhauer as Educator* there is a conception of the individual from the standpoint of singularity/particularity.

Singular individuality in *Schopenhauer as Educator* is made possible or impossible based on the response to tragic existence. Singular individuality one's affirmation of the empirical existence as an individual is not given (as the case of the individual as the *individuum*). Hence, singular individuality must be a task. Hollingdale's translation of *der des Ungewöhnlichen* and *den Ungewöhnlichen* is singularity and the singular man respectively.⁸⁴ This is the translation generally accepted even in contemporary Nietzsche literature. Other terminologies like *einzigkeit* (uniqueness) and *Einmalig* (unique, singular) are essential subsidiaries to the overarching term 'Ungewöhnlich.'

On the relationship between the individual and singular individuality, Nabais says that "Nietzsche endeavors to justify the empirical existence of each individual, on the basis of an imputed, equally empirical, individuality."⁸⁵ The standard position is that Nietzsche adopts the interior viewpoint by conceiving the individual in terms of both particular and singular terms through individuality as the foundation. Nietzsche himself affirms existence as inherently an individual endeavour. He posits, "why pay heed to what your neighbour says?" For Nietzsche, the activity of existence as individual is perhaps based on the understanding that: "[t]here exists in the world a single path along which no one can go except you: whither does it lead? Do not ask, go along it."⁸⁶ This means that numerical difference as a trait of the individual is incomplete without an internal character to account for a genuine individual. Through singular individuality as a task, numerical difference is turned into real difference. For singularity/individuality is generally expounded as a process "by which each individual frees himself of his general features."⁸⁷ Singularity is the quality of the human being who does not wish to belong to the mass.

For Nietzsche, the fear of being oneself originates from the knowledge of life as 'dark and veiled.' In the *Second Untimely Meditation*, life is described as "that dark, driving power

⁸⁴ Refer to *SE*, §3. Though the rendering of singularity and the singular man, is largely credible, there are other possible and similar renderings of the term *Ungewöhnliche*: as unusual, novel, particular, exceptional, and unseasonable in the sense of highly differentiated.

⁸⁵ Nabais, "The Individual and Individuality in Nietzsche," 79.

⁸⁶ *SE*, §1

⁸⁷ Nabais, "The Individual and Individuality in Nietzsche," 82.

that insatiably thirsts for itself.”⁸⁸ The insatiability of life could be designated differently in Nietzsche: in Chapter Two it will be related to the will to power and in Chapter Three to the notion of time and the challenge of willing backward. Nietzsche’s singular individual is necessarily associated with ‘he who has looked at the scary existence.’ So far, this chapter has investigated the elements that inform Schopenhauer’s exemplarity/singularity according to Nietzsche: honesty and its fruit, cheerfulness. It has also explored the theoretical conditions and obstacles for or against singular individuality. In what follows I attempt to show that the appropriate response to the nature of existence (taken on its own terms as tragic) is the promotion of singular individuality.

1.1.5 Affirmation of life: Justification for Singular Individuality

Nietzsche arguably gives a summary of cultural enhancement in the following text from *Beyond Good and Evil*:

The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering—don’t you know that *this* discipline has been the sole cause of every enhancement in humanity so far? The tension that breeds strength into the unhappy soul, its shudder at the sight of great destruction, its inventiveness and courage in enduring, surviving, interpreting, and exploiting unhappiness, and whatever depth, secrecy, whatever masks, spirit, cunning, greatness it has been given:—weren’t these the gifts of suffering, of the disciple of great suffering?⁸⁹

At the beginning of this chapter, Nietzsche notes the need for the taskmaster, a position he carried into the later period. The picture Nietzsche paints in this text is what has evolved so far as the underlying current for the singular individuality. That singular individuality demands a response to existential obstacles through self-discipline, self-overcoming, and honesty as dispositions towards life. In the words of David Owen, Nietzsche envisages the recognition of the in-eliminability of tragedy in life as the necessary feature for production of the singular individual.⁹⁰ In this section the claim to be examined is that Nietzsche believes that existence in its tragic form is itself a taskmaster and as such demands and can breed singular individuality. It should be noted that the unpacking of this claim will entail the psychology of

⁸⁸ *HL*, §3.

⁸⁹ *BGE*, §225.

⁹⁰ David Owen, “The contest of Enlightenment—An Essay on Critique and Genealogy” in *Journal of Nietzsche studies*, no. 25 (Spring 2003): 52.

the type *Übermensch* and the morality of the type *Übermensch* (considered in Chapters Two and Three).

Though Nietzsche's understanding of tragedy in terms of terror is derived from Schopenhauer, his response to the same seems to be inspired by the Greeks. For Schopenhauer, poetry is generally understood as the objectification of the picture of the human condition expressed in individual characters. He regards tragedy in terms of poetry, as the summit both in greatness of the effect and the difficulty of achievement. The purpose of that highest achievement of tragedy, Schopenhauer says,

is the description of the terrible side of life. The unspeakable pain, the wretchedness and misery of mankind, the triumph of wickedness, the scornful mastery of chance, and the irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent are all here presented to us; and here is to be found a significant hint as to the nature of the world and of existence.⁹¹

For Schopenhauer, tragedy manifests not only the terrible side of life, but apparently is the true image of existence. Encountering this Schopenhauerian image of existence is Nietzsche's theme from the early to the late works. In the *Birth of Tragedy*, for instance, on *How Art Enchants and Seeks to Heal the Horrific* he says: "only she [art] can reshape that disgust at the thought of the horrific or absurd aspects of life into notions with which it is possible to live: these are the *sublime*, the artistic taming of the horrific, and the *comic*, the artistic discharge of disgust at the absurd."⁹² Here, the response to that horrific existence is affirmation of life through the sublime (see Chapter Three on laughter). As such, Nietzsche envisages the sublime as the artistic conquest of the horrible.

For Nietzsche, the Greeks are the example of those who looked with boldness into the dreadful destructive turmoil of world-history and into the cruelty of nature without yielding to Buddhistic resignation.⁹³ Hence, though Schopenhauer's philosophy is spot on in diagnosing tragedy as existential sickness, it fails according to Nietzsche in its prognosis and prescriptions. Nietzsche turns to Greek art as a bulwark against Schopenhauer's philosophical pessimism toward life.

⁹¹ Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, translated from German by E.F.J. Payne in Two Volumes, Volume 1 (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), 252–253 (Hereafter, WWR 1).

⁹² *BT*, §7.

⁹³ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 131.

But Nietzsche's figure of the Schopenhauerean image of man embodies some of the necessary traits that made him (Schopenhauer) an exceptional figure: "*The Schopenhauerean man voluntarily takes upon himself the suffering involved in being truthful, and this suffering serves to destroy his own wilfulness and to prepare that complete overturning and conversion of his being, which it is the real meaning of life to lead up to.*"⁹⁴ Where other common human beings seek to conserve their inadequacies and humbugs, those who understand singular individuality as a task continuously undertake to overcome them. The singular individuals' (overcoming ones) being truthful towards existence implies believing in an existence that can in no way be denied, since it is itself true and without falsehood.

For Nietzsche, individuals seeking singular individuality descend into the depths of existence with a string of curious questions on their lips: why do I live? What lesson have I to learn from life? How have I become what I am and why do I suffer from being what I am? Such a figure seeking singular individuality torments itself and sees how no one else does as he does. The overtones from Montaigne are palpable in this string of questions. Given that, Montaigne's project entailed "writing his life as he lived and perceived it, suppressing nothing, altering nothing untouched by his own way of articulating it. Questions of how to live and what to live for were among his interests."⁹⁵ Thus, honesty taken to its utmost bounds can be tormenting since it cannot but touch on the senseless nature of existence. Such deep probing and scary undertaking inform Church's assertion that Nietzsche's contribution to culture is the articulation of the severity of the existential problem.⁹⁶ The tragic nature of existence can necessarily be only affirmed by the individual from the singular individuality perspective.

The idea of the tragedy occurs throughout Nietzsche's corpus. In Nietzsche's own later description of tragedy, he relates it to the Dionysian/life affirmation. He observes that the psychology of tragedy is:

'Saying yes to life, even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to life rejoicing in the *sacrifice* of its highest types to its own inexhaustibility—*this* is what I called Dionysian, *this* is what I understood as a bridge to the psychology of the *tragic* poet. *Not* freeing oneself from terror and pity, not purging oneself of a dangerous emotion through a vehement discharge—such was Aristotle's

⁹⁴ *SE*, §4.

⁹⁵ Schneewind, *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant*, Vol 1, 37.

⁹⁶ Church, *Nietzsche's culture of Humanity, Beyond Aristocracy and Democracy in the Early period*, 254.

misunderstanding of it—but, over and above terror and pity, *being oneself* the eternal joy of becoming, that joy which also encompasses the *joy of destruction*.⁹⁷

This text is elaborately explained in chapter three in relation to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence which entails the eternal joy of becoming that includes destruction. The simple description of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence in this context is the ethical imperative of appropriating the becoming nature of life. That appropriation entails recognition of the struggles, striving and failures in life. The affirmation of life is being over and above the terrors and pity of existence. For offering oneself as an individual to something higher than oneself, is what tragedy entails.

The affirmation of life entails affirming reality as flux. The individual who subscribes to the becoming nature of life, in Nietzsche's view, is free of the terrible anxiety which death and time evoke. The individual's justification for the tragedy is that "at any moment, in the briefest atom of his life's course, he may encounter something holy that endlessly outweighs all his struggle and all his distress."⁹⁸ This is what Nietzsche calls having the sense of the tragic. The affirmation of life (*Ja-sagen*) is necessarily linked to tragedy, and thus to singular individuality. Nietzsche envisages the task of internalizing the sense of the tragic (the sense of becoming and the will to power) first on the individual level, then by the community, as the only hope and guarantee for the future of humanity.

In the preface to *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche remarks, "I am a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus; I would prefer to be a satyr rather than a saint." Then later in the same work while presenting *The Birth of Tragedy*, on the affirmation of life as being over and above the terror and pity, he remarks, "In this sense I have the right to see myself as the first *tragic philosopher*—which means the polar opposite and antipodes of a pessimistic philosopher."⁹⁹ The immediate thought here about a pessimistic philosopher must be about Schopenhauer. Nietzsche agrees with Schopenhauer on the tragic nature of life, however, he differs from Schopenhauer on the affirmation of that tragic existence.

For Schopenhauer, given the tragic nature of existence, one of the possible solutions is a denial of the individual affirmation of life. Schopenhauer prefers a return to a unity that

⁹⁷ *EH* "BT," §3.

⁹⁸ *RWB*, §4.

⁹⁹ *EH*, Preface, §2 and *EH* "BT," §3.

overcomes individuation (the denial of becoming). This is because for Schopenhauer, the world is essentially a monstrosity of energy which is undifferentiated, like the will. Instead for Nietzsche, individual affirmation of life is the correct response. Regarding Nietzsche as an affirmer of life, Bernard Reginster believes that Nietzsche sees the affirmation of life as his defining achievement in philosophy.¹⁰⁰ The import of Reginster's assertion can be plausibly read as a commentary on Nietzsche's above text on saying yes to life. In addition to acknowledging the tragic aspect of life and its appropriation, it must be added that affirmation of life presupposes a human being with a developed sense and affirmation of individuality/singularity. Nietzsche links, and credibly so, singular individuality with tragedy, becoming, and the will to power.

By calling himself the disciple of Dionysus, Nietzsche simply means that he is the ultimate affirmer of the tragic. With the designation a 'disciple of Dionysus,' Nietzsche positions himself possibly as the one who has overcome. Whether such a projection of Nietzsche is plausible may only be evaluated in line with his claims on Eternal Recurrence. Nietzsche reiterates that we learn from the Greeks the meaning of tragedy as the innermost foundation of the life of a people. For tragedy both fights mysterious battles and seeks a necessary healing. (The two concepts of overcoming and transfiguration are discernible). The notable point is that Nietzsche finds in the interplay of the Dionysian and Apollonian actions the individual principle:

We know now that whenever a group has been deeply touched by Dionysiac emotions, the release from the bonds of individuation results in indifference, or even hostility, towards political instinct. On the other hand, Apollo, the founder of states, is also the genius of the *principium individuationis*, and neither commonwealth nor patriotism can subsist without affirmation of individuality.¹⁰¹

In this text, Nietzsche, through the interplay of Dionysian and the Apollonian forces makes it possible to affirm and link the tragic not only with singular individuality, but with development of states. It is through the Dionysian force (the feeling of fullness) that the singular individual surpasses the determinate institutional arrangements that may scuttle the path to singular individuality.

¹⁰⁰ Bernard Reginster, *The Affirmation of life, Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1.

¹⁰¹ *BT*, §21.

However, the Apollonian drive provides the needed individual forms to such Dionysian force, enabling the possibility of empirical existence. The interplay between the two in the tragedy of life is a continuous process. In this regard, the tragic gives us the image of life as the reflection of the human condition as singular. On Nietzsche's understanding of tragedy and the singular, Schacht observes that the prevailing perception occurring here is of human individual existence "as existence that is individual rather than merely a part of an inexhaustible and indestructible flow of life, and that is human rather than above and beyond the conditions to which man is subject."¹⁰² There is an inseparable link between tragedy, singular individuality and becoming.

Existence as tragic is always in the state of flux (constant becoming). If singular individuality as a work in progress is to be embarked on, then the reality to be incorporated into the individual is that of becoming. Singular individuality, like becoming for Deleuze, signifies a "vitalistic" process composed of multiplicity of forces that have ontological priority over the domains of society and history.¹⁰³ For it not to slide back to the mass, the singular individual needs to be constantly and consistently attracted to becoming. The focus now shifts to the demonstration of how the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual can justify each other.

1.2 The *Übermensch* and the Singular Individual

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche says that the philosopher, "being *necessarily* a person of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, has, in every age, been and has *needed* to be at odds with his today."¹⁰⁴ Nietzsche referred to this characteristic of a philosopher in relation to his Schopenhauer as the untimely figure. The philosopher overcomes the age/type in himself. From the last section, it emerges that Nietzsche prizes aversion, resistance, and opposition (overcoming). Nietzsche values such traits of aversion because they can contribute to the production of the singular individual. The singular individual is what Daniel Conway refers to as the "philosopher's next self."¹⁰⁵ In this second section of the chapter, the overriding

¹⁰² Schacht, *Nietzsche*, 500.

¹⁰³ Peter Sedgwick, *Descartes to Derrida, an Introduction to European Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 138.

¹⁰⁴ *BGE*, §212.

¹⁰⁵ Daniel Conway, *Nietzsche and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1997), 61.

claim is that the singular individual, to maintain overcoming, needs the type *Übermensch*. But more pertinently, the link between the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual is grounded in Nietzsche's notion of the will to power as overcoming and form-giving (discipline and generative power). In the first section of this chapter, the need for discipline/overcoming (constraints or dissatisfactions or breeders) is stressed. In this second section, the stress is on the optimum environment for overcoming (becoming) and introduction to the possible mechanism (the will to power) of fashioning singular individuality.

The singular individuality as work in progress must be continuously and steadfastly fashioned. It is the passion to overcome that ultimately entails affirmation of life as the characteristic note of singular individuality. Singular individuality as a task is "never already given, it is what gives itself up projects itself—out of the future as a possibility for the present, what has always not quite yet given itself up. ... Indeed, there can be no life except where this individuality opens itself onto a future possibility."¹⁰⁶ Hence, it can be claimed that singular individuality (in its steadfastness) must presuppose some form of in-determinacy. This claim is based on Nietzsche's assertion in *Schopenhauer as Educator* that "your true nature lies, not concealed deep within you, but immeasurably high above you, or at least above that which you usually take yourself to be."¹⁰⁷ Church notes that the deep within and high above are correlated. After going down to human contradictory nature, there is a need to transcend such a nature and seek determination for life.¹⁰⁸ It can be submitted that this 'high above you' is the prefiguration of Nietzsche's later figure of the type *Übermensch*. As will be elaborated below, the type *Übermensch* functions as a taskmaster that excites the individual to its qualitative character of individuality.

This indeterminate figure (the type *Übermensch*) is the possible guarantor for the possibility and steadfastness of singular individuality as a task. Hicks and Rosenberg believe that Nietzsche's figures often offer a peculiarly disruptive kind of enticement. The two further hold that the figures are designed to 'persuade' Nietzsche's readers into something 'untimely,' they lure readers into experiencing the world differently and thinking differently about the world.¹⁰⁹ The type *Übermensch* not only manifests to the individual the basic material inherent

¹⁰⁶ Hamacher. "Disgregation of the Will: Nietzsche on the Individual and individuality," 110.

¹⁰⁷ *SE*, §1.

¹⁰⁸ Church, *Nietzsche's culture of Humanity, Beyond Aristocracy and Democracy in the Early period*, 148.

¹⁰⁹ Hicks and Rosenberg, "Nietzsche and Untimeliness," 10.

in him, but more importantly it is an experimental figure. The experimentality of the *Übermensch* is generally understood to hinge on persuasion as a style that is open to risks and offers possibility for co-existence of different perspectives. I now examine some of these claims about the experimental nature of the *Übermensch* as a term and its appearance in Nietzsche's own published works.

1.2.1 The *Übermensch* in Nietzsche's Published Works

Scholars like Kaufmann and Babette Babich trace the meaning of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* from the 2nd century AD satirist Lucian. Kaufmann links Lucian's *hyperanthropos* with Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, on the grounds that Nietzsche as a classical philologist studied Lucian.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, Babich probes more through the study of Lucian's *Kataplous*.¹¹¹ Lucian in this work presents a tyrant by the name Megapenthes who passes into the underworld. Though the tyrant was powerful on earth, he realizes that the transition to the underworld means total democratization (equalization), no poor or rich. In death the powerful Megapenthes is stripped of his position (the trappings of power) and possessions. Owing to Megapenthes' power and influence he convinces Micyllus the shoemaker to see him as the superman (blessed and taller than the rest of mankind), a *hyperanthropos* who seemed like a divinity.

However, after death, Megapenthes, (once distinguished as a higher man in the world above, and now in the world below/underworld) looks ridiculous. In the underworld, Micyllus laughs at not only the look of Megapenthes, but at himself for once standing in awe of that trash.

Babich's inclusion of Lucian's satire into the projection of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* is partly due to the play on the terms: above and below; esoteric and exoteric. More importantly, the use of satire to explain the human phenomenon of power embodied in *hyperanthropos* is interpreted as ridiculous. This use of satire aligns Lucian's *Kataplous* with Nietzsche's work *Zarathustra* (in which Zarathustra is the teacher of the *Übermensch*), which is partly seen as parodic.

¹¹⁰ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 307.

¹¹¹ This work is translated as "The Downward Journey, Journey into the Underworld." This explanation is based on Babette Babich "Nietzsche Zarathustra and Parodic style: On Lucian's Hyperanthropos and Nietzsche's *Übermensch*" in *Diogenes* 58, no.4: 58–74.

The second preface to *The Gay Science* links the work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to parody apart from tragedy. Nietzsche holds that, it is not only the poets and their beautiful lyrical sentiments that vent sarcasm. Rather, Nietzsche asks: “[W]ho knows what victim he is looking for, what monster material for parody will soon attract him? ‘*Incipit tragoedia*’ we read at the end of this awesomely aweless book. Beware! Something downright wicked and malicious is announced here: *incipit parodia*, no doubt.”¹¹² This is a reference to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the work that follows *The Gay Science*. Describing *Zarathustra* as a parody seems to implicate *Übermensch* as a satirical figure.

The *Übermensch* is at the heart of *Zarathustra*, where the main theme is affirming tragic existence. To do that one needs parody. The inseparable link between tragedy and parody in Nietzsche is evident from the period of *The Birth of Tragedy* where the comic is interpreted as the artistic discharge of disgust at the absurd.¹¹³ The standard interpretation about the use of parody in the figures like the *Übermensch* is that it is part of Nietzsche's project of healing the wound of existence. Thus, understanding of the *Übermensch* must encompass life in its intertwined aspects of tragedy and parody. In that case, for Danto the term *Übermensch* is a variable and not a constant.¹¹⁴ This means that attempting to submit it to rigorous conceptual schemes may not yield much. Hence, the variableness of the term *Übermensch* makes it appeal to the multiple individual entities and not the imposing universal/conceptual categories.

Nietzsche's first explicit mention of the term *Übermensch* is in the context of the plurality of norms as the assurance for the sovereignty of individuals. Plurality in this context is explained in terms of polytheism. For Nietzsche, polytheism (as the art and gift of creating gods) is a medium through which individual ideals can be discharged, since it allows a plurality of norms. This form of polytheism neither privileges one god over and against the others, nor is it a blasphemy against the one.

With the multiplicity of norms, Nietzsche observes that the luxury of individuals is first permitted. It seems to be Nietzsche's position that, with favourable conditions, everyone has a possibility of making himself/herself into something great. More importantly, as Franco Paul

¹¹² *GS*, Preface §1. The above cited text also makes a reference to *GS*, § 342, the last aphorism of Book Four, which also introduces *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

¹¹³ *BT*, §7.

¹¹⁴ Arthur C. Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 200.

observes, “[I]t is only with polytheism that the ability to view the world through a multiplicity of perspectives, an ability that distinguishes human beings from other animals, first develops.”¹¹⁵ This is an important observation, because through it we realize under which conditions the *Übermensch* can function and emerge.

Monotheism (as opposed to polytheism) as the medium for positing individual rights could obscure new possibilities. First and foremost, the description of monotheism here is not Nietzsche’s considered position on monotheism *per se*, but its ensuing fruits. Monotheism in *The Gay Science* is aligned with having a single perspective. Nietzsche considers monotheism as a rigid consequence “of the doctrine of one normal human type.”¹¹⁶ For Nietzsche, the teaching about one normal type with one ultimate norm is highly likely related to the Jewish approach (monotheism), as opposed to the above polytheistic view that is Greek in origin. The basis for such an association is in Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*, ‘On the Thousand Goals and one,’ where three model tablets (moral systems) are given (Greek, Persian, and Jewish). About the Jews it says, “To honour father and mother,” and Nietzsche’s comment is that: “this tablet of overcoming another people hung over itself and became powerful and eternal thereby.”¹¹⁷ Nietzsche’s denouncement of what underlines monotheism must be conceived on how singular individuality is seemingly better enhanced under multiple norms. Thus, the crux of the matter here is that a single perspective may not favour the differentiation that Nietzsche envisages under plurality of norms. The justification for such a standpoint hinges on the need for the type that is neither affected by conceptual schemes that could be imposing nor the moral maxims as the givens. This is because what is needed is a type that possibly allows multiplicity of perspectives.

1.2.2 The *Last Human Being*: Nietzsche’s Despicable Type

Before looking at how Nietzsche specifically envisages the *Übermensch* in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, it is necessary to present the types that Nietzsche opposes to the type *Übermensch*. One such type is what he calls the last human being. In *Ecce Homo*, on the type *Übermensch* and some other types, Nietzsche declares,

¹¹⁵ Franco Paul, *Nietzsche's Enlightenment, the free spirit Trilogy of the Middle period* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 138.

¹¹⁶ *GS*, §143.

¹¹⁷ *Z*, I,15 (On the Thousand Goals and one).

The word ‘*overman*’ [*Übermensch*] as a designation for the type that has turned out best, by contrast with ‘modern’ men, ‘good’ men, Christians and other nihilists—a word which, in the mouth of a Zarathustra, the *destroyer* of morality, becomes a very thought-provoking word—has been understood almost everywhere, in all innocence, in the sense of those values whose opposite was made manifest in the figure of Zarathustra, in other words as the ‘idealistic’ type of a higher kind of man, half ‘saint’, half ‘genius’...¹¹⁸

The designation of the *Übermensch* as a type opposed to other types like modern men, good men, and even Christians is the clearest pointer to the fact that the *Übermensch* is not a concrete ontological state. The *Übermensch* is not a discursive figure that avails itself to conceptual schemes. The type *Übermensch* is pertinent to this research because as Nietzsche says, it is the type that comparatively has turned out the best. For being the best, the type *Übermensch* becomes the figurative exemplar that entices the individuals to become who they are. The richness of what the type *Übermensch* entails becomes clear when it is analyzed over and against other types that Nietzsche gives, such as the last human being.

There is a need for a brief presentation of Nietzsche’s notion of ‘types’ and how the last human as a type contributes negatively to the production of singular individuality. This is because in Nietzsche, the type and valuing are intertwined. Nietzsche in his characteristic element offers no obvious delineation of types. The closest he comes to a description is in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

We should admit to ourselves with all due severity exactly *what* will be necessary for a long time to come and *what* is provisionally correct, namely: collecting material, formulating concepts, and putting into order the tremendous realm of tender value feelings and value distinctions that live, grow, reproduce, and are destroyed, – and, perhaps, attempting to illustrate the recurring and more frequent shapes of this living crystallization, – all of which would be a preparation for a *typology* of morals.¹¹⁹

The context of this text is Nietzsche’s discussion on the development of the life forms, entitled ‘Natural History of Morality.’ It is at the beginning of the section dealing with affects and reactions. In this context (concerned with collecting, formulating, and above all aliveness to occurrences), typology can be rendered as the study of human traits and tendencies over time. The immediate domain of such study is the moral tendencies, in terms of its evolution from

¹¹⁸ *EH* “Why I write such good books,” § 1.

¹¹⁹ *BGE*, §186.

the past to the present (this will apply to Nietzsche's study of moral types in *Beyond Good and Evil* and the *On the Genealogy of Morals*). For Y. Tuncel typology is a method through which philosophical questions are pursued.¹²⁰ In this case, Tuncel understands typology in a generic sense.

However, for Nietzsche as in the above citation, typology involves specifically human traits (this understanding is privileged in this dissertation). The type as a unit of typology is not a person, but it can reside in individuals. This is the meaning the last human being or the Christian or the *Übermensch* is referenced as a type. Hence, in relation to individuals, a type can claim dominance depending on its intensity. The types are historical, and as such are neither eternal nor universal. The realm of typology deals with value, feeling, and distinctions that may be forceful and subject to destruction. (For example, the last human being as a type is certainly subject to transformation when the best type, the *Übermensch*, is appropriated). This means that types and values are correlated. Thus, the individuals who espouse the type *Übermensch* will live the values of the *Übermensch*, or if some espouse the ideals of the last human being, it will be manifested in their value domain.

When Nietzsche talks of the modern or last human types, he is *ipso facto* considering the value domains of these types. It follows that the types valued by the individual have a bearing on the values of the individual, and ultimately of a culture. For Nietzsche, types serve as the 'typification' of human character. The typological constitution of the individual determines the quality of the ensuing singular individual. The link between types and values justifies consideration of the last human being and the *Übermensch* as the two types that have either negative or positive effects on individual *autopoiesis*. The conditions of the last human being may not be optimal in enticing production of the singular individual as Nietzsche envisages. Hence, the last human being serves a negative purpose for singular individuality given that the key ingredient of *autopoiesis*, i.e. overcoming, is seemingly atrophic.

The types mentioned by Nietzsche (modern men, good men, and Christians) in many ways encompass tenets that characterize Nietzsche's last human being. Nevertheless, by giving the *Übermensch* as a type among others, Nietzsche shows that he is not dismissive of them.

¹²⁰ Yunus Tuncel presented a paper on "Zarathustra in Nietzsche's Typology" to the Nietzsche Circle in 2006. I have partly relied on this paper for the understanding of the types in Nietzsche. Refer also to Douglas Burnham, *Reading Nietzsche, An Analysis of Beyond Good and Evil* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2007), 107–109.

Rather, Nietzsche is basically calling for the return to Greek tragedy, which espouses the celebration of the singular individuality as an avenue for creating humanity freed from self-imposed inhibitions. In Nietzsche's estimation, the 'modern human beings,' the 'good human beings,' and the 'Christians' are compromised on the tragic account of life.

The modern human beings are described as those 'fellow men' who are passionately concerned about 'the theatre of politics' or masquerade as citizens, priests, or merchants. These groups, Nietzsche states in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, are 'mindful solely of their comedy and not at all of themselves.' Evidence about how far removed they are from themselves is in the response to the question of meaning: 'To what end do you live?' Nietzsche says: they will quickly answer: 'To become a good citizen, or scholar, or statesman.' Though the responses are themselves shallow, the crux of the matter is that "they are something that can never become something else."¹²¹ From an overall reading of Nietzsche, the expert position is that such groups are correlated to those he designates the 'last human being' in *Zarathustra*. The last human being in *Zarathustra* according to Nietzsche, though he raises fundamental questions about life, has still a tendency to settle for far too little.

The last human being is described in the prologue of *Zarathustra*. In general terms, the last human being is lacking knowledge of life as tragedy. The epoch of the last human being is presented by Nietzsche as the most despicable. And the overarching spirit of such an epoch is depicted as follows: "The time when the human will no longer shoot the arrow of its yearning over beyond the human, and the string of its bow will have forgotten how to whirl!"¹²² The epoch of the last human being is despicable because there is no zest for life. It is an age where even 'dissatisfaction' with the self is lost. It is the era when the greatest ingredient for cultural development is dead: longing (*sehnen*). Already in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche's description of the singular individuality of his Schopenhauer shows how longing is central to him:

Every human being is accustomed to discovering in himself some limitation, of his talent,[...] which fills him with melancholy and longing; and just as his feeling of sinfulness makes him long for the saint in him, so as an intellectual being he harbours a profound desire for the genius in him.¹²³

¹²¹ SE, §4.

¹²² Z, Prologue, §5.

¹²³ SE, §3.

Nietzsche sees the angst caused by dissatisfaction as the root of true culture. Longing is the ingredient that enables the human being to fight against his age and be untimely. In the absence of such a longing, what obtains is something akin to physical entropy.¹²⁴ The lack of longing explains the propensity for settling for far too little.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche explains the tension of the spirit and its necessity.¹²⁵ The passage on the tension of the spirit in the preface of *Beyond Good and Evil* mirrors the one in *Zarathustra* about the modern man/last human being. In *Zarathustra*, the era of the last human being is described as one lacking in chaos:

I say to you: one must still have chaos within, in order to give birth to a dancing star. I say to you: you still have chaos within you.
Alas! The time will come when the human will give birth to no more stars. Alas! There will come the time of the most despicable human, who is no longer able to despise itself.¹²⁶

Nietzsche is known to be critical of modernity. He traces modernity's lopsided approach to reality generally from Platonic philosophy. In a tense text he notes,

But the struggle against Plato, or, to use a clear and 'popular' idiom, the struggle against the Christian-ecclesiastical pressure of millennia—since Christianity is Platonism for the "people"—has created a magnificent tension of spirit in Europe, the likes of which the earth has never known: with such a tension in our bow we can now shoot at the furthest goals. Granted, the European experiences this tension as a crisis or state of need; and twice already there have been attempts, in a grand fashion, to unbend the bow, once through Jesuitism, and the second time through the democratic Enlightenment. ...
But we, who are neither Jesuits nor democrats, nor even German enough, we *good Europeans* and free, *very free* spirits—we still have it, the whole need of spirit and the whole tension of its bow! And perhaps the arrow too, the task, and—who knows? the *goal*.¹²⁷

The two texts refer to the need of the tension, longing, and chaos within, for striving. The struggle or the possibility to despise is the ingredient for self-enhancement and eventually cultural development. In the text from *Zarathustra*, the problem is the reigning complacency

¹²⁴ Refer to the study of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* by Stanley Rosen in *The Mask of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 54.

¹²⁵ *EH* "BGE", §2, Nietzsche says the following about *Beyond Good and Evil*: "This book (1886) is in all essentials a *critique of modernity*, not excluding the modern sciences, the modern arts, even modern politics, together with pointers towards an opposing type, as unmodern as possible, a noble, yes-saying type."

¹²⁶ *Z*, Prologue, §5.

¹²⁷ *BGE*, Preface.

and the lack of longing or any fruitful self-contempt. The text from *Beyond Good and Evil* reveals reasonably significant development where the longing/spirit exists at least among the few.

In *Zarathustra*'s prologue, the people simply want to remain 'last human beings,' but in *Beyond and Good Evil*, some recognize the need to keep the tension of the bow. The main fruit of maintaining the tension of the spirit is the possibility of the furthest goals. One such goal could be singular individuality and the type *Übermensch*. However, the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil* alludes as well to tenets of cultural decay—political and social values, such as democracy, equality, and progress—seeing them as means of oppression and as indicators of decay and degeneration.¹²⁸ These are indicators of the modern age (last human being) that Nietzsche renders despicable in *Zarathustra*. The last human being's despicability is founded on the fact that he cannot become anything. The despicability is partly due to lack of the passion necessary for striving. As Rosen aptly observes, in the last human being there is no new intensity and fecundity of existence.¹²⁹ Nietzsche pointedly enumerates the fundamental characteristics of the last human being that justify the despicable situation further:

Behold! I show you the last human.

'What is love? What is creation? What is yearning? What is a star?'—thus asks the last human and then blinks.

'For the earth has become small, and upon it hops the last human, who makes everything small. Its race is as in-extermicable as the ground-flea; the last human lives the longest.'¹³⁰

It was noted that the questions posed in *Schopenhauer as Educator* are mostly ontological/existential given that they revolve around themes of life and suffering. The questions have this thematic weight, even though the responses could be considered trivial: being a good citizen or a member of a state. On the contrary, the questions of the last human being can be anything, but not value-oriented.

The last human being seems to seek definition-oriented responses, perhaps for the sake of conceptual clarity. Such an approach is like the Socratic method of elenchus in Plato's dialogues. Though elenchus was a method of inquiry, ultimately it sought to arrive at a

¹²⁸ Refer to the introduction to *Beyond Good and Evil*, by Rolf-Peter Horstmann in the Cambridge edition, 2002, XXIV.

¹²⁹ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 54.

¹³⁰ Z, Prologue, §5.

conceptual belief not subject to revision. In the wider sense, for Nietzsche, Platonism was at the basis of the last human being. The question of ‘What is’ in its abstractive tendency, could shield one from the possibility of engaging with human existence (awareness of life) which does not present itself conceptually. Therefore, what is needed is, as Rosen says, a hierarchy of values, instead of a concentration on things as things.¹³¹ A mere focus on ideas could detach one from historical or generated existence. The non-evaluative questions of the last human being lead also to a solutions or style of life that may hardly produce great individuals.

There are two notable reasons why the era of the last human being can only produce individuals who feebly hide behind customs and institutions. In the absence of any longing, homogeneity and trivialization of life seem to be the norm. Nietzsche expresses homogeneity as follows: “No herdsman and one herd! Everyone wants the same thing, everyone is the same: whoever feels differently goes voluntarily into the madhouse. ‘Formerly the entire world was mad’—say their finest and they blink.”¹³² From the period of the *Untimely Meditations*, Nietzsche is critical of the mass. But in this section of the prologue of *Zarathustra*, there is the crowd that longs to be undifferentiated (this is contrary to Zarathustra's project of seeking individuals who can be lured from the herd).

The stance of the crowd is also contra Nietzsche’s advocacy for the movement towards individual differentiation. Homogeneity is representative of the last human being, which D. Burnham references as the vast undifferentiated mass of humanity.¹³³ There is a plethora of indicators from the text that strongly support Burnham’s stance: the ineradicable race as the ground-flea, who hop like insects and are contented; The association of their invented happiness with socialistic/egalitarian living (rubbing against each other for the warmth); and their cautiousness (toleration—no harbouring of mistrust; they quarrel but make up). Homogeneity carries within itself degeneration and stagnation. Rosen describes the homogeneity projected by *Zarathustra* as not only non-eleatic, but discontinuous.¹³⁴ It is the modern designation of ‘*différance*’ as reduction of sameness to difference, which is merely the reinstatement of the tyranny of sameness. The valorisation of sameness fails to acknowledge

¹³¹ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 55.

¹³² Z, Prologue, §5.

¹³³ Douglas Burnham, and Martin Jesinghausen, *Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra An Edinburgh Philosophical guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 24.

¹³⁴ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 55.

that plurality is essential to the existence of the one. What is needed instead is unity-in-difference as the essential ingredient for individual enhancement. Nietzsche defends unity-in-difference through the proposition of the type *Übermensch* where becoming is espoused.

One has no room to be different in such homogenized reality. That explains the need for a voluntary madhouse for those who may espouse differentiation.¹³⁵ The underlying reason for homogenization is explained by Zarathustra in the repetition of the word, “blink.” The last human blinks often: after asking questions, he blinks; contrived happiness, they blink. It possibly refers to the short attention span characteristic of the modern age. However, blinking can also be the sign of the trivialization of the need for knowing the human goals ahead.

Blinking is explainable in relation to unfamiliarity with the stars. This unfamiliarity is because of the attitude that ‘[o]ne is clever and knows all that has happened.’ Hence, the moment (*Augenblink*) is seemingly what is left when the past is all known and the future is deemed under control.¹³⁶ The earth is reduced, given also the field of vision (blinking relegates vision to units lacking goal-oriented vision) where there is no idea of the horizon. Practically all that is goal oriented is denied to such a creature that lives in the moment: no knowledge of tragic existence; no historical knowledge; and no social involvement can be possible. K. Higgins observes that the psychology of Nietzsche’s despicable last human type resembles Heidegger’s *das Man*, since “individuality and individual resolve are largely subsumed by the agency of the undifferentiated mass; even in the case of leaders among them, the dominant approach to the world is to huddle together instead of taking personal risks.”¹³⁷ But, for Heidegger mere avoidance of conformity may not guarantee individual particularity. Heidegger enumerates several characters that could be associated with Nietzsche’s last human being: “distantiality,” averageness, and levelling down (the ways of Being for the crowd ‘they’—*das Man*).¹³⁸

The comparison between Nietzsche’s last human being and Heidegger’s *das Man* may not be compelling enough. For Heidegger, *das man* as ‘Others’ cannot be thought of as a group of “genuinely individual human beings whose shared tastes dictate the tastes of everyone else;

¹³⁵ Nietzsche reflects on the role of madness and its linkage to differentiation in *Daybreak*, §14.

¹³⁶ Burnham, *Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 24.

¹³⁷ Higgins, “Festivals of Recognition—Nietzsche’s idealized communities” in Julian Young, *Individual and community in Nietzsche’s philosophy*, 79.

¹³⁸ For an elaborate study on Heidegger and the individuality and community refer Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans, John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), §27, (163–168).

and neither do they constitute an intersubjective or supra-individual being, a sort of communal self.”¹³⁹ The ‘they’ is not a single definite other. In this regard, it may not necessarily resemble Nietzsche’s last human being. Nevertheless, Nietzsche’s last human being and Heideggerian *das Man*, both in different contexts, demonstrate the unfavourable conditions for obtaining any genuine individual authenticity. In Nietzsche’s last human being from *Zarathustra*, there is still that “chaos within” which is a prerequisite for giving birth to a dancing star.¹⁴⁰ Chaos must be aligned to the uniqueness of the individual that Nietzsche proclaims in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. In *Zarathustra*’s scheme the *Übermensch* is the type that has turned out the best. The type *Übermensch* can serve as the effective attraction for the seemingly elusive singular individuality.

1.2.3 The *Übermenschen*: Nietzsche’s Best Type

This section seeks to concretize Nietzsche’s sense of the type *Übermensch*, and how that understanding possibly links with the enhancement of singular individuality. The examination of what Nietzsche implies by *Übermensch* in his published works is mostly from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and some references in *Twilight of Idols*, *Anti-Christ*, and *Ecce Homo*. It is probably needless to say that Nietzsche’s presentation of the term “*Übermensch*” is ambivalent. However, there is also very little textual material. In this scenario, the modus operandi will entail, firstly, looking at the few texts available (mainly *Zarathustra* and *Ecce Homo*), and secondly, engaging in some hermeneutics through analysis of Nietzsche’s concept of overcoming that leads to the concept of will to power as the link between the Singular individual and the type *Übermensch*.

The specific textual reference to *Übermensch* is within *Zarathustra*’s first speech to the people. *Zarathustra* says to the people: “*I teach to you the Overhuman [den Übermenschen]. The human is something that shall be overcome [überwunden]. What have you done to overcome it?*”¹⁴¹ *Zarathustra*’s opening speech begins on the typological note. The focus of *Zarathustra*’s probing is not simply on who man is. Rather, it is about a type that overcomes and does not seek preservation. The basis for emphasis on the type is made clear in part four

¹³⁹ Stephen Mulhall, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Heidegger and Being and Time*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), 68.

¹⁴⁰ Z, Prologue, §5.

¹⁴¹ Z, Prologue, §3.

of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. On the “Superior Human,” Zarathustra observes, “The most concerned minds today ask: ‘How is the human to be preserved?’ But Zarathustra is the first and only one to ask, “How is the human to be overcome?”¹⁴² Overcoming is the main distinction here between the type last human and the type *Übermensch*. The *Übermensch* is exemplified in overcoming. In Nietzsche, overcoming is generally understood to be the trait of the *Übermensch*. In *The Gay Science* book five, written after *Zarathustra*, Overcoming is described in terms of great health as that which is continually acquired through giving up again and again.¹⁴³ Great health is Nietzsche’s conception of the physiological condition of Zarathustra as a type. Nietzsche says that he was ambushed by Zarathustra as a type. The typological constitution of Zarathustra as the type of great health entails continual self-creation, new goals, expansive soul, a wide spectrum of experience of the life journey, and discontent with the present-day man. Zarathustra is the teacher of the *Übermensch*, and given his type, the *Übermensch* is valued as the best type. The *Übermensch*, since it overcomes itself, is the first and only concern for Zarathustra.

The standard understanding of *Übermensch* is a human type and cannot possibly be a single superior being. But the *Übermensch* as a type is understood to embody a “transformation of the mode of existence of the human species.”¹⁴⁴ The last human with its embodiment of self-preservation is to be surpassed. In *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche talks of “various cultures in which a higher type does manifest itself: something which in relation to collective [humankind] is a sort of superman [*Übermensch*].”¹⁴⁵ The reference to *Übermensch* as a type has ramifications for translation of the term *Übermensch* into English. In the prologue of *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche uses the plural form *Übermenschen* (overhumans), which supports the understanding of it as a type. However, *Übermensch* could also be rendered as overman.

Nevertheless, the prevailing Nietzsche scholarship finds it problematic when *Übermensch* is rendered as superman. Even though there is a necessity for the manifestation of the type *Übermensch* through singular individuality, the *Übermensch* may not be a designation for an empirical reality as such. The term superman is mainly associated with the

¹⁴² Z, IV, “On the Superior Human”, 3.

¹⁴³ GS, §382. The passage in *The Gay Science*, is repeated in *Ecce Homo* when Nietzsche introduces the book Zarathustra. Refer, EH “Zarathustra,” §2.

¹⁴⁴ Burnham, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 20.

¹⁴⁵ EH “Why I write such good books,” §1, and AC, § 3 and 4.

Darwinian conception of human evolution not Nietzsche's. From the period of the *Untimely Meditations* to the Later period, Nietzsche disassociates his higher type from the Darwinian perspective.

On producing great humankind as a goal dissociated from the notion of progress, Nietzsche believes that "the *goal of humanity* cannot lie in its end but only in its highest exemplars."¹⁴⁶ In *Anti-Christ*, he writes that "[humankind] does *not* represent a development of the better or the stronger or the higher in the way is believed today."¹⁴⁷ Then, in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche denies the association of the *Übermensch* with Darwinism:

[I]n other words as the 'idealistic' type of a higher kind of man, half 'saint', half 'genius' ...It has led some scholarly blockheads to suspect me of Darwinism; people have recognized in it even the 'hero cult' of that great unknowing and reluctant counterfeiter, Carlyle, which I have been so malicious as to reject.¹⁴⁸

The three cited texts allude to two points: (1) Nietzsche's notion of progress, and (2) the fact that *Übermensch* is not a heroic being. The historian Carlyle believed in a monumental image of history, whereby the society has strong dependence on heroes. Such a position, according to Nietzsche, has no respect for existence since it promotes an apathetic habit. The defining characteristic of the type *Übermensch* is overcoming, through which existence on its own terms is affirmed. The preference of overcoming over and against preservation is founded on the fact that, unlike preservation, overcoming affirms the meaning of life though tragic.

The type *Übermensch* becomes the meaning of the earth through overcoming. It is the symbol of the individual's journey into his uniqueness. It is the embodiment of existence as tragic and becoming. Hence, "[t]he Overhuman is the sense of the earth. May your will say: Let the Overhuman be the sense of the earth! I beseech you, my brothers, stay true to the earth and do not believe those who talk of over-earthly hopes!"¹⁴⁹ The ethical task of realizing singular individuality demands honesty about human ontology. The *Übermensch* as the sense (*Sinn*) of the earth seeks to ground the human being in the existential realm *hic et nunc*. The *Übermensch* as Nietzsche's guarantor of the individual's sense of the earth gives preference to a philosophy of personal tastes. The philosophy of personal tastes for Burnham is interpreted

¹⁴⁶ *HL*, §9.

¹⁴⁷ *AC*, §4.

¹⁴⁸ *EH* "why I write such books," §1.

¹⁴⁹ *Z*, Prologue, §3.

as Nietzsche's philosophy of immanence. Burnham holds that, faithfulness to the sense of the earth demands that if there is meaning or virtue, it must be sought and found within the domains of the existing things.¹⁵⁰ Any despising of the earth risks enhancement of life. The human world acquires meaning through the values created within it by singular individuals.

It can be argued that the *Übermensch's* sense of the earth commits Nietzsche's experimental philosophy to certain provisionality. I can arguably claim that provisionality encompasses the realm of science where *Versuch*/attempt is valued. *Versuch* implies a family resemblance of terms like inquiry (patient labouring); research; process of trial and error (provisionality); temptation (Nietzsche's philosophers of the future as *Versucher*/tempters); and the return to concreteness. The *Übermensch* is largely the appropriate symbol and space (as the best type) for Nietzsche's experimental philosophy. Since experimental philosophy seeks to abandon the metaphysical securities of this world and the beyond, it remains virtually without the presuppositions of the absolute as the foundation. Above all, experimental philosophy is about overcoming (risky self-testing). In this regard there is no suitable designation of that philosophy other than the figure of the *Übermensch*.

As Nietzsche's best type, it is the *Übermensch* that perhaps holds the key to singular individual's expression of human greatness in the concrete human life. The existential questionableness of man is largely meant to be affirmed in the type *Übermensch*. Zarathustra's objective is "to teach humans the meaning of their being: that is the Overman, the lightning from the dark cloud of the human."¹⁵¹ The meaning of human existence ought to incorporate the affirmation of its absurdity. The *Übermensch* as the *Blitz* (notice the opposition to Blinking of the last human being) is interpreted as the pleroma of illumination for justifying singular individuality. Now the link between the individual singularity and the type *Übermensch* can be sought.

1.2.4 The Type *Übermensch* and Singular Individuality

To discover the link between the type *Übermensch* and the singular individuality an interpretive approach is necessary. A closer analysis of the textual evidence provided by Nietzsche is required on the aspects of the *Übermensch* as a type and on the singular

¹⁵⁰ Burnham, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 20.

¹⁵¹ Z, Prologue, §7.

individuality. The overarching argument here is: the link between the type *Übermensch* and the singular individuality is immanently grounded in the will to power within the larger domain of “Nietzsche’s ontology of becoming.” Singular individuality, given its indeterminateness, must be justified only through overcoming a feat only claimed by the type *Übermensch*. A. C. Danto aptly observes that man is both *Untergang* and *Übergang* and “we go beyond ourselves by overcoming something in ourselves, and it is that which goes under, and is put beneath.”¹⁵² As will be explained, continuous affirmation of life requires both (going under and over), generally called overcoming. Applied to the singular individual, it implies being always on the way (*unterweg*) as a work in progress. Nietzsche’s type *Übermensch* may be interpreted as the quintessence of the “Ontology of becoming” expressed in the singular individual as self-overcoming. In the process of overcoming lies the defining link between the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual which is the will to power. Closer engagement on these assertions is needed. The basis of such engagement has been already outlined under Nietzsche’s best type, the *Übermensch*, in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and the relevant pre- and post-*Zarathustra* texts.

The link between the singular individual and the type *Übermensch* must necessarily be gauged from Nietzsche’s ontology of becoming. Ontology here simply means *what there is*. Such an understanding of ontology is possibly broad enough to encompass the reality of being and becoming. Thus, ontology cannot simply be tied to the Parmenidean-Platonic-being as permanence. This is because Nietzsche’s becoming is also an elucidation of reality. J. Richardson on Nietzsche and ontology observes that Nietzsche’s insistence on becoming “has the sense of specifying an unusual ontology, or metaphysics, and not of renouncing any such theory.”¹⁵³ The implication for Nietzsche is that being is becoming. On this account, Richardson believes Nietzsche does have a position on being/ontology/reality, which is becoming. Nietzsche’s ontology of becoming is his privileged stance about the nature of reality. Before examining how this reality of becoming has been panning out in this chapter, it is necessary to engage Nietzsche himself.

In the beginning of *Human All, Too Human*, Nietzsche alleges that philosophers hitherto lack a historical sense. Hence, such philosophers “will not learn that man has become,

¹⁵² Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher*, 198.

¹⁵³ John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s System* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 75.

that the faculty of cognition has become.”¹⁵⁴ Nietzsche, at the end of the aphorism, claims that everything has become. In the second volume of the same work, Nietzsche puts forward a historical figure putatively associated with reality as becoming: Heraclitus. On the experience of life as a flow, Nietzsche holds,

When we desire to descend into the river of what seems to be our own most intimate and personal being, there applies the dictum of Heraclitus: we cannot step into the same river twice.—This is, to be sure, a piece of wisdom that has gradually grown stale, but it has nonetheless remained as true and valid as it ever was.¹⁵⁵

This passage references Heraclitus' commonly known quote from the river fragments “Pantarei.”¹⁵⁶ In *The Gay Science*, on *Heraklitismus* Nietzsche writes:

Only fighting yields
Happiness on earth,
And on battlefields
Friendship has its birth. ...¹⁵⁷

Here Nietzsche brings out the theme of contest (agon) inherent in Greek self-understanding as it was embodied in Heraclitus. Though Nietzsche's relationship to antiquity in general is rather complex and manifold, Heraclitus according to Nietzsche espouses a Hellenic style of life.

For Nietzsche, Heraclitus embodies the Delphic oracle, “Man know thyself,” through his ‘inward turning.’ By seeking self-knowledge, Heraclitus, like the Greeks in general, was following the dictates of the oracle which involved: “thinking back to themselves, that is, to their real needs, and letting pseudo-needs die out.”¹⁵⁸ After a hard struggle and through protracted application of the oracle (by focusing on their real needs), Nietzsche observes, the Greeks took possession of themselves. The struggle on the part of Heraclitus involved his contest with conventional beliefs and trends (he showed aversion toward popular thoughts). Thus, according to Dale Wilkerson, the contest (*Wettkampf*) is at the core of Greek instinct, and Heraclitus reaffirmed that instinct by disclosing the innocence of becoming rather than

¹⁵⁴ *HAA*, §2.

¹⁵⁵ *AOM*, §223.

¹⁵⁶ It is believed that there are three Heraclitean river fragments: B 91, B 12, and B 49a. One (or more of them) makes use of the image of changing rivers—the waters are never the same—which relates to Heraclitus' general doctrine of change: he believed that no individual thing in this universe has stability and permanence, for it will eventually be destroyed and changed into something else.

¹⁵⁷ *GS*, “Joke, Cunning, and Revenge,” 41.

¹⁵⁸ *HL*, § 10.

injustice in nature.¹⁵⁹ Nietzsche credibly recognizes in this Hellenistic-Heraclitean spirit of contest, the inward concentration of force, an instinct for self-affirmation and struggle which enabled the Greeks to give birth to flourishing types. Nietzsche believes that the Greeks affirm their chaos/tragedy by organizing it without being pessimistic.

The overriding theme of singular individuality, within the aporetic question of existence as tragic, continuously hungers for some reality that justifies it. How can the singular individual affirm life as tragic? The general response is by some embodiment of the ontology of becoming. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, awareness of singular individuality is described as a strange penumbra, and something that most find unendurable due to laziness and the toils entailed in singular individuality.¹⁶⁰ The situation then demands an exemplar as the figure that attracts/draws forth the individual to who he is: the singular individual.

The envisaged role of the type *Übermensch* is very specific. Zarathustra's opening speech is centred on that role: "The human is something that shall be *overcome*. What have you done to *overcome* it? All beings so far have created something beyond themselves: and you want to be the ebb of this great tide, and even go back to the beasts rather than *overcome* the human?"¹⁶¹ The centrality of overcoming described by Nietzsche is attested to by Adrian Caro and Robert Pippin in their assertion that the text of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* carries three themes: the *Übermensch*; the Self-overcoming; and the new way of thinking and living.¹⁶² Furthermore, they argue that the themes of the type *Übermensch* and self-overcoming are intertwined. The singular role of the type *Übermensch* as the sense of the earth (as the giver of meaning) is to enable the overcoming of the last human being within the individual as a surety to singular individuality.

In this regard, the practicality of Nietzsche's philosophy as individual *autopoiesis* begins to take shape only through the role of the type *Übermensch*. On the practical aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy, Harold Alderman believes that the doctrine of the type *Übermensch* is not to be understood only theoretically. On the contrary, the conception of the type *Übermensch* entails a re-orientation of our experience amounting to a sort of conversion.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Dale Wilkerson, *Nietzsche and the Greeks* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2006), 137–138.

¹⁶⁰ *SE*, §3.

¹⁶¹ Z, Prologue, §3 (My Emphasis).

¹⁶² Adrian Caro and Robert Pippin, in the Introduction to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, X.

¹⁶³ Harold Alderman, *Nietzsche's Gift* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1977), 26.

The conversion involves openness to the ‘flux of becoming’ which inhabits and is inhabited by individuals. With general nuances of the type *Übermensch* in place, now the specific task given to the type *Übermensch*, overcoming of man, can be examined.

The type *Übermensch* is ultimately a *Blitz* (lightning) in the sense of pure affirmation. In the words of Alderman, overcoming man implies a need to create conditions within oneself for the type *Übermensch* (for affirmation). The preliminary condition so far investigated demands acknowledgement of existence as tragic. In relation to the type *Übermensch*, it means appropriating within oneself the ontology of becoming. Seeking to appropriate the spirit (*Geist*, life) of the type *Übermensch* is also the avenue for engaging with the ‘how’ part of the question raised at the beginning of the chapter.

In the original question, the emphasis is on “how:” How can one’s life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? It demands, apart from a theoretical approach (what the current chapter has done by laying down what is needed: overcoming, breeding, and embracing the tragic spirit), a methodological approach which will be taken up as the Psychology of the type *Übermensch* (dealing with the fundamental human drive, the will to power in chapter two), and will discover how it leads into practical living (morality of the type *Übermensch* in Chapter Three). The type *Übermensch* as pure affirmation embodies life as the will to power. In Deleuze’s interpretation, *Übermensch* is a name that Nietzsche gives to the conglomeration of forces of achievement (*Wohlgerathenheit*).¹⁶⁴ This perpetual flux of forces essentially accounts for change in the world. However, it is not only change but plurality and differentiation.

In the next chapter, the will to power will be considered on both psychological and methodological grounds (self-overcoming and form-giving) as the enabler for singular individuality in the broader process of individual *autopoiesis*. Through *autopoiesis* one can affirm Alderman’s argument that, to overcome the despicable type, each must create within himself, “to the extent that [he] can, the Overman.”¹⁶⁵ How does one do that? The immediate response will be through overcoming, understood as will to power. But the mechanism of it is more complex than that. In the current chapter, overcoming is projected as a necessity for both

¹⁶⁴ Alan Schrift, “Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze, and the Subject of Radical Democracy” in *Journal of Theoretical Humanities*, (Angelaki, 5:2, 2000), 153. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans, Seán Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 130.

¹⁶⁵ Alderman, *Nietzsche’s Gift*, 27.

the singular individual and the type *Übermensch*. Zarathustra as the teacher of individuals and not groups aims at teaching everyone the art of self-making. For the singular individuals in their own way must strive to live the life of the type *Übermensch*. One could think of the case of humanity as a type and the various individuals as units espousing the elements of humanity. Even though none of the individual entities will ultimately be the humanity, the point is that each individual entity is expected to espouse humanity to the best of their ability. Thus, though the type *Übermensch* is unattainable in principle by human beings, the struggle of the singular individual itself can serve as the sense for human life.

Failure to struggle is not only akin to the life of animality where existence is *Sinnlos*, but it is the life removed from one's actuality (existence). Nietzsche through Zarathustra describes the human as a "rope, fastened between beast and Overhuman—a rope over an abyss," and also as "[a] dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and standing still."¹⁶⁶ This is obviously a complex text. The human being as the rope and not on the rope seems obvious. Alderman observes that the human being as a rope does not allow the possibility that one may free oneself from the animal to be only the *Übermensch*.¹⁶⁷ Instead, Nietzsche's human being as a 'rope between' implies that to be a singular individual the tension between the animal (in our case here, the herd) and the type *Übermensch* ought not only to be acknowledged, but appropriated. The tension in *Schopenhauer as Educator* was expressed in different nuances such as ceasing to take oneself easily and taking a bold and dangerous line with one's existence.

And the underlying principle of such a life is overcoming. Therefore, singular individuality demands a continuous process of overcoming. Singular individuality seems always tensile (filled with tension) and as such precarious (over the abyss) between one's actuality (reality of human drives) and one's ideal embodied in the type *Übermensch*. Nietzsche's description for the link between the singular individual and the type *Übermensch* is *der Wille zur Macht* (the will to power).

¹⁶⁶ Z, Prologue §4.

¹⁶⁷ Alderman, *Nietzsche's Gift*, 29.

Conclusion

One of the main focuses of this chapter has been to tease out the link between Nietzsche's claims about singular individuality, as projected in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, and the type *Übermensch*. It has been positively argued that Nietzsche's aporia about existence is outlined in the early work, *Schopenhauer as Educator*. This work has been presented as Nietzsche's philosophical scheme where the overriding theme is justification for existence even though tragic. The basic unit for that affirmation of existence is Nietzsche's singular individual. However, it has also been extensively shown that, such a unit is not given. Instead it is an ethical task envisaged to be accomplished under some favourable conditions. Such conditions in *Schopenhauer as Educator* are expressed in such terms as: exemplar, taskmasters, breeders, need for honesty-cum-scepticism and striving borne out of dissatisfaction. It has been finely shown that Nietzsche ascribes these attributes to 'his Schopenhauer' who teaches about the tragedy of existence.

However, in the same work there are contrary attributes to existence as tragic. The opposite conditions to the task of singular individuality include self-satisfaction, complacency in life, and simply desiring happiness in a culture. Such characteristics largely inform the last human being as the representative of the modern age that Nietzsche seeks to undermine. Hence, the text *Schopenhauer as Educator* places existence as tragic at the centre of individual *autopoiesis*. The second pertinent theme of the type *Übermensch* derives from the obtaining conditions for singular individuality in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. The argument advanced is that though the type *Übermensch* is only introduced in later Nietzsche, it is highly prefigured in the role of the exemplar, taskmasters, and breeders and in the notion of striving in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. The type *Übermensch* becomes the best attraction to the life of untimeliness that singular individuality is tasked to embrace.

The singular character of the type *Übermensch* is overcoming. Through overcoming, life as tragic is affirmed. For Nietzsche, singular individuality is always a work in progress (given that it is implicated in life). Singular individuality is always called to overcoming. But more importantly, singular individuality ceases the moment one allows oneself to be timely/one with his age, to become part of the mass. The constraints necessary for realizing singular individuality are grounded in the type *Übermensch*. However, for that realization to work requires the psychological and methodological principle, the will to power.

Chapter 2: The Psychology of the Type *Übermensch*

The most concerned minds today ask: 'How is the human to be preserved?' But Zarathustra is the first and only one to ask: 'How is the human to be overcome?' (Z, IV, 13, 3)

Introduction

In the last chapter, the type *Übermensch* was presented as the necessary exemplar for the possibility of singular individuality. However, overcoming as the character of the type *Übermensch* must be realized in the singular individual. Nietzsche's commitment to the psychology of humankind is evident from *Human All Too Human* with his comments on psychological observations. He alleges that "the art of psychological dissection and computation is lacking above all in the social life of all classes, in which, while there may be much talk about people, there is none at all about *man*."¹⁶⁸ This could imply that Nietzsche is not only interested in the search of an explanatory key for the human being, rather this key ought also to offer some amelioration for human life.

In this chapter, the overarching assertion is that the psychology of the type *Übermensch* is the will to power. Psychology in this chapter and its role is understood in Nietzsche's sense as the explanatory tool for the type *Übermensch*. The will to power is the methodological/explanatory tool for accessing human drives that are at the heart of Nietzsche's psychological philosophy and morality. As a method, will to power is justified only within a context of becoming.

The type *Übermensch* embraces the reality of becoming which subsists in entities as the will to power. Furthermore, in its embodiment of becoming, the will to power guarantees the existence of diverse entities. In the words of Doyle Tsarina, the will to power is given content in a "particular context and is defined by its context."¹⁶⁹ In Chapter One, it was pointed out that the type *Übermensch* finds validation in the existence of the singular individual. Nietzsche gives a subtle characterization of the will to power: "The world seen from inside, the world determined and described with respect to its 'intelligible character'—would be just

¹⁶⁸ HAH, §35.

¹⁶⁹ Doyle Tsarina, *Nietzsche on Epistemology and Metaphysics: The World in View* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 117.

this ‘will to power’ and nothing else.”¹⁷⁰ This characterization of the will to power as the internal, explicative principle arguably will go a long way in not only understanding the type *Übermensch*, but more importantly, the process of individual *autopoiesis*.

This chapter is structured as follows: the first section examines Nietzsche’s understanding of the psychology of the will to power with an emphasis on self-overcoming; and the will to power as form-giving. It will be seen that overcoming and form-giving are inherent actions of the will. But for Nietzsche, in engaging with the will as overcoming and power as psychology of form-giving, he dissociates himself from the traditional metaphysics of conceiving the will as a faculty. For Nietzsche, the will entails a complex action of willing. The second aspect of this chapter will focus on the singular individuality and giving style as the specific application of the will to power and validation of the type *Übermensch*. This will lead into the notions of strong and weak wills that demand a morality of the type *Übermensch* (a morality with an attitude for seeking to live beyond good and evil).

2.1 Nietzsche: Psychology and the Will to Power

On the numerous occasions that Nietzsche mentions psychology, it is apparent that he is critical of psychology as it has hitherto been practiced: (1) the psychology that he dissuades himself from, the one dominated by morality, and (2) the psychology that he advances and associates with the philosophers of the future. Such is the psychology of the types, which is ascribed to the will to power. This section briefly investigates Nietzsche’s critical approach to a psychology dominated by morality, and his commitment to the psychology of types. The focus will be on Nietzsche’s psychology of types, given that it promotes the will to power as the privileged path for the task of individual *autopoiesis*. This is because the will to power, as Richardson observes, is the engine of diversity, which “gives no overall direction to the evolutionary process.”¹⁷¹ The above two designations of psychology (morality dominated and of types) differ in their approaches and orientation. For Nietzsche, psychology tied to morality relies heavily on the concepts it is apparently imposing, while the psychology of types is drives-based and favourable to diversity in its orientation.

¹⁷⁰ *BGE*, §36.

¹⁷¹ John Richardson, *Nietzsche’s New Darwinism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 165. On directing force opposed to driving force refer *GS*, §360.

To justify the above designations (about psychology), a brief analysis of the psychology tied to morality is pertinent. The analysis of the psychology dominated by morality will grant greater credence to Nietzsche's own privileged kind of psychology of types. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche alleges, "All psychology so far has been stuck in moral prejudices and fears: it has not ventured into the depths."¹⁷² The type of psychology Nietzsche projects here is one that claims universal validity based on the conventional or conceptual schemes.¹⁷³ Fear and depth go hand in hand. In the last chapter, in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, tunneling into oneself meant an attempt at acquiring knowledge of one's basic contradictory existence. Such an awareness elicits terror. Thus, the safer option seems not to tunnel or mine and undermine, but simply to make do with some ostensibly liveable conventions.¹⁷⁴ However, such moral prejudices as Nietzsche holds can be deeply distorting.

Still, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche talks of the psychology that "had put itself under the dominance of morality."¹⁷⁵ The reason Nietzsche gives for such domination of morality over psychology is supposedly the latter's belief in opposing moral values. For Nietzsche, psychology under the domination of moral values, implies the abstractive type of psychology that gives too much leeway to rationalization. And more fundamentally, Nietzsche holds that such a psychology interprets the opposites into texts and facts. The reference to texts and facts is a pointer to Nietzsche's philological slant, where the text in this case references existence or life. For Nietzsche, Philology entails the correct reading (interpretation) of existence that does not falsify.

Striving towards the correct interpretation of existence is Nietzsche's focus. The "correct reading" as an interpretation of existence will play a key role in understanding Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. For Nietzsche, psychology dominated by morality fails to see that "the opposites inhere not in the thing but in the interpreter's categories."¹⁷⁶ According to Nietzsche the opposites are part of the problem of metaphysical philosophy that thrives on the assumption that highly valued things must have a miraculous origin in the thing-

¹⁷² *BGE*, §23.

¹⁷³ Psychology influenced by morality talks about people, but not about man, as Nietzsche alleges in *HAH*, §35.

¹⁷⁴ In the preface to *Daybreak*, Nietzsche refers to his campaign against traditional morality in terms of tunnelling and mining. This is probably the reference to his attempt in the archaeology of human reality (understand human perceptions deeply).

¹⁷⁵ *BGE*, §47.

¹⁷⁶ Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task: An interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 107.

in-itself. For Nietzsche, values for things are not from without, but are conditioned within. Simply put, values are perspectival. This notion requires explanation in relation to values. In the words of M. Tanner, there cannot be “any value-free scrutinizing of the world followed by either acceptance of a value scheme that the world forces on one, or the adoption of a set of values based on a decision taken after surveying the way things are.”¹⁷⁷ In this regard, Tanner explains that Nietzsche’s claim that we create values is both a logical and an ontological one. It is logical in the sense that one is mistaken to think that values are imposed from without. It is an ontological claim because values are not out there to be discovered. Hence, a perspectival approach to values is the recognition that they are drive-centred and thus conditioned in human reality.

More pertinently, the psychology under the domination of morality poses a problem regarding the understanding of the will. Psychology under the tutelage of morality is bound to see the will as a faculty of choice (free will). Such a conception of the will necessitates, according to Nietzsche, seeking always for the accountable party. On free will, Nietzsche notes,

We no longer have any sympathy today with the concept ‘free will’: we know only too well what it is—the most infamous of all arts of the theologian making [humankind] ‘accountable’ in his sense of the word, that is to say for *making [humankind] dependent on him*. [...] I give here only the psychology of making men accountable.—Everywhere accountability is sought, it is usually the instinct for *punishing and judging* which seeks it.¹⁷⁸

In this text, Nietzsche gives various expressions of the psychology dominated by moral attributes such as responsibility (accountability), intentions, and judgement. These moral attributes affect the understanding of the will. Nietzsche is critical of the will as a faculty basically because it encompasses being instead of becoming. In starting from moral judgement (stress on intention and responsibility develops into notion of punishment), Nietzsche holds, becoming is deprived of its innocence.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche reconstructs a history of morality in three epochs: the pre-moral period of humankind; the moral; and the extra-moral.¹⁷⁹ The moral epoch is

¹⁷⁷ Michael Tanner, “Introduction” in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 19.

¹⁷⁸ *TI*, “The four great errors,” §7.

¹⁷⁹ *BGE*, §32

described as the one that embraces the origin of the action as the determination of its value. For Nietzsche, the moral epoch is the first attempt at self-knowledge. But it is considered a problematic phase since: “Instead of the consequences, the origin: what an inversion of perspectives!”¹⁸⁰ Grounding morality in the origin of an action for Nietzsche is an inversion, since it demands factoring in the notion of intention. Hence, the evaluation of an action is now ascribed to the value of the intention behind it. The morality founded on value of intention is what is being undermined by Nietzsche. Nietzsche’s contention about the intention is that it is “under the sway of this prejudice that one has morally praised, blamed, judged and philosophized on earth almost to the present day.”¹⁸¹ Nietzsche’s problem is that on the basis of the morality of intentions, judgements are made about good and evil. This point is still developed in the context of the Eternal Recurrence in Chapter Three.

For now, what is at stake is the will as a faculty. In this case, the old psychology (dominated by morality), “the psychology of the will” as a faculty, ascribes free will to people for the sake of accountability (either to praise or blame). Consequently, Nietzsche holds that “every action had to be thought of as willed [intentioned], the origin of every action as lying in the consciousness.”¹⁸² One can only grasp Nietzsche’s critique of the will as a faculty based on his stance about metaphysics of opposites (which embraces dualisms).

In the realm of being/traditional metaphysics, there is a tendency to be dualistic in outlook. For instance, references to cause and effects; substance and qualities; subject and predicates; and doers and their deeds. These compose partly the realm of metaphysical opposites. The Nietzschean position is that in all these instances, only the second exists, and the designations substance/quality, subject/soul, free will are the manifestations of the strong psychological need.¹⁸³ The psychological need here refers to that urge for explanations that ultimately for Nietzsche ought to crystalize into the strong will. The need for explanations sometimes warrants wrong justifications, for instance about origin of actions. Regarding the origin of action, as grounded in consciousness, Nietzsche believes it is the most fundamental

¹⁸⁰ *BGE*, §32.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *TI*, “The four great errors,” §7.

¹⁸³ *BGE*, §21; *GM I*, §13. An explanation by Simon May, *Nietzsche’s Ethics and his War on ‘Morality’* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 142.

falsification made against the very principle of psychology. For Nietzsche, the domineering aspect of morality on psychology, as hitherto understood, lies in the concept of consciousness.

With traditional morality, every willed action is grounded in consciousness. However, Nietzsche is critical of consciousness (*die Bewußtheit*) conceived as the unity of action. In *The Gay Science*, the following pertinent issues emerge about consciousness: Firstly, Nietzsche's own position is that "[c]onsciousness is the last and the latest development of the organic and hence also what is the most unfinished and strong." Being unfinished, it poses danger, since "[b]efore a function is fully developed and mature it constitutes a danger for the organism, and it is good if during the interval it is subjected to some tyranny." Secondly, Nietzsche posits the problem about the understanding of consciousness is that "[o]ne thinks that it [consciousness] constitutes the kernel of man, what is abiding, eternal, ultimate, and most original in him." With its conception as abiding and eternal, consciousness is taken for a determinate magnitude. Therefore, from the second position, it follows that "one denies its [consciousness] growth and its intermittences. One takes it for the unity of the organism."¹⁸⁴ Nietzsche seems to be problematizing the Cartesian ego, or the Kantian transcendental 'I' (of apperception), both of which are meant to be referencing the "contentless" 'I' as the condition for the unity of experiences. Instead, Nietzsche is concerned with the empirical reality of the will which subscribes to the phenomenon of becoming.

Be that as it may, what is relevant for now is the implication of associating the faculty of the will to one source: consciousness. The ensuing problem in the words of Steven Hales and Rex Welshon is the claim of having a single entity (self), being associated with separate actions.¹⁸⁵ Thus, the conception of the will as a faculty entails opposites (doer and the deed) rooted in the metaphysics of permanence/being. With the metaphysics of being, consciousness is projected as enduring and, on this foundation, the moral claims about universal values are developed. Nietzsche is more emphatic at the end of the aphorism, holding that the belief that one possesses consciousness has incapacitated human beings from seeking to acquire one.

But more pertinently is the recognition that such a consciousness is related to errors (that there are enduring things, there are substances, self/subjects and freedom of will). Nietzsche observes that any psychology (built on the consciousness) that is dominated by

¹⁸⁴ GS, §11.

¹⁸⁵ Steven Hales and Rex Welshon, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 130.

morality founded on intention is nothing but rudimentary and naïve. In a later text of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche expresses his sense of consciousness:

Consciousness does not really belong to man's individual existence but rather to his social or herd nature; that, as follows from this, it has developed subtlety only insofar as this is required by social or herd utility. Consequently, given the best will in the world to understand ourselves as individually as possible, ... each of us will always succeed in becoming conscious only of what is not individual but 'average.' Our thoughts themselves are continually governed by the character of consciousness—by the 'genius of the species' that commands it—and translated back into the perspective of the herd. Fundamentally, all our actions are altogether incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual. This is the essence of phenomenalism and perspectivism as I understand them: Owing to the nature of animal consciousness, the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface- and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner.¹⁸⁶

In this text, a summary of sorts, Nietzsche expounds his reasons for undermining any psychology that may be founded on consciousness. Such a psychology lacks the perspectival aspect that is central to the developmental nature of Nietzsche's thinking. On this interpretation, consciousness is not an aspect of man's individual existence. The implication is that consciousness as the kernel or enduring reality does not justify the condition of the individual as a perspectival entity. However, the above exposition on consciousness may have greater ramifications on Nietzsche's methodological grounds of individual *autopoiesis* than is currently acknowledged.

In divorcing his envisaged psychology of the will to power from traditional morality, Nietzsche's project breaks the abstractive limitations by insisting on becoming. The abstractive limitations entail the tendency of being fixated on universalistic principles and imposition of conceptual frameworks. Nietzsche, in dissociating himself from the conception of the subject/self as a unified entity, enables himself to reject the notion of the abstract individual, too. Nietzsche understands the will as multiple, efficacious, and present in the many drives that constitute an individual. Hence, Nietzsche's critique of any psychology dominated by morality and emphasis on becoming seems to entrench his thinking on human condition. As such, in the words of Ian Forbes, Nietzsche frees his method of will to power from being an

¹⁸⁶ GS, §354.

analysis of a particular society that purports to formulate prescriptions for other societies.¹⁸⁷ If this is taken to be the case, will Nietzsche's explanatory tool as will to power not turn out to be contentless? Nietzsche's method focuses on being "the directing force" as opposed to "the driving force."¹⁸⁸ The directing force is akin to the reservoir of boundless possibilities, potentially waiting to be used up. Such a force epitomizes the type *Übermensch*, which is the focus of Nietzsche's method. One can credibly ascribe the directing force to the traditional reference to the will as blind. The driving force applies to myriad ways in which the directing force expresses itself. Driving force is limited in operation and is goal-orientated and discharges itself in one particular way. This point on directing and driving force, will be dealt with again about the Will as overcoming below.

For Nietzsche, what guides the production of the singular individual is the psychology of the will, and not traditional morality. In the case of consciousness, like rationality, it serves a secondary function compared to the primary force of the will to power. In setting the psychological needs (of the type *Übermensch*) above the moral universalistic approach, Nietzsche positions his method above any particular individual, culture, or social setting. However, this does not imply that Nietzsche's method is ahistorical; instead, it is what I referred to in Chapter One as intra-perspectival. (Refer also to the notion of typology in Nietzsche, explained in Chapter One.) Such a method finds realization in different life forms, but not in a uniform manner. As such, Nietzsche's method can be validly applied for the appraisal of structures that ensue from traditional morality, like utilitarianism and any encompassing moral norms that Nietzsche critiques in the Western cultural setting. Now the focus shifts to that psychology which is realized in myriad life forms.

2.1.1 The Will to Power: The Psychology of the Type

Types from the last chapter are understood as explainers of human reality. In a famous text, Nietzsche describes psychology "as morphology and the *doctrine of the development of the will to power*."¹⁸⁹ To justify his brand of psychology, Nietzsche goes further to claim that nobody has ever come close to such a designation even in thought. This seemingly amounts to

¹⁸⁷ Ian Forbes, "Marx and Nietzsche: the individual history," *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson (London: Routledge, 1991), 157.

¹⁸⁸ *GS*, §360.

¹⁸⁹ *BGE*, § 23.

appropriating the will to power for his own psychology that is not dominated by morality. In *Twilight of Idols*, Nietzsche highlights salient points about his scope of psychology. He remarks that a born psychologist is conscious only of the conclusion, the outcome, and “knows nothing of that arbitrary abstraction from the individual case.”¹⁹⁰ The meaning of the outcome here is that it is about the type (the encompassing traits).

Psychology so understood is not dealing with particular human beings per se but with the typical explainers of human actions. (For Nietzsche, it is the will to power as the fundamental drive.) It is within such a domain that John Richardson designates Nietzsche’s psychology as the delineation of psychological types.¹⁹¹ For his part, Kaufmann is of the view that Nietzsche’s will to power is first and foremost a psychological hypothesis.¹⁹² As such, will to power could be an empirical concept arrived at by induction. The ontology of becoming as enshrined in the type *Übermensch* requires an accompanying psychology that accounts for that becoming. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche is more elaborate in his claims about pathfinding in psychology. Convinced that he has developed a psychology contra Christian morality he writes, “No one has yet felt *Christian* morality to be *beneath* them: for that you need an elevation, a far-sightedness, a hitherto quite unprecedented psychological depth and bottomlessness. Christian morality has hitherto been the Circe of all thinkers—they were in its service.”¹⁹³ This can possibly be appreciated under psychology tied to traditional metaphysics and Nietzsche’s position on a psychology that he values, of types. However, where does his psychology of explainers of actions lead to? What does it entail and how does it work? These are the questions that will be investigated under the framework of the will to power as the explanatory principle of the type *Übermensch*. The argument revolves around the claim that the will to power through its inherent nature of overcoming and form-giving is the guarantor of individual *autopoiesis* through singular individuality.

Nietzsche links psychology and the will to power through morphology. The term morphology from its Greek etymology, (μορφή) *morphē* (form) has two possible applications: (a) *morphē* may refer to the external appearance of a thing, the outside shape/structure. This is

¹⁹⁰ *TI*, “Skirmishes,” §7.

¹⁹¹ John Richardson, “Nietzsche’s Psychology,” *Nietzsches Wissenschaftsphilosophie*, eds. H. Heit, G. Abel, and M. Brusotti (De Gruyter Verlag, 2011), 315.

¹⁹² Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 204.

¹⁹³ *EH* “Destiny,” § 6.

a common Greek usage in the writings of Homer, or (b) *morphē* as the nature or essence of a thing. The standard understanding of this is the Platonic *Eídos*, as the Form/Idea.¹⁹⁴ In the German language, there is *die Morphe*, a derivative of Greek *Morphē/Eídos*, which gives nuances such as *Geist/Form*. The philosophical understanding of *Morphologie* in German is as Science of the doctrine of things, their forms, structure and characteristic development and regularities.¹⁹⁵ The usage that Nietzsche has in mind is the form as expression of the essential aspect of a thing (delineation of a thing as such). Morphology, in Nietzsche's context, is about the fundamental features that comprise an organism, mostly from the psychological and biological perspectives. Some Nietzsche scholars, such as Maudemarie Clark, allege that the will to power is a psychological drive.¹⁹⁶ Clark further argues that Nietzsche thought that all human actions could be explained in terms of the will. The standard position is that the fundamental psychological unit to which Nietzsche attributes his doctrine of the will to power is the drive.¹⁹⁷ Thus, for Nietzsche, the formal (essential) structure of the human being is grounded in the drives.

For human beings, the regime of drives constitutes the life of instincts. In Nietzsche's view, the drives form the essential constitution of the human being. Thus, knowledge of the drives, though incomplete, provides a major insight into human reality. Nietzsche relates the drives to intellectual conscience. He alleges, "A conscience behind your 'conscience' ... has a pre-history in your instincts, likes, dislikes, experiences, and lack of experiences."¹⁹⁸ The intellectual conscience lies deeper than the judgmental conscience (which is tied to the morality that Nietzsche criticises). The conscience behind the conscience in Nietzsche's corpus is mostly associated with the drives. The drives operate beneath the level of consciousness.¹⁹⁹ The ultimate entity that governs the functioning of the drives is the will, which is a complex

¹⁹⁴On the various nuances of *morphē*, refer to Ancient Greek dictionaries such as Henry George Liddel, *Greek-English-Lexicon*, 8th edition (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, MDCCCXI/1901); Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, eds. Madeleine Goh & Chad Schroeder (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

¹⁹⁵ There is an elaborate presentation on *Morphologie* in *Duden Deutsches Universalwörterbuch A-Z* (Wien: Dudenverlag, 1989) and in English, Philip Babcock Gove, ed. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, unabridged (Massachusetts: Merriam Webster, 1993).

¹⁹⁶ Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 208.

¹⁹⁷ Rex Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (London: Routledge, 2004), 178.

¹⁹⁸ GS, §335.

¹⁹⁹ Paul Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean self: Moral Psychology, agency, and the unconscious* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 79.

reality for Nietzsche. This is because, as it will later emerge, Nietzsche associates the will with affects/emotions of command. The affects are explained through the drives. Thus, knowledge of the drives entails Nietzsche's psychology. The link of the drives to psychology is evident in Nietzsche's allegation that psychology is the path to fundamental problems. Nietzsche's brand of psychology through the regime of drives is one such avenue for far-sightedness and archaeology of the human type (which entails the instinctual constitution).

In this regard, Nietzsche's psychology studies the forms involved in its articulation of the type human.²⁰⁰ This is the reason Nietzsche's psychology is about the fundamental human drive, the will to power. The fundamental condition of the human being is best described by the in-built constraints explainable in terms of drives. In *Zarathustra's* passage, 'On Self-Overcoming,' Nietzsche associates the will to power with the unexhausted procreative life-will, obeying and commanding, even with life. More pertinent is Nietzsche's claim, "And this secret did Life herself tell to me. 'Behold,' she said [life], I am *that which must always overcome itself*."²⁰¹ Nietzsche perceives the presence of overcoming wherever there is will to power, and particularly wherever he finds the living, because for Zarathustra, will to power, as it later emerges, is about life in its multiple forms.

Overcoming in this case underpins the ontological case of life associated more with the will. The different aspects of will and power can be discerned in *Beyond Good and Evil*. Nietzsche believes that "life itself is *essentially* a process of appropriating, injuring, overpowering the alien and the weaker, oppressing, being harsh, imposing your own form, incorporating, and at least, the very least, exploiting."²⁰² In the process of overcoming, something else takes place, appropriation and imposition of some form. The type *Übermensch* fundamentally requires appropriation and form in the singular individual which is accomplished by the will to power.

²⁰⁰ Douglas Burnham believes psychology understood in terms of morphology is fundamentally a natural process of analysis that is also akin to Nietzsche's understanding of genealogy. Furthermore, Burnham claims that morphology's interest is about value in terms of why people in large numbers or whole epochs should believe it to be true. There seems to be a confusion about value here. This is because, psychology as morphology in Nietzsche's conception is meant to lay bare/explain, human reality, the will to power as the path to fundamental problems. Psychology as morphology is not about value per se, even though value is in the domain of psychology. Refer to Nietzsche's *BGE*, §23, *TI*, "Skirmishes," §7, and for Burnham, refer to Douglas Burnham, *Reading Nietzsche, An Analysis of Beyond Good and Evil* (London: Acumen Publishing, 2007), 13 and Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil*, 58.

²⁰¹ *Z*, II, 12 (On Self-overcoming).

²⁰² *BGE*, §259.

Hence, the will to power as the fundamental drive must be regarded as the disposition that structures human affective orientation and exerts remarkable influence. Now, with the doctrine of the will to power, the methodological response to Nietzsche's questions: 'how can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered?' seem to take some shape. The will to power is emerging as that efficacious principle by which human life can be organized to possibly yield singular individuality. In Chapter One, the *Übermensch* is presented as Nietzsche's best type. The burden of elaborating on how the *Übermensch* is deemed the best type in terms of its effectiveness lies in its explainer, the will to power. Thus, articulating human actions (psychology) within the ontology of becoming may only be credible through the will to power.

The will to power explains the mechanism of becoming. Nietzsche envisages the reality of becoming "as the embodiment of will to power" which is understood as will to grow, to spread, to win dominance. The basis of will to power is not out of any morality or immorality, but simply because it is *alive*, "and because life *is* precisely will to power."²⁰³ The standard interpretation of the aspects of the will to power as growing, winning, and dominance is taking them as the character of life. The common inner-character of life is indifference. And as the will to power, life is essentially overcoming and form-giving. Nietzsche envisions life as beyond good and evil (supra-moral) since it is not out of any morality. This is a complex claim that requires more analysis of Nietzsche's notion of life.

In the notes of the period 1885–1886 there is an entry on life and value. The outstanding stance in the following text is that valuation and even morality must be life-oriented. Such is the suggestion from the following text:

What are our evaluations and moral tables really worth? What is the outcome of their rule? For whom? in relation to what?—Answer: for life. But *what is life?* Here we need a new, more definite formulation of the concept 'life.' My formula for it is: Life is will to power.²⁰⁴

Life qua life is not governed by moral valuations, since it is simply indifferent. To revert to the previous discourse about the moral epoch, life for Nietzsche may not have intentions ascribed to it. In *Beyond Good and Evil* on moral epochs, apart from the moral intentions, he

²⁰³ *BGE*, §259.

²⁰⁴ *WP*, 254.

envisages an unintentional realm, called extra-moral. The extra-moral epoch for Nietzsche is where “the decisive value of an action resides in precisely that which is not intentional in it.”²⁰⁵ Nietzsche generally does not ascribe such life of unintentionality to any of his contemporary human beings, but he seems to envision it for those he calls the philosophers of the future. The indifferent character of life implies there are no obligations supervening on life per se. Thus, Nietzsche holds that life is not an abstraction but an outcome since like the will it wills itself. For Nietzsche whatever is called morality is nothing but “a system of evaluations that partially coincides with the conditions of a creature’s life.”²⁰⁶ In this regard, the conditions of life (founded on the drives) ought to be the basis for morality. And like the will, life is efficacious.

The domains of life, the will to power as the psychology of the type *Übermensch* supports the claim that the life of singular individuality is founded on the regime of the human drives. It is within the domain of the will to power, that the notion of singular individuality as a task is made credible. This is because the will to power as a fundamental drive operates in an immanent manner. As one scholar on Nietzsche’s ontology observes, because of its immanence, will to power is not something merely added to the human condition from without, but it is inherent in it.²⁰⁷ That inherence is based on the human instinctual life of the drives. The drives as affects (unconscious factors) are the main explainers of our actions. Peter Poellner believes that Nietzsche conceives explanation/articulation of human actions in terms of efficacy.²⁰⁸ In efficacy, the will expresses itself as the affect of command. In this regard, espousing becoming (by the singular individual) as demanded of by the type *Übermensch* is not just natural but seems inevitable since it is the *raison d’être* of the type *Übermensch*. Nietzsche rejects the will as a faculty (will as a moral judgement in the domain of abstraction), then he accepts the same as an *affect* of command (as the distinguishing feature for sovereignty and strength). The will, in Nietzsche’s estimation, holds the key for understanding the two inseparable acts of the will to power as self-overcoming and form-giving. It has been shown so far that the will is not a faculty. Now clarity is needed on the meaning of the will as an emotion of command (*Affekt des Commando*).

²⁰⁵ *BGE*, §32.

²⁰⁶ *WP*, 256.

²⁰⁷ Addis Laird, *Nietzsche’s Ontology* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 124.

²⁰⁸ Peter Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 267.

2.1.2 Will: 'Affect of Command'

The will is conceived by Nietzsche as a multifarious thing both in nature and operation. Hence, he thinks that it is a mistake for philosophers to talk about the will as if it is the most familiar thing in the world. There is need for caution, since “the will is not just a complex of feeling and thinking; rather, it is fundamentally an *affect*: and specifically the affect of the command.”²⁰⁹ The basis of such a will is the instinctual life (that touches on the basic composition of the human being, as *homo natura*). Though assumptive, Nietzsche believes that, we cannot get down or up to any “reality” except the reality of our drives (since thinking is only a relation between these drives). In this section, the argument is that Nietzsche’s conception of the will as the “affect of command” is the *raison d’être* for the development and understanding of the underlying notions of the will to power, self-overcoming, and form-giving. Furthermore, it will be shown that, psychology as the morphology of the doctrine of the will to power, necessarily deals with the action of the will. It is the action of the will that accounts for singular individuality (individuals with strong wills, those who live the life of the type *Übermensch*, affirm will to power) or the opposite (weak individuals who espouse traits of the type last human being).

In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, singular individuality is given as a task. For Nietzsche, singular individuality is literally a production that demands requisite raw materials and the appropriate engineering to accomplish. To begin with, there is no substantive “self”/ego. This is partly explained above in our consideration of the psychology dominated by morality. The realm of consciousness (that presupposes existence of a unified ego), considered from the regime of drives Nietzsche believes: “is a more or less fantastic commentary on an unknown, perhaps unknowable, but felt text.”²¹⁰ In this aphorism Nietzsche deals with the complexity of drives, and as such our knowledge of them will always be incomplete. It is within that complexity that even the very notion of the ego unfolds. The word ego is a designation for the complexity of the drives and desires whose ultimate law we cannot really know.²¹¹ The

²⁰⁹ *BGE*, §19.

²¹⁰ *D*, §119.

²¹¹ *WS*, §55 Nietzsche opines that every word is a prejudice, and the word ego fits such designation; owing to its complexity, it defies a unification. Refer also to Franco Paul, *Nietzsche's enlightenment, the Free – Spirit Trilogy of the Middle Period*, 70–71.

difficulty in understanding the complexity of the ego, and its later development, hinges on the complexity of willing as it is explained in *Beyond Good and Evil*.

In Nietzsche's psychology of the action of the will, the larger question of affirming tragic existence is properly encountered. The psychology of the will, as the explanation of the influence of the will on human action, is meant to be a bulwark against the fears of tragic existence. For Nietzsche, the domain of human activity is centred around the will as efficacious. This implies that human actions are largely unconscious and are influenced by the drives. More specifically, it is through the psychology of the will that Nietzsche can replace the passive pessimism of Schopenhauer with a tragic attitude of "overcoming the flight from the world with the transfiguration of the world through art."²¹² It must be made clear that the transfiguration from Nietzsche's perspective is through fashioning the individual as a singular individual (which is affirmation of existence). The foundation for that fashioning is the regime of drives as the basic human condition.

According to Christoph Cox, as natural beings (opposed to the supernatural), human beings are caught up within a nexus of competing world-views and each perspective has origin in psychological, physiological, historical, cultural and political beliefs, and values.²¹³ Nietzsche's brand of perspectivism deals with the reigning conditions for individuals as determiners of values. Perspectival (life from a privileged position) here refers specifically to the drives as the inner determinant of any human activity. That perspectival condition is fundamentally what the will as will to power is about. It is on its perspectivity (in-built constraint) that the will to power can be considered as a sort of standard for carrying out critique in Nietzsche.²¹⁴ The multiple action of the will is explained through the many drives that constitute the human condition.

For Nietzsche, the will involves a complex phenomenon and as such, is only unified in word. This controversial claim is explained through the complex phenomenon of willing. In every action of the will there is a "plurality of feelings, namely: the feeling of the state *away from which*, the feeling of the state *towards which*, and the feeling of this 'away from' and

²¹² Fink, *Nietzsche's Philosophy*, 34.

²¹³ Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche, Naturalism and interpretation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 110.

²¹⁴ Paul Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean self: Moral Psychology, agency, and the unconscious*, 247.

‘towards’ themselves.”²¹⁵ The act of willing thus entails a *push and pull* scenario of the impulses. In this first case scenario of the act of the will, at play is the plurality of instincts. The second ingredient of the action of the will is thought. This is because in every act of willing there is a commandeering thought. However, Nietzsche’s position is that thought and willing are inseparable. The linking of will and thought is consistent with what Nietzsche already states in *Zarathustra*:

‘Body am I and soul’—thus talks the child. ... But the awakened one, the one who knows, says: *Body am I through and through*, and nothing besides; and soul is merely a word for something about the body.

The body is a great reason, a manifold with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a herdsman.

A tool of the body is your small reason, my brother, which you call ‘spirit,’ *a small tool and toy of your great reason*.

‘I’ you say, and are proud of this word. But the greater thing—in which you do not want to believe—is *your body and its great reason*: it does not say I, but does I.²¹⁶

In this passage, *Gedanken* (thoughts) must be associated with *kleine Vernunft* (small reason) instead of *grosse Vernunft*. Thought related to *kleine Vernunft* serves as the instrumental reason for the causal reason (*grosse Vernunft*). The causal/great reason in the current context (act of the will), is willing. Thus, the claim that thought is not to be divorced from willing simply emboldens Nietzsche’s position that a human being is body through and through. Affirming willing above thought maintains the privileged place of the drives as the basis for any plausible Nietzschean production of singular individuality. The credibility of the drives in the willing process is clearer in the next aspect of willing.

On the third aspect of willing Nietzsche alleges that “the will is not just a complex of feeling and thinking; rather, it is fundamentally an *affect*: and specifically the affect of the command.” On the affects lies the entire structure of the phenomenon of willing. The affects are the result of the drives (as the non-conscious dispositions which generate affective orientations). One ought to understand affects as strong inclinations for and aversions to certain actions.²¹⁷ The moral feelings are described as either for or against inclination. But affects, described as states of inclinations *to* or *from* are constitutive of an action, and like moral

²¹⁵ *BGE*, §19.

²¹⁶ *Z*, I, 4 (Despisers of the body). The italics are mine.

²¹⁷ *D*, §34.

feelings they are simply non-cognitive.²¹⁸ This makes any moral justification a *post hoc* affair given that it is simply the pronouncement after the action. In this case, drives as affects are morally undetermined, given that most of the moral determinations are judgments (as the affirmation or negation of the act).

For Nietzsche, moral determination here is in terms of moral feelings and moral concepts: whereby “the former are powerful *before* the action, the latter especially after the action in face of the need to pronounce upon it.”²¹⁹ The morality that Nietzsche campaigns against is the one that derives from the moral concepts (rationalized) where universal guiding principles tend to originate (morality as a set of principles). Such morality says little about the individual reality based on the affects. This is because, as Robert C. Solomon observes, morality conceived conceptually (*Moralität*) tends to rule out all psychological influences (as interests or inclinations) from moral worth.²²⁰ Morality as understood from a universal perspective fails to realize that it is the principle that is universal, and not the property of the individual. The individual property refers to the drives and the affects. With this realization (affects as inclinations/dispositions and morally indeterminate), Nietzsche seems to succeed in his understanding of the will as multiple and perspectival.

The will is perspectival because the drives as affects are the standpoint through which we interpret the world (through their likes, dislikes—inclinations). “Interpret” here implies that human affects do adopt a perspective as a standpoint. And that is what entails evaluation. By being perspectival, the affects command. Therefore, when the will as will to power is presented as the explanatory principle of human life, it is simply implying that the will in the sense of the entire regime of drives is the necessary condition (perspective) for any possible affirmation of human existence. Thus, the complexity of the will lies in the fact that it entails sensory (sensation), cognitive (thought), and affective (affect) aspects. However, from the above consideration of the affects as inclinations, it is credible to be summative and say that the will is basically the affects.

²¹⁸ On Drives and Affects, there is an incisive presentation by Daniel Telech and Brian Leiter, “Nietzsche and Moral Psychology” in *A Companion to Experimental Philosophy*, ed. Justin Sytsma et.al (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 84–87.

²¹⁹ *D*, §34.

²²⁰ Robert C. Solomon, *From Hegel to Existentialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 93.

The affective domain espouses the influential complexity of the inner reality of the will. Nietzsche's doctrine of perspectivism is inseparable from the understanding of the affects. In *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche affirms the power of affects:

There is *only* a perspectival seeing, *only* a perspectival 'knowing'; the *more* affects we are able to put into words about a thing, the *more* eyes, various eyes we are able to use for the same thing, the more complete will be our 'concept' of the thing, our 'objectivity'. But to eliminate the will completely and turn off all the emotions without exception, assuming we could: well? would that not mean to *castrate* the intellect?²²¹

Affects are conditional in the sense that they determine the individual's life from a certain stand- point and thus they form the basic reality of the individual. For Nietzsche, the affects as inner conditions provide the aperture into the character of human life. Human existence is explainable through its perspectival character. The inner reality of the individual is non-cognitive, given the complexity of the drives involved. For Nietzsche, the appropriate explanation of basic human reality is through the activities of the drives and interests.

Nietzsche's doctrine of perspectivism finds its compelling strength in the understanding of the affects as units of meaning for human life. The perspective-laden individual is necessarily understood through the multiple drives and affects, and in that way, whatever is referred to as self, is a reality having multiple power relations of composite wills.²²² The will as a multiple entity demands for its own organization. It is on the account of the organization of the drives that singular individuality is continually realized or lost. Hence, the need for a commanding will. The will as affect of command implicitly requires response to the command, which is obedience. The will as an affect of command has an inner certainty that it will be obeyed. The inner certainty of the will is founded on its nature of being efficacious, and it is on this basis that it commands.

The act of willing is a property of every drive, and as Welshon opines, "disciplining the drives is the hallmark of a healthy psyche."²²³ The need for discipline or taskmasters or

²²¹ *GM*, III, §12.

²²² Sebastian Gardner gives a credible account of Nietzsche's views on the unitary self as illusory since it is basically based on the cognitive reality, but Nietzsche is after a multiple conception of the self, which is founded on the reality of the affects. It is the "self" understood from the multiple domains of the affects that is the locus of value for Nietzsche. Refer to Sebastian Gardner, "Nietzsche, the self, and the Disunity of philosophical Reason" in *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*, eds. Ken Gemes and Simon May (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1–12.

²²³ Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, 178.

dissatisfaction was prominent in chapter one. Those individuals lacking discipline because of weak wills could find it hard to embark on singular individuality. This is because, where drives are not coordinated under a single drive, or a small cluster of dominating drives, are bound to result into failed selves.²²⁴ Drives need discipline/coordination for the greater realization of power. Nietzsche's response to the need for taskmasters/discipline is the psychology of the will, as will to power. In the will to power, the will as the fundamental *affect* of command, the sensation, the thought and affect are perfectly harmonized. Nietzsche gives the person of Goethe as a possible example of that harmonization. Goethe fulfills the perspectival demands of the affects and the will in the following description:

[H]e did not sever himself from life, he placed himself within it; nothing could discourage him and he took as much as possible upon himself, above himself, within himself. What he aspired to was *totality*; he strove against separation of reason, sensuality, feeling, will. [...]; he disciplined himself to a whole, he *created* himself.²²⁵

For Nietzsche, Goethe is understood as one who made a grand attempt to overcome the 18th century. Nietzsche understood the 18th century from the moral perspective as the century of enthusiasm given that the philosophers of that century operated under the seduction of morality (that paralyzed the critical will). Goethe is an exception to that by returning to nature and embracing the naturalness of renaissance.²²⁶ The attempt to overcome is associated with Goethe's strongest instinct for life, which is self-overcoming.

The greatness of Goethe is given in three expressions: he took as much as possible *upon himself, above himself, and within himself*. It implies that Goethe was his own helmsman-cum-taskmaster, recognized the exemplar (a provocateur) and organized the regime of the drives. Thus, singular individuality as a task is realized in Goethe. The production of the singular individual is done in every act of living. This means that the final verdict of one's existence must come from an aesthetic perspective, which evaluates the individual in terms of the integration, coherence, and harmony that has been achieved.²²⁷ In striving, one implicitly gives style (meaning the capacity to continually subject oneself to discipline; it is a work in

²²⁴ Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, 149.

²²⁵ *TI*, "Skirmishes," §49.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ Richard J. White, *Nietzsche and the problem of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 20.

progress) to his individual life. In this style, Goethe embraces the grand style of the type *Übermensch* which is actualizing difference within the individual without reducing it.²²⁸ Embracing differences without being reductive is learning to love the multiple as they come to be within individuals that embody such differences. Reducing differences is akin to being contra singularities. Goethe learned to love the reality of the type *Übermensch*, as it comes to be within himself who made it exist in his singular individuality. Goethe also embodies what Nietzsche describes as his own nature, which is affirmative. Goethe embodies the will as the affect of command. The will to power sets the affirmative journey through its twin operations of overcoming and form-giving.

In the will to power lies the enormous possibilities of producing the singular individual within the grand style of the type *Übermensch*. The type *Übermensch* is the epitome of the will to power. The will to power comprises not only the fundamental drive, but also the methodological technics of form giving (stamping becoming with the character of being) to the type *Übermensch*. Hence, the will to power is not essentially what one wills, but how one wills.²²⁹ That is, it is about the process of organizing the drives, which involves striving/overcoming. It is the process of overcoming which determines the strong or the weak will. The concrete form of the type *Übermensch* is the singular individual (one that espouses the strong will and right kind of organization). To embark on the course of grand style, two concurrent traits of will to power—overcoming/striving and form-giving—are needed.

a. Will as overcoming

In this section I attempt to show that the will to power, as the explanatory impulse of the type *Übermensch*, accounts for how singular individuality can be made possible. In the previous chapter, I argued that the type *Übermensch*, as the best type, is necessary for the singular individual not only to affirm life, but also to remain indeterminate. The valorisation of the type *Übermensch* is founded on its psychology, which is the will to power. However, the mechanism for the affirmation is still lacking. The twin aspects of the will to power as overcoming and form-giving will be presented as promising enough for singular individuality.

²²⁸ Khalfa and Deleuze, *An introduction to the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, 62.

²²⁹ Paul Katsafanas, “The Problem of Normative Authority in Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche” in *Nietzsche’s Engagement with Kant and the Kantian Legacy, Vol. II, Nietzsche and Kantian Ethics* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 36.

The consideration of the will as overcoming is an attempt to explain how the fundamental drive maintains itself as *affect* of command. The will as overcoming is fundamentally dealing with the psychology of the will as the fundamental drive.

The type *Übermensch* is described as one that has turned out the best: it organizes the multiple drives without reducing them to uniformity. The *Übermensch* is understood by Nietzsche as the type that is synthesized in the right way possible. The type *Übermensch* as the will to power combines, not only the richness of the drives, but also the ability to organize through overcoming and form-giving. For Nietzsche, the structuring of the drives is necessary because every drive seeks to expand itself and its sphere of influence. This is called mastery. Mastery rides on the fact that every single drive “would be only too pleased to present *itself* as the ultimate purpose of existence and as rightful *master* of all the other drives. Because every drive craves mastery.”²³⁰ Overcoming must be related to mastery, discipline and untimeliness. These three are demands that obtain if singular individuality is to be maintained as a process in individual mastery.

However, the need for mastery is always a process. For the will, as an affect of command, entails movement beyond what it now is or does.²³¹ The will as a movement justifies it as the unexhausted procreative life-will. The movement explains the activity of the drives, where they (the drives) tend beyond their borders. It is the nature of the will to pass beyond itself into a stronger drive. (Such is the summative mechanism of will’s own mastery as overcoming.) The will as overcoming is figuratively its own greatest enemy since whatever it esteems is overthrown in its turn by the next evaluation.²³² This phenomenon of overcoming needs more exploration: firstly, by briefly demonstrating the meaning of overcoming in Nietzsche’s corpus, referencing human life; and secondly, by showing how the nature of the will is self-overcoming (commanding and obeying).

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the type *Übermensch* and the human being are joined by the act of overcoming. Zarathustra in the town of Motley Cow pronounces to the people, “*I teach you the Overhuman*. The human is something that shall be overcome. What have you

²³⁰ *BGE*, §6.

²³¹ Richardson, *Nietzsche’s system*, 24.

²³² Zarathustra believes that “[w]hatever he creates however much it is loved, soon he must oppose it and its love. Thus, creating, loving, and opposing the same is what Zarathustra’s will wills.” Z, II, 12 (On Self-Overcoming) and Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment, Nietzsche’s Zarathustra*, 159.

done to overcome it?”²³³ Zarathustra’s pronouncement about the type *Übermensch* in the town of Motley Cow is itself meaningful. In a philosophical sphere Motley is traced from Plato’s *The Republic*, where it is a description for the democratic state.²³⁴ In Plato, democracy is not a preferred form of governance, since it is considered the rule of the masses. And Plato’s question about democracy is, how can the *hoi polloi* rule? Nietzsche applies the image of Motley Cow in his critique of modernity’s herd-like operations.²³⁵ Taken in the broader sense as the description of modernity, Motley is present in Nietzsche’s works from the beginning to the end. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, modernity is characterized as a “pandemonium of myths” thrown into a “disorderly heap.”²³⁶ The following year, in the first *Untimely Meditation*, modernity is described as a chaotic jumble of styles and a market motley.²³⁷ Then in *Beyond Good and Evil*, the work specifically meant as a critique of modernity, several references to motley culture are prevalent.

Nietzsche describes the modern European man as “[t]he hybrid European—a tolerably ugly plebeian, all in all—definitely requires a costume: he needs history as his storeroom for costumes. He realizes, to be sure, that none of them fits him properly—he changes and changes.”²³⁸ The problem is, though the costumes are many in terms of different epochs (romantic, classical, or Christian) that modernity attempts to suit for itself, none of them fit. In the words of Young, modern man constantly tries out supposedly new styles in terms of customs and arts.²³⁹ Further in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche believes that “democratic mingling of classes and races” has plunged Europe into semi-barbarism.²⁴⁰ That the modern human being’s instincts now run back in all directions, and ‘we ourselves are a kind of chaos.’ However, what seems critical is that modern human beings “accept precisely this confusion of colours, this medley of the most delicate, the coarsest and the most artificial, with a secret of

²³³ Z, Prologue, §3.

²³⁴ Plato, *The Republic*, trans, Desmond Lee, (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 558^c. The section is generally about imperfect societies and the description reads: “Democracy with grandiose gesture sweeps all this [in reference to good environment for upbringing and for exceptional gifts] away and doesn’t mind what habits and background of its politicians are; provided they profess themselves the people’s friends, they are duly honoured. All very splendid. These, then, and similar characteristics are those of democracy. It’s an agreeable anarchic form of society, with plenty of variety, which treats all men as equal, whether they are equal or not.”

²³⁵ Julian Young, *Individual and Community in Nietzsche’s philosophy*, 19.

²³⁶ *BT*, §23.

²³⁷ *DS*, §1.

²³⁸ *BGE*, §223.

²³⁹ Young, *Individual and Community*, 19.

²⁴⁰ *BGE*, §224. The description of the modernity is also given in §200.

confidence and cordiality.”²⁴¹ Hence, Motley Cow town represents the average man where desire for anything higher is almost lost (the sense of overcoming is non-existent).

The above description of the Motley Cow seems to represent what needs to be overcome through the type *Übermensch*. The term *überwinden* has several nuances like, to overcome a crisis (*Krise*) or even to get over a sickness (*Krankheit*). It may also imply to conquer or simply outgrow. In relation to the project at hand, singular individuality as the appropriate domain for affirmation of life, *überwinden* ought to be associated with existence as it manifests itself in modernity.

Thus, *überwinden* is central to encountering Nietzsche’s aporia: how can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? Based on existence and within the crisis of modernity, in understanding *überwinden*, its designation as outgrow/conquer can be favoured. The idea of conquest is closer to *Überwindung*, as the conquest or the overpowering/overcoming as a way of *Ja-Sagen* (affirmation) of tragic existence. It is in linking overcoming to affirmation of life, that one sees the possibility of the *Übermensch* as the epitome of overcoming.

The type that affirms tragic existence in Nietzsche’s purview is the *Übermensch*. Thus, the type *Übermensch* at any rate cannot be dissociated from the conception of *Überwindung*. As Kaufmann notes, “Man is something that should be overcome”—and the man “who has overcome himself has become an overman.”²⁴² The conquest of the type *Übermensch* is justified by its incorporation of the psychology of the tragedy that entails being over and above (conquest) terror and pity, which is the affirmation of life in its complete sense. In Zarathustra’s terms, overcoming is an invocation, a sort of a calling. The call takes the form of something that shall be overcome. It then follows that, living the life of the type *Übermensch* that entails overcoming is a human being’s calling, though not everybody can respond to the invocation positively. As an invocation (*soll*), it implies that it is not a given, it is a task (an obligation/*sollen* that presupposes the ability) which requires breeding. Proper breeding involves the action of the will, which is only possible with the suitable attitude (the theme of the next chapter).

²⁴¹ *BGE*, §224.

²⁴² Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 309.

Association of the will with overcoming is considered by Zarathustra under the auspices of human actions (tablet of good and evil). The human evaluation of morality for Nietzsche is inherently perspectival. It is in the perspectival conditions of many lands (*viele Länder*) and many peoples (*viele Völker*) that Zarathustra introduces the will and overcoming. Nietzsche's proposition is that "[n]o people could live without first evaluating; but if it would maintain itself, it may not evaluate as its neighbour evaluates."²⁴³ Valuing in the sense of estimating, is conditional/perspectival given that the loci of values are the people in specific lands. Further elaboration on the diversity of the phenomenon of estimating reads:

Much that this people deemed good was for another a source of scorn and shame: thus have I found it. Many things I found called evil here, and there adorned with purple honours. [...] A tablet of things held to be good hangs over every people. Behold, it is the tablet of its overcomings [*Überwindungen*]; behold, it is the voice of its will to power.²⁴⁴

Nietzsche here attempts to show that overcoming can be inherent in the human condition, and it is described as the will to power.

The tablet represents the Ten Commandments as some peoples' response to the tragedy of their existence expressed as will to power. The will described as overcoming is what allows ruling, conquering, and triumphing over the others. On the strength of its power, the will counts "as the lofty, the first, the measure, the meaning of all things."²⁴⁵ It is on the will as the affect of command that the entire human life is discerned as valuable or otherwise. Nietzsche later references the will to power as "the strongest, most life affirming impulse."²⁴⁶ This understanding of the will vis-à-vis life yields the fundamental human drive. The fundamental drive justifies Zarathustra's assertion above that no one evaluates as his neighbour does, meaning that it is the inherent character of existence to be perspectival and individually valued. Human life and valuing can only be properly perceived under one's own perspective.²⁴⁷ In this regard, the inherent nature of human existence as stated above is a conquest/overcoming, one that espouses change.

²⁴³ Z, I, 15 (On the Thousand Goals and One).

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Z, I, 15 (On the Thousand Goals and One).

²⁴⁶ *GM*, III, §18.

²⁴⁷ Nietzsche's theme of Perspectivism as a character of existence is found in *GS*, §374, and *GM*, III, §12.

Overcoming is fundamentally embracing change, which is a war on what seeks to persist. Since the human being existentially cannot stand still, he must overcome or decline.²⁴⁸ However, the overcoming in question here is of the type *Übermensch*. The *Übermensch* embodies overcoming as such. The type *Übermensch*, as the embodiment of the overcoming, implies that it is essentially indeterminate and unconditionally powerful. Power here means that the type *Übermensch* as pure overpowering can command, and in these two ways (overpowering and command) is transformed into reality as the will to power.²⁴⁹ It means that the *Übermensch*'s desire for power is not achieved in the overcoming *per se*, but in concrete terms, expressed as singular individuals. I will return to this point in a moment. It has been demonstrated how Nietzsche in *Zarathustra* links overcoming to will to power. However, it is necessary to understand how he develops self-overcoming in the same work in the aphorism on self-overcoming.

Zarathustra describes self-overcoming as the will to procreate or drive for a purpose. The 'purpose' implies that which is higher, farther, and more manifold.²⁵⁰ Nietzsche talks of *Zweck* (purpose) and *Zwecke* (purposes). In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, on nature and purpose, Nietzsche notes, "Nature propels the philosopher into [humankind] like an arrow; it takes no aim but hopes the arrow will stick somewhere. But countless times it misses and is depressed at the fact. Nature is extravagant in the domain of culture as it is in that of planting and sowing."²⁵¹ There is purpose (*Zweck*) in nature, but that purpose is not teleological (no determinate end). This almost sounds contradictory, but it may not be. In *Zarathustra*, he talks of struggle (*Kampf*), becoming (*Werden*), purpose (*Zweck*), and conflict of purposes (*Zwecke Widerspruch*). These characteristics of nature are summed in a statement: "Whatever I create and however much I love it soon must oppose both it and my love: thus my will wills it."²⁵² This means self-overcoming may not be toward a stable fixed telos. Such understanding is consistent with nature, which Kaufmann describes as something which has purposes (*Zwecke*) but is not purposeful (*zweckmässig*).²⁵³ Such a conception of nature gives impetus to the need

²⁴⁸ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 113.

²⁴⁹ Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, trans., David J. Parent, Nietzsche, *His Philosophy of Contradictions and the Contradictions of his philosophy* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 80.

²⁵⁰ Z, II, 12, (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁵¹ SE, §7.

²⁵² Z, II, 12 (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁵³ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 174.

for struggle. The means of nature are insufficient for its realization. That is why man must help nature by working at his own perfection.

Hence, the common position is that overcoming is consistent with striving and dissatisfaction as ingredients for singular individuality under the direction of the type *Übermensch*. Zarathustra associates self-overcoming with several nuances of will to power: legislation, the will, and its commanding power. The commanding power of the will involves its need for mastery. More pertinently for Nietzsche, self-overcoming *ipso facto* entails problematizing of traditional morality that delineates between good and evil. Thus, self-overcoming problematizes the following aspects that Zarathustra speaks to:

‘Will to truth’ you call it, you who are wisest, that which drives you and puts you in heat?
Will to the thinkability of all things: thus *I* call your will!
All beings you want first to *make* thinkable: for you doubt with healthy suspicion whether they really are thinkable. ...
That is your entire will, you who are wisest, as a will to power; and even when you talk of good and evil and of valuations.
You still want to create the world before which you can kneel: that is your ultimate hope and intoxication.
Your will and your values you have placed on the river of Becoming; what the people believe to be good and evil betrays to me an ancient will to power.²⁵⁴

This is largely the first part of the aphorism on self-overcoming. Here, Zarathustra once more perhaps intends to be clear that the will to truth may not necessarily promote overcoming. Zarathustra’s description of the will to truth as that which drives and fills one with sentimentality can be linked to non-perspectival claims to truth. In *Human All Too Human*, when distinguishing between possessing truth and seeking truth, Nietzsche notes, “And the pathos of possessing truth does now in fact count for very little in comparison with that other, admittedly gentler and less noisy pathos of seeking truth that never wearies of learning and examining anew.”²⁵⁵ The will to truth is linked by Nietzsche to the metaphysical claims of absolute, pretentious, and eternal truths (universalistic claims, unconditional). On the broader scale, the will to truth reflects more on the individual who purports to live in the non-perspectival domain of existence. The will to truth (as unconditioned claims) Nietzsche associates with the fettered spirits/weak spirits which are necessarily dependent.

²⁵⁴Z, II, (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁵⁵HAH, §633.

The fettered spirit is associated with the one who is “faithful to his convictions.”²⁵⁶ In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the fettered spirit is associated with “dogmatists,” and in *Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche talks of “men of conviction, [...] man of faith, the believer,” as “necessarily a dependent man.”²⁵⁷ In the self-overcoming aphorism from *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche as he has done before in the Thousand Goals and One, seeks to correct the wrong prejudgments imposed on reality through the conceptual (rationalization) sphere, by affirming the power of the will which is multiple and complex.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the first aphorism is on the will to truth, where Nietzsche holds, “The will to truth that still seduces us into taking so many risks, this famous truthfulness that all philosophers so far have talked about with veneration: what questions this will to truth has already laid before us!”²⁵⁸ In *Zarathustra*, the will to truth, as will to thinkability of things, is criticized and necessarily christened as the will to power. This shows that Nietzsche through his persona Zarathustra, acknowledges the prejudgments that seem to be wrongly presented in universal terms as will to truth. Instead, they need to be taken back to where they appropriately belong, to life, hence interpreted as will to power. Commitment to truthfulness inherently entails a pervasive suspiciousness, a readiness against being fooled, an eagerness to see through appearances to the real structures and motives that lie behind those structures.²⁵⁹ It is the desire for truthfulness that ought to drive any process of criticism. Truthfulness is thus more akin to the will to power as opposed to merely the will for possession of unconditioned truth, which is geared towards will to truth. For Nietzsche, the will to truth is fundamentally guided by the need for preservation, and thus a sign of decay.

Perceiving human life in terms of truthfulness implies the understanding that the happenings in the human world are fundamentally the outcome of developments within it. These human developments must be understood as entirely inherent in the “internal dynamics and the contingencies to which they give rise.”²⁶⁰ In *Zarathustra’s* aphorism on self-overcoming, the internal dynamics are justified in the realm of the will to power, as the

²⁵⁶ HAH, §629.

²⁵⁷ BGE, §43 and AC, §54, respectively.

²⁵⁸ BGE, §1.

²⁵⁹ Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness, An Essay in Genealogy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 1.

²⁶⁰ Christopher Janaway and Simon Robertson, *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 239.

unexhausted procreative life-will. Nietzsche's life as will to power is a reality above the moral dichotomy of good and evil. In projecting life as beyond good and evil, Nietzsche undermines traditional morality as the path to singular individuality and in so doing he valorises the psychological path of the will to power. It is the will to power that defines both the basic human instinct for growth and the need for development.²⁶¹ Growth and development of the will understood as expansion is what freedom of the will entails. This is the import of the second part of the aphorism in Zarathustra that seems to lay bare the different nuances of the will as overcoming and form-giving.

Nietzsche, through Zarathustra, claims that he followed the greatest and the smallest path to understand the human. The path in question is the psychological one where the action of the will as the affect of command is paramount. The elaboration on the assertion about the greatest and the smallest path of life is evident in the following passage:

But wherever I found the living, there too I heard the speech about obedience. All that is living is something that obeys.
And this is the second thing: whoever cannot obey himself will be commanded. That is the way of the living.
But this is the third thing that I heard: that commanding is harder than obeying. And not only because the commander bears the burden of all who obey, and this burden can easily crush him:—
An experiment and a risk appeared to me in all commanding; and always when it commands, the living puts its own self at risk.²⁶²

In this passage, one can discern the mechanism of the will to power as the psychology of the type *Übermensch*. Some in-depth analysis of this text from some of Nietzsche's works after *Zarathustra* is pertinent. I have already demonstrated that the will based on drives is a multiplicity. In this regard, the action of the will involves multiple drives. The passage under consideration (On Self-overcoming), is about the living. Whatever is being described concerns the nature of life, according to Zarathustra.

In a preamble to the passage above, Zarathustra references the method used in his pursuance of the greatest and the smallest path to the living: Observation, as the look into life's eyes through a hundredfold mirror.²⁶³ The different perspectives to life are brought out in this

²⁶¹ Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche and the problem of the will in Modernity" in *Nietzsche and Modern German thought*, 169.

²⁶² Z, II, (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁶³ Z, II, (On Self-Overcoming).

part pointing to the nature of life. And it is the eye of life that speaks to Zarathustra. The theme of life is discussed through the perspective of life itself. The hundredfold mirror likely implies the manifold perspectival nuances involved in life.

Zarathustra's expression about life, "that its eye might speak to [him]," is a perspectival claim. It possibly implies Nietzsche's profound method in the affirmation of life (a non-imposing experimental approach, that lets life express itself). In *Twilight of Idols*, speaking of his nature, Nietzsche alleges,

To be true to my nature, which is *affirmative* and has dealings with contradiction and criticism only indirectly and when compelled, I shall straightaway set down the three tasks for the sake of which one requires educators. One has to learn to *see*, one has to learn to *think*, one has to learn to *speak* and *write*: the end in all three is a noble culture.—

Learning to *see*—habituating the eye to repose, to patience, to letting things come to it; learning to defer judgement, to investigate and comprehend the individual case in all its aspects.²⁶⁴

The relevance of this passage specifically lies in the learning to see. An affirmative attitude entails the assimilation of the ontology of becoming where differentiation is espoused as opposed to universalization. Universalization is contrary to the perspectival nature of life that is innocently becoming. Learning to see is a discipline in self-overcoming whereby there is a realization that the "innocence of becoming is rooted in the chaotic interior of external order."²⁶⁵ Learning to see is thus the opposite of the thinkability of beings, it embraces becoming and perspectival approaches. Hence, Zarathustra seems to be well educated in noble culture, since he lets life speak to him, or rather come to him. The spirit of becoming thrives on a genealogical inquiry which always surges towards the bottom of problems, among which life is the greatest.

With so many mirrors, it is possible for one to see round corners and allow access to the multifarious perspectives about life. Unlike the all-encompassing traditional metaphysical ways, the perspectival approach to life occurs without the obstruction of artifices designed to mislead.²⁶⁶ It is from this free rein condition that life speaks of itself to Zarathustra as not only obedient but obeys itself and more fundamentally commands itself. Life in commanding itself

²⁶⁴ *TI*, "Germans," §6.

²⁶⁵ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 113.

²⁶⁶ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 159.

overcomes itself, and in its overcoming becomes the judge and avenger and sacrificial victim. One emerging scenario so far is that the acts of life are also predicated of the will. The will as overcoming in general is understood as a conquest, but now there is need to investigate overcoming as self-overcoming of life.

b. Life as self-overcoming

It is in relation to self-overcoming that Zarathustra lets life proclaim itself: “I am *that which must always overcome itself*.”²⁶⁷ For Zarathustra, the reality of overcoming is the expression of the intrinsic character of life. Even Zarathustra’s understanding of life’s source seems to be in overcoming given the allegation that “the life that itself cuts into life: through its own torment it increases its own knowledge.”²⁶⁸ In overcoming, life enhances itself. It is within the phenomenon of overcoming that Nietzsche can claim to have crept into the very heart of life and the very roots of life’s heart. Zarathustra’s proclamation of life’s own message gives credence to the allegation that singular individuality requires assimilating life on its own terms, which is overcoming. And wherever there is life, Zarathustra claims to have found the will to power.

In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, about the production of the exemplary human beings, Nietzsche envisages the necessity for self-overcoming [*Selbstüberwindung*] by asserting,

All great things bring about their own demise through an act of self-sublimation [*Selbstaufhebung*]: that is the law of life, the law of *necessary* ‘self-overcoming’ [*Selbstüberwindung*] in the essence of life, – the lawgiver himself is always ultimately exposed to the cry: ‘*patere legem, quam ipse tulisti*’ [‘Submit to the law you have yourself made.’]²⁶⁹

Here two levels of self-overcoming can be discerned. We have the generic (macro level) self-sublimation that entails the law of life, and the (specific, perspectival level) self-overcoming that demands for the lawgiver and submission to one’s own law. Being consistent with Zarathustra’s ‘On Self-Overcoming’ of the individual life beyond the moral domains of good and evil, one can fairly assert that Nietzsche’s commitment is to the individual self-overcoming. Hence, he seems to privilege *Selbst-überwindung*.

²⁶⁷ Z, II, 12 (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁶⁸ Z, II, 8 (On the famous wise men).

²⁶⁹ GM, III, §27.

The justification for privileging the *Selbst-überwindung* is founded on Zarathustra's claim: "I would rather go under than renounce this one thing: and verily, where there is going-under and falling of leaves, behold, there life sacrifices itself—for power!"²⁷⁰ The going-under is a key aspect of the human being since what is loved in the human is a going-over (*Übergang*) and a going-under (*Untergang*). The going-over and the going-under aptly describe the condition of singular individuality within the domains of the type *Übermensch*. For Nietzsche, the necessity of striving to encounter and overcome resistance is a feature of human actions.²⁷¹ Human actions are not immune from the psychological state. This is because the drives are highly involved in the characteristic form of activity (human activities, for Nietzsche, are drive motivated). That activity is essentially the order of encountering and overcoming resistance.

With such a high engagement with the drives, the implication is that apparently human activities manifest will to power. In understanding overcoming as going over and going under, the current scholarly connection of *Selbstüberwindung* with the microcosm of the personal self-perfection could be credible enough. However, before any ethical claim about personal self-perfection is sought, knowledge of the instinctual constitution of the human being is paramount. The knowledge in question entails the psychology of the will (which demands the engagement with the regime of drives).

In the words of Conway, the psychology of the will demands developing an individual outlook which states that personal self-overcoming is a complex process of destruction and creation.²⁷² This is the hallmark of individual *autopoiesis* which continuously calls for the conquering of the current self. Destruction and creation as overcoming marks justify the understanding of life as an experiment and a risk. Nietzsche in his middle period works, especially in *Daybreak* and *The Gay Science*, calls for experimental living. In *Daybreak*, existence is projected as a daring and adventurous affair: "we live existence which is either a *prelude* or a *postlude*, and the best we can do in this *interregnum* is to be as far as possible our own *reges* and found little *experimental states*. We are experiments: let us also want to be them!"²⁷³ The call to be one's own ruler is not concrete enough until the overcoming element

²⁷⁰ Z, II (On Self-Overcoming).

²⁷¹ Katsafanas, "The Problem of Normative Authority in Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche" in *Nietzsche's Engagement with Kant and the Kantian Legacy, Vol. II Nietzsche and Kantian Ethics*, 36.

²⁷² Conway, *Nietzsche and the Political*, 65.

²⁷³ D, §453.

is factored in. Experimental life is never lacking in dangers/risks, as the apt description of not only the philosophers of the future, but also those individuals who embark on the treacherous path of singular individuality. The nature of experiment, (*Versuch*) is a risk. For Nietzsche, the operative word for experiment is *Versuchen Wir's* (Let us try it).²⁷⁴ The dominating attitude for the *Versucher* (experimenters, Philosophers of the future) is adventure (*Abenteuer*) and danger.

Philosophers of the future, just like the singular individuals, produce themselves through a process encumbered with toil. It is toilsome because, for Nietzsche, the task of the philosopher of the future “calls for him to *create values*.”²⁷⁵ However, the preliminary to the creation of values demands a perspectival approach. Such an approach is described by Nietzsche as having the capacity to gaze with many eyes and consciences from the heights into every distance, from the depths up to every height, from the corner onto every expanse. The philosopher or the singular individual with such perspectival traits will possibly encompass a range of human values and feelings. The toil is also explained in terms of an inner power that renders such great men powerful explosives. In *Twilight of Idols*, Nietzsche describes great men and epochs as “explosive material in whom tremendous energy has been accumulated.”²⁷⁶ Their greatness is founded on the fact that they expend themselves through self-overcoming (given that they do not spare themselves, but use themselves up).

But *Versucher* can also imply tempters.²⁷⁷ Self-overcoming has no known formula, and in this regard, it is an exercise in self-experimentation. It is a continuous destruction and creation. The realm of creating values is ever experimental, cajoling, and marked with provisionality. Hence, the entire process of individual *autopoiesis* is both ever risky and indeterminate (experimental). Those who set out on the path of self-overcoming are obliged to raze their old “homes” before new ones are yet in sight. Yet it is precisely in the prospect of this “homelessness” that singular individuality is conferred its peculiarity and attractiveness.²⁷⁸ The homelessness is justified within the realm of the psychology of the type *Übermensch* that cajoles individuals to ever overcome themselves. Nietzsche’s philosophers of the future in

²⁷⁴ *GS*, §51.

²⁷⁵ *BGE*, §211.

²⁷⁶ *TI*, “Skirmishes,” §44.

²⁷⁷ Refer to Michael Tanner “Commentary” *Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil*, 228.

²⁷⁸ Conway, *Nietzsche and the Political*, 65.

their role of being commanders and legislators are *Übermensch*-like, since they ask, “How it *should* be!” They are the ones who first determine the “where to?” and “what for?” of people.²⁷⁹ The inherent constraint that justifies the future philosopher’s *Übermensch*-like character is the will to power, which is responsible for their creativity expressed through commanding and legislating. Through commanding and legislating, the type *Übermensch*, like the philosophers of the future, create the favourable conditions for singular individuality.

The theme of overcoming as embodied in the type *Übermensch* largely accounts for the condition of singular individuality as an indeterminate and untimely figure. In the preface to *Nietzsche Contra Wagner* (1888), Nietzsche asks, “What does a philosopher demand of himself first and last?” His response: To overcome his time in himself, and to become timeless.²⁸⁰ This view of a philosopher is referenced in *Beyond Good and Evil*, as the “being *necessarily* a person of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow [*Mensch des Morgen und Übermorgen*], has, in every age, been and has *needed* to be at odds with his today: his enemy has always been the ideal of today.”²⁸¹ The secret that renders all these overcomings possible is the assimilation of the essential trait of life as that which always overcomes itself. This is life’s character as exemplified in the best type the *Übermensch*.

It is pertinent to note that the will to power contains within itself an inner structure of command and obedience. The will to power is not simply an undisciplined and chaotic outpouring of force. Even though becoming is at the heart of human existence, self-overcoming or mastery demands organization and valuation.²⁸² The type *Übermensch* cannot merely exist as becoming, it requires the form, which is realized through the will as form-giving (exercise of power). According to Nietzsche, the type *Übermensch*’s synthesizing self-affirmation is credible only “when [it] opens up to the multiplicity of what is, without depriving [itself] of the possibility of creating.”²⁸³ With the possibility of creating, the type *Übermensch* makes the singular individuality possible. Form-giving occurs in the process of overcoming. Hence, the dynamics of the will as commanding and obeying entails power, which I reference as form-giving.

²⁷⁹ *BGE*, §211.

²⁸⁰ Nietzsche, “Der Fall Wagner Ein Musikanten-Problem” SA *Zweiter Band*, Vorwort.

²⁸¹ *BGE*, §212.

²⁸² Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 159.

²⁸³ Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche, His Philosophy of Contradictions and the contradictions of his philosophy*, 81.

c. Will as form-giving

This section is meant to show that the type *Übermensch*, in its need for validation, requires some form which is realized by the will as form-giving (power). What is posited in the action of willing is power which is understood as the expansion of the will. In this regard, commanding and execution/obeying of the command belong together in the will. Hence, this is the appropriate section for engaging with the three things that Zarathustra “heard” from life: living as obedience; being commanded in absence of obedience; and then commanding as harder than obeying. Form-giving entails the dynamics within the will as the one that commands and actualizes (effects) its commands. Nietzsche describes form-giving technically as follows: “A person who *wills*—, commands something inside himself that obeys, or that he believes to obey.”²⁸⁴ The intrinsic capacity for the will to command and to effect its commands expresses the complex nature of willing and its role in the process of singular individuality. The argument on the will as form-giving is structured as follows: firstly, evaluations of the nuances involved in commanding and obeying; secondly, I will engage with the organization of the drives in this mechanism of commands and their effect.

The will is indeterminate in its nature. This is problematic. In Nietzsche’s scheme, the action of the will is apparently the last instance in any attempt to justify human autonomy away from a traditional conception of morality. It is problematic given the fact that for Nietzsche the will in its multiplicity is simply chaos and not matter. Hence such a will must be the intrinsic force that precedes the forms and makes them possible as well as transitory.²⁸⁵ The will that precedes forms must be the fundamental will. It is only such a will that can be a force which commands and effects changes within itself first and foremost, then on other wills too. But my concern here is on the fundamental will as the will to power, and its commanding or effect on itself. In Nietzsche’s view, when individuals appropriate into themselves such a fundamental will, supposedly they can imbibe the life of the type *Übermensch*. The will to power as the psychology of the type *Übermensch* enables the *Übermensch* to realize its differential domain and to affirm itself. When one engages with the functioning of the fundamental drive, as the

²⁸⁴ *BGE*, §19.

²⁸⁵ Alphonso Lingis, “The Will to Power” in *The New Nietzsche*, ed. David B. Allison (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977), 38.

first instance, *ipso facto* one is explaining the structure and the operation of the type *Übermensch*.

The will to power, to be able to command, needs to exist in relationship with itself as a commanding and an obeying will. It must be efficacious. For Nietzsche, the strangest thing about the will and its manifold nature is this:

On the one hand, we are, under the circumstances, both the one who commands *and* the one who obeys, and as the obedient one we are familiar with the feelings of compulsion, force, pressure, resistance, and motion that generally start right after the act of willing. On the other hand, however, we are in the habit of ignoring and deceiving ourselves about this duality by means of the synthetic concept of the ‘I.’²⁸⁶

To understand this passage, one needs to start from the second point about deception: the need to dissuade oneself from the position that there is a unified ego. For Nietzsche, anyone who is committed to an intellectual conscience founded on the instinctual life (interests, desires), is also closer to the human condition of existence as perspectival. The perspectival conception of the human condition admits of the attainment of the self as work in progress. For individuals to become who they are (as *autopoietic*), the traditional philosophy’s conception of the self as a given can be a hindrance to such a task.

The claim that the majority make about the ego is a phantom. Nietzsche observes that the ego they claim to have or to be is that which is given. Consequently, they (the majority with given egos) allegedly dwell in “a fog of impersonal, semi-personal opinions, and arbitrary, as well as poetical evaluations” based on someone else’s phantasms too.²⁸⁷ This world of phantasms about the ego and its opinions, lives and grows almost independently of the people it envelops.

Ultimately, on such an asymmetrical conception of the ego, the general abstractions about man are drawn. On the contrary, intellectual conscience takes its cue from the human being’s instinctual constitution. Such is the realm of Nietzsche’s “philosophy of indifference” or “instinct for personal diet” or “joy of becoming, and joy of destruction,” founded on the drives.²⁸⁸ It is the drives, powered by self-overcoming, that form the materials necessary for

²⁸⁶ *BGE*, §19.

²⁸⁷ *D*, §105.

²⁸⁸ *WS*, §16; *D*, §501 and 553; *EH*, “BT,” §3.

the task of individual *autopoiesis*. Hence, the ethical task of self-cultivation is not ex-nihilo, and the possible end-game is the ever-untimely (which is propelled by overcoming) singular individuality.²⁸⁹ For Nietzsche, it is through the regime of drives that proper purification of our opinions (about the ego) and enhancement of individual *autopoiesis* is made possible.

Nietzsche explains the will as form-giving in terms of feelings of compulsion, force, pressure, resistance, and motion. These terms stand for the phenomenon of obeying. However, this designation of commanding and obeying is for explanatory purposes, since the fundamental will is both the one that commands and obeys. (Commanding and obeying are not opposites in the will.) Instead, the will to power is conceived as a doctrine on the nature of commanding and obeying. In *Zarathustra*, for the one seeking freedom, he asks: “Can you give yourself your own evil and your own good, and hang your will over yourself as a law? Can you be your own judge and avenger of your law?”²⁹⁰ At stake here is the will as a legislator and executor of its own laws. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche is dismissive of such dualisms as the deception of separating the doer and deed or subject and object:

A quantum of force is just such a quantum of drive, will, action, in fact it is nothing but this driving, willing and acting, and only the seduction of language (and the fundamental errors of reason petrified within it), which construes and misconstrues all actions as conditional upon an agency, a ‘subject’, can make it appear otherwise.²⁹¹

The will as the quantum of force or a drive for action is the epiphenomenon (as a by-product does not causally influence the process) of human acting. In a similar text from *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche is clearer: “I have learned to distinguish the cause of acting from the cause of acting in a particular way, in particular direction, with a particular goal.”²⁹² The cause of acting is akin to the quantum of force that Nietzsche calls a quantum of dammed-up energy that is waiting to be used up somehow, for something. Then, the second kind (acting in a particular way) is compared to the energy. However, the will as the drive for action is not acknowledged in its entirety, given the nuances of language.

²⁸⁹ The middle period notion of self-cultivation is given due consideration by Keith Ansell-Person in the article: “We are Experiments: Nietzsche on Morality and Authenticity” in *Nietzsche and the Becoming of life*, ed. Lemm Vanessa (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015); Michael Ure, *Nietzsche’s Therapy Self-Cultivation in the Middle works* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008).

²⁹⁰ Z, I, (On the Way of the Creator).

²⁹¹ GM, I, §13.

²⁹² GS, §360.

For Nietzsche, language is responsible for popular morality's separation of strength from the manifestations of strength. For instance, the doer and the deed. In the domain of the will to power, there is no 'being' behind the deed, its effect, and what becomes of it; 'the doer' is invented as an after-thought, the doing is everything. In this case, the commanding will is the one which has power to actualize itself.²⁹³ The will wills itself (gives itself form, expressed as power). The will has the capacity to act on itself (as the affect of command). Power designates the way in which the will manifests itself (power entails the desire for the will to give itself form). It is the efficacious ability for self-manifestation of the will that brings about the validation of the type *Übermensch* in some individuals that are so inclined.

From such renderings about power, one can credibly claim that the will wills power (*Macht*) as form-giving. Form-giving includes a family of terms: expanding, mastering, and shaping. The objective here is to show how the will realizes some form in its perpetual need for mastery. Nietzsche notes, "All willing is simply a matter of commanding and obeying, on the groundwork, as I have said, of a society constructed out of many souls."²⁹⁴ The perpetual need for mastery is explicable from the understanding of human reality as a society constructed out of many souls (plurality of drives), and the realizable effect is the I (*L'effet c'est moi*). The "I" (in our exploration is akin to the reality of the singular individual) as the effect of the will to power of the type *Übermensch* (part of the process of the fundamental will's overcoming) presupposes the organization of the drives that underlie human reality.

In the mechanism of form-giving for the type *Übermensch*, the following scenario is possibly foreseeable. Form-giving as mastery is part and parcel of the fundamental drive of the *Übermensch*. It entails a process whereby some drives are brought into subordinate roles within the will itself. For instance, in the case of the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual; the drive activities of the singular individual come to be *telically* contained within the fundamental drive of the type *Übermensch*.²⁹⁵ Consequently, the singular individual in its functioning obeys the *Übermensch* willfully. However, the singular individual does not view himself as serving the type *Übermensch*, but as setting its sights by reference to the type

²⁹³ Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche and the problem of the will in Modernity" in *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought*, 178.

²⁹⁴ *GS*, §19.

²⁹⁵ Telically here implies: operationally/functionally/existentially, but not ontologically.

Übermensch's project.²⁹⁶ In this existential relationship between the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual, it is the latter that is transfigured by embracing more and more its own existence (by being and remaining on the path of untimeliness). This is because the type *Übermensch* validates itself through form-giving, rendered as singular individual.

The form-giving is part of the improvement in terms of the growth of the drive's activity. The mechanism of form-giving is guided by a high level of discipline (part of overcoming) that requires the modification of the energy discharged by the will. Hence, form-giving can be described as the manner of organizing the activity imposed by the drive, and cultivating it in a focused, disciplined, and inventive manner.²⁹⁷ Power as form-giving is the way in which the *Übermensch* expresses itself, which is manifested in the singular individuality. It must be emphasized that the psychological constitution of the type *Übermensch* is described as the one that has overcome, since it is the type that is well synthesized (organized/well-coordinated in its fundamental drives). It can be argued that it is the nature of the type *Übermensch* to express itself given its plenitude. This point needs further elaboration.

The reality of art as an expressive undertaking is one way of explaining the dynamics between the type *Übermensch* and the process of singular individuality. The type *Übermensch* expresses itself in the singular individual through form-giving. As the type *Übermensch* strives to give form to itself, it concurrently enables the possibilities for individual *autopoiesis*. The individual "must will" the life of the type *Übermensch* or otherwise. Note that the complete dynamism of the process of individual *autopoiesis* can only be clear after understanding the ethical stance of the type *Übermensch* (undertaken in the next chapter). Now, it suffices to say that ultimately individual *autopoiesis* is an individual task under the persuasion of the type *Übermensch*.

The dynamics involved in such process can be explained analogically through the artistic works as expressions. Aesthetics' experts hold that in ordinary life's circumstances one

²⁹⁶ This is partly expressed by Nietzsche in his doctrine on incorporation (*Einverleibung*), knowledge as condition for life as one of the main themes in *The Gay Science*, as specifically explained in §110. Also refer John Richardson, on what he calls "Nietzsche's Power Ontology" in his book, *Nietzsche's system* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 35–70, and 73–77.

²⁹⁷ Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, 180.

becomes aware of what he/she feels only by expressing—giving vent to—something within.²⁹⁸ Expression, when applied to artists as a process, begins in a sort of expulsion—the artist is practically not aware of it. In the words of R. G. Collingwood, the artist may be conscious of having an emotion, but not necessarily conscious of what the emotion is. Since:

All he is conscious of is a perturbation or excitement, which he feels going on within him, but of whose nature he is ignorant. While in this state, all he can say about his emotion is: ‘I feel...I don’t know what I feel.’ From this helpless and oppressed condition he extricates himself by doing something which we call expressing himself. [...] he expresses himself by speaking.²⁹⁹

The excitement, as an inward condition, is expressed or discharged into the artist’s products, for instance speaking, as the letting out what is interior. The inner feeling or excitement is both clarified and transformed only in the process of expression.³⁰⁰ The excitement is given form when developed or allowed to develop into some specific reality. Hence, there is an inseparable link between the excitement and what is expressed. In the case of art, the identity of an emotion expressed in a work of art, is inextricably linked to the identity of the work of art.³⁰¹ The nature of expressions in art is that they are particularized, in the sense of being individuated. As such, expressions in art are not meant to describe or deal with realms of classification (conceptualizations).

The poet proper does not need descriptive words (concepts). The reason is that descriptions are by nature generic. Collingwood, almost in Nietzsche-like terms says: “The reason why description, so far from helping expression, actually damages it, is that description generalizes. To describe a thing is to call it a thing of such and such a kind: to bring it under a conception, to classify it. Expression, on the contrary, individualizes.”³⁰² On Collingwood’s account, one realizes that the artist reaches a sort of self-knowledge when he succeeds in transforming formless and unclarified feeling into something concrete or certain. A similar case apparently happens to the type *Übermensch*, and its expression through singular individuality.

²⁹⁸ Aaron Ridley, “Expression in Art” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 211.

²⁹⁹ R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), 109.

³⁰⁰ Ridley, “Expression in Art,” 223.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Collingwood, *The Principles of art*, 112.

The type *Übermensch*, given its perfect embodiment of the psychology of the will to power, is necessarily suited for expressing itself through the multiple singular individualities. The type *Übermensch* is the pleroma of overcoming and ipso facto needs self-expression, through singular individuality. As a type, the *Übermensch* oscillates between the narrowest and the broadest conception possible.³⁰³ Within the type *Übermensch*, there are enormous possibilities where complex and conflicting drives express themselves (part of its grand nature). The complexity-cum-conflicting nature of drives demands some form of organization that is achieved through discipline-cum-breeding (acts as a taskmaster, *Zuchtmeister*). The process of form-giving is complicated, since it must be guided by discipline. Nietzsche describes the value of discipline as follows:

I will say it again: what seems to be essential ... is that there be *obedience* in one direction for a long time. In the long term, this always brings and has brought about something that makes life on earth worth living—for instance: virtue, art, music, dance, reason, intellect—something that transfigures, something refined, fantastic, and divine.³⁰⁴

For Nietzsche, the conditions under which form-giving obtains are akin to the underpinnings of nature, purpose without purposefulness. The obedience in question presupposes the command of nature in terms of arbitrariness, harshness, terror, and anti-reason. These are ingredients of life as becoming and are the means through which strength and reckless curiosity are bred in the culture that is tasked with the production of singular individuality.

The elements of arbitrariness, terror, harshness and anti-reason are the building blocks of what overcoming entails. Thus, it may not be surprising that Nietzsche views the same conditions as apt for breeding something refined, and even godly. Nietzsche consistently maintains that morality must be related to life as the main constraint. More pertinently, the constraints have a disciplinary role, as the following text shows:

We can look at every morality in the following way: whatever ‘nature’ it contains teaches us to hate the *laisser-aller*, the all-too-great freedom, and plants in us the need for limited horizons and the closest tasks. It teaches a *narrowing of perspective* and so, in a certain sense, stupidity as a condition for life and growth.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Richardson, *Nietzsche's system*, 66.

³⁰⁴ *BGE*, §188.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

There is need for disciplining (*Züchtung*) and breeding (*Zucht*). The inherent constraints yield power (life and growth). *Zucht* and *Züchtung* can be desired as good, since they heighten the will to power, providing an opportunity for resistance (overcoming). However, these conditions are referenced to the type and not directly to the individual human beings.

This means that the constraints of breeding can be applicable to any human being anywhere who may espouse such conditions in himself, just like will to power. In this regard, Nietzsche further remarks,

‘You should obey someone, anyone, and for a long time: *or else* you will deteriorate and lose all respect for yourself’—this seems to me to be the moral imperative of nature, which is clearly neither ‘categorical,’ as the old Kant demanded it to be (hence the ‘or else’—), nor directed to the individual (what does nature care about the individual!), but rather to peoples, races, ages, classes, and above all to the whole ‘human’ animal to *the human*.³⁰⁶

The emphasis in the text must be on obeying someone, and where it is directed, it views the whole human animal as a type. Form-giving as obedience focuses on the type, and in that way respects differentiation as the hallmark to produce singular individuality. The stress on the type frees Nietzsche’s psychology of power from the Kantian universalistic categorical imperative (Law of morality). Nietzsche is interested in the morality that is founded on the inclinations/interests/conditions of the human being (respecting the perspectival approach).

The privileging of form-giving at the typical level (of the *Übermensch*) respects the nature of the fundamental drive (will to power). Thus, the fundamental drive predominates, but still allows possibilities for the expression of other drives.³⁰⁷ When the fundamental drive of the *Übermensch* is incorporated into the individual human being, the same dynamics of form-giving via commanding and obeying are supposed to obtain. Power is not over others but is basically power over oneself. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche expresses the need for power over the individual as the “very *instinct for freedom*.”³⁰⁸ The presupposition is that before one engages in the journey of giving style to oneself, the psychology of power that governs the production of singular individuality must be in place. The instinct for freedom, implies will to power as the directing force (*dirigierende Kraft*) and not a driving force

³⁰⁶ *BGE*, §188.

³⁰⁷ Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean Self*, 177.

³⁰⁸ *GM*, II, §18.

(*treibende Kraft*), is the possible cause for acting in a particular way, in a particular direction, with a particular goal.³⁰⁹ The fundamental drive, if incorporated into the individual life, puts it on a certain trajectory of embracing experimental traits where contingency is paramount. The individual becomes aware of how fluid and dynamic he is with enormous possibilities of being cultivated.

2.2 The Type *Übermensch* and Giving Style

In this penultimate section of the chapter, I make sense of the fact that power as form-giving is qualitative rather than quantitative. This means that there needs to be some notable difference between those individuals who espouse in themselves the psychology of the will to power, and those who do not (seen in terms of strong and weak wills). Thus, this section will be a synthesis of what has transpired in the attempt to respond to the Nietzsche's guiding questions: how can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? The synthesized response so far is by incorporating the fundamental drive that entails the ability to act upon the chaos which encompasses human constitution (the ability to discipline oneself).

For Nietzsche, the basic constitution of the human being is the multiple drives and interests. On such a basis, Nietzsche demands an end to what he calls 'the atomistic need.' The conception of the self as a unity is one such case of atomism. Nietzsche observes that "atomism of the self" is an expression signifying "the belief that the soul is something indestructible, eternal, indivisible, that it is a monad, an *atomon*."³¹⁰ Such a conception in relation to oneself may require very little work to be done, since the self is regarded as basically a given and a completed reality. However, Nietzsche refers to the human being as the *noch nicht festgestellte Tier* (the still undetermined animal).³¹¹ Being undetermined here should not be construed in the philosophical sense of determinism as of free will. The infinitive of the verb *feststellen* carries various nuances like "to determine," "to locate," "to fix in a place," and "to ascertain." *Fest* alone implies solid or fixed, permanent, and even stable. *Festgestellt* can be rendered as "ascertained" or "established."

³⁰⁹ Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, 181; *GS*, §360.

³¹⁰ *BGE*, §12.

³¹¹ *BGE*, § 62. (The Cambridge text translation); *KSA*, 11:25[428].

Douglas Burnham presents different translations of the *noch nicht festgestellte Tier*: the “as yet undetermined animal;” “the animal that has not yet reached its final form;” or “the as yet unstructured animal.”³¹² The appropriate rendering of *noch nicht festgestellte Tier* must necessarily be linked to life. Hence, the human being as *noch nicht festgestellte Tier* has the implication of the animal that is yet to reach its final form. In this regard, Nietzsche envisages “the [self] as a society constructed out of drives and affects.”³¹³ The understanding of the self as a multiplicity of drives is consistent with Nietzsche’s project of producing great men. The project of regarding oneself as “one’s *reges*” with the task of founding little experimental states, obtains only on some organization of the drives which presupposes the human individual as always a work in progress.

The task of organizing our drives requires giving style. The *organizational* approach to the drives demands the existence of some intrinsic principle of mastery.³¹⁴ Preference for some intrinsic organization is consistent with the interpretation of Nietzsche’s will to power as the intra-perspectival constraint. It is this intrinsic organizational constraint that Nietzsche gives the directing responsibility in *On the Genealogy of Morals* when he remarks:

Fundamentally, it is the same active force as the one that is at work on a grand scale in those artists of violence and organizers, and that builds states, which here, internally, and on a smaller, pettier scale, turned backwards, in the ‘labyrinth of the breast,’ as Goethe would say, creates bad conscience for itself, and builds negative ideals, it is that very *instinct for freedom* (put into my language: the will to power): except that the material on which the formative and rapacious nature of this force vents itself is precisely man himself, his whole animal old self—and *not*, as in that greater and more eye-catching phenomenon, the *other* man, the *other* men.³¹⁵

This text is part of what Nietzsche calls the ‘psychology of the conscience.’ For Nietzsche, the conscience entails the instinct of cruelty. As such an instinct, the conscience is meant to play the same disciplining role as the instinct for freedom, only that it has been turned the wrong way. Nietzsche observes about conscience that it is: “turned back on itself when it can no longer discharge itself outwards.”³¹⁶ Cruelty here is inseparable from the nature of life and the

³¹² Douglas Burnham, *Reading Nietzsche, An analysis of Beyond Good and Evil* (Stockfield: Acumen, 2007), 95.

³¹³ *BGE*, §12.

³¹⁴ There is an elaborate study on the various possible Nietzschean approaches to the organization of the drives for the continual realization of the authentic individual self. Two notable studies are Steven D. Hales and Rex Welshon, *Nietzsche’s Perspectivism*, 158–162. Then, Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean Self*, 166–177.

³¹⁵ *GM*, II, §18.

³¹⁶ *EH* “GM.”

basis of life as a conquest. There is need to engage deeply with the theme of cruelty and Nietzsche's understanding of the constitution of the type *Mensch*. The nature of the type *Mensch* is central to what 'giving style' demands.

For Nietzsche, the philosopher of the future, apart from being the man of tomorrow, is also one who is given to self-examination as cruelty (thorough self-scrutiny). The project of self-making/giving style is not ex-nihilo, hence, there is the necessity for some knowledge of the natural material. Nietzsche elaborates on cruelty in relation to the free spirits:

'There is something cruel in the tendency of my spirit':—just let kind and virtuous people try to talk him out of it! In fact, it would sound more polite if, instead of cruelty, people were to accuse, mutter about and praise us as having a sort of 'wild honesty.'³¹⁷

Cruelty here is interpreted as the quintessential condition to produce the future philosophers. Cruelty provides possible access to the basic material useful for individual self-fashioning. Nietzsche associates the virtue of honesty with the 'cruel' operation of nature. The cruelty of the virtue of honesty is about thoroughness in engaging with the basic material that can account for the human animal. Such honesty is predisposed to take human reality deeply in defiance of any simplification or the desire to mask. The virtue of honesty entails the journey into the abyss (*Abgrund*). This is the domain of the crude encounter with 'What it is.' The abyss, as the groundless, the chaos beneath all the foundations, is the starting point for any differentiation (key to giving style).³¹⁸ This abyss is associated with the will to power as the fundamental drive.

It is a standard position that the abyss is related to the fundamental drive as the reflection of the basic constitution of the human animal. It is abysmal because it touches on the epitome of life as chaos (the realm of becoming). Nietzsche compares the fundamental drive to the the basic human constitution he calls a '*homo natura*.' The full thrust behind honesty as cruelty leads to the recognition of

[T]he terrible basic text of *homo natura* ... recognized even underneath these fawning colors and painted surfaces. To translate humanity back into nature; to gain control of the many vain and fanciful interpretations and incidental meanings that have been scribbled and drawn over that eternal basic text of *homo natura* so far; to make sure that, from now on, the human being will stand before the human being,

³¹⁷ *BGE*, §230.

³¹⁸ Lingis, "The Will to Power" in *The New Nietzsche*, 38.

just as he already stands before the *rest* of nature today, hardened by the discipline of science, —with courageous Oedipus eyes and sealed up Odysseus ears, deaf to the lures of the old metaphysical bird catchers who have been whistling to him for far too long: “You are more! You are higher! You have a different origin!”³¹⁹

The basic material of the human being is called terrible because it is chaotic. This must be understood in relation to Nietzsche’s theme of tragic existence and the suitable response. As May credibly observes, the capacity to face the raw ‘truth’ will enable one to affirm the same through form-giving.³²⁰ The raw truth about one’s terrible situation is what creates the need for aesthetics, as form-giving. Among the numerous expressions of existence as essentially chaotic, the earliest one from *The Birth of Tragedy* is remarkable:

[L]ife at the bottom of things, in spite of the passing of phenomena, remains indestructibly powerful and pleasurable, this consolation appears in embodied clarity in the chorus of satyrs, of creatures of nature who live on as it were ineradicably behind all civilization and remain eternally the same in spite of the passing of generations and of the history of peoples.³²¹

Life must be linked existentially to its basic fact, the cruelty of nature, that includes being purposeless. Nietzsche’s position on the nature of life as indestructible power seems to run through his philosophy. Thus, the task of individual *autopoiesis* necessarily presupposes a good level of knowledge of human life as fundamentally tragic, and the affirmation of such a life demands constant overcoming. Knowledge of the inherent indestructible nature of life as tragic largely contributes to “who one is” as one who must always overcome, which is the mark of the untimely one. The starting point for that knowledge is the principle itself, which is life that “torments” itself.

Nietzsche seems to have appropriated the possibility of gazing into this cruelty of life from the Hellenistic culture. The Greeks of the golden age are Nietzsche’s great teachers on two accounts: (1) the above reference to Oedipus the King, and (2) Greek exceptionalism. Before giving style, the individual, like the Greeks, needs to gaze on the “truth” of the human being with unshocked Oedipus-eyes. In *Oedipus the King*, before the prophet Tiresias reveals the murderer of Laius, he laments about the encounter with the truth: “How terrible—to see

³¹⁹ *BGE*, §230.

³²⁰ May, *Nietzsche’s Ethics and his War on ‘Morality,’* 32.

³²¹ *BT*, §7.

the truth when the truth is only pain to him who sees!”³²² Nietzsche’s allegation about the “unshocked eyes of Oedipus,” is in complete contrast to what transpires when the full import of the oracle is made known to Oedipus.

When Oedipus sees the body of his mother-cum-wife hanging by the neck “he digs down the sockets of his eyes, crying, You, you’ll see no more that pain is suffered, all the pain I caused!”³²³ Oedipus in front of the abyss wavers, while Nietzsche’s philosopher remains with unshocked eyes. Such a philosopher who gazes at the chaos within his nature embarks on what one can reference as giving style explained by three related tasks: (a) translating humanity back into nature, (b) mastery over the metaphysical interpretations, and (c) making new humanity (that presupposes individual *autopoiesis*). Thus, gazing at the terrible text (the chaos within) is the precursor to any possible style giving (making of a new humanity as the *raison d’être* of the type *Übermensch*).

The process of identifying the chaos within, as prerequisite for the formation of new humanity is evident in Nietzsche’s interpretation of Greek exceptionality. Hence, based on “*homo natura*” and the Greek exceptionality in organizing their chaos, it can be argued that Nietzsche’s eternal basic existent is nothing but life as the indestructible power. It is this life that remains eternally the same despite the passing of generations and of the history of peoples. Eternal here refers to the general character of life as will to power.

The abiding characteristic of life as will to power can be discerned from the early Nietzsche on his observations about the primacy of human violence and weakness:

It is not justice which here sits in judgement; it is even less mercy which pronounces the verdict: it is life alone, that dark, driving power that insatiably thirsts for itself. Its sentence is always unmerciful, always unjust, because it has never proceeded out of pure knowledge; but in most cases the sentence would be the same even if it were pronounced by justice itself.³²⁴

The will to power as instinct for freedom, denotes the need for expansion/mastery, for power. However, the primitive energy of direct power over others, now must be transformed into

³²² Sophocles, *The three Theban plays, Antigone, Oedipus the King and Oedipus at Colonus*, trans. Robert Fagles (London: Penguin Books, 1982). The cited reference is from, *Oedipus the King*, 360.

³²³ Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, 1402-1406.

³²⁴ *HL*, §3.

higher creative forms on oneself.³²⁵ Hence, self-overcoming as form-giving demands giving style to oneself.

The alternative to giving style to one's life is preservation which is inherently against singular individuality as a task. Nietzsche's stance on preservation and overcoming is proclaimed by Zarathustra: "The most concerned minds today ask: 'How is the human to be preserved?' But Zarathustra is the first and the only one to ask: 'How is the human to be overcome?'"³²⁶ Overcoming is the very nature of the type *Übermensch*. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche warns, "Physiologists should think twice before positioning the drive for self-preservation as the cardinal drive of an organic being. Above all, a living thing wants to *discharge* its strength—life itself is will to power."³²⁷ For Nietzsche the act of willing as commanding and obeying is essentially about the groundwork of a human being as a society constructed out of many drives.

Hence the need for style cannot be underestimated. However, giving oneself style though great is a rare art. The rarity of this art is because

[i]t is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. Here a large mass of second nature has been added; there a piece of original nature has been removed—both times through long practice and daily work at it. Here the ugly that could not be removed is concealed; there it has been reinterpreted and made sublime. Much that is vague and resisted shaping has been saved and exploited for distant views; it is meant to beckon toward the far and immeasurable.³²⁸

This text from Book IV of *The Gay Science*, whose general theme is whether we are still ashamed of ourselves. Books II and III of *The Gay Science* end with the theme of shame. For instance in Book II, Nietzsche alleges,

We should be *able* also to stand *above* morality—and not only to stand with the anxious stiffness of a man who is afraid of slipping and falling any moment, but also to *float* above it and *play*. How then could we possibly dispense with art and

³²⁵ Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche and the problem of the will in Modernity" in *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought*, 176.

³²⁶ Z, IV, (On the Superior Human, 3.

³²⁷ BGE, §13.

³²⁸ GS, §290.

with the fool? —And as long as you are in any way *ashamed* before yourselves, you do not belong with us.³²⁹

At the end of Book III, Nietzsche poses the question: “*What is the seal of liberation?*” The response is “[N]o longer being ashamed in front of oneself.”³³⁰ Nietzsche’s observation on being ashamed is an aperture into the appropriation of the inherent nature of life as chaos. Those who probably still feel some shame in front of themselves are not yet comfortable becoming who they are.³³¹ One thing seems evident: they (those who give style to themselves) must be able to stand above morality (*Moralität*) which ensues from the moral concepts. For those above morality this implies that they have embraced the psychology of the type *Übermensch*.

Those who survey their strengths and weaknesses are obligated by will to power as a constraint because it defines them. The only question is: to what extent does one recognize himself as a will and to what extent does one will his will as a will to power?³³² The recognition of oneself as will implies that one acknowledges that fundamentally he is a multiplicity of drives, and some organization (form-giving) is required. Those who can survey their strength and weaknesses have embraced the tragic nature of life as chaotic. Those who survey their strengths and weaknesses are the ones who do not believe in themselves as in complete *fully-developed facts*. Instead, they are like gardeners who

[c]ultivate the shoots of anger, pity, curiosity, vanity as productively and profitably as a beautiful fruit tree on a trellis; one can do it with the good or bad taste of a gardener ... ; one can also let nature rule and only attend to a little embellishment and tidying-up here and there; one can, finally, without paying any attention to them at all, let the plants grow up and fight their fight out among themselves.³³³

I have mostly argued for power (*Macht*) as form-giving that entails perpetual improvement in the individual drive activities. Power over oneself in the case of singular individuality demands recognition of some in-built constraint, which is will to power. The will as the fundamental drive (in relation to the type *Übermensch*) can empower itself by subordinating many other

³²⁹GS, §107.

³³⁰Ibid., § 275.

³³¹Higgins, *Comic Relief, Nietzsche's Gay Science*, 146.

³³²Ansell-Pearson, “Nietzsche and the problem of the will in Modernity” in *Nietzsche and Modern German thought*, 180.

³³³D, §560.

drives to its own activity. Nietzsche foresees this organization by a fundamental drive as giving style to one's character and actions.³³⁴ Hence, letting nature rule, as Nietzsche opines in the above citation from *Daybreak*, can be interpreted as subscribing to the form-giving tenets of life as the fundamental drive. Form-giving is an activity of the will, since it is what the will desires.

Power as form-giving, then, is essentially an aesthetic process of the will to power that demands fitting the strengths and weaknesses into an artistic plan. The fitting of the strengths and weaknesses to be successively taken demands knowledge of one's nature as will to power. The power desired by the type *Übermensch* through its psychology of will to power is only realized or validated in the singular individual. Thus, wherever there is the type *Übermensch* there must be some differentiated individuals espousing singularities.

Through the psychology of the type *Übermensch*, the lacuna in singular individuality so pronounced in Chapter One can possibly be found. For instance, in Chapter One, the account for the animality of the majority; the lack of dissatisfaction in the last human; the embrace of tragedy; and the type *Übermensch* as the best type, can be justified in their actions depending on how they embody the will to power. Nietzsche's reality of willing (commanding and obeying) as will to power accounts for the strong and weak wills.

2.2.1 The Strong and Weak wills

The strong wills or natures can harmonize the multifarious drives. The strong natured also accept chaos as something that can be affirmed through overcoming and cultivation. Nietzsche opines that the strong wills enjoy their finest gaiety in the constraint of style/discipline under their own law. The strong will unites three aspects man, creature, and creator. The strong will is ultimately aesthetic that implies that "in man there is not only matter, shred, excess, clay, mire, folly, chaos; but there is also the creator, the sculptor, the hardness of the hammer, the divinity of the spectator, and the seventh day—do ye understand this contrast?"³³⁵ The operative term for the strong will is overcoming, which is the quintessential trait of the type *Übermensch*. Apart from overcoming and form-giving, there is need for an

³³⁴ Christopher Janaway, "Autonomy, Affect, and the Self in Nietzsche's project of Genealogy" in *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*, eds. Ken Gemes and Simony May (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 58.

³³⁵ *BGE*, §225.

inbuilt attitude towards self-governance and self-fashioning. Such an attitude can encompass the valorisation of the historical, becoming, the hypothetical and general indifference to metaphysical flights (that can entail needless recourse to the universalizing and disinterested approaches to life).

On the other hand, the weak wills hinge on the fact of preservation. The weak characters, those without power over themselves, hate the constraint of style. They are afraid and ashamed of the bitter and evil/cruel constraint. The weak will cannot withstand the thought that it is essentially a chaos and a mere overcoming.³³⁶ The weak will strives to eliminate and repress certain forces and drives in an effort to achieve some illusory mastery over itself. The weak wills can thrive on the deceptive cheerfulness whose basis is either shame or fear of the chaos that constitute essentially the human reality. Such wills (weak) are simply not effective, given that they lack the power that they need to accord them the sense of effectiveness. Without the sense that one's will matters, that one can be effective in the world, it is difficult to work up a great deal of zest for living and doing.³³⁷ For Nietzsche, the weak wills espouse lack of mastery over life, and in that way, they are seemingly outsmarted by life, which is evidenced in their cherishing preservation (instinct of weakness). Given the inherent weakness in terms of the will, the weak wills are more likely to embrace disinterested and dogmatic approaches for the sake of preservation.

Nietzsche provides pointers to weak will or lack of it in his analysis of what he calls the believers and their need to believe. The following are the markers of the weak will for Nietzsche of 1886/87:³³⁸

(1) The demand for certainty; Nietzsche remarks, "The demand that one wants by all means that something should be firm ..." is the instinct of weakness that seeks not to create systems but to conserve them. For Nietzsche, the need to conserve systems is something that smells of weariness, disappointments, and fear of new disappointments.

(2) Patriotism (*Vaterländerei*), as chauvinism, the manifestation of the need of support, and something to fall back on amid being mastered by life. Patriotism is pertinent to this thesis on individual *autopoiesis*, and its appraisal of African ethno-philosophy, specifically

³³⁶ Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche and the problem of the will in Modernity" in *Nietzsche and Modern German thought*, 181.

³³⁷ Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 323.

³³⁸ *GS*, § 347.

ethnocentric valorisation, and its effects on singular individuality. It suffices to note here that patriotism and ethnocentrism can be emblematic of the weak will, and inimical to the production of the singular individuals.

The weak will still requires command but in a different way. The will as the affect of command is arguably the guarantor of the overcoming and form-giving for the type *Übermensch* with the validation in the singular individual. Hence, Nietzsche envisages the will as the decisive sign of sovereignty and strength. As such, “the less one knows how to command, the more urgently one covets someone who commands. Who commands severely—a god, prince, class, physician, ... dogma or party conscience.”³³⁹ The weak will yields a human being that cannot internally regulate his actions, and instead relies on external determination. The knowledge of how to command (for the will to power, command, and execution belong together) fundamentally lies in encountering the chaos constitutive of human life, the abyss, where the spirit of life which is overcoming/conquest/agonies originates. The spirit (*Geist*) of life as that which cuts into life, that which torments life is best expressed in the life of the type *Übermensch*.

Conclusion

The import of this chapter has been to demonstrate that the type *Übermensch*, characterized by overcoming, requires a commensurate psychology which is the will to power. Nietzsche’s stance on psychology is mostly about its validity and instrumental value in ameliorating human existence. In this context two psychologies emerge: the psychology that is amiable to morality of intentions, and the psychology of the type. The pertinent question is, between the two psychologies, which one is promising enough in the project of affirming existence though tragic? It has been demonstrated that the choice between the two must be founded on the theme of overcoming. At the centre of the two psychologies is the understanding of the will.

The psychology dominated by morality believes that the will is a faculty of choice. Nietzsche critiques the ‘self’ as a unified entity, conscience, and the consciousness based on the notion of a will as a unified faculty. Such a psychology is undermined by Nietzsche since it evolves imposing structures that supposedly do not serve the demands of human existence.

³³⁹GS, § 347.

The structures that ensue from the will as a faculty tend to foster preservation and rigidity. The end-product from such structures is weak-willed individuals who are apparently at variance with life's demands. However, as will become clear in Chapter Five, with weak-willed individuals (meaning those with insufficient embodiment of life as will to power), it equally implies weak institutions. Contrary to the will as a faculty is Nietzsche's own valorisation of the will as the affect of command.

The will as the affect of command is developed within the psychology of the type, which is will to power. Such a psychology engages with overcoming and form-giving as the key characterization of the act of the will. The underlying fact about the act of the will for Nietzsche is the regime of drives. It is through the complex reality of drives that Nietzsche stumbles on the fundamental drive as will to power. Such is the instinct for growth since its nature is overcoming. This fundamental will/drive is particularized in the multiple forms of entities. The reality that best characterizes the will's overcoming and power is life. It is within the objective of affirming existence that the psychology of the type is emphasized as the facilitator for humankind's encounter with the tragic existence.

The type *Übermensch* is the highest possible explication of the act of willing, since it is validated through its forms, the singular individuals. The *Übermensch* as the best type affirms individuals as they are through the intra-perspectival *affect of command*, the will to power.³⁴⁰ As such, the *Übermensch* lives in the innocence of becoming *simpliciter*. However, there is need for a different morality that is espoused by the type *Übermensch* which can be heuristic enough for individual self-governance.

³⁴⁰ Richardson, *Nietzsche's system*, 71.

Chapter 3: The Extra-Moral Life of the Type *Übermensch*

'Bite the head off! Bite it off!' thus it cried out of me, my horror, my hate, my disgust, my compassion, all my good and bad cried out of me with a single cry. (Z, III, On the Vision and Riddle, 2)

Introduction

Life itself as will to power defies the categories of good and evil. Hence, the type *Übermensch* not only embodies the ontology of becoming and the psychology founded on the will to power but espouses life in the unintentional realm. The unintentional domain seeks to overcome narrow categorizations of good and evil by seeking to embrace life in an extra-moral sense. This is the theme of this chapter. Life from the extra-moral perspective essentially encompasses transience and destruction as crucially important description for the type *Übermensch*. This chapter is envisioned as the summation of the last two and the orientation to Chapters Four and Five.

In Nietzsche's view, singular individuals are possibly bred only through the type *Übermensch*. The practical illustration of the life of the type *Übermensch* is discerned in Nietzsche's difficult and horrifying doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. Nietzsche in his numerous descriptions of how the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence dawned on him considers it as the highest possible formula of affirmation. The affirmation of life by the type *Übermensch* is justified through innocence of becoming which is meant to overcome any morality that is founded on the dichotomy of good and bad or good and evil.³⁴¹ In examining the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, one engages in a discourse on life of the type *Übermensch*.

The argument for the type *Übermensch*'s unintentional-based morality is structured as follows: Firstly, Nietzsche's possible sources of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence are traced from the philosophy of Heraclitus and the Stoics. From these philosophies, Eternal Recurrence is largely understood as a cosmological and an anthropological phenomenon. Secondly, a brief scholarly interpretation of Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence will follow where, apart from the above two phenomena, a third one emerges, the prescriptive type. Thirdly, I will engage with the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence from Nietzsche's corpus. In Nietzsche, the

³⁴¹ Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche: An Introduction to the understanding of his philosophical activity*, trans, Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J Schmitz, (Indiana: Regnery/Gateway, Inc, South Bend, 1979), 150.

Eternal Recurrence's normative position demands ultimately in the case of individuals for each to evolve his/her own proper constraints. For Nietzsche, the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is only properly thought when it is appropriated in individual's life. Hence, it must be conceived in an existential ethical-imperative manner. The final section of the chapter will briefly present the antithesis to life in the extra-moral sense, the domain of the morality of custom. Owing to its centrality to this dissertation, this chapter is comparatively longer than the others.

3.1 Brief Historical Note on Eternal Recurrence

Nietzsche alludes to the possible sources of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: "The doctrine of the '[Eternal Recurrence]', in other words of the unconditional and infinitely repeated circulation of all things—ultimately this doctrine of Zarathustra's *could* also have been taught already by Heraclitus. At least the Stoics, who inherited almost all their fundamental ideas from Heraclitus, show traces of it."³⁴² Herein lays the thrust of this section. I examine the development of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence in Greek thought firstly as a cosmological reality and secondly as a particular anthropological phenomenon. From this Greek foundation, Nietzsche radicalizes the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence in his attempt to appropriate it into the individual condition as an existential-ethical imperative.

3.1.1 The Eternal Recurrence in Heraclitus

Heraclitus wrote very little. But from the available fragments, his writings are subject to conflicting interpretations. Nietzsche provides various positive views on Heraclitus and his thought. In the notes of summer 1871 to early 1872, Heraclitus is associated with ideas like transfiguration and competition; and the understanding of the world as a game.³⁴³ Still in the notes from the same period, Nietzsche links Heraclitus with the understanding of the cosmos as artistic play.³⁴⁴ In the later published lecture notes on "Tragic Age of the Greeks," Heraclitus is associated with intuition and becoming.³⁴⁵ In "History for Life," Nietzsche calls Heraclitus the emblem of the spirit of the Delphic oracle.³⁴⁶ In 1884 Heraclitus is mentioned among

³⁴² *EH*, "BT" 3.

³⁴³ *KSA*, 7: 16[17].

³⁴⁴ *KSA*, 7: 19[18].

³⁴⁵ *PHG*, §5.

³⁴⁶ *HL*, §10.

Empedocles, Spinoza, and Goethe, as Nietzsche's ancestors.³⁴⁷ On such accounts, there is a need to look at Heraclitus's philosophy, particularly its pertinence for the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

One of the areas where Heraclitus and Nietzsche are almost in agreement is on the need for honesty about existence. On the sense of smell, Heraclitus remarks, "If everything that exists should become smoke, nostrils would (still) distinguish (them)."³⁴⁸ Similarly, Nietzsche believes that through the sense of smell one discovers "the lie as a lie." Nietzsche notes, "My genius is in my nostrils."³⁴⁹ In the words of Richard White, "The sense of smell may not be idealized or consciously ignored."³⁵⁰ Honesty to existence, for Heraclitus, is marked by his realization that becoming is the singular activity of reality. Kirk thinks that "the universality of change, though not its absolute constancy, was a commonplace of early Greek thought which Heraclitus cannot have avoided: change is going on everywhere, you only have to use your eyes."³⁵¹ Hence, the Greeks may have regarded change as an essential property of empirical life.

Heraclitus explains the fact of transformational change in agonistic terms. On war, he claims that "[o]ne must realize that war is common, and justice strife, and that all things come to be through strife and necessity."³⁵² He further states, "War is father of all, and king of all."³⁵³ Kirk et al. interpret these two fragments under a common theme as follows: "The total balance in the cosmos can only be maintained if change in one direction eventually leads to change in the other, that is, if there is unending 'strife' between opposites."³⁵⁴ The harmony of opposites is at the heart of the Heraclitean consideration of cosmic change. According to W. K. C. Guthrie, for Heraclitus, any harmony between contrasting elements necessarily and always

³⁴⁷ KSA, 11: 25[454].

³⁴⁸ Aristotle, "Sense and Sensibilia" in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Book 5.443a23, Robinson's Translation, Fragment 7. The full context of Aristotle's rendering reads: "Some writers look upon exhalation, which is a compound of earth and air, as the essence of odour. Heraclitus implied his adherence to it when he declared that if all existing things were turned into smoke, the nose would be the organ to discern them with." Aristotle, "Sense and Sensibilia" Book, 5.443 a22-24

³⁴⁹ EH "Destiny," §1.

³⁵⁰ White, *Nietzsche and the problem of sovereignty*, 164.

³⁵¹ Kirk, "Natural Change in Heraclitus" in *The Pre-Socratics*, 192.

³⁵² Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 6.42, Robinson's translation, fragment, 80.

³⁵³ Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, 9.9.4, Robinson's translation, fragment, 53.

³⁵⁴ Kirk, et. al, *The Presocratic Philosophers, A Critical History with Selection of Texts*, second edition, 193.

involved a tension of strife between the opposites of which it was composed.³⁵⁵ The contest/tension is never ended. Guthrie further elaborates: “Cessation of struggle would mean the disintegration of the cosmos.”³⁵⁶ For Heraclitus, if one seeks for the justification of the cosmic recurrence, it must be founded on the nature of the cosmos itself, as fire. Hence, Heraclitean thought is possibly alive to the fact of the Eternal Recurrence as a cosmological as well as an empirical phenomenon.

However, Nietzsche in his lecture notes on the tragic age of the Greeks recognizes another form of recurrence, of the empirical observer of the cosmos. It must be observed that in the extant Heraclitean fragments there is no mention of what one may call particular recurrence of entities in the cosmos. Nevertheless, Nietzsche draws his claim of particular recurrence possibly from the Heraclitean teachings on the cosmic activities. Nietzsche notes that “[w]hile Heraclitus’ imagination was eyeing this never-ceasing motion of the cosmos, this ‘actuality,’ like a blissful spectator who is watching innumerable pairs of contestants wrestling in joyous combat and refereed by stern judges, a still greater intuition overtook him.”³⁵⁷ For Nietzsche, Heraclitus’s notable character is intuition. And intuition is projected over and above the conceptual thinking that Nietzsche calls “other type of thinking,” which is accomplished in concepts and logical thinking.³⁵⁸ The advantage of having intuitive thinking on Nietzsche’s part is that, it does not impose conceptual structures over one’s reality. Instead it seemingly reveals itself through action.

Intuition for Nietzsche led Heraclitus to two-fold negations: (1) the denial of the duality of totally diverse worlds. He no longer distinguished a physical world from a metaphysical one, a realm of definite qualities from an undefinable “indefinite.” The negation of the duality of the world gave birth to what Nietzsche calls a far greater negation; (2) the denial of being altogether.³⁵⁹ It is from this one world that Nietzsche envisages Heraclitean affirmation of becoming as the actuality of the cosmos. It seems from the actuality of the cosmos that the spectator of that actuality must share in it. Based on the condition of a spectator of the cosmic motion Nietzsche projects another greater intuition: “He could no longer see the contesting

³⁵⁵ W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol.1 The earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 437.

³⁵⁶ Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol.1 The earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans*, 437.

³⁵⁷ *PHG*, §6.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, §5.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, §5.

pairs and their referees as separate; *the judges themselves seemed to be striving in the contest and the contestants seemed to be judging them.*”³⁶⁰ From this interpretation, it is apparent that cosmological recurrence involves also the entities present in the cosmos. But there is no textual evidence from Heraclitus in support of particular recurrence. For the question of particular recurrence, the early Stoics and the late Stoics were mainly interested in the physical world and the individual life respectively.

3.1.2 The Eternal Recurrence and the Stoics

On the generation of the world and whether it is eternal, Aristotle testifies, “With Empedocles of Acragas and Heraclitus of Ephesus, [they] believe that it alternates, being sometimes as it is now and sometimes different and in a process of destruction, and that this continues without end.”³⁶¹ This cannot strictly speaking be taken to be the position of Heraclitus. But, based on this Aristotelian interpretation, the early Stoics considered Heraclitus as their ancestor.³⁶² The basis of the early Stoics’ doctrine of Eternal Recurrence partly lies in these Aristotelian interpretations. If such an assertion is tenable, then Nietzsche’s claim that the Stoics are the inheritors of Heraclitus’ teaching of Eternal Recurrence is not entirely credible.

It is also not entirely true that the early Stoics relied only on Aristotle’s interpretation of Heraclitus. They had recourse to the Pythagorean and Platonic views as well. The focus will be on the early and later Stoics. The early Stoics’ interests centred on nature and are the ones commonly associated with Heraclitus. For the Later Stoics, they are mainly associated with ethics. Nietzsche’s views on the Stoics in general are ambivalent. They vary between denouncement and assimilation of some of their doctrines.

Nietzsche never gave extensive lectures on the Stoics as with Heraclitus. He mentions them in the passing in the early notes on ancient Greek philosophy. One point of Nietzsche’s disagreement with the Stoics is on “living according to nature.” In the 1870s he challenges the Stoics on their claims about knowledge of the aims of nature and whether one can know anything outside nature.³⁶³ Then, in 1886, Nietzsche poses the question, “So you want to *live*

³⁶⁰ *PHG*, §6. (The emphasis is mine).

³⁶¹ Aristotle, “On the Heavens” in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Book 1.10.279^b12–17

³⁶² David Hahn, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology* (Ohio: Columbus, 1976), 187.

³⁶³ *KSA*, 7:7 [155].

‘according to nature?’ Oh, you noble Stoics, what a fraud is in this phrase!’³⁶⁴ This is a response to one of the main guiding principles of the Stoics. Zeno of Citium in his work *On Human Nature* taught that “the goal is to live in harmony with nature, which means to live according to virtue; for nature leads to virtue.”³⁶⁵ Chrysippus, in his book *On Goals* believed living according to virtue is equivalent to living according to the experience of natural events. Chrysippus’s explanation is that our natures are parts of the nature of the universe. The nature according to which one should live takes both the universal and the human nature.

For a plausible account of Eternal Recurrence according to the Stoics, their usage of terms requires clarification. On the four elements—fire, water, air, and earth—reference is made to Zeno’s work *On the Universe* and on his fellow early Stoic Chrysippus’s first book, *Physics*. From these two works, an element is “that which from which generated things are first generated and into which they are resolved.”³⁶⁶ The four elements together constitute unqualified substance, which is matter. Among the elements, Chrysippus singles out fire as the element par excellence because the other elements are composed out of it in the first place by alternation, and into it lastly everything diffuses and dissolves. For Chrysippus, everything of fiery form is called fire.³⁶⁷ Hence in Chrysippus, “element” must in the first place imply fire. Fire is the permanent feature of the universe.³⁶⁸ It is the transformations of fire that bring about the alternating phases of the cosmic cycle. M. J. White differentiates between *archai*, principles and *stoicheia*, elements in Stoic thought. The principles are ungenerated and are indestructible, while the elements are the traditional four elements that are subject to destruction.³⁶⁹ Fire is not only an element, but also a principle of the cosmos. The Stoic concept of the cosmos equally warrants clarification for its notion of cosmic cycle.

³⁶⁴ *BGE*, §9.

³⁶⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (Hereafter, *DL*) trans. Pamela Mensch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) Book 7:87.

³⁶⁶ *DL*, 7:137 or Hans von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, Leipzig, 1903-5, hereafter SVF. They are given in A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic philosophers, Volume 1 Translations of the Principal Sources, With Philosophical Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Also, for the Greek and Latin texts refer to A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic philosophers, Volume 2, Greek and Latin Texts with Notes and Commentary and Bibliography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

³⁶⁷ *SVF*, 2.413.

³⁶⁸ Long, et.al, *The Hellenistic philosophers, volume 1*, 286.

³⁶⁹ Michael J. White, “Stoic Natural Philosophy (physics and cosmology)” in *The Cambridge Companion to The Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 126.

According to Diogenes Laertius' evidence, the Stoics use the term *cosmos* in three senses:³⁷⁰ (a) of god himself, derived from the whole substance, as indestructible and ungenerated. Such a god is also the craftsman of the world's orderly arrangement and, at set periods, takes all substance back into himself and generates it again from himself; (b) the world order itself as a *cosmos*; and (c) the *cosmos* as that which is composed of both (a) and (b). In the words of D. E. Hahn, the perishability of the *cosmos* for the Stoics must be admitted with qualification.³⁷¹ The *cosmos* as the particularly qualified matter derivable from the entire substance is eternal. In this sense, the *cosmos* is the principle of the subsequent order. Instead, the *cosmos* as the specific arrangement is generated and thus destructible in an eternal cycle. It is in the generation of the cosmic order that destruction ensues.

The Stoics generally explain the generation and destruction of the cosmic order via the term, *ekpurōsis*. It signifies a tremendous conflagration when everything is changed into fire, and then after a period, the *cosmos* come into existence again. The conflagration seems to happen on two levels: cosmic, and then particular entities within the *cosmos*. On the evidence of Nemesius:

(1) The Stoics say that when the planets return to the same celestial sign, in length and breadth, where each was originally when the world was first formed, at set periods of time they cause conflagration and destruction of existing things. (2) Once again the world returns anew to the same condition as before; and when the stars are moving again in the same way, each thing which occurred in the previous period will come to pass indiscernibly (from its previous occurrence). For again there will be Socrates and Plato and each one of mankind with the same friends and fellow citizens; they will suffer the same things and they will encounter the same things, and put their hand to the same things, and every city and village and piece of land return in the same way.³⁷²

These assertions about cosmic and particular recurrences, though not based on seriously adduced evidence, seem to follow from a doctrine associated with Heraclitus. Diogenes's words, ascribed to Heraclitus's doctrine, read like a summary of the Stoics' position on fire and other elements. It reads: "Fire is the element; all things are an exchange of fire and come into being by rarefaction and condensation." Then, about the *cosmos*: "It is alternately born

³⁷⁰ *DL*, 7:137–138; *SVF* 2.526.

³⁷¹ Hahn, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, 193.

³⁷² *SVF* 2.625.

from fire and again resolved into fire at fixed periods through all eternity.”³⁷³ This passage is alluded to in the first paragraph of this section about Aristotle and his interpretation of Heraclitus. Still, it can be taken as an Heraclitean thought about the cosmic composition and activity in general, but not about Eternal Recurrence.

Nevertheless, on the part of the Stoics, their position on cosmological and particular recurrence is founded on the distinction between the indestructible principle, and the ever-destructible elements. The argument from the Universal reason/principle is attested to by Eusebius about the Stoic doctrine:

(1) Universal reason having advanced thus far, or universal nature having grown and increased, it finally dries up everything and takes it up into itself and comes to be in the whole substance. (2) Having returned because of the order from which it began to create the world in just such a way, it manufactures the same way of life again according to reason, since such periods occur everlastingly without ceasing.³⁷⁴

The cosmos being governed by mind and providence was a position held by Chrysippus: that the cosmos is a living being endowed with reason and fire is its ruling part.³⁷⁵ Apart from cosmic recurrence, Chrysippus argues for the human recurrence based on the cosmic renewal, where he concludes that “it is evidently not impossible that we too after our death will return again to the shape we now are, after certain periods of time have elapsed.”³⁷⁶ Alexander, the Aristotelian commentator, testifies to Chrysippus’s assertion: “They (the Stoics) hold that after the conflagration all the same things recur in the world numerically, so that even the same peculiarly qualified individual as before exists and comes to be again in that world, as Chrysippus says in his books *On the world*...”³⁷⁷ The claim of numerical recurrence is grounded on the notion of the moment.

Marcus Aurelius, a later Stoic, puts a strong case for numerical identity and this moment. Aurelius is of the view that “[e]ven if you were to live three thousand years or thirty thousand, nevertheless remember that no one loses another life than this which he is living, nor lives another life than this which he is losing.”³⁷⁸ As Aurelius explains, no one loses what

³⁷³ *DL*, 9:8.

³⁷⁴ Eusebius, *Evangelical preparation* 15.19. 1–2; *SVF*, 2.599.

³⁷⁵ *DL*, 7:138.

³⁷⁶ Lactantius, *Divine institutes* 7.23; *SVF* 2.623.

³⁷⁷ Alexander, *On Aristotle's Prior analytics* 180,33–6, 181, 25–31; *SVF*, 2.624.

³⁷⁸ *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, trans. A.S.L. Farquharson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), Book II: 14.

is past or what is future, and one cannot be deprived of what he does not have. On the account of the primacy of the moment Aurelius infers two things: (1) that everything everlastingly is of the same kind and cyclically recurrent. It makes no difference whether one should see the same things for hundred years or for two hundred or for an infinite time; (2) that the longest-lived and the quickest to die have an equal loss. This is because it is the present alone of which one will be deprived, given that, the present is the only thing that one has.³⁷⁹ Looking at the ensuing arguments from Chrysippus's numerical identity thesis to Marcus Aurelius, one wonders how Nietzsche could refer to the Stoics' doctrine on Eternal Recurrence as "traces." Nietzsche's approach to Eternal Recurrence is largely from the particular point of view, and more pertinently the demands of the moment that accompany the doctrine in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Marcus Aurelius's argument on particular recurrence is that "all a person has is the present moment."³⁸⁰ The notion of the moment is pertinent to Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, as is shown later in this chapter.

The Greek thought on cosmic and particular recurrence is summarized in evidence associated with Aristotelian school. In the work *Problemata*, it is alleged:

Just as the course of the firmament and of each of the stars is a circle, why should not also the coming into being and the decay of perishable things be of such a kind that these things again come into being and decay? This agrees with the saying that 'human life is a circle.' To demand that those who are coming into being should always be numerically identical is foolish, but one would more readily accept that they were identical in kind. And so we should ourselves be prior, and one might suppose the arrangement of the series to be such that it returns back in a circle to point from which it began and thus secures continuity and identity of composition.³⁸¹

The context of this text is the understanding of the terms "prior" and "posterior," in relation to human life. The conclusion that the author draws is that, if human life is a circle, and given that a circle has neither beginning nor end, then we should not be prior to those who lived before nor they prior to us by being nearer to the beginning.³⁸² The survey of the Eternal Recurrence in Greek thought has brought to the fore the fact that Nietzsche's claim to Eternal

³⁷⁹ *Meditations Marcus Aurelius*, Book II:14.

³⁸⁰ Long, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Volume 1, 313.

³⁸¹ Aristotle, "Problems" in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Book XVII, 916^a.

³⁸² *Ibid.*

Recurrence may not be unprecedented. But Nietzsche's demand for its ethical appropriation in the individual human condition may be unprecedented.

For the Greeks, Eternal Recurrence is understood to be of necessity for the very existence of the cosmos. They understood this essential aspect of the cosmos through their empirical attentiveness to cosmic activities. From the Greeks, Nietzsche was exposed to cosmological and particular nuances of Eternal Recurrence. However, before engaging with Nietzsche himself on the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, it is pertinent to look briefly at some prevailing scholarly approaches.

3.2 Scholarly Approaches to Nietzsche's Doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence

The focus will be on various scholarly interpretations of the doctrine understood as cosmological, particular/anthropological, and existential-ethical. I start with some general claims about the doctrine. For Heidegger, Nietzsche's doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is the most difficult thought to bear, because it involves "the tragedy of being as such."³⁸³ Heidegger's claim is founded on Nietzsche's own assertion about Anaximander's value question:

'What is your existence worth? And if it is worthless, why are you here? Your guilt, I see, causes you to tarry in your existence. With your death, you have to expiate it. Look how your earth is withering, how your seas are diminishing and drying up; the seashell on the mountain top can show you how much has dried up already. Even now, fire is destroying your world; someday it will go up in fumes and smoke. But ever and anew, another such world of ephemerality will construct itself. Who is there that could redeem you from the curse of [becoming]?'³⁸⁴

In this text, though Nietzsche is aware of the Greek cosmic nuances of cyclical recurrence, he conceives such a phenomenon as an existential enigma. That there is cosmic recurrence seems fine from an observer's standpoint. But that human existence is implicated in the cosmic curse of becoming seems unsettling. Hence, Heidegger credibly notes that the "experience of the tragic and meditation on its origin and essence are proper to the very basis of Nietzschean

³⁸³ Martin Heidegger, "Tragedy, Satyr-Play, and Telling Silence in Nietzsche's Thought of Eternal Recurrence" trans. David Farrell Krell, *Why Nietzsche Now?* Ed. Daniel O'Hara (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 25.

³⁸⁴ *PHG*, §4.

thought.”³⁸⁵ In Nietzsche’s purview, the Greek understanding of the cosmic cycles raises value-related questions about human life.

Heidegger, in his lectures on Nietzsche’s doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, hypothetically remarks, “If the thought of eternal recurrence of the same is Nietzsche’s principal thought, then it will have been present to him during the entire subsequent period of his creative life from 1881 to January 1889.”³⁸⁶ Together with the timeframe, Heidegger recognizes “incorporation” of the tragic as essential to the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence.³⁸⁷ To show the link between incorporation and the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, Heidegger notes, “However novel it may be, the doctrine of eternal return does not drop out of the blue.”³⁸⁸ This may imply that even though Eternal Recurrence is a cosmological doctrine, it requires some form of appropriation.

Heidegger’s position is that “incorporating” implies thinking the thought of Eternal Recurrence “in such a way that right from the start it becomes one’s fundamental stance toward reality as a whole.”³⁸⁹ Heidegger’s emphasis is that “[o]nly when the thought has become the basic posture of our thinking as a whole has it been appropriated [incorporated]—and taken into the body [into the drives]—as its essence demands.”³⁹⁰ The thinking in question entails adopting the experimental attitude of innocence that Heidegger suggests in Nietzsche “pervades being as a whole.”³⁹¹ Being here ought to be consistently interpreted in terms of *Wirklichkeit* as actuality that is applicable to the entire cosmic reality. More fundamentally, Heidegger’s position is that “the thought of eternal recurrence of the same is not yet thought when one merely imagines everything turning in a circle.”³⁹² Whether this is really the case in Nietzsche’s presentation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence will be tested below.

Eternal Recurrence on anthropological grounds correlates to Kaufmann’s claim that the value of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence for Nietzsche was something new and paramount. Kaufmann believes that the search for the positive function of the doctrine of

³⁸⁵ Heidegger, “Tragedy, Satyr-Play, and Telling Silence in Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Recurrence,” 26.

³⁸⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Volumes One and Two, *The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, Volume II, trans. David Farrell Krell, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984), 70.

³⁸⁷ The notion of “incorporation” is a complex one in Nietzsche. It is analysed later in relation to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

³⁸⁸ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 75.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

³⁹⁰ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 76.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁹² Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 42.

Eternal Recurrence mattered for Nietzsche.³⁹³ Kaufmann's reflection is founded on the following stance from Nietzsche:

This life as you live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself.³⁹⁴

For Kaufmann, this text elicits the issues of the problem of life and its finality; eternity and time; and Eternal Recurrence as an anthropological doctrine. In Kaufmann's words, one must probe his present state of being, such that he would have to answer the demon with anger or be in accord with the demon.³⁹⁵ Kaufmann's thinking is shared by other thinkers, like Schacht.

For Schacht, the thought of Eternal Recurrence is problematic. The problem is the realization that "all events recur eternally, down to the last detail."³⁹⁶ That last detail here references "even this moment." Schacht's explanation is that "[t]he thought of the eternal recurrence of all events without addition, subtraction, or alteration would, on [Nietzsche's] view, present an even more formidable challenge and test of one's strength and ability to affirm life as it exists."³⁹⁷ The credibility of Schacht's observation must be gauged against one's ability to appropriate the thought. Lack of appropriation of the cosmic actuality as becoming seems to be the main test. Eternal Recurrence's challenge depends on the question in each and everything, "Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?"³⁹⁸ Nietzsche adds that this question "would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight."³⁹⁹ Eternal Recurrence on the cosmological level exposes human actuality even from the spectator's perspective to existence that is *sinnlos*.

Löwith draws his attention to Nietzsche's thinking that the nature of the cosmos *ipso facto* points to meaninglessness. Nietzsche alleges: "Let us think this thought in its most terrible form: existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any

³⁹³ Kaufmann, "Translators Introduction" *GS*, 17.

³⁹⁴ *GS*, §341.

³⁹⁵ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 325.

³⁹⁶ Schacht, *Nietzsche*, 258.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁸ *GS*, §341.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

finale of nothingness: ‘*the eternal recurrence.*’⁴⁰⁰ Hence, for Löwith, Eternal Recurrence on cosmological grounds characterizes Nietzsche’s “teaching as the ‘most extreme form of nihilism’ and at the same time as the ‘self-overcoming’ of nihilism.”⁴⁰¹ In *The Gay Science* text the final question is, “Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?” Though one may say *Nein* the doctrine says your life is already meaningless. And yet even the *Ja* is problematic, given that you will either be transformed or be crushed by the doctrine. It is a Sphinx-like scenario. Löwith recognizes the deficiency in the cosmological theory of Eternal Recurrence claiming that “the dwarf cannot bear Zarathustra’s most abysmal idea of the Eternal Recurrence; but Zarathustra—who, in carrying up the dwarf, carried up the burden of his existence—can indeed bear the most abysmal idea.”⁴⁰² In this regard, it is plausible to claim that Eternal Recurrence, thought of as cosmological only, may not entail Zarathustra’s deep-thought. In what way Zarathustra’s deep thought could be envisaged must be beyond the mere cosmological or anthropological underpinnings of the doctrine. This leads into some practically oriented interpretations.

The third interpretation of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is commonly rendered as a prescriptive type. It takes on different nuances as it is expressed by different scholars. For instance, Bernd Magnus interprets Eternal Recurrence as an existential imperative,⁴⁰³ Pierre Klossowski sees it as a re-think on one’s current life,⁴⁰⁴ and Paul Loeb holds that the condition of coming to Nietzsche’s Eternal Recurrence is the honesty of life/existence, since our condition of life determines how we need to live.⁴⁰⁵ Magnus relates the normative account with ontology of the cosmos.

The ontological account tends to concern itself with the constitutive aspects of reality and its essential character. For Magnus, it is from the ontological account that normative questions like “How ought I to behave?” a fortiori emerge.⁴⁰⁶ In Nietzsche, one comes to know

⁴⁰⁰ WP, 55.

⁴⁰¹ Karl Löwith, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, trans. J. Harvey Lomax (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 56.

⁴⁰² Löwith, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, 69.

⁴⁰³ The argument of Eternal Recurrence as an existential attitude against the traditional cosmological dominant view about life is the import of Magnus work, *Nietzsche’s Existential Imperative* (already cited above).

⁴⁰⁴ Klossowski insists on reading the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence from the context that Nietzsche experienced it. Refer Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Daniel W Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

⁴⁰⁵ Paul S. Loeb, “Identify and Eternal recurrence” in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, 176.

⁴⁰⁶ Magnus, *Nietzsche’s Existential Imperative*, 73.

the character of existence through the art of listening. The honest listening in Magnus' interpretation makes Nietzsche's doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence an existential-imperative. This is more than simply alleging that the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is prescriptive. According to Heidegger, there is no schema into which one might pigeonhole the project of Eternal Recurrence and make it familiar.⁴⁰⁷ Instead, each one individually must be on the lookout for the project itself, given that whatever pertains to Eternal Recurrence is its own schema.

In this regard, instead of Eternal Recurrence being prescriptive, it is possibly selective. As Heidegger further observes, "Whatever is taught there, whatever is thought in the thought, recedes before the way it is taught and thought."⁴⁰⁸ In keeping with the existential slant of this dissertation, existential-imperative nuance of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence will be sought as a selective process. The Eternal Recurrence, owing to the conditions in which it came to Nietzsche, can plausibly be approached from the perspective of the attitude(s) that it elicits in those who may be possessed by this thought. Now, I engage with Nietzsche himself on the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

3.3 Eternal Recurrence in Nietzsche's Corpus

In Nietzsche's own engagement with the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence one must be alive to the complex issues surrounding the doctrine. The issues revolve around the cosmological, particular/anthropological, scientific/empirical, and practical/prescriptive aspects of the doctrine. For Nietzsche, even Greek thought on the everlasting and exclusive becoming is itself disturbing for the human observer. Nietzsche calls it a terrible, paralyzing thought.⁴⁰⁹ Nietzsche is making such a claim about cosmic reality simply as a spectator in 1873, which is a different case in August 1881, when it becomes an existential-imperative for him. I will argue that the affirmation of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence for Nietzsche is only viable through the type *Übermensch*. The following is an attempt at tracing Nietzsche's journey of appropriating the thought of Eternal Recurrence.

⁴⁰⁷ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 76.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ *PHG*, §5.

3.3.1 Eternal Recurrence: Nietzsche's 1881 Sketches

In the 1881 notes, a first sketch on the doctrine contains five themes. Three themes are about incorporation: (1) of fundamental errors, (2) of passions and (3) of knowledge and of renunciatory knowledge. The remaining two themes are (4) the innocent man and the individual as experiment, and (5) the new heavy weight: the Eternal Recurrence of the same.⁴¹⁰

Prima facie, there seems to be an important link between incorporation and the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. Though incorporation appears more clearly in *The Gay Science*, it is alluded to before.⁴¹¹ In 1874, Nietzsche explains the plastic power of man as “the capacity to develop out of oneself in one’s own way, to transform and *incorporate* into oneself what is past and foreign, to heal wounds, to replace what has been lost, to recreate broken moulds.”⁴¹² In this case, without the power to integrate and appropriate, one perishes. The modern man is said to drag around with him “a huge quantity of *indigestible* stones of knowledge.”⁴¹³ Indigestibility in this regard is the opposite of what the term incorporation entails in Nietzsche.

Whatever is indigestible is not assimilated into the body system. The term *Einverleibung*, the equivalent of the English “incorporation,” literally means to take into the body or ingest. In the words of Keith, “Nietzsche situates incorporation in the same context of problems that come to inform his presentation of eternal return in 1881.”⁴¹⁴ Incorporation involves the conditions of life, which are ever open-ended, and entails becoming. Thus, in the above sketch of 1881, Nietzsche seems to set the necessary prerequisites for Eternal Recurrence as an incorporating process. Incorporation as power mastery is expressed in later notes as part of the understanding of the living, which “must extend its power and consequently incorporate alien forces.”⁴¹⁵ Hence, Eternal Recurrence is introduced specifically as the

[i]nfinite importance of our knowing, erring, our habits, ways of living for all that is to come. What shall we do with the *rest* of our lives—we who have spent most of our lives in the most profound ignorance? We shall *teach the doctrine*—it is the

⁴¹⁰ KSA, 9: 11[141].

⁴¹¹ In *GS*, the main theme is appropriation of Knowledge for life, but that appropriation can only be achieved under the auspices of what Nietzsche calls incorporation as the measure of the strength of Knowledge, as a condition of life. Refer, *GS*, §110.

⁴¹² *HL*, §1. The emphasis is mine.

⁴¹³ *HL*, §4. The emphasis is mine.

⁴¹⁴ Keith Ansell Pearson, “The Eternal Return of the Overhuman: *The Weightiest Knowledge and the Abyss of Light*” in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 30, (Autumn 2005): 4.

⁴¹⁵ KSA, 13: 14[192] or *WP*, §728.

most powerful means of *incorporating* it in ourselves. Our kind of blessedness, as teachers of the greatest doctrine.⁴¹⁶

Eternal Recurrence as the new weight and the greatest doctrine is the singular preoccupation for Nietzsche in the 1880s. The thought of Eternal Recurrence as *schwer* implies “weighty” or “difficult” or “hard” in the generic sense of “hard to bear.”⁴¹⁷ The difficulty of Eternal Recurrence for Nietzsche is two-fold: thinking through it and existentially living it. The import of the two-fold burden is expressed on numerous occasions.

In a letter of the same period of 1881, Nietzsche talks of “the intensity” of his feelings and “tears of joy and exaltation.”⁴¹⁸ In *The Gay Science*, he hypothesizes, “if this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you.”⁴¹⁹ If it is incorporated it transforms.⁴²⁰ In the 1881 notes the philosophy of indifference is the link between the incorporations and weighty thought of Eternal Recurrence. For Nietzsche, the philosophy of indifference among others is characterized by innocence and experiment toward existence. In the 1881 notes, there are calls to “adopt a child’s attitude towards” existence.⁴²¹ Such an attitude in Nietzsche’s scheme entails understanding reality as becoming.⁴²² It has been acknowledged by Nietzsche that “incorporation” has fundamentally involved errors and our thinking itself about existence is flawed. Eternal Recurrence takes millennia to be incorporated. Hence, Nietzsche warns,

Let us beware of teaching such a doctrine like a sudden religion! It must sink in slowly; entire generations need to build on it and become fruitful—so that it becomes a great tree overshadowing all humanity to come. ... For the most powerful thought many millennia are needed—*long, long*.⁴²³

Part of the reason it takes so long to incorporate lies in the fact that there are no external sanctions on those who fail to believe in it. Nevertheless, those who fail to incorporate it; are

⁴¹⁶ KSA, 9:11[141].

⁴¹⁷ Joan Stambaugh, *Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Return* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1972), XI.

⁴¹⁸ Letter to Peter Gast, Sils-Maria, August 14, 1881.

⁴¹⁹ GS, §341.

⁴²⁰ KSA, 9: 11[143].

⁴²¹ KSA, 9:11[141].

⁴²² In terms of actuality.

⁴²³ KSA, 9:11[158].

deemed to live fleeting lives.⁴²⁴ Hence, incorporation is vital in conceiving the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, and in this regard it is more than a prescriptive doctrine.

The ending signature of the sketch itself seems to defy mere interpretation of the doctrine as prescriptive. The dating, signature, and location sound obscure. It reads: “Early August 1881 in Sils-Maria, 6,000 feet above sea level and much higher above all human things!”⁴²⁵ Later in 1888 Nietzsche writes “6000 Fuss jenseits von Mensch und Zeit.”⁴²⁶ The obscurity of the location lies in the wording “much higher above all human beings and time.” Nietzsche understands becoming as an activity. Like the actuality of the cosmos, characterized by constant acting and coming to be, the challenge for Nietzsche is how to appropriate it into the human realm. That “how” could include striving. Nietzsche generally links striving in the human realm to living in drives and activities.⁴²⁷ This leads to the second sketch of Eternal Recurrence found in the same notes of 1881 ordered differently as follows:

1. The mightiest insight [understood to be of the Eternal Recurrence].
2. Opinions and errors transform humankind and grant it its drives, or: the incorporated errors.
3. Necessity and innocence.
4. The play of life.⁴²⁸

This sketch apparently manifests the prevailing situation of those who have incorporated the Eternal Recurrence and been transformed. It is not the hypothetical situation of “if.” The key to such an assertion is the realized state of “the play of life.” The play of life reflects a fragment associated with Heraclitus’s dictum: “Lifetime is a child at play, moving pieces in a game.”⁴²⁹

The child in Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* epitomizes the life of creativity, while the notions of play and laughter in *Zarathustra* are marks of a transformed life.⁴³⁰ After experiencing the Eternal Recurrence, the shepherd’s situation in *Zarathustra* is described: “No longer a shepherd, no longer man a transformed being, surrounded with light, laughing!”⁴³¹ For Hollingdale, part three of *Zarathustra* is the pinnacle of Nietzsche’s writings. The reason is

⁴²⁴ KSA, 9:11[160].

⁴²⁵ KSA, 9:11[141].

⁴²⁶ SA, *EH* “Z” §1.

⁴²⁷ KSA 9:11[141].

⁴²⁸ KSA 9:11[144].

⁴²⁹ Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 9.9.4. Translation from Charles H. Kahn, *The Art and thought of Heraclitus: An edition of the fragments with translation and commentary*, fragment XCIV (52).

⁴³⁰ Z, I (On the Three Metamorphosis).

⁴³¹ Z, III, (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

that in part three “On the Vision and riddle” the full statement of the theory of Eternal Recurrence is reached.⁴³² Hence, the four themes of the second sketch on Eternal Recurrence may only be properly validated after one has experienced the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence at the existential-imperative level. In Nietzsche’s corpus that experience is in *Zarathustra*, Part Three.

3.3.2 Eternal Recurrence: *The Gay Science*, 1882

Part of the first proclamation of the doctrine in the published works reads, “The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!”⁴³³ The eternal hourglass of existence expresses Nietzsche’s version of Eternal Recurrence as a cosmological doctrine. Nevertheless, the bulk of the proclamation of the doctrine in *The Gay Science* focuses on the impact of such a thought on the individual life. The proclamation is filled with existential nuances:

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: This life as you live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself.

There is a demand made on the one invaded by the demon for reflection on life at an existential level. The “existential” enigma is symbolized by the expression “loneliest loneliness.” Nietzsche seems to oppose the existential nuance of Eternal Recurrence to another form that he calls the “eternal recurrence of war and peace.”⁴³⁴ This designation in the passage is the first reference to the doctrine in published works. It is not clear what such a designation implies. But contextually it may imply that cosmic recurrence is not radical enough until its demands at the existential level are appropriated.

3.3.3 The Doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* 1883–1885

⁴³² R.J. Hollingdale, “Introduction” Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A book for Everyone and no one*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1961), 32.

⁴³³ *GS*, §341.

⁴³⁴ *GS*, §285.

Thematically, *The Gay Science* gives birth to *Zarathustra*. In *Ecce Homo*, he writes, “[T]he ‘*gaya scienza*,’ which gives a hundred indications that something incomparable is near; latterly it gives the opening of *Zarathustra* itself, and in the penultimate section of the fourth book it gives Zarathustra’s fundamental thought.”⁴³⁵ The fundamental thought of *Zarathustra* is the Eternal Recurrence. The last aphorism of *The Gay Science* referred to by Nietzsche above is entitled *Incipit tragoedia*, Tragedy begins. This gives an indication of the link between the thought of Eternal Recurrence and tragedy.

In *Zarathustra*, Part Two, written in the autumn of 1883, there are two texts that allude to the Eternal Recurrence. In the section entitled ‘The Soothsayer,’ after the teaching of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, there is a sense of mournfulness over humankind given a negative belief that “[a]ll is empty, all is the same, all has been!”⁴³⁶ This teaching and belief of the prophet, it is remarked, touched Zarathustra’s heart and transformed him. Nevertheless, the transformation was only short-lived. This is because thereafter Zarathustra became mournful like the rest of humankind. The meaning of the events in this part is unclear. However, being a prophecy, it could be the prefiguration of the meaning and the consequences of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. Aligning the prophecy to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, it is drawn from the cry of Zarathustra’s alter ego, punctuated with the words, “It is time! It is high time!” And then Zarathustra’s asks: “For what is it then high time?”⁴³⁷ What follows this question is the mournful teaching about Eternal Recurrence.

The prophecy is followed by the existential theme of time, couched in terms of the redemption of the will.⁴³⁸ The greatest torment to the will is the irreversibility of time. The problem of the will and time is stated variously as: “Backwards the will is unable to will; that it cannot break time and time’s desire—that is the will’s loneliest sorrow.”⁴³⁹ In addition, the fact that “time does not run backwards” arouses the will’s fury. Amid the problem of time, the teaching on time is envisaged.

⁴³⁵ *EH*, “Z” §1.

⁴³⁶ *Z*, II (The Soothsayer).

⁴³⁷ *Z*, II (On the Greatest Event).

⁴³⁸ *Z*, II (on Redemption). The discussion on will and time is extensively taken in Chapter Two. Here in Chapter Three the question is how Eternal Recurrence could be a response to irreversibility of time and will’s willing backward.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid*.

However, the problem is not about the past only, but also about now and the future. Zarathustra says to his disciples:

The now and the formerly upon earth—ah! my friends—that is what I find most unbearable; and I should not be able to live if I were not a seer of that which must come.

A seer, a willer, a creator, a future himself and a bridge to the future—and alas, also as it were a cripple by this bridge: Zarathustra is all this.⁴⁴⁰

In this text, Zarathustra acknowledges, like humankind, the unbearable nature of existence. But he has an advantage of being a seer. He is a willer of a future and even a bridge to the future. Though Zarathustra is a future himself, he is still a cripple. In the words of Rosen, Zarathustra “too is crippled by his epoch as a historical person.”⁴⁴¹ However, as a seer he understands the present moment as the bridge to a healthy future. It is only as a seer that Zarathustra can claim that he walks “among human beings as among the fragments of the future.”⁴⁴² The future that he envisages must involve time and will. Hence, “To redeem that which has passed away and to re-create all ‘It was’ into a ‘Thus I willed it!’” is what he calls redemption. This will possibly be the work of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence when appropriated. In the absence of redemption for the will, a phenomenon of revenge sets in. Revenge here is understood as the will’s ill-will toward time and its past. Nietzsche’s doctrine of Eternal Recurrence as a possible reconciliation of time and existence at this point (1883) is only still a theoretical proposition.

In January 1884, Nietzsche, in the person of Zarathustra, gives a principal discussion on incorporation of Eternal Recurrence. It seems an understatement to call it a discussion because it entails all possible practical nuances for Eternal Recurrence. Rosen calls Part Three of *Zarathustra* “the most intensely poetic, the part that gives the greatest support to those for whom the work is one of inspiration rather than discursive forethought.”⁴⁴³ Nietzsche himself already stated in *Ecce Homo* that Zarathustra is the teacher of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. The teaching of the doctrine is the import of the two sections “On the Vision and the Riddle.”

⁴⁴⁰ Z, II (On Redemption).

⁴⁴¹ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment, Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, 168.

⁴⁴² Z, II (On Redemption).

⁴⁴³ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 174.

The context of the vision and the riddle is on the ship in the open sea. Zarathustra has embarked on a sea voyage from “the Isles of the Blest.”⁴⁴⁴ The beginning of the voyage is clear, but the destination is uncertain. It is remarked about the ship that it “came from far away and would sail even farther.” It seems to be a voyage of the “infinite,”⁴⁴⁵ and to “yet another world to be discovered and more than one.”⁴⁴⁶ More pertinently it is noted: “But Zarathustra was a friend to all those who journey far and do not like to live without danger.”⁴⁴⁷ This assertion about danger is consistent with Nietzsche’s position about preparatory human beings: “For believe me: the secret of harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is—to *live dangerously!* Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships into uncharted seas!”⁴⁴⁸ The point is that what Nietzsche taught before is now being implemented in the person of Zarathustra. And the wider context of the teaching is experimentation.⁴⁴⁹ The reference to the open sea is perhaps an allusion to the needed experimental spirit, which is pertinent for the thought of the Eternal Recurrence.

The riddle is addressed to a specific group: the crew and one unnamed person who embarked with Zarathustra. The address affirms the experimental spirit: “To you, bold searchers, tempters, experimenters, and whoever has embarked with cunning sails upon terrifying seas.” Rosen alleges that the condition of Zarathustra and his friends demands that “[t]he price of continuous discovery is detachment from life; the sailors cannot be faithful to the earth, because they are immersed in the sea of becoming.”⁴⁵⁰ The problem is how Rosen’s observation about Zarathustra and friends could be understood when compared to Zarathustra’s invitation in the prologue: “[S]tay true to the earth and do not believe those who talk of over-earthly hopes!”⁴⁵¹ One measure of faithfulness to the earth is immersion in the activity of life, which is becoming. Detachment from life is contra demand for appropriation of the doctrine. The appropriation entails, as Keith notes, the idea “that we, along with

⁴⁴⁴ Z, III, (On the Vision and the Riddle, 1).

⁴⁴⁵ GS, §124.

⁴⁴⁶ GS, §289. The title of the aphorism is *Embark*, the translation of the German title *Auf die Schiffe!* Literary “Onto the ships.”

⁴⁴⁷ Z, III, (On the Vision and the Riddle, 1). The praise for new Seas forms one of the Songs of Prince Vogelfrei, end of Book Five of GS, 1887. The title of the song is “Toward New Seas.”

⁴⁴⁸ GS, §283.

⁴⁴⁹ The theme of Experimentation is rife in Nietzsche’s notes of 1880s. In *Daybreak* the book ends on the call to be Aeronauts of the Spirit; see aphorism 575.

⁴⁵⁰ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 174.

⁴⁵¹ Z, Prologue §3.

everything else that lives, are implicated in the perpetual flux.”⁴⁵² Hence, the sailors in the riddle must largely be understood from the experimental angle as those who are open to the activity of life. This type of outlook on experiment is in line with the notions of uncharted seas and living dangerously. With clarity about the audience, Zarathustra delves into the circumstances in which he received the riddle.

The riddle contains the “the vision of the loneliest.”⁴⁵³ The term loneliest appears in *The Gay Science* with a qualification as loneliest loneliness. The German rendering *Einsamste Einsamskeit*, implies moments of total desolation and withdrawal into nothingness. It must be the existential moment, given the gloomy description of the difficult climb and the spirit of heaviness.⁴⁵⁴ Zarathustra’s purpose of climbing is “to see the grounds of all things and their backgrounds.”⁴⁵⁵ To see the source of reality, Zarathustra must climb over himself onward and upward. This is an allusion to the theme of self-overcoming encountered in Chapter Two.

Nevertheless, the spirit of heaviness and its underlying distractions must be overcome. The half dwarf, lames, and those who are laming symbolize human life that calls for pity from Zarathustra.⁴⁵⁶ Pity in this case must be defied. It can be credibly claimed here that pity serves as a simple response to a complex existential challenge that is not yet deeply fathomed. The dwarf represents those who supposedly need to be pitied and as such need to be overcome. The challenge of searching the ground for existence where past efforts failed is described in Zarathustra’s experience: “I climbed, I climbed, I dreamed, I thought but everything oppressed me.”⁴⁵⁷ Zarathustra reaches a point of decision-making either to succumb to the voice of past failures or to chart a new path to the abyss.

The turning point is facilitated by what Zarathustra describes as “something I call courage.” In courage, Zarathustra confronts the dwarf: “Dwarf! You! or I!” The choice here is between two heavy weights, pity representing the hitherto moral response to enigmatic existence or the Eternal Recurrence. Hence, the need for courage as “the best of killers: courage strikes even pitying dead. But pitying is the deepest abyss: as deeply as the human being sees

⁴⁵² Keith Ansell-Pearson, “The Incorporation of Truth: Towards the Overhuman” in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, 238.

⁴⁵³ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 1, 2 (ending)).

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁵⁵ Z, III (The Wanderer).

⁴⁵⁶ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 180.

⁴⁵⁷ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 1).

into life, so deeply does it also see into suffering.”⁴⁵⁸ This statement leads into a serious conundrum.

If pitying is a deepest abyss, how comes it Zarathustra is charting the path to the abyss, too? Heidegger comments that as Zarathustra “climbs the depths themselves increase and the abyss first becomes an abyss—not because the climber plunges into it, but precisely because he is ascending.”⁴⁵⁹ It is highly probable that the abyss induced by pity is life-negating since it does not see the grounds of all things. Such an abyss is limited, since it has the same depth for life and for suffering. Instead, the life affirming abyss-like courage “even strikes death dead, for it says: ‘was *that* life? Well then! One more time!’”⁴⁶⁰ Instead the abyss through the morality of compassion entails pitying that one plunges into. But Zarathustra can rise no higher until he overcomes pity for humanity that still pulls him back to the depth.⁴⁶¹ The challenge, “Dwarf! You! or I!” is resolved in the second section of the Vision and Riddle.

Zarathustra is forthright: “I or you! But I am the stronger of us two for you do not know my abyss-deep thought! *That*—you would not be able to bear!”⁴⁶² If the dwarf and those like him think existence burdensome as it is, they are mistaken. Zarathustra’s abyss-deep thought is more tragic. Since this entails the thought that life as you now live it, and have lived, you will live once more and innumerable times more. Apparently with the knowledge that it cannot bear the deep-thought, the dwarf jumps down from Zarathustra’s shoulders. However, the jumping is with a proviso, “out of curiosity.” The curiosity of the dwarf is possibly founded on his mocking of Zarathustra’s attempt of anything new. The dwarf’s mockery of Zarathustra partly goes: “O Zarathustra, far indeed you threw the stone—but onto *you* will it come falling back!”⁴⁶³ Gianni Vattimo calls the dwarf’s mockery a “dwarf-like version of Eternal Recurrence.”⁴⁶⁴ The dwarf’s curiosity is perhaps to “wait and see another failed attempt.”

At the gateway of the Moment, the idea of the Eternal Recurrence begins to be theoretically discussed as follows:

⁴⁵⁸Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 1).

⁴⁵⁹ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 40.

⁴⁶⁰ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 1).

⁴⁶¹ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 181.

⁴⁶² Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁶³ Z, III, (On the Vision and Riddle, 1).

⁴⁶⁴ Gianni Vattimo, *Nietzsche, An Introduction*, trans. Nicholas Martin (California: The Athlone Press 2002), 112.

Behold this gateway, dwarf! I continued. It has two faces. Two ways come together here: nobody has ever taken them to the end.

This long lane back here: it goes on for eternity. And that long lane out there—that is another eternity.

They contradict themselves, these ways; they confront one another head on, and here, at this gateway, is where they come together. The name of the gateway is inscribed above it: ‘Moment.’

But whoever should walk farther on one of them—on and on, farther and farther: do you believe, dwarf, that these ways contradict themselves eternally?—

‘All that is straight lies’, murmured the dwarf contemptuously.

All truth is crooked; time itself is a circle.⁴⁶⁵

This text contains some of the complex concepts relevant to the interpretation of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. They include eternity, moment, and time. Zarathustra’s text above talks of lanes that go on for eternity. The contradiction is that eternity collapses into the moment. In the ordinary understanding, eternity implies endless duration or even timelessness. Nevertheless, Nietzsche seems to hold a different notion of eternity. The two ways must be related to time, given the reference to backward and forward. The dominant Western tradition that views eternity as the overcoming of time is challenged in the little phrase, “Nobody has ever taken them to the end.” Eternity in this regard implies no end. In the words of Stambaugh:

[F]or Nietzsche, eternity, the eternal return of the Same, meant ‘there is no end.’ To say there is no end is not the same as to say that the world is endless. What is endless never comes to an end, in the sense that it *endures* on and on without ever encountering anything to stop it.⁴⁶⁶

This interpretation apparently brings eternity and time into the one realm of becoming. This is a complex domain. The complexity, as Deleuze holds, is because becoming is not a moment of being. Instead, like the present moment, it “is the passing moment, forces [one] to think of becoming, but to think of it precisely as what could not have started, and cannot finish, becoming.”⁴⁶⁷ For Zarathustra eternity and time coalesce in the moment. The moment is described as the gateway where the two eternal ways come together. But that conflation must be within the understanding of the ‘Moment.’ This is a very complex notion in Nietzsche and goes beyond *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Hence, clarification is necessary.

⁴⁶⁵ Z, III, (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁶⁶ Stambaugh, *Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Return*, 3.

⁴⁶⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 48.

a. The moment in Nietzsche

There is an intimate link between the moment, human beings, and existence. It is within the moment that the action of life is accomplished. In the *Nachlass* 1883-1885, an entry on the single moment alleges,

If we affirm one single moment, we thus affirm not only ourselves but all existence. For nothing is self-sufficient, neither in us ourselves nor in things; and if our soul has trembled with happiness and sounded like a harp string just once, all eternity was needed to produce this one event—and in this single moment of affirmation all eternity was called good, redeemed, justified, and affirmed.⁴⁶⁸

David Wood envisages Nietzsche's conception of the moment as an intensity whereby the highest possibility of temporal existence is realized.⁴⁶⁹ Nietzsche makes specific reference to the "Moment" and the Eternal Recurrence: "The moment is immortal in which I produced return. For the sake of this moment I *bear* return."⁴⁷⁰ And then in *Twilight of Idols*, the artistic productions are realized in conditions where one enriches everything from one's own abundance.⁴⁷¹ It is a feeling of positive intoxication filled with plenitude and increased energy. In such a condition of fullness one can transform "things until they mirror his power—until they are reflections of his perfection."⁴⁷² In the case of the "Moment," its perfection is eternal return. And given its own abundance whatever ensues from it can envisage recurrence. Zarathustra, in his conversation with the dwarf, expected his arch-enemy to have grasped the notion of the "Moment" in such complexity.

The dwarf's response simply shows either he has not grasped anything or is simply contemptuous. However, from the discussions about time, eternity, and "Moment," nothing is directly said about the union of the two ways, the circularity of time. And in any case, the dwarf was ultimately asked what he believes. The question is, "[D]o you believe, dwarf, that these ways contradict themselves eternally?" The presentation as is so far given is obscure. As such the dwarf's response may have sincerely sprung from belief. The prevailing belief is that the Eternal Recurrence is a cosmological phenomenon that encompasses reality as such. From

⁴⁶⁸ *WP*, 1032.

⁴⁶⁹ Wood, "Nietzsche's Transvaluation of Time" In *Exceedingly Nietzsche*, 42.

⁴⁷⁰ *Nachlass*, XII: 371.

⁴⁷¹ *TI*, "Skirmishes," §9.

⁴⁷² *TI*, "Skirmishes," §9.

Zarathustra's reaction to the dwarf, simple cosmological belief of Eternal Recurrence is insufficient.

Eternal Recurrence understood only from the cosmological aspect is "too light and easy."⁴⁷³ For one to get the riddle right, the entry into the "gateway of the moment" seems paramount. Vattimo, reflecting on happenings in the riddle believes that "[w]hat is clear at least is that the 'cosmological' version of Eternal Recurrence ... is rejected, if not as false then as a too superficial view of things."⁴⁷⁴ Though what Vattimo says is largely plausible, it must be clarified that the dwarf's response contains more than the cosmological view of time. The statement that "all that is straight lies" is not a cosmological view, but an allusion to a linear conception of time which is discussed later in this chapter.

From the 1881 notes, without appropriation, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is perhaps ineffective. And during appropriation, the understanding of the notion of the "Moment" is pertinent. Hence, the primacy of the "Moment" is affirmed by further explanations and questions as follows:

Must not whatever among all things *can* walk have walked this lane already? Must not whatever among all things *can* happen have happened, and been done, and passed already?
And if everything has already been, what do you think, dwarf, of this moment? Must this getaway too not already—have been?
And are not all things knotted together so tightly that this moment draws after it all things that are to come? *Thus*— —itself as well?⁴⁷⁵

Most of the comments made above about the "Moment" can be adduced in favour of this text. However, the notion of a gateway needs clarification. Initially it is simply a "gateway," then "this gateway" where two ways (of time) come together. Gradually the gateway is inscribed with the name "Moment" and is referred to as "this gateway Moment." Eventually follows the statement: "Behold, I said, this moment! From this gateway 'Moment' a long eternal lane runs backward: behind us lies an eternity."⁴⁷⁶ One can discern a progression where Zarathustra is gradually implicated into the gateway, from being a bystander at the gateway to being part of the structure of the gateway "Moment."

⁴⁷³ Z, III, (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁷⁴ Vattimo, *Nietzsche, An Introduction*, 114.

⁴⁷⁵ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Interpreters like Rosen consider the gateway as the structure of time that applies to all human beings, including Zarathustra and the sailors.⁴⁷⁷ However, it must be added that time ought to be appropriated as a human condition for it to ultimately have a transformative influence. Stambaugh notes that time as becoming “is a direct contradiction of the idea of time as the principle of finitude, as Chronos who devours his own children, as time that inexorably rolls out of the future into the past, drawing everything along with it.”⁴⁷⁸ Nietzsche is concerned with time in relation to man as becoming. It is such notion of time that is tied to the notion of the “Moment.”

The “Moment” is described further in terms of “all things knotted together so tightly that this moment draws after it all things.”⁴⁷⁹ This knotting together of things sounds very much like the description of the nature of the “Moment.” The “Moment” so conceived is pure becoming as the foundation for any return. Deleuze explains something similar in relation to the present moment: “The synthetic relation to the moment to itself as present, past and future grounds its relation to other moments.”⁴⁸⁰ The moment is the basis of the entire doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. It is the moment that returns and draws after it all things.

With the assertion about the moment drawing all things in return, anthropological recurrence is also envisaged. Zarathustra reverts to existential expression in *The Gay Science*:

And this slow-moving spider, crawling in the moonlight, and this moonlight itself, and I and you in the getaway, whispering together, whispering of eternal things— must we not all have been here before?
—and must come again and walk in that other lane, out there, before us, in this long and dreadful lane—must we not eternally come back again?—⁴⁸¹

It seems there is transitioning from the gateway of the “Moment” to its effects. Based on the “Moment,” the recurrence of all things is made possible. The rhetorical question is, must “we” not eternally come back again? The dwarf’s prior response is reflected in this question. If it is a foregone case that everything recurs, the question remains as to why the initial response of the dwarf was rejected. The argument in support of Zarathustra’s version could be that they are responses made from different standpoints. Zarathustra’s stance is informed by the

⁴⁷⁷ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 184.

⁴⁷⁸ Stambaugh, *Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Return*, 4.

⁴⁷⁹ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁸⁰ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 48.

⁴⁸¹ Z, III (On the Vision and the Riddle, 2).

experience of the “gateway of the Moment.” But the dwarf’s projection emanates from a bystander’s viewpoint. Heidegger, on viewpoints between the dwarf and Zarathustra, argues, “The superiority consists in the fact that certain conditions of understanding have been brought into play, conditions the dwarf cannot satisfy—because he is a dwarf. These new conditions derive from the realization that the second question is based on the Moment.”⁴⁸² But the superiority of the new standpoint is grounded in the fact that the return goes down to the minutest detail. The new demand is founded on adopting one’s stance within the “Moment,” which is in time as perspectival.

From the ensuing arguments, it emerges that the contention is not about the adoption of Eternal Recurrence as a cosmological phenomenon. Instead the standpoint of whoever makes such an assertion must render some weight to the cosmological argument. The weight on the cosmological stance is that even if one affirms it as such, there is some bearing on life. As Rosen interprets Nietzsche, “From a cosmological standpoint, life is valueless until we impose an interpretation on it.”⁴⁸³ Through the gateway one moves into historical time. It is within time that he supposedly creates values instead of surrendering to fate. From Nietzsche’s schema, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is meant to be affirmed from the individual’s standpoint. Such an affirmation demands appropriation through experience of the “Moment.” This could inform the shift in focus to an individual’s deep involvement with the thought. The transition is introduced by Zarathustra’s statement: “Thus was I talking, and ever more softly: for I was afraid of my own thoughts and the [ulterior motives].”⁴⁸⁴ What follows is the symbolic and horrifying description of the appropriation of the thought of Eternal Recurrence and its eventualities.

b. The appropriation of the thought of Eternal Recurrence

The explanation of the vision reaches the climax when Zarathustra’s state is described as desolate. This is a reminder of the “loneliest loneliness.” The scene is described thus:

A young shepherd I saw, writhing, choking, convulsing, his face distorted, and a heavy black snake hanging out of his mouth.
Have I ever seen so much disgust—and pallid horror on one face?

⁴⁸² Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 43–44.

⁴⁸³ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 183.

⁴⁸⁴ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2). The “ulterior motives” translates *Hintergedanken*.

Had perhaps been asleep? Then the snake crawled into his throat and there it bit fast.

My hand tugged at the snake and tugged:—in vain! it could not tug the snake out of his throat. Then it cried out of me: ‘Bite off! Bite off!

‘Bite the head off! Bite it off!’—thus it cried out of me, my horror, my hate, my disgust, my compassion, all my good and bad cried out of me with a single cry.—

...

But the shepherd bit, as my cry had counselled him; he bit with a good bite! Far away he spat out the head of the snake—and then sprang up.

No longer shepherd, no longer human—one transformed, illumined, who *laughed!*

Never yet on earth had a human being laughed as *he* laughed!⁴⁸⁵

Zarathustra provides an exegetical key to most of the issues raised in this text in a later text titled “The Convalescent.” Hence, the two can be analysed together. For now, the focus will be on one point, the decision to bite. Biting the head of the snake is an act of the will undertaken only by the shepherd. Biting, like entering the gateway of the “Moment,” is an individual decision. For Vattimo, the image of the shepherd who bites off the snake’s head “ties the idea of Eternal Recurrence to a decision which man has to make and which is his only means of transforming himself.”⁴⁸⁶ T. B. Strong refers to the act of biting as transformative.⁴⁸⁷ On the other hand Rosen alleges that “Zarathustra is the instrument of persuasion, but only the shepherd can save himself by direct action.”⁴⁸⁸ Two issues must be delineated from the thinkers’ observations: (1) The act of the will as transformative, and (2) Zarathustra’s standpoint as the teacher of the Eternal Recurrence.

Zarathustra as the teacher of Eternal Recurrence seems an overriding idea, and thus will be examined first. The most potent means of incorporating the doctrine, according to the 1881 notes, is teaching it. However, there are also requisite qualifications for one to be a teacher. The major qualification is espousing a philosophy of indifference, but specifically aversion to the morality of compassion. Morality of compassion in the name of being the object of pity for Nietzsche is contra the realization of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. For Zarathustra, more than the terror induced by the thought of Eternal Recurrence, he must overcome the morality of compassion. Such an interpretation is consistent with the description of the contents of the cry from Zarathustra. In Zarathustra’s account he says: ‘it cried out of

⁴⁸⁵ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁴⁸⁶ Vattimo, *Nietzsche, An Introduction*, 114.

⁴⁸⁷ Tracy Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 264.

⁴⁸⁸ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 186.

me, my horror, my hate, my disgust, my compassion, all my good and bad cried out of me with a single cry.’ These elements represent inhibitors to appropriation of Eternal Recurrence. The dwarf embodies these elements. Hence Zarathustra’s standpoint as the teacher of Eternal Recurrence is akin to nature.⁴⁸⁹ The stance of nature basically entails no praising and no blaming. It is simply an extra-moral stance.

The act of the will as transformative is evidenced by the shepherd’s action. In general, Western philosophy applied the notion of the will to intentional actions. This is the trend that Nietzsche seeks to avoid by stating that the will is not a faculty but an emotion. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the will is called “the affect of the command.”⁴⁹⁰ The one who wills commands something inside him that obeys. As an emotion of command, Nietzsche considers the will “the decisive sign of sovereignty and strength.”⁴⁹¹ This may sound innovative, but Kant had viewed some aspects of the will in terms of command and sovereignty. Kant in *Religion within the limits of Reason* distinguishes between *der Wille* and *die Willkür*.⁴⁹² The work of *die Willkür* is to choose between the promptings of desire and the imperatives stemming from *der Wille*. In the words of J. B. Schneewind, the will as *der Wille* is identical with practical rationality.⁴⁹³ But in addition there is the power of choice. For Kant, it is the power of choice that one implies when speaking of freedom. The will itself is neither free nor unfree.⁴⁹⁴ It is this unintentional understanding of the will that Nietzsche apparently endorses. In this case, the will wills its own acts. Thus, the act of the will for Nietzsche always gives form, it creates, it transforms. This is the import of Magnus’s assertion that the will must be thought of “principally as form-giving.”⁴⁹⁵ The young shepherd can only transform himself through his own act of biting the snake’s head.

Thus, the action of the will is crucially important for the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. In the 1881 notes, one of the pertinent issues was the experience of Eternal Recurrence. In involving the act of the will, it implies Eternal Recurrence could ultimately be espoused as a

⁴⁸⁹ *HAH*, §34.

⁴⁹⁰ *BGE*, §19.

⁴⁹¹ *GS*, §347.

⁴⁹² Kant, *Religion within the limits of reason*, 6:21–26. *Der Wille* and *die Willkür* refers to the will as source of practical reason, action, and the power of choice (will as a faculty) respectively.

⁴⁹³ J. B. Schneewind, “Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue; An Overview of Kant’s moral philosophy” in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 330.

⁴⁹⁴ Schneewind, “Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue; An Overview of Kant’s moral philosophy” in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, 330.

⁴⁹⁵ Magnus, *Nietzsche’s Existential Imperative*, 24.

selective thought. Though the act of the will apparently explains the difference between the dwarf and the animals, and between Zarathustra and the young shepherd, it complicates the doctrine.

In “On the Vision and Riddle,” Zarathustra recounts the doctrine from without. The attempt to explain the doctrine from within is done in the section “The Convalescent.” The actors this time are the animals on the one hand and Zarathustra on the other. The setting is in the cave where Zarathustra retreated after the voyage:

Zarathustra sprang up from his pallet like a madman, screamed in a terrifying voice, and acted as if there were still someone lying on the pallet who would not get up ... Get up, abyss-deep thought, out of my depths! I am your cock and morning-dawning, you sleepy worm: up! up! My voice shall surely crow you awake! ... And once you are awake you shall stay awake eternally. ... Zarathustra, the Godless, summons you!
I, Zarathustra, the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering, the advocate of the circle—you I summon, my most abyss-deep thought!⁴⁹⁶

In this text, Zarathustra is sounding the wakeup call for the deep-thought of the Eternal Recurrence to manifest itself. Zarathustra refers to himself as the cock and morning-dawning for Eternal Recurrence. Different nuances are latent within this phrase. In the foreword of *Twilight of Idols*, Nietzsche alleges that part of his work is to: “*Sound out idol ... and pied piper like me, in the presence of whom precisely that which would like to stay silent has to become audible...*”⁴⁹⁷ The primary idea here is sounding out, which is like an auscultation exercise, while the secondary connection is the enticing element, as pied piper. Prima facie, one can submit that the thought of Eternal Recurrence is sounded out by Zarathustra from the heart of existence. The heart of existence properly envisaged is expressed in Zarathustra’s own three credentials as: “the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering and the advocate of the circle.”⁴⁹⁸ In one word, the three are the description of tragedy. In some form of self-referencing Nietzsche remarks,

[T]o realize in oneself the eternal joy of becoming—that joy which encompasses joy in destruction. ... *Birth of Tragedy* was my first revaluation of all values: with that I again plant myself in the soil out of which I draw all that I will and can—I,

⁴⁹⁶ Z, III, (The Convalescent, 1).

⁴⁹⁷ *TI*, Foreword.

⁴⁹⁸ Z, III (The Convalescent, 1).

the last disciple of the philosopher Dionysos—I, the teacher of the eternal recurrence. ...⁴⁹⁹

It is rather evident from this text that for Eternal Recurrence to be rightly thought, appropriation of the tragic nature of existence is inevitable. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether what Nietzsche claims about sounding out idols, enticing, and letting the silent become audible, here in the 1888 text, was ever achieved by Zarathustra in 1883. Nietzsche's thought of Eternal Recurrence may not have been simply a spectacular experience, as he claims in 1881. Instead, it must have been a consistent painstaking listening to existence over a period. This point is treated in an elaborate manner in the analysis section below.

Still more pertinent, Zarathustra was laying side by side with “someone who would not get up.” And this someone, once awake, stays so eternally. This other apparently is the thought of Eternal Recurrence. Heidegger observes, “The thought lies beside him in bed, has not yet become one with him, is not yet incorporated in him and hence is not yet something truly thought.”⁵⁰⁰ Hence, the objective of “The Convalescent” is for the thought of Eternal Recurrence to be manifested in all its fullness. Its moment of comprehension is of mixed reception: “my ultimate depth I have turned out into the light!” And then “let go!”⁵⁰¹ Though disgusting, it is also the turning moment for Zarathustra. Though the thought of the Eternal Recurrence is comprehended by Zarathustra, he is apparently overcome by it, and collapses. Shortly he regains awareness, but it is too fragile: “Thus he remained for seven days; but his animals did not leave him by day or night.”⁵⁰² Thereafter, the conversation begins, supposedly about Eternal Recurrence. It is supposedly because what turns up in the conversation is first a critique of the limitations of language and encounter with existence. The challenges of espousing Eternal Recurrence as simply a cosmological thought come to the fore when the thought is experienced. The new understanding is the result of appropriating the thought through the period of seven days. Zarathustra has a new understanding and sees the situation differently.⁵⁰³ The animals like the dwarf may not espouse a similar stance about existence.

⁴⁹⁹ *TI*, “Ancients,” §5.

⁵⁰⁰ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 50.

⁵⁰¹ *Z*, III (The Convalescent, 1).

⁵⁰² *Z*, III (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵⁰³ Bernd Magnus, Stanley Stewart, and Jean-Pierre Mileur, *Nietzsche's Case: Philosophy as/and Literature* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 153.

The animals in their enthusiasm attempt to convince Zarathustra to step out of the cave since the world awaits him like a garden. Zarathustra responds:

—O my animals, replied Zarathustra, do chatter on thus and let me listen to you! It is so refreshing to hear you chatter: where there is chatter, there the world does lie for me like a garden.

How lovely it is that there are words and tones: are words and tones not rainbows and seeming-bridges between what is eternally separated?

To every soul belongs another world; for every soul every other soul is a world behind.

Between just what is most similar does seeming deceive most beautifully: for the smallest cleft is the hardest to bridge.⁵⁰⁴

Zarathustra's first reply to the animals sounds simple but could be pertinent to the discourse at hand. The pertinence of this initial discourse is premised on the tendency to have overarching claims about reality. The tendency to universalize is seen in the animal's assertions that all things are yearning for you. Nietzsche's campaign against words and conceptual universalization goes back to the early writings. In *Truth and Falsehood in the Extra-Moral Sense* (1873) he writes that "a word becomes a concept insofar as it simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases—which means, purely and simply, cases which are never equal and thus altogether unequal. Every concept arises from the equation of unequal things."⁵⁰⁵ Nietzsche's contention is that concepts overlook the individual and the actual.⁵⁰⁶ Nature, too, is unacquainted with forms and concepts. Thus, for Nietzsche, the world in its actuality remains inaccessible and undefinable for us. The same point is developed in *Human All Too Human* where he claims that through concepts and names of things, man has appropriated to himself knowledge of the world.⁵⁰⁷ For Nietzsche, there is need for the realization that in language one is only giving things designations. This is the awareness Zarathustra seems to be demanding from his listeners as he convalesces. The words are thus referred to as sham bridges connecting what is eternally distinct. There is also a refutation of the world as a garden.

⁵⁰⁴ Z, III (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵⁰⁵ Nietzsche, "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im AusserMoralischen Sinn" in *SA dritter Band*, §1, 313; Lange, *Nietzsche Reader*, 117.

⁵⁰⁶ The actual here must be understood in conjunction with the notion of Actuality explained earlier under Heraclitus. The actual is ever becoming.

⁵⁰⁷ *HAA*, §11.

The garden in Nietzsche's work is a reference to Epicurus of Athens. In the middle period Nietzsche praises Epicurus's philosophy, especially for its *ataraxia*.⁵⁰⁸ However, later he is dissatisfied with Epicurus's philosophy. The reason stated in 1884–1886 note is apt in the present context of Eternal Recurrence:

I have presented such terrible images to knowledge that any "Epicurean delight" is out of the question. Only Dionysian joy is sufficient: *I have been the first to discover the tragic*. The Greeks, thanks to their moralistic superficiality, misunderstood it. Even resignation is *not* a lesson of tragedy, but a misunderstanding of it! Yearning for nothingness is a *denial* of tragic wisdom, its opposite!⁵⁰⁹

Epicurus's philosophy apparently lacks the main ingredient of the thought of Eternal Recurrence. It is considered as a flight from existence. Nietzsche is clearer on the dissociation from Epicurus in 1887: "Thus I gradually learned to understand Epicurus, the opposite of a Dionysian pessimist."⁵¹⁰ Epicurus lacks the sense of life as tragic. Heidegger is of the opinion that "Nietzsche's conception of the world does not provide the thinker with a sedate residence in which he can putter about unperturbed, like the philosopher of old, Epicurus."⁵¹¹ Zarathustra's warning that, with imposing words and concepts, human beings dance over all things is a fair observation.

Nevertheless, the role of concepts as a way of relating to reality must be recognized. In the words of Graham Parkes, concepts "enable the mind to get a grip on at least some aspects of the world by excluding what they don't grasp, through a logic of negation and opposition."⁵¹² The animals' approach to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is superficial. The animals are determined in their overriding understanding of the world. They proclaim Eternal Recurrence as a cosmological phenomenon in their remarks:

[F]or those who think as we do all things are already dancing: they come and shake hands and laugh and flee—and come back again.
Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally is built the same house of Being. Everything separates, everything greets itself again; eternally true to itself remains the ring of Being.

⁵⁰⁸ *D* §505; *GS* §45, §306.

⁵⁰⁹ *WP*, 1029.

⁵¹⁰ *GS*, §357.

⁵¹¹ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 52. This observation is largely apt flowing from the Nietzsche of the late period (1884–1888).

⁵¹² Graham Parkes, "Introduction" to *Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, XVII.

In every now Being begins; around every here rolls the ball of there. The centre is everywhere. Crooked is the path of eternity.⁵¹³

The ground for animals' thinking is embodied in the statement: for those who think as we do. In the words of Löwith, the animals bear the idea of Eternal Recurrence that "corresponds to their nature."⁵¹⁴ The animals themselves are natural and periodic living beings. They are implicated in the eternal flow of things without necessarily appropriating those changes. Zarathustra's reply to the animals reveals perspectival demands of the thought:

How well you know what had to be fulfilled in seven days: and how that monster crawled into my throat and choked me! But I bit its head off and spat it forth from me. And you—have you simply made a hurdy-gurdy song of it all? But now I lie here, still weary from this biting and spitting out, still sick from my own redemption. And you simply watched all this? O my animals, are you too cruel?⁵¹⁵

This explanation is supposed to respond to the last questions in "On the Vision and the Riddle": "What did I see then in the parable? And who is it that must come some day? Who is the shepherd into whose throat the snake thus crawled? Who is the man into whose throat all that is heaviest and blackest will crawl?"⁵¹⁶ In all fairness the above purported response applies only to one of these questions, about the shepherd. And if the full import about transformation in the vision and riddle is taken on board, the implications apparently go beyond the initial figure of Zarathustra.

The end of the first part of *Zarathustra* reads, "*Dead are all Gods: now we want the [Übermensch] to live* –may this be at the Great Midday our ultimate will!"⁵¹⁷ If *Zarathustra* was meant to proclaim the possibility of the type *Übermensch* through teaching the Eternal Recurrence in claiming for himself the transformation of the shepherd, does he become an *Übermensch* himself? It is possible to have a working response to some of these questions. It is generally underscored that the approach to *Zarathustra* as a text is supposed to be within an imagined life with a play on images. Thus, what is needed is the participation in the images that engage the whole psyche rather than the intellect alone.⁵¹⁸ The participation in the

⁵¹³ Z, III, (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵¹⁴ Löwith, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, 73.

⁵¹⁵ Z, III, (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵¹⁶ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁵¹⁷ Z, I (On the Bestowing of Virtue, 3).

⁵¹⁸ Parkes, "Introduction" *Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, XVII.

transformative demands of the thought of Eternal Recurrence is apparently what sets Zarathustra apart from the animals. Müller-Lauter captures the mood when he notes that, although Zarathustra likes to listen to the chatter of the animals, “he knows they do not do justice to the thought. The animals do not understand its deep seriousness; they do not know the pains with which the assimilation of the doctrine of eternal recurrence must come about.”⁵¹⁹ The fact of the animals not knowing is like the dwarf’s situation. The animals make the doctrine a simple instrument as “a hurdy-gurdy song.” The dwarf made it too light and easy for himself. If the animals and the dwarf do not do justice to the thought of Eternal Recurrence, then why does Zarathustra call himself the advocate of the circle?

There is a discernible difference between Zarathustra’s assertions about the advocate of the circle, and the animals’ and dwarf’s claims about the same. The source of Zarathustra’s claim is the sickly biting and spitting out that is redemptive. On the other hand, the animals were simply by-standers. Zarathustra seems to challenge their knowledge: “How well you know what had to be fulfilled in seven days.”⁵²⁰ The implication is that unless you have experienced it, your claim to knowledge is still rudimentary. The animals’ and the dwarf’s knowledge of existence is not deep enough. Heidegger refers to the animals’ knowing as “their knowing is not knowledge.”⁵²¹ The knowledge about the Eternal Recurrence may not be a given, it demands going to the grounds of all things and their backgrounds. Without going to the depth of things, what Nietzsche says in *On the Genealogy of Morals* applies: “being knowers who are unknown to ourselves.”⁵²² Lacking deeper knowledge about existence, one may not have difficulty with Eternal Recurrence as a given phenomenon. In approaching Eternal Recurrence as a given, one remains a spectator.

The animals’ knowledge of the Eternal Recurrence is from an observer’s viewpoint. For Müller-Lauter, the thought of Eternal Recurrence is understood only “superficially whenever it takes on the character of a generally valid statement.”⁵²³ The thought becomes essential and pertinent when viewed not from outside but assimilated. However, the affirmation of Eternal Recurrence with the animals and Zarathustra as advocate of the circle is

⁵¹⁹ Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche, His Philosophy of Contradiction and the Contradictions of his Philosophy*, 102.

⁵²⁰ Z, III (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵²¹ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 54.

⁵²² *GM*, Preface, §1.

⁵²³ Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche, His Philosophy of Contradiction and the Contradictions of his Philosophy*, 103.

distinct in the consequences of such knowing. Assimilation of the thought of Eternal Recurrence assists Zarathustra to understand the meaninglessness of existence if only cosmological recurrence is espoused. The consequences of Eternal Recurrence simply envisaged as cosmological are thus stated:

The great loathing for the human being—that is what choked me and had crawled into my throat; and what the soothsayer foretold: All is the same, nothing is worthwhile, knowing chokes. ...

Eternally it returns, the human being you are so weary of, the small human being thus—yawned my mournfulness and dragged its feet and could not go to sleep. ... —Ah, the human being returns eternally! The small human being returns eternally!—

All-too-small the greatest!—That was my loathing for the human! And eternal recurrence even of the smallest! That was my loathing for all existence!⁵²⁴

This text attempts to show the nihilistic tendencies within the conception of Eternal Recurrence from the cosmological aspect. Yet this account is impossible outside of the subjective individual appropriation of the thought of Eternal Recurrence. The appropriated knowledge of Eternal Recurrence seems to open a Pandora's box. As Magnus et al hold, "all his knowledge and acumen has led Zarathustra to this choking sense of appalling sameness."⁵²⁵ If Eternal Recurrence is maintained on the cosmological scale alone, then human striving is pointless.

Nietzsche's concern is how existence can be beaten at its own game. Eternal Recurrence at the cosmological level as the animals and dwarf project it, fails the test of tragic nature of existence. Maintaining Eternal Recurrence simply at the cosmological level promotes resignation to a life where its diminutive characters are still promoted, instead of being overcome. If everything turns in a circle, Heidegger, interpreting Nietzsche, argues, then "nothing is worth the trouble; so that the result of the teaching is disgust and ultimately negation of life."⁵²⁶ With the Eternal Recurrence as cosmological Zarathustra opines that human beings dance over things. Dancing over could imply failure to grasp the existential depth of life as a tragedy. As Otto Manthey-Zorn alleges, life for Nietzsche does not merely want to preserve itself; rather, life wants to be thoroughly itself as the will to power that is constantly striven for through uncovering misinterpretations and misdirection of some powers

⁵²⁴ Z, III (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵²⁵ Magnus et. al, *Nietzsche's Case*, 152.

⁵²⁶ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 55.

of life.⁵²⁷ For Nietzsche, misinterpretations and misdirection influence the society and its institutions. But even to discover the failure of Eternal Recurrence on the cosmological level, the appropriation of the same is inevitable.

The assimilation of the Eternal Recurrence requires Zarathustra's wisdom that recognizes that "the smallest cleft is the hardest to bridge."⁵²⁸ Between Eternal Recurrence as affirmed by Zarathustra and testified to by the animals lies the need for involvement in existence as tragic. That is the knowledge that suffocates. Heidegger observes that such knowledge is what "marks the essential and altogether unbridgeable difference between the usual kinds of spectation and cognition, on one hand, and proper knowing on the other."⁵²⁹ In Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, the "Moment" is the focal point of striving.

One final text from part three of *Zarathustra* is from the "The Seven Seals." The importance of this text is its seeming affinity with the young Nietzsche. About eternity Zarathustra says, "Oh how should I not lust after Eternity and after the nuptial ring of all rings the ring of recurrence!"⁵³⁰ Then in the 1863 entry on '*Mein Leben*,' Nietzsche wrote: "As a plant I was born close to God's green acres/cemetery, as a human being in a pastor's house." And then, it ends with the following words: "And so the human being outgrows everything that once surrounded him. He does not need to break the fetters; unexpectedly, when a god beckons, they fall away. And where is the ring that ultimately encircles him? Is it the world? Is it God?"⁵³¹ It is not easy to figure out what Nietzsche meant. The attempt to answer Nietzsche's question can be the discourse on the question of the moment. But the fact that Nietzsche, as early as 1863, raised a question about recurrence at the anthropological level could justify the observation that the 1881 incidence is a culmination of a long project.

⁵²⁷ Otto Manthey-Zorn, *Dionysus: The Tragedy of Nietzsche*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1956), 108.

⁵²⁸ Z, III, (The Convalescent, 2).

⁵²⁹ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 55.

⁵³⁰ Z, III (The Seven Seals). The statement appears in all the sections. The difference is that in section one, it is not a question but an exclaimed statement. In the rest of the sections it is put as a question.

⁵³¹ Nietzsche, "Mein Leben (Aus dem Jahre 1863)" in *Autobiographisches Aus den Jahren 1856–1869*, SA *Dritter Band*, 107–110. The text here is reproduced from Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 9–10.

3.3.4 Eternal Recurrence: in *Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886

Beyond Good and Evil's subtitle, 'Prelude to a Philosophy of the future,' bears some links with the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. In several note entries of Summer-Autumn 1884 and April-June of 1885 there are various references to Eternal Recurrence.⁵³² In addition, in a letter to a friend about *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche notes: "Please read this book (even though it says the same things as my *Zarathustra*—only in a way that is different very—different)."⁵³³ The work has nine main parts and the reference to the Eternal Recurrence is under part three 'The Religious Nature.' The aphorism for examination reads:

Anyone like me, who has tried for a long time and with some enigmatic desire, to think pessimism through to its depths and to deliver it from the half-Christian, half-German narrowness and naiveté with which it has finally presented itself to this century, namely in the form of the Schopenhauerian philosophy; anyone who has ever really looked with an Asiatic and supra-Asiatic eye into and down at the most world-negating of all possible ways of thinking – beyond good and evil, and no longer, like Schopenhauer and the Buddha, under the spell and delusion of morality –; anyone who has done these things (and perhaps precisely *by* doing these things) will have inadvertently opened his eyes to the inverse ideal: to the ideal of the most high-spirited, vital, world-affirming individual, who has learned not just to accept and go along with what was and what is, but who wants it again *just as it was and is* through all eternity, insatiably shouting *da capo* not just to himself but to the whole play and performance, and not just to a performance, but rather, fundamentally, to the one who needs precisely this performance – and makes it necessary: because again and again he needs himself – and makes himself necessary. – – What? And that wouldn't be – *circulus vitiosus deus*?⁵³⁴

This is a very dense text and contains the main contours of *Beyond Good and Evil*. From a syntactical perspective the text is a single compound sentence. Kaufmann gives this text among others in *Beyond Good and Evil* as the principal passages for understanding the title of the work.⁵³⁵ Laurence Lampert opines that "Given its placement and theme" is one of the most important in the book.⁵³⁶ For Heidegger, the fact that the entire passage is constructed as a

⁵³² KSA, 11: 26[325]. Translated as *Beyond Good and Evil*, Preface to philosophy of eternal return. *Wiederkunft* according to Stambaugh refers to return which could be anything, including a person that goes back to where it was. Stambaugh, *Nietzsche's Thought of Eternal Return*, 29–31. Notebook entries: KSA 11: 27[58]. Other entries are in KSA 11: 27[80]; 29[40] and 34[191].

⁵³³ "Letter to Jakob Burckhardt, September 22, 1886" in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed./trans. Christopher Middleton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), 255.

⁵³⁴ *BGE*, §56.

⁵³⁵ They include aphorisms, 2, 4, 32, 33, 153, 164, 202 and 212 among others. In the attempt to understand the current text aphorisms 2, 32, 153, 164 and 202 are perhaps more pertinent.

⁵³⁶ Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's task: an interpretation of Beyond good and evil*, 116.

single sentence, its articulated divisions reflect linguistically the structure of an essential thought.⁵³⁷ Beyond its syntax and placement in the book, its relevance must be thematically analysed.

Nietzsche envisages the period after *Zarathustra* as one of revaluation of previous values. The theme of *Beyond Good and Evil* is envisaged as “in all essentials a *critique of modernity*.”⁵³⁸ The work’s subtitle’s term “prelude” points to the philosophers of the future as affirmers of Eternal Recurrence. The philosophy that preludes the future is founded on the unintentional. The unintentional implies a philosophy based on actions. In the philosophy that privileges action, the dichotomy between the doer and the deed is generally excluded. The Eternal Recurrence operates within the unintentional domain that Nietzsche calls extra-moral, described in *Beyond Good and Evil* as “the inverse ideal.”⁵³⁹ It is the inverse to life-negating approaches prevalent for Nietzsche in traditional metaphysical approaches. In this regard the thought of Eternal Recurrence for Nietzsche entails “the most high-spirited, vital, world-affirming individual, who has learned not just to accept and go along with what was and what is, but who wants it again just as it was and is through all eternity.”⁵⁴⁰

However, it should not be construed at all that the experience of the thought of Eternal Recurrence is a given. The entry in *Beyond Good and Evil* on Eternal Recurrence entails a two-fold process. The first process is thinking through pessimism to its depths without succumbing to any form of resignation. Nietzsche gives two forms of resignation Buddhist and Schopenhauerian which he calls “spell and illusion of morality.”⁵⁴¹ The thinking through pessimism gives birth to a situation beyond good and evil, which can be rendered as a transitional state of becoming. Nietzsche holds by the act of thinking through pessimism, which is tragedy, one may affirm life. Now this is problematic. Lampert observes, “Whoever pursues the experiences described in the first half of the sentence ‘may perhaps’ undergo the experience described in the second.”⁵⁴² The first part of the sentence is the pessimism towards the spell and illusion of morality. And the experiences in the second refer to those accruing from the appropriation of the Eternal Recurrence at the individual level.

⁵³⁷ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 65.

⁵³⁸ *EH*, “BGE,” §2.

⁵³⁹ *BGE*, §56.

⁵⁴⁰ *BGE*, §56.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid*.

⁵⁴² Lampert, *Nietzsche’s task: an interpretation of Beyond good and evil*, 116.

In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, one characteristic for which Nietzsche calls for cultivation is steadfastness.⁵⁴³ The steadfastness demands one to be a helmsman and a taskmaster of tragic existence. Manthey-Zorn understands steadfastness in terms of discipline, training, and education.⁵⁴⁴ Hence, Nietzsche's response to how one can experience the Eternal Recurrence is by endeavouring to think pessimism through to the bottom.⁵⁴⁵ Pessimism ordinarily sounds negative but what he means is possibly consistence in the evaluation of one's life. Such pessimism in *Schopenhauer as Educator* involves self-interrogation: "Do you affirm this existence in the depths of your heart? Is it sufficient for you? Would you be its advocate, its redeemer? For you have only to pronounce a single heartfelt Yes!—And life, though it faces such heavy accusations, shall go free."⁵⁴⁶ Then, in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, in response to Zarathustra's question in "On the Vision and Riddle" posed to the Voyagers (Who is it that must yet come some day?), Nietzsche responds, "Antichrist and anti-nihilist, this conqueror of God and of nothingness—he must come one day ..."⁵⁴⁷ This is an allusion to the philosophers of the future.

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche is clearer that his brand of pessimism is against a "conceptual understanding of existence" and against the desire for preservation.⁵⁴⁸ Instead, he seeks to promote the desire for destruction and becoming as an expression of an overflowing energy pregnant with the future. This is Nietzsche's implication of the 'Dionysian.' The overflowing energy associated with destruction and change entails the pessimism of the future, which he calls Dionysian pessimism. Such pessimism is Nietzsche's guarantor for experience of the thought of Eternal Recurrence.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the text on Eternal Recurrence ends with a question about a god: "And would this not be *circulus vitiosus deus*?"⁵⁴⁹ There are several acceptable translations: God as a vicious circle; a vicious circle as God; or a vicious circle made god.⁵⁵⁰ In Eternal Recurrence, is Nietzsche creating room for the affirmation of life through another

⁵⁴³ *SE*, §2.

⁵⁴⁴ Manthey-Zorn, *Dionysus: The Tragedy of Nietzsche*, 113.

⁵⁴⁵ *BGE*, §56.

⁵⁴⁶ *SE*, §3.

⁵⁴⁷ *GM*, II, §§ 24, 25.

⁵⁴⁸ *GS*, §370. It means existence as an abstraction.

⁵⁴⁹ *BGE*, §56.

⁵⁵⁰ Refer to Kaufmann's notes in *Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil a Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), §56. And Hollingdale, "Commentary" in *Friedrich Nietzsche Beyond Good and Evil Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 229.

God? Nevertheless, even before one attempts to answer this question there must be some clarity about the God he seeks to conquer. In the declaration of the death of God, Nietzsche claimed, “*We have killed him—you and I. All of us are his murderers.*”⁵⁵¹ Later, perhaps as an explanation of the expression, “God is dead,” he notes that “the belief in the Christian God has become unbelievable.”⁵⁵² How did we kill God and how did the belief in the Christian God become untenable? The answer to these questions could also explain why God is dead for Nietzsche. Heidegger believes that “[t]he God who is viewed in terms of morality, this God alone is meant when Nietzsche says, God is dead.”⁵⁵³ This could be consistent with the reflections above on pessimism. That over-abstraction seemingly contributed to the estrangement of God from concrete human lives. The death of the Christian God apparently allows for a different basis for valuing.

Nietzsche himself in *The Gay Science* asks, “Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?”⁵⁵⁴ However, Eternal Recurrence as a selective ethical process may not accommodate a thinking towards a single ideal. More pertinently the interpretation of the thought of Eternal Recurrence in *Beyond Good and Evil* entails aspects of individual life. Nehamas offers an elaborate commentary on Eternal Recurrence as is projected in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

The thought is this, Every single aspect of an individual life is equally essential to that life being what it is; also, since Nietzsche believes that everything in the world consists simply of its interconnections to everything else, every single aspect of the world is equally essential to that life being what it is. To want, therefore, even a single moment of one’s life to recur is to want the whole world, exactly as it has been, to recur again.⁵⁵⁵

The experience of the Eternal Recurrence in this case is a demand for accountability in everything. For Nietzsche, given the interconnections everything influences positively or negatively the development of one’s singular individuality. Nietzsche already in *Schopenhauer as Educator* envisages such a scenario as the prerequisite for social involvement.⁵⁵⁶ There is a

⁵⁵¹ *GS*, §125.

⁵⁵² *GS*, §343.

⁵⁵³ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 66.

⁵⁵⁴ *GS*, §125.

⁵⁵⁵ Nehamas, “A Reading of Beyond Good and Evil” in *Reading Nietzsche*, 61.

⁵⁵⁶ I will not engage with this topic here. It will be taken up in the last chapter on Individual *autopoiesis* and *Cosmopoiesis*. Refer *SE*, §6.

way in which through Eternal Recurrence some human beings can experience the life of the gods. Living the single aspects (moments) of the individual's life could entail such experience.

The Eternal Recurrence as projected in *Beyond Good and Evil* is not only anthropological, but also ethical and upon it develops the need for *Cosmopoeisis*. This is because Eternal Recurrence in *Beyond Good and Evil* is the assurance for the need of the world-affirming individual.

From the examinations of the 1881 notes, *The Gay Science*, texts from *Zarathustra* and the single text from *Beyond Good and Good and Evil*, the centrality of the Eternal Recurrence in Nietzsche's corpus is undoubtable. In some of the above texts Nietzsche acknowledges its cosmological validity. However, it is also very clear that he is more interested in its individual appropriation as an existential ethical demand. In the ending of *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche talks of not getting "tired of 'perfecting' ourselves in *our* virtue."⁵⁵⁷ For Nietzsche, "[a] virtue has to be *our* invention, our most personal defence and necessity: in any other sense it is merely a danger. What does not condition our life *harms* it."⁵⁵⁸ This particularly applies to the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. If it is left simply on the cosmological level without striving for its appropriation, one may not escape the question of meaninglessness of life. The onus now is to seek Nietzsche's interpretation of Eternal Recurrence as a selective ethical project and its impact on the project of individual *autopoiesis* and *cosmopoiesis*. The Eternal Recurrence is meant to be a 'great cultivating idea' and in that case it must first be appropriated in the individual and then eventually influence a new humanity.

3.4 The Eternal Recurrence: The Formula of Affirmation

The emphasis will be on ascertaining the extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch* and its role, if any, in individual *autopoiesis*.⁵⁵⁹ Nietzsche scholars who interpret Eternal Recurrence as an existential selective imperative are also in favour of its practical ethical implications. When the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is understood as a practical attraction to the form of life of the type *Übermensch*, it becomes pertinent to the project of producing

⁵⁵⁷ *BGE*, §227.

⁵⁵⁸ *AC*, §11.

⁵⁵⁹ Extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch* refers to the unintentional operations of this type which includes form-giving. The basic feature of the extra-moral life is the privileging of the action/act as opposed to the actor. Make recourse to *BGE*, §32.

and sustaining singular individuality. I start by analysing the conditions surrounding Nietzsche's own conception of the doctrine and, thereafter, flesh out the envisaged consequences regarding the type *Übermensch* as the affirmer of the Eternal Recurrence.

In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche associates the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence with the affirmation of transience and destruction. He remarks, "[T]he decisive feature of any Dionysian philosophy, saying 'yes' to opposition and war, *becoming*, with a radical rejection of even the concept of 'being'—in this I must in any event acknowledge ideas that are more closely related to mine than any that have hitherto been thought."⁵⁶⁰ The overriding realm of the doctrine from Nietzsche's wording is the ontology of becoming, which is Dionysian in scope.⁵⁶¹ Nietzsche further notes, "We have uncovered a manifold one-after-another where the naïve man and inquirer of older cultures saw only two separate things. 'Cause' and 'effect' is what one says; but we have merely perfected the image of becoming without reaching beyond the image or behind it."⁵⁶² As a continuum, becoming is what characterizes reality. Becoming rules out any doer behind the doing since what is basic in becoming is simply the activity.⁵⁶³ It is in this Heraclitean view of actuality as becoming that the rejection of being must be understood in the above text.

Hence, germane to the interpretation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is Nietzsche's insistence on becoming. Nietzsche talks of Eternal Recurrence and infinitely repeated circulation of all things.⁵⁶⁴ Though Nietzsche recognizes the fact of Eternal Recurrence as it was first envisaged in Greek thought, he also demands the overcoming of the Greeks.⁵⁶⁵ Nietzsche's concern is with the effect of the human conception of Eternal Recurrence on practical human life. This means it is about the quality of life. The expert stance is that Nietzsche is more concerned with *ewigen Wiederkunft* and not the infinite.⁵⁶⁶ Eternity is closely related to the quality of time as indeterminable, while the infinite is more of a mathematical notion and thus a quantitative aspect of things. Infinite is a spatial term, not

⁵⁶⁰ *EH*, "BT" §3.

⁵⁶¹ The Dionysian here is a euphemism for the type *Übermensch*.

⁵⁶² *GS*, §112.

⁵⁶³ Richardson, "Nietzsche on Time and Becoming," 211.

⁵⁶⁴ *EH*, "BT" §3.

⁵⁶⁵ *GS*, §340.

⁵⁶⁶ Refer to Stambaugh, *Nietzsche's thought of Eternal Return*, 29–31 and Keith Ansell-Pearson, "The Eternal Return of the Overhuman: The Weightiest Knowledge and the Abyss of Light" in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 30, Autumn 2005: 1-21.

temporal per se. Nietzsche is touched more by the indeterminateness of time, and how it affects practical living. If one stresses the infinite, the like-hood is the interpretation of Eternal Recurrence in terms of time as cyclical. The demand to overcome the Greeks is partly about overcoming the cyclical conception of time.

In *Ecce Homo* again, on *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is given primacy of place as the “highest attainable formula of affirmation—belongs to the August of 1881.”⁵⁶⁷ The prerequisite disposition he claims for this thought is the “art of listening.” In a letter to Peter Gast of August 14, 1881 Nietzsche recounts his existential nuances attributed to Eternal Recurrence as follows:

Thoughts have loomed upon my horizon the like of which I have not known before—I shall not divulge anything about them, but shall remain imperturbably calm. ... Ah, my friend, sometimes I have a feeling that I am leading a most dangerous life, for I belong to the kind of machine that can fly to pieces. The intensity of my feelings makes me shudder and laugh—once or twice already I have been unable to leave my room for the absurd reason that my eyes were inflamed—by what? On each occasion I had wept too much on my wanderings the day before—and not sentimental tears by any means, but tears of joy and exaltation.⁵⁶⁸

Though, Nietzsche does not immediately divulge the nature of the thought, it is apparent that the thought had affected him. It is fitting to concentrate on the preconditions under which the thought ‘came to’ Nietzsche through what he calls the “art of listening.”

The “art of listening” is a mark of Nietzsche’s philological training. Nietzsche generally understood philology as the art of correct reading. Nietzsche recommends slow reading, not only of the texts, but more importantly of life. In Philology not all interpretations carry the same weight. For Nietzsche, there are two types of philologists:

You must forgive an old philologist like me who cannot help maliciously putting his finger on bad tricks of interpretation: but this ‘conformity of nature to law,’ which you physicists are so proud of, just as if—exists only because of your interpretation and bad ‘philology.’ It is not a matter of fact, not a ‘text,’ but instead only a naive humanitarian correction and a distortion of meaning. ...⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ *EH*, “Z” §1.

⁵⁶⁸ Ludovici, “Nietzsche to Peter Gast. Sils-Maria, August 14, 1881” in *Friedrich Nietzsche, Selected Letters*, 136–137.

⁵⁶⁹ *BGE*, §22.

This is the case of bad philology where conceptual schemes are imposed on reality.⁵⁷⁰ As such bad philology yields wrong interpretations. For Eric Blondel, the falsifying interpretation is an equivalent to an absolute lack of intellectual honesty.⁵⁷¹ Such an interpretation is against the very art of philology, since it falsifies. The alternative to the falsifying interpretation is described by Nietzsche as follows:

This sort of interpreter would show the unequivocal and unconditional nature of all ‘will to power’ so vividly and graphically that almost every word, and even the word ‘tyranny,’ would ultimately seem useless or like weakening and mollifying metaphors—and too humanizing. Yet this interpreter might nevertheless end up claiming the same thing about this world as you, namely that it follows a ‘necessary’ and ‘calculable’ course, although *not* because laws are dominant in it, but rather because laws are totally *absent*, and every power draws its final consequences at every moment.⁵⁷²

For Nietzsche, this second engagement with the ‘text’ of nature seeks to decipher facts without falsifying them. This engagement lets reality express itself as the will to power, which is the highest possible affirmation of reality. In this regard, the “art of listening” entails letting life as will to power express itself. This entails encountering life on its own terms as tragic.

The thought of Eternal Recurrence “comes” in the sense that existence in its own innermost terms as tragic is manifested in Nietzsche’s own life. Based on good philology, it is plausible to claim that the appropriate condition for singular individuality is the interpretation of life as will to power. The thought of Eternal Recurrence is meant to lead to such an interpretation of life, with solitude as its prerequisite.

Solitude and hearing are at the heart of encountering existence as will to power. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, solitude is presented as the gift that humankind accords to the one who is in the process of encountering the core of his being through singular individuality. Solitude though it entails vulnerability, is for Nietzsche the favourite and supreme condition for maximizing one’s critical powers. Solitude is about the contemplation of life and not its renunciation. Denial of life for Nietzsche “has nothing in common with the solitude of the *vita contemplativa* of the thinker” that chooses life in its entirety.⁵⁷³ The practical life that does not ensue from solitude leads to renunciation that ultimately is never enhanced since it lacks the

⁵⁷⁰ Entails conforming nature to a law.

⁵⁷¹ Eric Blondel, *Nietzsche: The Body and Culture*, trans, Seán Hand (London: Athlone Press, 1991), 94.

⁵⁷² *BGE*, §22.

⁵⁷³ *D*, §440.

source. Through solitude, one isolates oneself from the common opinion to encounter and bring to the surface one's own deepest instinctive wisdom.⁵⁷⁴ It is notable that it is in the loneliest and in the most terrifying moments that the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is painstakingly brought to the fore in *The Gay Science* and *Zarathustra* respectively.

The Eternal Recurrence as the formula of affirmation enables one, through the type *Übermensch*, to have a glimpse into the heart of existence as will to power. The possible conditions for the reception of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence are now established.⁵⁷⁵ In the art of listening, the starting point is *what there is*: ontology. In listening one recognizes this ontology that disrupts all projects of identification or conceptual schemes. The credibility of Eternal Recurrence, owing to the conditions in which it came to Nietzsche, is grounded in the attitude(s) that it elicits in those who may be possessed by this thought.

One of the compelling consequences of good philology is giving voice to that ontology that comes with its differences without falsification. In Deleuzian thought, one of the tasks proper to philosophy is to speak of what there is, and this involves voicing differences.⁵⁷⁶ The work of voicing and promoting differences seems to be inherent in the type *Übermensch*. Nietzsche refers to the Eternal Recurrence either as a formula or a doctrine. This could be a pointer to its interpretation. Generally, a doctrine articulates an insight whose value to the future of one's conduct of life depends on the ability to bring certain aspects of life into manageable focus.⁵⁷⁷ This means that part of the response to the doctrine is the need for espousing some constraints at the individual level. Ultimately, this is the life of the type *Übermensch*, to affirm and create possibilities for differences as the ground for enhancing singular individuality. How the Eternal Recurrence performs such a heuristic role is through a different notion of time and the ensuing practical implications.

⁵⁷⁴ Loeb, "Identity and Eternal Recurrence," 176; Z, III, (The Return Home).

⁵⁷⁵ The conditions here are governed by the art of listening that involves solitude as reception of essence of life as the will to power.

⁵⁷⁶ May Todd, *Gilles Deleuze, an Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21.

⁵⁷⁷ Higgins, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, 193.

3.4.1 Eternal Recurrence: Orientation on Time and the Will

The rationale of this section is premised on the understanding that the life of the type *Übermensch* affirms the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. As it is shown in the 1881 notes and reaffirmed in *Zarathustra*, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is more than normative. As a heuristic formula, anyone affected by Eternal Recurrence develops some practical imperative commensurate to his existential level. I will show the impact of Eternal Recurrence on human attitudes about time and the implications on the will. The underlying claim is that thinking differently can lead to acting differently.

The doctrine of Eternal Recurrence given in *Zarathustra* provides the main themes for understanding the life of the type *Übermensch* in the extra-moral sense. Experimentalism is the broader context of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. A life of experimentation is provisional, and with it, one must learn how to value this world, and its transience.⁵⁷⁸ It is difficult for any human being to affirm transience through and through. Hence, only the type *Übermensch*, as the mark of the ontology of becoming, can suitably account for Eternal Recurrence as the formula of affirmation. Nietzsche believes that in appropriating the Eternal Recurrence the human individual can live the life of the *Übermensch*.

The parameter of embodying the life of the *Übermensch* is manifested in the conversation between Zarathustra and the dwarf.⁵⁷⁹ Zarathustra justifies his strength thus: “But I am the stronger of us two—you do not know my abysmal thought! *That*—you could not bear!”⁵⁸⁰ In Chapter Two, the abyss is identified with the will to power as the heart of existence. However, it is one thing to know about the essential constitution of reality as becoming, but completely another to bear it. It is the capacity to affirm the transience of reality that ultimately makes the difference in shaping the direction of life. The dwarf, the lame, and the laming represent the worldviews that generally valorise disinterested valuation. “Disinterested” here refers to the unconditional or impersonal approaches to valuation. It is the opposite of perspectival or conditional approaches. The Eternal Recurrence among other themes entails the type of temporality that Nietzsche valorises.

⁵⁷⁸ Aaron Ridley, “Nietzsche’s Greatest Weight” in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Eternal recurrence, no. 14 (1997), 20.

⁵⁷⁹ Z, III (on the Vision and riddle, 1).

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

a. Nietzsche on temporality

Two things work against Nietzsche's unintentional morality of the type *Übermensch*: conception of time and the morality of *pity*. The thought about time influences the moral orientation of one's life. Thought is here understood in Heideggerian terms as "the most intrinsic of inner forces."⁵⁸¹ In this section I engage with Zarathustra's passage on the "Moment" as an attitude towards temporality and its effects on singular individuality. It is instructive from the *Zarathustra* text that, only after overcoming the weight of the dwarf, that both reach a gateway of the moment which foreshadows the totality of becoming. It is at the gateway that Zarathustra and the dwarf have a discourse on the nature of time.

In the discourse, Zarathustra describes the composition of the gateway. One characteristic about the two paths is that they blatantly offend each other, and their only meeting point is at the gateway of the moment. Hence, the past and the future, though contradictory in nature, can be collapsed into one another. Time meets up with itself in the present moment as its inner condition. Richardson believes that in *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche is continuing on the trajectory of perspectivism, whereby temporality is understood as an inbuilt viewpoint of the drives.⁵⁸² Zarathustra expounds on temporal perspectivity in the question he poses to the dwarf: "But whoever were to walk one of them further—and ever further and ever on: do you believe, dwarf, that these paths contradict each other eternally?"⁵⁸³ This is a hypothetical question that Zarathustra thought could be answered based on the explanation of the present moment as encompassing the inner determinations of all moments. As some scholars have suggested, the dwarf's answer, though judged as untenable by Zarathustra, represents the temporal structure that seems to govern the two on the way to the gateway, and regulates all living things. The prevailing temporal structure till the gateway of the moment is Time as cyclic or linear.

The linear or cyclical notion of time is what the dwarf knows. Hence its answer: All that is straight lies and all truth is crooked, time itself is a circle. In this response one can discern the Greek notion of cosmic time as cyclical. The dwarf on his part valorises time as cyclic. However, Zarathustra chastises the dwarf on the grounds of the lazy answer. The

⁵⁸¹ Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Volume II*, 3.

⁵⁸² Richardson, "Nietzsche on Time and Becoming," 209.

⁵⁸³ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

dwarf's reply is consistent with its condition: "on a rock and not on the path, it is not walking." Thus, from the disinterested position, time as cyclic is possible. For Burnham and Jesinghausen, from the disinterested position, only abstract descriptions of nature and their usage as laws are available.⁵⁸⁴ This is the case of bad philology seen earlier. The inadequacy of the dwarf's view warrants Zarathustra's admonition: "Do not make it too easy on yourself!" The cyclic view of time, which is basically from the cosmological standpoint, interprets human life as repetition and there is no possibility of creation of values.⁵⁸⁵ The anti-cyclic stance of Zarathustra is not only evident in this passage but is expressed in "The Convalescent," when Zarathustra's animals preach Eternal Recurrence to him as the eternal roll of the wheel.⁵⁸⁶ Zarathustra terms their observation foolish on the grounds that they are describing what they never experienced; instead, they were merely observers.

Fundamentally, the cosmological conception of time falls short of healing the unhealthy obsession with the past prevalent in traditional morality, as it propagates the disinterested birds-eye-view of reality. In Eternal Recurrence, it must be clearly understood that Nietzsche is attempting to evolve a human relationship with time which is neither circular nor linear.⁵⁸⁷ The case in point favouring such an assertion is his critique of Socrates' dying wish and the need to overcome the Greeks.

Socrates's dying wish: "Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius; make this offering to him and do not forget."⁵⁸⁸ It was a practice among the Greeks that a cock be sacrificed to Asclepius by those who were sick in his temples in hope of a cure. On this incident, Nietzsche alleges that "Socrates *suffered life!* And then he still revenged himself—with this veiled, gruesome, pious, and blasphemous saying. Did Socrates need such revenge? Did his overrich virtue lack an ounce of magnanimity?—Alas, my friends, we must overcome even the Greeks!"⁵⁸⁹ Nietzsche's interpretation is that even for Socrates, life was a disease, to which he longed for a cure: death. Nietzsche demands a need to conquer the Greek notion of life as suffering which is evident in the Silenus's oracle. For Nietzsche, the notion of time that one cherishes is pertinent to such redemption.

⁵⁸⁴ Burnham and Jesinghausen, *Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide*, 129.

⁵⁸⁵ From the disinterested perspective alone, there is limited possibility of envisaging singular individuality.

⁵⁸⁶ Z, III (On Convalescent, §2).

⁵⁸⁷ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the politics of Transfiguration*, 267.

⁵⁸⁸ Plato, "Phaedo" in *Plato Complete Works*, 118^a.

⁵⁸⁹ GS, §340.

The summary of the argument on temporality and the will could be captured in the words of Wittgenstein: “The sickness of a time is cured by an alteration in the mode of life of human beings, and it was possible for the sickness of philosophical problems to get cured only through a changed mode of thought and of life, not through a medicine invented by an individual.”⁵⁹⁰ In investigating the extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch*, the notion of time endorsed determines such mode of life. Hence, a new way of thinking and living is regarded as the general orientation of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.⁵⁹¹ The project of Zarathustra is more broadly understood as being about a whole new way of thinking or imagining, that Nietzsche believes is necessary for the needed re-orientation of human life in relation to time.

The notion of time that Zarathustra seems to privilege is the perspectival one described by the notion of the “Moment.” From the gateway “Moment” a long eternal lane runs backward, and behind us lies eternity. This implies that Zarathustra experiences the whole of time from the standpoint of the “Moment.” In this lies Nietzsche’s difficulty: how does Zarathustra possibly describe what he himself is implicated in? In privileging the present moment and experiencing it as such, Zarathustra experiences that present moment as “this moment.”” Zarathustra’s main insight about this “Moment” lies in the two rhetorical questions: “And are not all things firmly knotted together in such a way that this moment draws after it *all* things to come? Therefore—itsself as well?”⁵⁹² The likely way to understand this moment must be in terms of eternity. In “At Mid-day,” Zarathustra asks: “What happened to me: hearken! Did time just fly away? Am I not falling? Did I not fall—hearken! Into the well of eternity? ... What? Did the world not just become perfect? Round and ripe?”⁵⁹³ In this solitude, some sort of innocence comes to Zarathustra. Time seems to be liberated through the insight into the innocence of the “Moment.” For Rosen, “the immersion in the flow of time from moment to moment” could be the only experience of eternity that is accessible to humanity.⁵⁹⁴ This position mirrors Aurelius’s observation of the moment.⁵⁹⁵ The implication is that eternity,

⁵⁹⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, trans, G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), 132.

⁵⁹¹ Adrian Del Caro and Robert Pippin, “Introduction” *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Cambridge edition, X.

⁵⁹² Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle 2).

⁵⁹³ Z, IV (At Midday).

⁵⁹⁴ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 225. On how time is liberated refer to Keith Ansell-Pearson’s “The Eternal Recurrence of the Overhuman: The Weightiest knowledge and the Abyss of Light” in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue, 30 Autumn 2005.

⁵⁹⁵ Refer to the Eternal Recurrence and the Stoics above.

as the liberation from the affliction of time, is made possible through the espousing of the present moment.

In Nietzsche, time may not be presented as a disinterested reality; instead, it is a form of perspective. Zarathustra, during the midday sleep described above is affected by time from within; he is inhabiting time and describes it from within.⁵⁹⁶ For Peter Berkowitz, a perspective must be understood as the condition of all life, but from a particular vantage point.⁵⁹⁷ The present moment must be thought as that singular moment only through eternity. The moment is pure becoming, and as such requires some justification. In eternity, we find the justification for the differentiation that is experienced at the level of singular individuality. It is eternity that justifies the manifold individual perspectival time.

The life of the type *Übermensch* can be described as eternal. Eternity does not become, has no past or future, it simply is. And when something is eternal, it is with one always. In the words of Strong, the eternal does not stretch out into infinity, given that it is eternally present.⁵⁹⁸ The perspectival time is inbuilt into the type *Übermensch* and its forms through its fundamental drive, the will to power. Nietzsche through Zarathustra teaches the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence as the way the *Übermensch* wills, whereby the fear of becoming has been overcome, and thus wills eternal return.

The affirmation of Eternal Recurrence depends on the disposition of the affirmer. The type *Übermensch*'s condition of the will to power allows it to will eternity. Eternity is understood in Boethius's terms as: the whole, simultaneous and perfect possession of limitless life.⁵⁹⁹ Eternity so conceived is partially independent of time, since it is the limitless fullness of life. However, in its fullness, eternity in Nietzsche's conception contains the present moments. Nevertheless, the singular individual's experience of eternity cannot be simpliciter. It is eternity in a derived sense, since singular individual's sense of eternity is from the flow of time as countless moments of the life that will be drawn into eternity.⁶⁰⁰ But it can be argued

⁵⁹⁶ Richardson, "Nietzsche on Time and Becoming," 215.

⁵⁹⁷ Peter Berkowitz, *Nietzsche: the ethics of an Immoralist*, 233.

⁵⁹⁸ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the politics of Transfiguration*, 266.

⁵⁹⁹ Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans, P.G. Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), Book V, Chapter 6, §4.

⁶⁰⁰ Nietzsche's usage of eternity should not be removed from the immanent ontology that he espouses. Hence, his notion of eternity as conflation of the moments is something completely different from God's eternity. On the differences between Human eternity and God's eternity refer, Gerhard Lohfink, *Is This All There Is? On Resurrection and Eternal Life*, trans, Linda M. Maloney (Minnesota: Liturgical Press Academic, 2017) 248–258.

that, a distinction about eternity for the type *Übermensch* and the singular individual, is unjustified, given that the type *Übermensch* and singular individual validate each other.

The validation process is consistent with the perspectival notion of time. The cyclic or even linear views on time cannot originate values for the singular individuals because they lack the inner determinations, lack involvement of the person from within. This is the problem with the dwarf: the cyclic and linear views tend to foster disinterestedness. By contrast, the perspectival notion of time is consistent with the psychological constitution of the type *Übermensch* and its ensuing forms as the will to power.

Therefore, Eternal Recurrence as the type *Übermensch's* way of being-in-time, demands willing the way of the *Übermensch*. Such a view seems to be the import of the presentation of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence in *The Gay Science* and the transformative aspects of the doctrine in the last part of *Zarathustra*. In willing the Eternal Recurrence, the standpoint may not be on the truth-value of the doctrine but its practical-transformative implications. Given that the phenomenon of time cannot be escaped, though problematic, the perspectival notion of time could be an appropriate manner of being-in-time without time necessarily leading to anguish. There is need to see how perspectival time, through the type *Übermensch* as the affirmer of the Eternal Recurrence, is the healthiest way of willing minus resentment.

b. Nietzsche on Perspectival willing

The thrust of Eternal Recurrence is incomplete without the act of the will. In *Zarathustra*, the young shepherd must decide to bite the head of the snake, as the highest form of affirmation of life. As a formula of affirmation, the ultimate testing ground for it is in the act of willing. This section is grounded in the belief that for Nietzsche the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is meant to have practical implications. To demonstrate the practicality of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, the act of the will is paramount. Firstly, I describe how the Eternal Recurrence elucidates the temporality of the type *Übermensch*; secondly, the practical underpinnings of that transformation and thirdly, the life of the type *Übermensch* in the extra-moral sense.

1) Eternal Recurrence and transformation

Transformation of hitherto human reality is at the core of Nietzsche's project. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche poses: "When will we complete our de-deification of nature? When may we begin to naturalize humanity in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature?"⁶⁰¹ In German 'to naturalize' is *Vernatürlichen*, which could imply 'to change man' in relation to the elemental or native constitution. By the fact that Nietzsche places it in question form as: 'when will we complete... 'or' when may we begin...' is possibly an indication that it ought to be conceived as a task. From the *Zarathustra's* young shepherd's encounter with the snake, the experience of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is made manifest.⁶⁰² The Eternal Recurrence entails the role of transfiguring the human into the life of the *Übermensch*.

The Eternal Recurrence could be the panacea to the questions: how can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? The transfiguration must be experienced as a terrifying process. The life of the type *Übermensch* is bred through the horrific process of the Eternal Recurrence described by the experience of the young shepherd and Zarathustra himself.⁶⁰³ The entire description of the young shepherd writhing in pain and seemingly distorted face possibly justifies the hypothetical effects of Eternal Recurrence. For Nietzsche had written earlier: "If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you."⁶⁰⁴ The snake in the throat represents the thought about life. Hence, Eternal Recurrence is plausibly seen by Magnus as an existential imperative meant for transforming human living.⁶⁰⁵ The existential transformation of human living must be centred around the singular individual for it to be transformative indeed. For the thought not to destroy its guest, it must be overcome by an act of will where personal involvement is paramount.

Zarathustra tries in vain to free the young shepherd from the snake. Instead, the shepherd is transformed by his own act of biting the serpent.⁶⁰⁶ But there is some persuasion

⁶⁰¹ *GS*, §109.

⁶⁰² *Z*, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2) refer from "And truly, I saw something the like of which I had never seen before." And following...

⁶⁰³ Refer the ending scene: *Z*, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2) and (The convalescent).

⁶⁰⁴ *GS*, §341.

⁶⁰⁵ Magnus, *Nietzsche's Existential Imperative*, 71.

⁶⁰⁶ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 185.

on the young shepherd to bite the snake's head off. But who persuades the young man's will to engage in that act? There seems to be some unknown voice crying out of Zarathustra: "Then *it* cried out of me: 'Bite down! Bite down! Bite off the head! Bite down!' – Thus *it* cried out of me [...]." ⁶⁰⁷ The immediate response is that Zarathustra persuades the young shepherd to bite the head off the snake himself.

However, on a closer scrutiny, Zarathustra is merely the instrument of the main provocateur, the type *Übermensch*. It seems to be the voice of the *Übermensch* through Zarathustra that cajoles the young shepherd to appropriate Eternal Recurrence and transfigures him as he is. ⁶⁰⁸ In this case, the role of the *Übermensch* through the Eternal Recurrence is a directing one. The *Übermensch* rules by persuading and through the Eternal Recurrence, it generates and shapes the actions/wills to be better able to will return. ⁶⁰⁹ In this ruling role, the extreme relevance of the type *Übermensch* as the best type, and as the enabler of individual *autopoiesis* is manifest.

The young shepherd is transfigured from life of the last human, which is defined by hatred and pity and to the life of the type *Übermensch*. The life of the type *Übermensch* is described as: "No longer shepherd, no longer human – one transformed, illumined, who laughed! Never yet on earth had a human being laughed as he laughed!" ⁶¹⁰ The shepherd is transformed by his own act of the will through the persuasion of the type *Übermensch*. As an act of the will, freedom for Zarathustra must be conceived as the kind that transforms from 'thou shalt' to 'I will.' This freedom arrives in the three metamorphoses of the spirit at the beginning of Zarathustra's speeches. In this act of the will, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence is expressed not as a theory of the cosmos. Instead as Strong observes, it is the state of being of an individual. ⁶¹¹ As such its willing is conditioned by the stance it takes towards time. The impotence towards the past ought to be tested out on Nietzsche's act of willing as the practical guarantor of transformation.

⁶⁰⁷ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2), emphasis mine.

⁶⁰⁸ Zarathustra refers to the voice as: the cry that counsels.

⁶⁰⁹ Richardson, "Nietzsche on Time and Becoming," 223.

⁶¹⁰ Z, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁶¹¹ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the politics of Transfiguration*, 265.

2) Eternal Recurrence: the act of the will

For Nietzsche, time interpreted only within the cyclic and linear dimensions pose irresolvable problem for the will. This is because one cannot will backwards. Such torment of time is evident in Nietzsche's thought of Eternal Recurrence as is given in *The Gay Science*.⁶¹² The hypothetical scenario is meant to provoke and necessitate some constraints on the individual where the emphasis is: Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more? Would you lie upon your actions as the greatest weight? From the standard interpretation, the focus is on the individual as a creative interpreter of his ongoing experience.⁶¹³ The burden of such life is on the actions of the will.

For Nietzsche, the comedy of existence is properly encountered in the present moment. Hence, the demon talks of the very moment that returns. The demon insists on "your loneliest loneliness" and "even this moment."⁶¹⁴ As such, the demon does not envisage the existence of any absolute or universal time that can be discerned independent of and outside the recurrences. Perspectival time is built into the will of the type *Übermensch* and its differentiated forms. The singular individual in living perspectival time becomes the opening through which time is secreted. In this regard, it is the will that encounters the enigma of time. The will that ensues from the perspectival notion of time is the one that can take Eternal Recurrence as the tremendous moment. Such a will according Keith, experiences the Eternal Recurrence as that which comes in a manner that is innocent and wanton, which is the singularity of time that always comes as the same.⁶¹⁵ Elaborate illustration of this possibility is explained in the doctrine of redemption as one of the characteristics of the transfigurations made possible by the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

Nietzsche finds most unbearable dealing with the now and the past upon earth. Hence the need for liberation envisaged as: Redeeming "that which has passed away to re-create all 'It was' into a 'Thus I willed it!'"⁶¹⁶ For Nietzsche, this is liberation. The will is meant to be that liberator and joy-bringer but is generally imprisoned by the inability to will backward. The problem with the linear conception of time is the unidirectional nature of time where there is

⁶¹² GS, §341.

⁶¹³ Higgins, *Comic Relief*, 144.

⁶¹⁴ GS, 341.

⁶¹⁵ Ansell-Pearson, "The Eternal Recurrence of the Overhuman," 16.

⁶¹⁶ Z, II (On Redemption).

beginning and end. The linear model of time may not involve the constitutive elements of the human being, the drives which are directly linked to the will. The challenge with the linear model of time is the inability to operate within the auspices of overcoming, which is will to power as life. Nietzsche's emphasis is for one to make himself in accordance with what he is, will to power.⁶¹⁷ In recognition of will to power ipso facto, the perspectival approaches come into play where in the case of Eternal Recurrence the primacy of the present moment is acknowledged.

It is in the affirmation of the present moment as the pivot of the activity of the will that the past can be affirmed possibly without revenge. The situation prior to the transformation of the Eternal Recurrence on the part of the will is one of gnashing the teeth described as follows:

‘It was’: thus is called the will's gnashing of teeth and loneliest misery. Impotent against that which has been – it is an angry spectator of everything past. The will cannot will backward; that it cannot break time and time's greed – that is the will's loneliest misery. Willing liberates; what does willing plan in order to rid itself of its misery and mock its dungeon? [...] That time does not run backward, that is its wrath.⁶¹⁸

This is the situation that the perspectival notion of time is meant to cure through the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. The solution though painful, is by going through the gateway of the ‘Moment’ whereby the will is capable of willing life as will to power. The moment of being transformed by the thought of Eternal Recurrence leads to freedom as a selective act which in the words of P. A. Bolaños entails “willing, affirming, accepting, desiring, embracing and creating.”⁶¹⁹ These elements are summed up by Nietzsche as acts of the will. Hence, in the act of willing the individual embarks on form-giving expressed in singularity. The selection entails the mode of life, not merely parts of that life as the singular practical relevance of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

Nietzsche's musings about the will leads him to pose: “And who has taught it reconciliation with time, and something higher than any reconciliation? [...] Who has yet taught it to will backwards and want back as well?”⁶²⁰ The experience of the moment of eternity, frees the will from the affliction of pastness and time reconstitutes itself in terms of

⁶¹⁷ Higgins, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, 187.

⁶¹⁸ Z, II (On Redemption).

⁶¹⁹ Bolaños, *On Affirmation and Becoming: A Deleuzian introduction to Nietzsche's Ethics and Ontology*, 45.

⁶²⁰ Z, II (On Redemption).

desire of will.⁶²¹ The will's desire is simply life, and thus in the transfiguration, the young shepherd attains the life of the *Übermensch*, which is proper freedom.

For Nietzsche, freedom must be consistent with human fundamental drives. Nietzsche's general orientation to any form of human ethical living must be consistent with the regime of the drives. Thus, Reginster observes that the good life according to Nietzsche: "[I]s acceptable only if the achievement of what it represents as the good life does not require human beings either to deny or fundamentally alter their generic natural constitution (for example, to suppress their basic natural needs or desires) or to deny, or withdraw from, this 'natural' world."⁶²² It is an ethical conception because it is not a demand from without, but strictly from within the human being and the underlying material conditions. Thus, freedom must be in accord with the will as the expression of the drives. Freedom for Nietzsche is described as the capacity to evaluate on one's own account.⁶²³ Evaluating on one's own account is the expression of the strength and the will to self-determination. In this regard, for Nietzsche, freedom demands that one is the source of one's own values. The meaning of freedom for Nietzsche in relation to laughter as a life of the type *Übermensch* warrants some consideration.

3) Freedom and laughter

Zarathustra describes the transformed life of the *Übermensch* in terms of a non-human laughter. But this laughter comes after its opposite, a cry from the tragic scene. There are numerous accounts of laughter in Nietzsche's corpus. In *The Gay Science*, he remarks:

To laugh at oneself as one would have to laugh in order to laugh *out of the whole truth* –to do that even the best so far lacked sufficient sense for the truth, and the most gifted had too little genius for that. Even laughter may yet have a future.⁶²⁴

The general theme of the aphorism is on existence. Next, in *Zarathustra*, laughter is proposed as a bulwark against the spirit of heaviness since: "Not with wrath but with laughter does one kill. Come let us kill the spirit of Heaviness!"⁶²⁵ In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche counsels:

⁶²¹ Ansell-Pearson, "Overhuman," 17.

⁶²² Bernard Reginster, "Honesty and Curiosity in Nietzsche's Free Spirits" in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Volume 51, no. 3, (July 2013):451.

⁶²³ *HAA*, Preface, §3.

⁶²⁴ *GS*, §1.

⁶²⁵ *Z*, I (On Reading and Writing).

“perhaps it’s that, when nothing else from today has a future, our *laughter* is the one thing that does!”⁶²⁶ Nietzsche ranks himself among the philosophers who value laughter and attributes it to the type *Übermensch* and the gods:

I would go so far as to allow myself a rank order of philosophers based on the rank of their laughter – right up to those who are capable of *golden* laughter. And given that even gods philosophize (a conclusion I have been drawn to many times –), I do not doubt that they know a new and super-human way of laughing – at the expense of everything serious! Gods like to make fun of things: it seems as if they cannot stop laughing, even during holy rites.⁶²⁷

For Nietzsche, laughter is an instrument for gauging one’s perspective on existence. He elevates laughter to the level of one’s conception of truth, as perspectival/conditional/interested as opposed to disinterested/unconditional projections of the same. Laughter must be thus linked to the singular individual’s response to the enigma of existence.

Laughter is related to what Nietzsche calls ‘the whole truth.’ For Nietzsche, truth is always an existential matter in the finite world of becoming.⁶²⁸ Existence must be understood in its fullness as both tragic and comic. In laughter existence is experienced as both tragic and comic. From the realm of becoming, existence is encountered as something dark, fearsome and difficult. However, such a tragic experience of life alone yields responses that demand seriousness towards life. The serious responses include most of the disinterested norms external to the individual’s existential condition.

For instance, the dwarf’s understanding of time as cyclic and linear is drawn mostly from the disinterested approaches to life. The dwarf is thus appropriately associated with the spirit of heaviness, which is marked by inelasticity and rigidity.⁶²⁹ But, Nietzsche is also aware of the need for the comedy of existence to be made conscious. The tragic existence requires a positive response which may not be properly served through the disinterested views on life. The joyous vocal discharge that erupts is meant to disable the seriousness from the tragic. Hence, laughter is the most positive form of tragic affirmation, an affirmative appropriation of

⁶²⁶ *BGE*, §223.

⁶²⁷ *BGE*, §294.

⁶²⁸ Lawrence J. Hatab, *Nietzsche’s Life Sentence, Coming to Terms with Eternal Recurrence* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis group, 2005), 156.

⁶²⁹ John Lippit, “Nietzsche, Zarathustra and the Status of Laughter” in *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 32, No. 1, (January 1992): 40.

the negative limits of being.⁶³⁰ In this regard, laughter encompasses both the tragic and comic dispositions of existence.

Zarathustra's non-human laughter gives birth to unstilled yearning. Such laughter is correlated to the type *Übermensch*. It is in the type *Übermensch*, as 'the sense of the earth' that the project of singular individuality encounters the tragic pathos and the comic laughter in its primal existential bivalence. The type *Übermensch*, through the tragic pathos and comic laughter, according to Nietzsche, depicts an affirmative negation which avoids both a pessimistic denial of life and an optimistic fantasy that negative limits can be overcome or resolved in some way.⁶³¹ Nietzsche's emphasis on comic laughter as a positive response to the tragic is not utopic. Instead, it is a response that does not overcome or cancel the tragic negativity, but ever remains a work in progress. This is the description of singular individuality as a task, expressed as a thirst, and a yearning that will never be stilled. This means that the ability to laugh is about overcoming the spirit of gravity which is associated with the fixated and the unconditional view of life.

Laughter is about one's appropriation of existence at the depth of one's experience. Such laughter must be associated with freedom, along with the willingness to sacrifice formality and surrender to structures, which is the hallmark of the becomingness of reality. Therefore, laughter is not simply the characteristic of the transfigured man as Strong claims.⁶³² Rather, laughter is also espoused by those who strive to live the life of the *Übermensch*, like the singular individuals. The espousing of laughter by those in the process of transformation is evidenced in the spirit of Zarathustra's laughing lion.⁶³³ The lion and its laughter stand for the striving that is never stilled.

In this regard, singular individuality entails the act of the will where the individual power is not willed or conditioned from without.⁶³⁴ The act of the will that yields singular individuality must involve a continual activity of self-gathering and self-appropriation technically described as self-overcoming. For Nietzsche, the journey to human freedom which

⁶³⁰ Lawrence J. Hatab, "Laughter in Nietzsche's thought: A philosophical tragicomedy" in *International Studies in Philosophy* Volume 20, Issue 2, (1988): 72.

⁶³¹ Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence*, 156.

⁶³² Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, 281.

⁶³³ Z, IV (The Sign).

⁶³⁴ White, *Nietzsche and the Problem of Sovereignty*, 19.

is the process of singular individuality is undertaken within the domains of the Eternal Recurrence governed by unintentionality.

3.5 The Ethical stance of the Type *Übermensch*: Extra-Moral Life

In this section, the argument is that the type *Übermensch* ought to be recognized as the condition of all life from the vantage point of existence governed by unintentionality. Nietzsche partially describes what the life of the type entails as: “The complete unaccountability of man for his actions and his nature is the bitterest draught the man of knowledge has to swallow if he has been accustomed to seeing in accountability and duty the patent of humanity.”⁶³⁵ In such a condition, there are no evaluations since one may no longer praise, no longer censure, given that it is absurd to praise nature and necessity. Such is the life of the type *Übermensch*. The life of the type *Übermensch* is beyond good and evil since it espouses existence in its unintentionality. The type *Übermensch* is the symbol for the transcendence of good and evil.⁶³⁶ Elaboration on the life of the *Übermensch* from the extra-moral sense in some detail is the focus now and how such life puts the *Übermensch* at the centre of individual *autopoiesis*.

The ethical stance about the type *Übermensch* must be demonstrated by appealing to the ‘Moment,’ brought about by the Eternal Recurrence. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the Eternal Recurrence is only affirmed by the type that espouses the will to power simpliciter.⁶³⁷ The figure which is introduced here as “[a]nyone like me,” if interpreted from what follows as someone who is above tragedy, then it can be credibly opined that it is about the type *Übermensch*.

Such a figure as Nietzsche describes wants life as tragic, again *just as it was and is* through all eternity. In other words, it affirms life without succumbing to any delusionary morality. It is only the type *Übermensch* as will to power which can pursue life into its abysmal state, and yet not succumb to lures of intentional morality. The perspective required goes beyond the Western and even the Eastern perspectives on life.⁶³⁸ In this regard, Lampert notes:

⁶³⁵ *HAA*, §107.

⁶³⁶ Ofelia Schutte, *Beyond Nihilism, Nietzsche Without Masks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 117.

⁶³⁷ *BGE*, §56.

⁶³⁸ *BGE*, §56. Nietzsche partly admonishes Schopenhauer’s and Buddha’s responses to life.

“The eye confined neither to European nor to Asiatic perspectives is ultimately the eye of Nietzsche’s Zarathustra, who transcended the moral view of being and time introduced by the historic Asiatic, Zarathustra.”⁶³⁹ The privileged seeing for Zarathustra is the perspectival one, which is founded on the nature of life as the will to power. Thinking pessimism through its depth is only undertaken from the standpoint of beyond good and evil, as an extra-moral stance.

The extra-moral position towards the world is expressed as the insatiable shouting “*da capo* not just to himself but to the whole play and performance, and not just to a performance, but rather, fundamentally, to the one who needs precisely this performance – and makes it necessary: because again and again he needs himself – and makes himself necessary.”⁶⁴⁰ The life of the type *Übermensch* does not deny the reality of the world, which is becoming/chaos, instead it affirms it. As Berkowitz alleges, the type *Übermensch*’s yearning is to affirm the world exactly as it is without reference to good and bad.⁶⁴¹ In its affirmation of the world as it is, the type *Übermensch* necessarily validates itself. The type *Übermensch*’s fundamental will is prone to necessitating singular individuals.

The fundamental nature of the will lies in its efficacy. According to Klossowski, efficacy, rather than merging with the processes it analyses, it externalizes them by producing a sphere outside itself for the verification of its own reason and guaranty.⁶⁴² Such is the case with the *Übermensch* in its fundamental drive of will to power. Klossowski further observes that the thought of Eternal Recurrence brings about as of necessity the successive realization of all possible identities.⁶⁴³ The import of Klossowski’s observation is that once the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is appropriated, susceptibility to becoming is inevitable. The pointer to becoming is the insatiable shout of *Da Capo* about the play of life.⁶⁴⁴ Playfulness like laughter is an ability that is necessary to the life of the type *Übermensch* in the extra-moral sense.

At the end of *Zarathustra* III, Nietzsche speaks of seven seals where the theme of play understood in the wider sense as gambling/gaming is raised. Zarathustra presents a

⁶³⁹ Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of 'Beyond Good and Evil'* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 117.

⁶⁴⁰ *BGE*, §56.

⁶⁴¹ Berkowitz, *Nietzsche: the ethics of the immoralist*, 245.

⁶⁴² Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, 138.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁶⁴⁴ *BGE*, §56. A musical term calling for replay of the music from the beginning.

hypothetical scenario: “If ever I played dice with Gods at the Gods’ table of the earth, so that the earth quaked and broke open and pushed up floods of fire:— for the earth is a Gods’ table and trembles with creative new words and Gods’ dice-throws.”⁶⁴⁵ This is basically a Heraclitean idea of the world as the gaming table of the divine world-child. The art of gambling by its nature is not only experimental but tempting as well.

Being an experimenter and a tempter, are the nuanced forms of the term *Versucher*. Gaming as an activity, carries within it the result created by the throw, the accident of that result, and the necessary conditions that make the throw possible.⁶⁴⁶ The activity of play is characterized by an element of innocence and wantonness. The key point here is the creativity involved in the activity of play. The nature of creativity is that it is very conditional or perspectival and is never replicated in anybody else playing the same game. As Strong notes, if the game is properly played, one truly “wills one’s own will.”⁶⁴⁷ Playfulness demands always beginning anew. That beginning as Julian Young opines: “constitutes an absolute rupture with the past, not a modulation or re-creation of the past but a beginning — as the Germans described the first moments after the catastrophe of the Second World War — at *Stunde Null* (hour Zero).”⁶⁴⁸ In the world of flux, as the condition for singular individuality, the danger is contentment. To forestall that danger, constant experimentation is needed.

However, for the game to be deemed sufficiently creative, there must be an element of unintentionality in terms of valuing. The life that Nietzsche ascribes to the type *Übermensch*, from the extra-moral perspective is based on the will to power. Contrarily to the intention-based morality, Nietzsche asserts,

But today, thanks to a renewed self-contemplation and deepening of humanity, shouldn’t we be facing a renewed necessity to effect a reversal and fundamental displacement of values? Shouldn’t we be standing on the threshold of a period that would be designated, negatively at first, as *extra-moral*? Today, when we immoralists, at least, suspect that the decisive value is conferred by what is specifically *unintentional* about an action.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁵ Z, III (The Seven Seals, §3).

⁶⁴⁶ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*, 279; Z, I, (On the Three Metamorphosis), on the characteristics of the child and creativity.

⁶⁴⁷ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of transfiguration*, 280.

⁶⁴⁸ Julian Young, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 119.

⁶⁴⁹ *BGE*, §32.

Nietzsche here celebrates the depth in human self-scrutiny. The fruit of that scrutiny is the understanding of life as will to power. Hence, “what is not intentional is what is given or granted in our passions and dispositions, what has become instinct.”⁶⁵⁰ The unintentional is the basic disposition that articulates itself as an expression of an overflowing of energy. It is on the unintentional realm that the value of an action is to be judged.

On the unaccountability and innocence, Nietzsche holds: “Everything is necessity – thus says the new knowledge; and this knowledge itself is necessity. Everything is innocence: and knowledge is the path to insight into this innocence.”⁶⁵¹ This new knowledge must be based on the instinctual domain, and for the type *Übermensch* it is essentially as will to power. The necessity here must be linked to the act of the will that gives access to existence. From the Deleuzian standpoint “Innocence is the game of existence, of force and of will. Existence affirmed and appreciated, force not separated, the will not divided in two – this is the first approximation of innocence.”⁶⁵² Whoever may agree with Deleuze, as I do, ought to view existence as a play that is itself purposeless. As Strong remarks: “So long as one is playing, he is involved in the game by necessity.”⁶⁵³ Hence, the activity of the game is a capsule summary for the extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch* that is lived beyond good and evil, beyond utility and the moral antinomies that ordinarily are deemed to shape existence.

The life of the type *Übermensch*, is evaluated from its activity where it wills its will unintentionally. As Klossowski notes, Nietzsche’s unavowable project is to act without intention, which is impossible morality for us, but the total economy of this “intentionless universe creates intentional beings.”⁶⁵⁴ This is insightful in the sense that, through the process of individual *autopoiesis* undertaken within the extra-moral ethical stance of the type *Übermensch*, one can possibly become the best he can be and evolve moralities fitting for such enhancement. In this regard, the Eternal Recurrence as affirmed by the type *Übermensch* is the fundamental insight into existence, where there is no Leibnizian pre-established harmony “between the furtherance of truth and the well-being of mankind.”⁶⁵⁵ With the rejection of the pre-established harmony, the present becomes the significant site for individual action.

⁶⁵⁰ Lampert, *Nietzsche’s Task*, 77.

⁶⁵¹ *HAH*, §107.

⁶⁵² Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 23.

⁶⁵³ Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of transfiguration*, 280.

⁶⁵⁴ Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, 140.

⁶⁵⁵ *HAH*, §517.

Therefore, about the “questionableness of man,” Nietzsche’s possible appropriate response could take this line of thought: That life will be valued if ultimately the aspects of the life of the type *Übermensch*, which necessitates self-fashioning as a singular individual are embraced.⁶⁵⁶ More pertinently as Frederick Copleston observes, embarking on the process of singular individuality is “an act of defiance, a no-saying, to the meaningless world.”⁶⁵⁷ It is with the thought of Eternal Recurrence that Nietzsche’s forcefulness is manifested on how and with what attitude one can confront existence. In this regard, Heidegger considers Eternal Recurrence as “the fundamental doctrine in Nietzsche’s philosophy” and “Bereft of this teaching as its ground, Nietzsche’s philosophy is like a tree without roots.”⁶⁵⁸ Given the role of the Eternal Recurrence on our perception of time as perspectival, and its ensuing repercussions on individual *autopoiesis*, Heidegger’s claim seems quite plausible. However, the type last human being embraces a different moral stance, a morality of custom that is contra the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, the type *Übermensch*, and above all, could be detrimental to the production of the singular individual.

3.6 Morality of Custom

This section examines morality of custom and how it possibly inhibits the appropriation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. It is my considered position that morality of customs entails a lopsided manner of facing existence. This is a transitional section that leads into the next chapter, African ethno-philosophical underpinnings of *shienyu ni shienyu* and its underlying effects on the project of individual *autopoiesis*. This section begins with Nietzsche’s understanding of the morality of custom, and its aspects contrary to tragedy.

The morality of custom as a theme in Nietzsche’s corpus starts receiving considerable attention at least from 1878. In *Assorted Opinions and Maxims* Nietzsche alleges, “The origin of custom lies in two ideas: the community is worth more than the individual and an enduring advantage is to be preferred to a transient one.”⁶⁵⁹ The preservation of the community is privileged in customary morality. Nietzsche also references morality of custom as: “that much

⁶⁵⁶ That such is the possibility given the thinking in *SE*, §2.

⁶⁵⁷ Frederick Copleston, “Foreground and Background in Nietzsche,” *The Review of Metaphysics: A Philosophical Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (March 1968): 519.

⁶⁵⁸ Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. II, 6.

⁶⁵⁹ AOM, §89.

older and more primitive kind of morality.”⁶⁶⁰ He says that the reason for engaging with such a morality was a “question of the *value* of morality.”⁶⁶¹ Nietzsche reviews the various aspects of morality of custom from the middle period onwards:

I dealt especially with the value of the ‘unegoistic’, the instincts of compassion, self-denial, self-sacrifice which Schopenhauer had for so long gilded, deified and transcendentalized until he was finally left with them as those ‘values as such’ on the basis of which he *said* ‘no’ to life and to himself as well.⁶⁶²

Pertinent to this text is Schopenhauer’s understanding of the foundation for moral worth in actions as un-egoistic, which is the absence of self-interest. For Schopenhauer the only motive that fulfils such a criterion of moral worth of an action is compassion.⁶⁶³ Schopenhauer understands pity as “the immediate *participation*, independent of all ulterior considerations, primarily in the *suffering* of another, and thus in the prevention or elimination of it.”⁶⁶⁴ The justification for the involvement in the life of others is founded on the fact of the frustration of the will that views existence as punishment. The only appropriate response to such a tormented existence is indulgence toward one another. The indulgence takes the forms of forbearance and charity among others. Given the torment of existence, for Schopenhauer, we owe each other as fellow sufferers, compassion. Our acting motivation is compassion. It becomes a customary law, to participate in the sufferings of others. Compassion is supposedly a form of alleviating the torment of existence that can be more pronounced with individual existence.

The thrust of Nietzsche’s engagement with morality lies in its source: “To be moral, to act in accordance with custom, to be ethical means to practice obedience towards a law or tradition established from old.”⁶⁶⁵ On the contrary, to be immoral in the realm of custom is to practice things not sanctioned by custom, which implies resisting tradition. Acts such as benevolence or pitying demonstrate that one is acting according to custom. Customs in general were designed not to provide advantages to individuals but to preserve and develop the entire

⁶⁶⁰ *GM*, Preface, §4.

⁶⁶¹ *GM*, Preface, §5.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶⁶³ Franco, *Nietzsche’s Enlightenment, The Free-Spirit Trilogy of the Middle period*, 25.

⁶⁶⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer, *On the Basis of Morality*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Oxford: Bergham Books, 1995), § 16, 144.

⁶⁶⁵ *HAH*, §96.

human cultural network.⁶⁶⁶ The good meant what preserves the community and evil what is considered injurious to it.

In his critic of what he calls the cult of philanthropy, Nietzsche mentions Schopenhauer's stance on compassion and John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism as those who "gave the widest currency to the teaching of the sympathetic affects and of pity."⁶⁶⁷ The danger of these teachings on the cultural enhancement is the undermining of an individual response to the tragic nature of existence. That is why for the yearning for individuality to ensue horror, disgust, hate and compassion elements associated with the morality of custom are cried out of Zarathustra.⁶⁶⁸ In the morality of custom, preservation is preferred over overcoming.

Nietzsche's problem with compassion is existentially well founded, since "[o]ur personal and profoundest suffering is incomprehensible and inaccessible to almost everyone; here we remain hidden from our neighbour, even if we eat from one pot."⁶⁶⁹ Highly valorised pity strips away from the suffering of others whatever is distinctively personal. Thus, Nietzsche's call to get beyond pity ought to be understood on the account of existence as individual and needs to be affirmed as such. Closely related to compassion is problem of revenge. For Nietzsche, the spirit of revenge is a tendency to view existence itself as a trial and punishment.⁶⁷⁰ In their powerlessness towards existence they seek the moral standards that seem to support their situation. As a form of impotence, *ressentiment* is the process of apportioning responsibility and blame for the pain one suffers.⁶⁷¹ The pain in this case is of an existential nature.

But, with *ressentiment*, one thinks that there is a causal relation between the outside world and the suffering/pain wrought by one's impotence towards it. This relation assumes a strong commitment to organizing the outside world, in the belief that this commitment will alleviate existential suffering. The organization of the world entails political organization, fighting for equality, nationalistic tendencies and identities like ethnocentrism, and the incessant search for democratic values. Hence, R. Jay Wallace aptly

⁶⁶⁶ Rüdiger Safranski, *Nietzsche, A Philosophical Biography*, trans, Shelley Frisch (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2002), 189.

⁶⁶⁷ *D*, §132.

⁶⁶⁸ *Z*, III (On the Vision and Riddle, 2).

⁶⁶⁹ *GS*, §338.

⁶⁷⁰ Magnus, *Nietzsche's Existential Imperative*, 148.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 246.

observes that “the *ressentiment* of the weak is one of the main sources of modern moral consciousness.”⁶⁷² The *ressentiment* is responsible for the system of morality that ensues, which is fundamentally rationalistic in nature, and thus inappropriate for Nietzsche’s individual *autopoietic* project. The system of morality that ensues from customs fails to factor in the transience and the destructive aspect as the immanent character of existence.

Conclusion

With this chapter, the coordinates for individual *autopoiesis* are considerably in place. Individual *autopoiesis*, which is meant to yield singular individuality, entails ontology of becoming. The fact of becoming is best expressed by the type *Übermensch*. However, for its justification the type *Übermensch* espouses life as will to power and in that regard it is the affirmer of Nietzsche’s vital doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. It is through the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence that the extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch* is examined. It is clearly stated that extra-moral life is about the unintentional nature of actions. In its unaccountability, the type *Übermensch* apparently operates in the ways similar to nature. Nietzsche draws his doctrine from Heraclitus and the Stoics, among others.

Nietzsche inherits from the Greeks the notions of Eternal Recurrence as a cosmological and anthropological phenomenon. The Greek ontology of the cosmos is described in terms of strife and fire. These two terms justify the cosmos’ ontology of becoming, otherwise called transience and destruction. Fire as the principal element of the cosmos entails destruction and generation of the same. It is on becoming as an activity of the cosmos that Nietzsche draws existential-ethical dimensions for human life. Eternal Recurrence espoused both on cosmological and anthropological level elicits the question of value on the human level. Hence, appropriation of existence as becoming becomes Nietzsche’s undertaking as an existential-ethical project. It is as an existential-ethical project that the Eternal Recurrence is developed in this dissertation as the possible avenue for undertaking singular individuality. Eternal Recurrence as an existential-ethical reality is largely affirmed by the type *Übermensch* as the guarantee of the ontology of becoming. The ontology of becoming entails espousing life as will to power, which is a technical way of asserting that life is tragic. In the doctrine of the

⁶⁷² R. Jay Wallace, “*Ressentiment*, Value, and Self-Vindication: Making Sense of Nietzsche’s Slave Revolt” in *Nietzsche and Morality*, ed. Brian Leiter and Neil Sinhababu (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 111.

Eternal Recurrence, the “Moment” is that singular element that extra-moral life of the type *Übermensch* is embedded. It is the “Moment” that returns, and it is within the “Moment” that life as such is experienced. It is in this regard, that the ‘Moment’ is not only an *autopoietic* space but demands a world-affirming individual.⁶⁷³ This point is examined in Chapter Five, where *autopoiesis* as such calls for *cosmopoiesis*.

The affirmation of the Eternal Recurrence by the type *Übermensch* exposes the limits of any existence envisaged outside the realms of will to power. For Nietzsche, morality of custom largely espouses superficial understanding of existence. The contrary elements which embody the life of the type *Übermensch* include pity and disinterested standpoints. Nietzsche holds the position that life as will to power may never be experienced as such outside the appropriation of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. And singular individuality may be hard to obtain where the ontology of becoming is not appropriated. However, such an assertion needs to be fleshed out through a different approach to existence. That approach must be from a different setting too, specifically an ethno-philosophical one which valorises the morality of custom. As it plays out in Chapter Four, such a morality is grounded in agents as opposed to their acts.

⁶⁷³ *BGE*, §56.

Part II: Dialogue with Ethno-philosophy and *Cosmopoiesis*

Chapter 4: The Ethno-philosophy of *Shienyu Ni Shienyu*

It is very possible, both with the individual and with the [ethnic or cultural] group, that the mysteries of life and death, survival and destruction, together with fear rising from all these mysteries, became the psychological agent that gave birth to certain behaviour patterns and to certain redemptive practices. (Placide Tempels, Bantu Philosophy, 18–19).

Introduction

In the introductory chapter, I stated that this dissertation is situated within two settings: Nietzsche's philosophy and the African ethno-philosophy. In Chapters One, Two, and Three, the conditions for the task of individual *autopoiesis* have been examined, the key condition being the appropriation of life as will to power. Life understood and properly affirmed as will to power entails overcoming, which is the singular characteristic of the type *Übermensch*. Overcoming is espoused where life is valorised in the extra-moral sense. However, opposed to Nietzsche's life as will to power is the morality of custom. Such a morality is marked by a valorisation of the communal life and a stress on what endures over and against the transient. In the context of Chapter Three, the morality of custom is opposed to the appropriation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. This chapter focuses on the second aspect of the dissertation, African ethno-philosophy, in which the morality of custom is discernible. The effects of such a morality on the task of individual *autopoiesis* and *cosmopoiesis* are relevant to this dissertation.

One of the anchor claims in the African ethno-philosophy is about fellow-feeling expressed as a communal value. Fellow-feeling and its ensuing moral maxims entail modes of facing existence, as will be seen in the ethnic genesis of the *Abaluyia* and their moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu*.⁶⁷⁴ In this chapter I argue firstly that the *shienyu ni shienyu* reality must be understood within the communal tenets of ethno-philosophy as a response to the enigmatic nature of existence; and secondly, that the ontology

⁶⁷⁴ The literal translation is "your own is your own." Analysis of its dynamics forms part of this chapter.

of *shienyu ni shienyu* mostly lacks individual prioritization and may thus be inherently untenable for the task of singular individuality. Such ethnic maxims seem to conceal the tragic aspect of existence. The development of the two claims is structured as follows:

First, I examine the reasons for the existence of *Abaluyia* ethnic group.⁶⁷⁵ It will be argued that ethno-philosophical maxims like *shienyu ni shienyu* are intertwined with the genesis and enhancement of the ethnic group.

Second, I present and analyze the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu*. This task demands the presentation of its academic source in African philosophy of sociality. Subjecting communal claims to scrutiny is at the heart of the current ethno-philosophical setting of this dissertation. Thus, before engaging with the outlined themes a brief overview of African ethno-philosophy is pertinent.

4.1 Ethno-philosophy and the Communal

Ethno-philosophy is generally described as “the bodies of beliefs and knowledge that have philosophical relevance and which can be re-described in terms drawn from academic philosophy, but which have not been consciously formulated as philosophy by philosophers.”⁶⁷⁶ Such beliefs are expressed in thoughts and activities of the people that share some common cultural heritage. P. Hountondji a Benin philosopher used ‘ethno philosophy’ as an overarching term for works of anthropologists, sociologists, ethnographers and philosophers which give the African collective worldviews. The term is first critiqued in Hountondji’s seminar paper titled: *Remarques sur la philosophie africaine contemporaine* delivered in 1969.⁶⁷⁷ Hountondji used the term ethno-philosophy mainly as a critique of the works of Placide Tempels and Alexis Kagamé among others.⁶⁷⁸ Hountondji generally critiques what Tempels and Kagamé call philosophy when he observes: “[A]ppplied to Africa, it is

⁶⁷⁵ The elaborate analysis of this ethnic group is part of the sections of this chapter. There are several designations for this ethnic group for instance, as *Luyia*, *Luhya*, and *Abaluyia/Abaluhya*. The prefix here *Aba/Ba-* implies people, while the suffix, *luyia/luhya* stands for a homestead or warmth/hearth. Warmth comes closer to fellow-feeling, communal. Hence, the term *Abaluyia/Abaluhya* implies people of the same origin.

⁶⁷⁶ Ivan Karp, and D.A. Masolo, “Ethnophilosophy, African” in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, Volume 3 (London: Routledge, 1998), 446.

⁶⁷⁷ “Remarks on the Contemporary African Philosophy.” It was delivered at a seminar in Copenhagen in 1969 and then published in *Diogene* Journal in 1970. It was later reprinted 1976 as the first Chapter of *Sur la Philosophie Africaine* under the title of ‘Une Littérature aliénée.’

⁶⁷⁸ Tempels is a Belgian Franciscan missionary who worked among the *Baluba* ethnic group of the present-day Democratic Republic of Congo. He wrote a book called *La Philosophie Bantoue*. While Kagamé is a Rwandese philosopher.

supposed to designate no longer the specific discipline it evokes in its Western context but merely a collective world-view, an implicit, spontaneous, perhaps even unconscious system of beliefs to which all Africans are supposed to adhere to.”⁶⁷⁹ Masolo interprets Hountondji’s designation of ethno-philosophy as a merger of ethnography and philosophy.⁶⁸⁰ Ethnography is understood as the study of an ethnic group’s collective, passive, and largely descriptive claims.

From an ethnographer’s standpoint, ethnography deals essentially with the collective aspects of community life. According to Alyward Shorter, ethnography deals with descriptive accounts of the culture and social institutions of a people.⁶⁸¹ In this case, ethnography organizes the expectations, not necessarily the regularities, of daily existence. As such, Hountondji’s position is that what Tempels and Kagamé were engaged in is not philosophy, but ethnography, which hinges on two defining characteristics: (1) it seeks to encompass the whole life from the methods of childbirth to the fate of the soul; and (2) it regards the customary as more important than the actual.⁶⁸² Thus ethnographers seek to construct the natives’ social order.

Kwame Anthony Appiah refers to a philosophy where the beliefs are not subjected to systematic and critical analysis as a folk philosophy.⁶⁸³ However, folk philosophy is mainly oral and as such may be envisaged under ethno-philosophy. Ethno-philosophy aims to explore folk philosophies systematically.⁶⁸⁴ For one to gauge the value of the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* as the domain of African ethno-philosophy, it is important to engage with the ethnic genesis of the *Abaluyia* people. It is within this ‘ethnic group’ that the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* can be fleshed out. Engaging with the ethno genesis of the *Abaluyia* people will *ipso facto* entail dealing with some aspects of the communal and the individual.

⁶⁷⁹ Paulin Hountondji, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (London: Hutchinson, 1983), 60.

⁶⁸⁰ D. Masolo, *Self and Community in a Changing World* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 54.

⁶⁸¹ Alyward Shorter, *East African Societies* (London: Routledge, 2005), 14.

⁶⁸² Walter Goldschmidt, ed. *Culture and Behavior of the Sebei: A Study in Continuity and Adaptation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 1.

⁶⁸³ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In my Father’s House, Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (Methuen: Michelin House, 1992), 137.

⁶⁸⁴ Kwame Anthony Appiah, “African Philosophy” in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, Gen. ed. Edward Craig (London: Routledge, 1998), 96.

4.1.1 The *Abaluyia* Ethnogenesis.

One of the main features associated with African ethno-philosophy is communality. This assumption of communality is expressed by Hountondji as “the myth of primitive unanimity.”⁶⁸⁵ It is a misplaced unanimism with an assumption that all men and women in such societies not only speak with one voice and share the same opinion about fundamental issues, but also share the same origin.⁶⁸⁶ The *Abaluyia* ethnic genesis problematizes the cherished cliché of African communality. What seems to prevail is the enigma of existence as the basis for any valuation of a people. Communality properly rendered may be a work in progress. As such, communality demands continual formulation and reformulation. Furthermore, it can be claimed that the *Abaluyia* ethnic genesis justifies the need for moral maxims for its survival as an ethnic group.

The thinking that ethnic groupings are not natural seems to be gaining traction. L. de la Gorgendiere et. al, hold that ethnic groupings may not be natural after-all given the origins and legends or myths associated with them.⁶⁸⁷ J. Osogo on the people of western Kenya observes that their clan compositions are of more mixed ancestries.⁶⁸⁸ G. Were cautions against the tendency “to associate African societies with homogenous origins and cultures.”⁶⁸⁹ Rather than being fixed, ethnicity is created and re-created through interactions. Hence, according to T. H. Eriksen, ethnicity emerges and is made relevant through social interactions and encounters as people’s ways of coping with the demands and challenges of life.⁶⁹⁰ On this score, ethnicity ought to be understood as a response to the enigmatic question of existence. Nonetheless, justification must be sought, whether strong ethnic inclinations are the befitting response to existence as tragic. It can be generally claimed that the *Abaluyia* ethnic genesis is grounded in existential challenges of some sort.

⁶⁸⁵ Hountondji, *African Philosophy, Myth and Reality*, 60.

⁶⁸⁶ Richard, H. Bell, *Understanding African Philosophy, a Cross-cultural approach to Classical and Contemporary Issues* (London: Routledge, 2002), 59.

⁶⁸⁷ Louise de la Gorgendiere, Kenneth King and Sarah Vaughan (editors), *Ethnicity in Africa, Roots, Meanings and Implications*, Centre of African Studies (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1996), 4.

⁶⁸⁸ Paul Ogula, “Inter-ethnic and Intra-ethnic Interaction in Western Kenya up to 2000” in *Historical Studies and Social change in Western Kenya: Essays in memory of Professor Gideon S. Were*, ed. William R. Ochieng (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2002), 263.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 264.

⁶⁹⁰ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism, Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 1993), 1.

The *Abaluyia* are part of an African linguistic group called the *Bantu*. The *Bantu* is a group of closely related languages and is considered as one of Africa's most widespread linguistic groups. The *Bantu* related languages stretch from Cameroon in the west to southern Somalia in the east and as far as Southern Africa in the south.⁶⁹¹ However, what is presently called *Bantu* is historically held to be the recent offshoot of the African family language, Niger–Congo. The region of Niger–Congo is also deemed to be the original dispersal place of the Bantu speaking.⁶⁹² It is commonly accepted that from the Niger–Congo different migratory routes were taken until the present settlement of the *Bantus* in Central, South and East of Africa. In Kenya the *Bantus* are generally grouped as: The western *Bantu* that comprises *Abaluyia*, *Abagusii*, *Abakuria* and *Luo-Abasuba*; The central *Bantu* includes, *Agĩkũyũ*, *Aembu/Ambeere*, *Amĩrũ* and *Akamba*; and the eastern Bantu coastals are, *Wataita*, *Wataweta*, *Wapokomo* and the *Mijikenda*.

The defining feature of the Bantu linguistic group is the reference to a human being as *mu-ntu* in the singular form, and then *ba-ntu* in the plural form. The designation of the term *ba-ntu* is an adaptation by W. H. Bleek from the Xhosa ethnic group of South Africa. Bleek's term *bantu* is in keeping with the "orthography advanced at the time for Xhosa."⁶⁹³ For Bleek the main characteristic of the Bantu linguistic group is the derivative prefix and pronouns whereby only two classes/genders seem decisive to what he calls the '*Ba-languages*.' In relation to the reference of distinctions observed in nature, the restricted prefix to nouns denotes reasonable beings, the one in the singular and the other in plural.⁶⁹⁴ The case in point is the designation of *ba-ntu/aba-ntu*, and *mu-ntu/omu-ntu* as the human beings in plural and singular respectively. The *ba-/aba-*, and *mu-/omu-* as prefixes apply to 'human beings,' thus *ba/aba-*, is about people and *mu-/omu-*, is the singular form, a single person. In addition to

⁶⁹¹ Koen Bostoen, "Pots, words and the bantu problem: on Lexical reconstruction and early African history" in *Journal of African History*, 48 (London: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 173. There is considerably an elaborate analysis of African languages by M. Mann and D. Dalby, *A Thesaurus of African Languages, A classified and annotated inventory of the spoken languages of Africa with an appendix on their written representation* (London: Hans Zell Publishers, 1987) and another one by M. Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and prehistory of the Bantu languages*, 4 volumes (London: 1967).

⁶⁹² Wangũhũ Ng'ang'a, *Kenya's Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation* (Nairobi: Gatũdũ publishers, 2006), 5.

⁶⁹³ John M. Mugane, "Bantu Languages and peoples" in *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of African Thought*, Volume 1 eds. F. Abiola Irele and Biodun Jeyifo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 133.

⁶⁹⁴ W.H.I. Bleek, *A Comparative Grammar of South African languages*, Part I, Phonology (London: Trübner & Co, 1862), §11.

prefixes as Mugane observes, nearly all Bantu languages use a root form *-ntu*, *-tu*, *-ndu*, or *-du*.⁶⁹⁵ In the case of *Aba-luyia*, two variations *ba* or *aba*, seem to be in operation. The *-luyia*, in this case is the suffix which provides the ethno genesis of today's ethnic group called *Abaluyia/Baluyia*. The role of the suffix *-luyia* in the ethnogenic sense will reveal not only the origin, but also who these people called *Abaluyia* are.

What is designated as *Abaluyia* is a conglomeration of eighteen sub-ethnic groups.⁶⁹⁶ The migratory movements and periods of settlement of these groups into Kenya are diverse. Ng'ang'a remarks that,

The earliest *Abaluyia* immigrants arrived in the territory that is today western Kenya before 1000 A.D. and the latest waves of immigrants arrived about 1700. The very earliest clans to arrive have now disappeared or have been absorbed by clans which arrived much later and only their names are still remembered. It would appear that the first arrivals passed through Buganda [part of present-day Uganda] on their way from Bunyoro or the Congo. [...]. A northern route brought the mount Elgon sub-groups to their present settlement.⁶⁹⁷

It is noteworthy that in the period of these migratory movements no *Abaluyia* ethnic group yet existed. Instead, the migration involved the different sub-ethnic groups that would later (in the 20th century) come together for existential reasons under the name *Abaluyia*.

The past of many ethnic groups in Kenya was not a unified one, since such groups were characterized more by regular patterns of interactions. By such interactions people of one ethnicity may blend into adjacent ethnicities without a distinct cultural boundary.⁶⁹⁸ Marked ethnic categorization in Kenya may be partly linked to colonial activities. From the sociological standpoint, a social category is characterized by a common identity that exhibits no necessary or regular patterns of interactions.⁶⁹⁹ Instead, ethnicity *qua* ethnicity is founded

⁶⁹⁵ Bleek, *A Comparative Grammar of South African languages*, 132.

⁶⁹⁶ According to the current nomenclature the *Baluyia* sub-ethnic groups are designated as follows: *Ababukusu*, *Bamaragoli* (*Abalogoli*), *Abatiriki*, *Abitakho*, *Abesukha*, *Abawanga*, *Abatsotso*, *Abashisa*, *Abanyole*, *Abatura*, *Abamarama*, *Abanyala ba Maelo/Abanyala Baongo* (*Kakamega/Busia*), *Abakabalasi*, *Abasamia*, *Abakhekhe*, *Abamaraki*, *Abakhayo* and *Abatachoni*. The Social Anthropologist, Gunter Wagner gives a considerably an old nomenclature that may not be currently in use. Refer to his "The *Abaluyia* of Kavirondo" in *African Worlds, Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples*, ed. Daryll Forde (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 27–54.

⁶⁹⁷ Ng'ang'a, *Kenya's Ethnic communities, Foundation of the Nation*, 16.

⁶⁹⁸ Pius Kakai Wanyonyi, "Historicizing Negative Ethnicity in Kenya" in *(Re) membering Kenya, Vol. 1: Identity, culture and freedom*, eds. Wa-Mungai Mbugua and George Gona (Nairobi: Twaweza Communications, 2010), 34.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

on social interactions. And social interactions are defined in term of social groups. A social group is defined as “a set of individuals who interact with one another in patterned ways, who share a culture that contains beliefs about the group and rules of conduct that shape behaviour, and who identify with one another.”⁷⁰⁰ The ethnic group must be understood as a complex group owing to its size and the members who exist to carry out the group’s goals. As Eriksen notes, ethnicity entails classification of peoples and involves group relationships. Eriksen furthermore holds that ethnicity is about group identification and that the identification concerns “us,” which is opposed to racism as a categorization of “them.”⁷²⁹ In the Kenyan case it is claimed that before the establishment of colonial rule, diverse ethnic groups with varying traditions interacted easily.

However, such interaction must not be construed to mean peaceful coexistence. There were persistent raids. But the cultures and even languages experienced widespread intermingling and assimilation of elements from other supposedly foreign communities. On ethnic labelling as an external factor two positions emerge: Scholars like Le Vine and Campbell are of the view that, “the homogenous tribe or ethnic unit was the creation of colonialism and missionaries.”⁷⁰¹ Then, Vincent G. Simiyu and Ng’ang’a counter such claims with assertions that,

ethnic groups existed in Kenya long before colonialism. In fact the only such case of ethnicity being created by colonialism was in Rwanda and Burundi. Colonialist Belgians attached an ethnic label on the terms Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. In the Pre-colonial period the Tutsi and Hutu were socio-economic categories and not ethnic groups.⁷⁰²

However, one must be cautious enough and clarify that the external factors that Ng’ang’a mentions were meant to advance the set objectives, such as the success of colonial administration. The colonialists’ modus operandi may be responsible for the marked consciousness of ethnic categorizations, but not for their creation. This point will be more

⁷⁰⁰ Dean Harper, “Social groups” in *International Encyclopaedia of Sociology*, Volume Two, ed. Frank N. Magill (London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1995), 1239.

⁷⁰¹ Ng’ang’a, *Kenya’s Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation*, XV and Le Vine and Campbell, *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes and Group Behaviour*, 1972.

⁷⁰² Ng’ang’a, *Kenya’s Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation*, XV.

pronounced with the Négritude movement that insisted on black consciousness.⁷⁰³ But as Wanyonyi claims, in pre-colonial Kenya ethnicity was a “mere sign of identification. Membership was fluid.”⁷⁰⁴ The fluidity of membership changes greatly with the colonial experience.

Given the colonial experience, identification generally results in statuses: member and non-member, ‘your own’ and ‘not-your own.’ The pre-colonial experiences manifest tendencies of inclusive identification. For the facilitation of colonial administration, the British modus operandi seems to have made ethnic identification exclusive. According to Lord Frederick Lugard one of the main architects of the system, continuity and decentralization was inevitable for the success of the indirect rule. Lugard remarks:

The first and most important conditions in maintaining an effective administration, co-operation is the keynote of success in its application—continous co-operation between every link in the chain, from the head of the administration to its most junior member, — co-operation between the Government and the commercial community, and above all, between the provincial staff and the native rulers.⁷⁰⁵

In places where traditional leadership was nonexistent, the local British administrator had the discretion to establish one by picking those who are loyal and compliant to the system. However, on a grand scale, the indirect rule for Kenya meant setting up the ethnic groups against each other in terms of loyalty and disloyalty to the British system, for easier facilitation of the rule.

The ethnic groups were allocated areas for settlement. In different alienated partitions, ethnic groups could easily be lured through incentives of education and political power, based on their level of cooperation. On incentive-based loyalty P. Karari notes: “The ethnic preferential treatment of colonial authorities nurtured a privileged centre of loyalists and a disgruntled periphery of rebels.”⁷⁰⁶ The strategy of having African reserves seemed to have

⁷⁰³ In the Essay by Jean-Paul, Sartre, and John MacCombie, “Black Orpheus” *The Massachusetts Review* 6, no. 1 (1964): 13-52. Accessed May 21, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/25087216. In Black Orpheus, négritude is defined in terms of Heideggerian Existentialist terms as “the-being-in-the-world-of-the-Negro.” This was a contingent reference, not fixed, but Senghor enlarged the term négritude and gave it a new orientation as an enduring quality of being constitutive of the black race. Refer Moya Deacon, “Trends in African Philosophy” in *The African Philosophy Reader*, ed. P. H. Coetzee, and A. P. J. Roux (New York: Routledge, 2003), 116-147.

⁷⁰⁴ Wanyonyi, “Historicizing,” 36.

⁷⁰⁵ Lugard, F. D, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, 1st edition (London: Blackwood, 1922), 193.

⁷⁰⁶ Peter Karari, “Modus Operandi of Oppressing the ‘Savages’: The Kenyan British Colonial Experience,” *Peace and Conflict Studies*: Vol. 25, No. 1, Article 2, (2018): 9.

had multiplier effects: firstly, it weakened the pre-colonial interactions among different ethnic groups; secondly, it created ethnic suspicions and intensified ethnic consciousness; and thirdly, it rendered the Africans divided and suspicious of one another, leaving them open to easy conquest. With this system of divide and rule, some ethnic groups, especially those who were given some leverage or power, felt included in the administration's ideals. Such acts, it is popularly claimed, may have led to the development of fellow-feeling.

Analysis of the feelings of inclusion and exclusion justifies the claim that marked ethnic categorization in Kenya is due to colonial occupation. The inclusion-exclusion card as Wanyonyi observes, eventually planted the seeds of ethno-centricism and the urge for ethno-cracy.⁷⁰⁷ The primacy of ethnic organization and rulership was envisaged by different ethnic formations as fitting guarantor of their survival. Shadrack Amakoye Bulimo believes that “around the second World War, most clan heads realized that political parameters had shifted dramatically and only organized societies with a definite ethnic identity could hope to reap political benefits associated with economies of scale.”⁷⁰⁸ The political benefits were supposedly an assurance for the existential future. Hence being “included or excluded” had a bearing on the community's existence.

To share in the largesse of the colonial administration and to safeguard ethnic existential interests, ethnic welfare groups emerged. Communal strength and fellow-feeling within the group presented some leverage against those who were purported to be weak in terms of ethnic mobilization. Thus, the overarching names as the precursor to the present day *Abaluyia* emerged. The notable ones are the North *Kavirondo* Central Association (NKCA) and *Bantu Kavirondo* Taxpayers' Association.⁷⁰⁹ Such associations seem to have been an assurance of some better positions at the bargaining table especially at what was called

⁷⁰⁷ Wanyonyi, “Historicizing Negative Ethnicity in Kenya” in *(Re) membering Kenya, Vol. 1: Identity, culture and freedom*, 37.

⁷⁰⁸ Shadrack Amakoye Bulimo, *Luyia Nation: Origins, Clans and Taboos* (Trafford: Trafford Publishing, 2013), XIX.

⁷⁰⁹ Kavirondo is the area around Lake Victoria, part of the Winam Gulf. Kavirondo is an obscure word that its exact designation is not clear. Though it came to refer partly to the people around Lake Victoria, it seems to refer to the area around Lake Victoria. Hence various renderings for people around the lake as: South Kavirondo, North Kavirondo, or Bantu Kavirondo (the *Abaluyia*) to distinguish them from the Luos who are Central Kavirondo. However, according to Gunter Wagner, the name Bantu of North Kavirondo apparently was never used by the natives to refer to themselves. This may not be entirely true, given that they formed an association bearing the name, unless, the implication is that the name Bantu Kavirondo Taxpayers Association is also a designation.

the Native Trust land Boards. Such boards were established to secure the land rights of different native ethnic groups which required representations.

The NKCA was a political native organization like several others spread across the colony. The British administration outlawed any movement with a semblance of a national outlook. The challenge for the NKCA or *Bantu Kavirondo* Taxpayers' Association was that although its eighteen sub-ethnic groups had some common customs, and spoke closely related dialects of the same language, they lacked an all-embracing name.⁷¹⁰ The idea of welfare associations was used as an ethnic mobilization. According to MacArthur, NKCA had its publication titled "*Abaluhya*," here loosely implying kinship, and the publication named the people of NKCA "*Luyia*."⁷¹¹ The term *luyia* entails a myriad of meanings.

Hence, *Luyia* may denote *oluyia*, which implies warmth, to be hot. J. Osogo, a *Luyia* historian uses the term *okhuyia* which means to burn.⁷¹² According to Shadrack Amakoye Bulimo, there were two types of fireplaces: (1) In the traditional homestead was a fireplace. The polygamous man had several wives, each with her own hut in the compound forming a semicircular pattern, with the fireplace at the centre, (2) Each clan/community lineage had a common hearth/fireplace, which served as a place of congregating for special announcements, decisions or declarations on issues.⁷¹³ Thus, the *oluyia* space served as a village court where community matters could be adjudicated and discussed. In this regard, there is a link between *khuluyia*, being the assembly space in the homestead/community's and *oluyia*. And in the extended family setting, even though one may have several houses, there is *oluyia lulala*.⁷¹⁴ There is another usage, from *oluyia*, implying a fire place, especially in the meadow, where the elders of the clan met every morning.⁷¹⁵ In this case, the *oluyia* could serve as an assembly site, the microcosm where the practical life played out.

However, the *oluyia* is not only a micro setting in the case of a homestead, it is also a macro-setting for the community. The people who share a fireplace at a village's common space belong to the same *oluyia*. But in the words of Bulimo when a group of clans come

⁷¹⁰ Ng'ang'a, *Kenya's Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the nation*, 16.

⁷¹¹ MacArthur, "When did the Luyia (or any other group) become a tribe?" in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 359.

⁷¹² John Osogo, *A History of the Baluyia* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1966), 6.

⁷¹³ Bulimo, *Luyia Nation, Origins, Clans and Taboos*, 68–69.

⁷¹⁴ In *Abaluyia* language means: one homestead or one assembly space.

⁷¹⁵ MacArthur, "Luyia", 358.

together they form *aba-luyia*.⁷¹⁶ At the *oluyia*, the fire-place, the elders of the clan met every morning to warm themselves from the morning cold of western Kenyan weather. In the process the elders also discuss the events and pertinent matters of the community.⁷¹⁷ Closely related to the designation of an assembly place is the belief that communities used to hold criminal tribunals at the junctions of the footpath.⁷¹⁸ Such junctions were referred to as *luyia*, a meeting point. Among the different threads of meanings given there is a discernible link between the hearth/fireplace (*oluyia*) and homestead (*luyia*). The likely thinking is that any functioning homestead must have a fireplace as a preparatory space for food and enhancement of communion/assembly. Hence, according to J. Osogo,

It is understandable [...] how the name *oluyia* came to mean tribe, especially as it was a common practice for people to ask, ‘to which *oluyia* do you belong?’ – meaning ‘to which fire.’ The *oluyia* so defined represented a physical location, posited at the ‘centre of the public life of the clan.’⁷¹⁹

One’s response to the question of ‘which *oluyia*’ he belonged to entailed naming one’s physical homestead. The homestead in this case becomes “a space where problems, common to all, were brought up, discussed and decided upon around the fire.”⁷²⁰ In this regard, the *oluyia* is a common ground, a space of expression, a space of communion where diversity is lived as unity. The closest expression to this common space is the case of a polygamous home, “where the courtyard outside the main father’s house is called *luyia*. And all the children are referred as children of one *Luyia* and hence the name *Abaluyia*.”⁷²¹ Hence, generally the term *Abaluyia* designates people of the same *luyia*, the hearth, homestead or simply those who share the homestead. The full form is something like *abantu baluyia lula*, people of the same hearth/homestead. Osogo concludes that *Abaluyia* means ‘fellow tribesmen.’ For the colonial political circumstances in Kenya, the name *Abaluyia* was determined by vote of the North *Kavirondo* Native council of 1942, accepted by the *Luyia* language committee and adopted by the colonial government.

⁷¹⁶Bulimo, *Luyia Nation*, 69. It means the people of the same homestead or hearth.

⁷¹⁷Aidan W. Southall, “The Illusion of Tribe” in *International Studies of Sociology and Social Studies*, Vol. X, ed. K. Ishwaran, *The Passing of Tribal man in Africa* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), 35.

⁷¹⁸Ng’ang’a, *Kenya’s Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation*, 19.

⁷¹⁹Osogo, *A History of the Baluyia*, 7.

⁷²⁰MacArthur, “Luyia”, 358.

⁷²¹Ng’ang’a, *Kenya’s Ethnic Communities: Foundation of the Nation*, 19.

The *Abaluyia* ethnogenesis seems to have arisen from the realization that for their existential survival, given the colonial influence, a unified front was inevitable. Southall holds that the emergence of the *Abaluyia* was “the reaction of younger and more educated men to the exigencies of the colonial situation.”⁷²² The plausibility of Southall’s assertion can be discerned from the understanding that it is not only the *Abaluyia* that seem to have engineered their ethnic group owing to existential demands. The process of engineering the *Abaluyia* ethnic group may have been a conscious one. But the *Abaluyia* were not the only group that felt an existential threat. G. Muriuki observes that among the *Agĩkũyũ* there existed different kinships and solidarity was needed during periods of existential threats.⁷²³ Muriuki is of the view that by the end of the 19th century the *Agĩkũyũ* society was generally un-centralized and divided into kinships. The kinship was called *mbari* (a clan). Even though external threats stimulated wider ethnic unity, allegiance to kinship groups remained important. The loyalty to the wider community is expressed when individuals introduce themselves as belonging to the *mbari ya Mumbi*.⁷²⁴ *Mumbi* is the mythical founding ancestor of the *Agĩkũyũ* people.⁷²⁵ Hence, the invocation of the myth of *mbari ya Mumbi* is relevant for fostering solidarity and unity within the *Agĩkũyũ* community especially when their existential situation is deemed precarious.

Louis de la Gorgendiere et al, in support of their claim that ethnic groupings are non-natural, observe that, owing to colonial challenges, the *Agĩkũyũ* needed to submit to a coordinating leadership. The need arose from the realization that, given contrasting social constructions among them, they needed moral ethnicity or patriotism as the strategy for their political nationalism.⁷²⁶ Moral ethnicity here implies the constructed fellow-feeling centred around the maxim, *mbari ya Mumbi*. The politics are important here, because the *Agĩkũyũ* defined themselves as the people who owned the land. The existence of the *Agĩkũyũ* as a people was intertwined with land ownership. Though mythical, the *Agĩkũyũ*’s *mbari ya Mumbi* seems to represent some common origin for the diverse *mbari*, in terms of ancestry called *Mumbi*. This may not be the case with the *Abaluyia*.

⁷²² Southall, “The Illusion of Tribe” in *International studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 34.

⁷²³ Godfrey, Muriuki, *A history of the Kikuyu, 1500–1900* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974), 112.

⁷²⁴ *Agĩkũyũ* language, which means: the kinship of *Mumbi*.

⁷²⁵ Muriuki, *A history of the Kikuyu, 1500–1900*, 113.

⁷²⁶ Gorgendiere et al, *Ethnicity in Africa: Roots, Meanings and Implications*, 18.

The *Abaluyia* do not claim any common ancestry. MacArthur puts it succinctly: “[T]he *Luyia* by and large have not and do not claim a common ‘*Muluyia*’ ancestor from whom they all sprang.”⁷²⁷ One recent scholarly work analyses the *Luyia* composition from the clan level, testifying to the fact of discrete entities. It notes that “[t]he 863 *Luyia* clans are amorphous units united only by cultural and linguistic bonds. The political union between these clans is a nettlesome issue that has eluded the community since the formation of the super-ethnic polity more than seventy years ago.”⁷²⁸ On the difficulty of establishing a political union, one can opine that it is a character of constructed communities. To enforce some possible semblance of having a unified community, some moral-oriented maxims are apparently fashioned. The *Abaluyia*, as MacArthur observes, “share no myth of a founding father, no singular narrative of historical descent and migration, no standard set of cultural practices, no common language.”⁷²⁹ Myths and legends are some of the pointers to the fact that ethnicity is largely a construction. Where there are no common myths of origin, some moral maxims seem to serve the purpose of myths and legends. Nevertheless, it would be grossly mistaken to ascribe maxims only to ethnic groups lacking a myth of common origin.

The belief in common ancestry is vital for the propagation of group formation and it matters little whether an objective blood relationship exists.⁷³⁰ The need for joint political action can develop into a moral duty or maxim that seeks to bind the members together. Such maxims can be like *shienyu ni shienyu* in the ethno-philosophical domains. As Omedi Ochieng observes, such maxims are not only defined as a property of an ethnic group, but are envisaged as “consensual and primordial.”⁷³¹ Such maxims are considered consensual knowledge on the basis that they are held and accepted by everyone in the designated ethnic group. The maxims for Ochieng are primordial in the sense that they are thought of as traditionally handed down and passed on from time immemorial and then appropriated by the ethnic group. But whether consensual or primordial or constructivist, the underlying principle around ethnicity seems to revolve around the manner of encountering life

⁷²⁷ MacArthur, “Luyia,” 355.

⁷²⁸ Bulimo, *Luyia Nation*, XIX.

⁷²⁹ MacArthur, “Luyia,” 353.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁷³¹ Omedi Ochieng, “The Epistemology of African Philosophy: Sagacious Knowledge and the Case for a Critical Contextual Epistemology,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 48, no. 3, issue 191 (September 2008): 338.

as tragic. I can therefore claim that communality, understood as a value in ethnic formations, is one pertinent way of encountering existence as tragic.

Thus, unanimity, which Hountodji ascribes to ethno-philosophy, can plausibly be understood as a response to existential demands. The question is whether unanimity *per se* aptly encounters the tragic nature of existence. So far, the examination of the genesis of the *Abaluyia* ethnic group has evolved some pertinent nuances for further analysis. In general, it has been demonstrated that ethnicity is largely a construction that is informed by the social-existential conditions. The examination has relied mainly on the ethnographical and some sociological underpinnings of ethnicity to arrive at the existential conditions as grounds for ethnic maxims. The *shienyu ni shienyu* moral maxim within the *Abaluyia* ethnic group must now be examined through the broader prism of African ethno-philosophical development.

4.2 *Shienyu Ni Shienyu* as Ethno-philosophy

In the preceding section, the focus was on the ethnographic aspects of ethnicity. And one of the emerging themes from ethnogenesis in general is the necessity for moral maxims given the constructivist nature of ethnicity. This section concentrates on the philosophical discourse around the moral maxim of *shienyu in shienyu*. The justification for this approach is Hountodji's notion of ethno-philosophy as the merger of the ethnographical and the philosophical.⁷³² From the ethnographical perspective *shienyu ni shienyu* largely serves the existential needs of the *Abaluyia* ethnic group, owing to the circumstances of its emergence.

Nevertheless, ethnography, though important for this chapter does not override the necessity for a philosophical discourse on the moral maxim of *shienyu ni shienyu*. Such a discourse will proceed as follows: firstly, a presentation of the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* from the perspective of Maurice Makumba;⁷³³ secondly, a contextualization of the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* as a communal stance in a broader discourse of African philosophy of sociality. In this way Makumba's tracing of *shienyu ni shienyu* from African Socialism will be highlighted.

⁷³² Hountodji, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, 62-63.

⁷³³ Maurice Makumba is currently the Catholic Bishop of Nakuru Diocese in the Rift Valley part of Kenya. He develops what is called "The philosophy of Shienyu ni shienyu" in the short work, *Introduction to African Philosophy* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2007), 151-164.

Makumba's introduction to his philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* apparently justifies the two-fold approach. He discusses the philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* within the framework of African socialism, which he claims is dictated by the principle of family-hood. Makumba believes that

[f]or African socialism to have any affinity with philosophy, it should adhere to this basic principle [family-hood]. When we say, for instance, that the central values of Africa are communal rather than individual, we need to go further to dissect and subject 'communal' to greater analysis. 'Communal' makes no sense without reference to a real community. And just which community is the object of African socialism's 'communal' values? Is it a closed community that recoils into itself or an open community that goes all out for interrelationship?⁷³⁴

Makumba's call for subjection of communality to greater examination must necessarily encompass the nature of existence as such. Makumba holds the position that African socialism is "perhaps best expressed" as the philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu*.⁷³⁵ This communal approach is not without its challenges. Joseph M. Nyasani, a critic of African philosophy of sociality, believes that such a philosophy is "always fostered and nurtured more by the ubiquitous physical dangers and the inability of man to manage and safeguard his own fate single-handedly and without resorting to the corporate or communal intervention."⁷³⁶ He justifies his criticism by appealing to the psychology of managing fate, rooted in the belief that no one single-handedly can tame the forces of nature, except in as far as it became a common concern. However, Nyasani's position can partly be discerned from the ethnogenesis of the *Abaluyia* above. Still, the communal response to and existential threat and its ramifications will only be clearer at the end of this chapter. For now, the focus is on Makumba's conception of *shienyu ni shienyu*.

4.2.1 Makumba on the Ontology of *Shienyu Ni Shienyu*

Makumba's point of departure is the complex nature of the maxim *shienyu ni shienyu*. The *Abaluyia* moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* for Makumba, "means far more than it says, and as a result it can have far reaching implications in concrete life."⁷³⁷ Makumba claims

⁷³⁴ Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy*, 152.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁷³⁶ Nyasani, *Philosophy of Development: An African Perspective*, 99.

⁷³⁷ Makumba, 155.

further that the maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* conceals what it means, and that the concealment could be intended in some cases. It may not be immediately clear from the text why Makumba elects to use the Heideggerian terminology of concealment. But Makumba's assertion about the maxim in Kiswahili language may not leave doubt of what is intended.⁷³⁸ He alleges, "*Shienyu ni Shienyu* is more easily translated in Kiswahili than English, in which case it is rendered as 'Chenu ni Chenu.' A perfect translation for perfect concealment!"⁷³⁹ As Makumba opines, at first sight the maxim and its translation make very little sense. However, Makumba's use of the term 'concealment' is the possible aperture into the interpretation of the moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu*.

The meaning of concealment and its object must be clarified. Heidegger in *Being and Time* mainly uses a Greek term *a-letheia* in his endeavour to explain Dasein's disclosure and hiddenness. He writes, "The goddess of Truth who guides Parmenides, puts two pathways before him, one of uncovering, one of hiding; but this signifies nothing else than that Dasein is already both in the truth and in untruth."⁷⁴⁰ Depending on the translation, uncovering and hiding implies un-concealment and concealment respectively. For Heidegger, the term *a-letheia* expresses "the essence of truth."⁷⁴¹ The nature of truth for Heidegger entails un-concealment and concealment. According to Heidegger *aletheia* is equated to the un-concealment/disclosure of Dasein through the myriad of beings/entities. Heidegger holds that *aletheia*, which Aristotle equates with "pragma" and "phainomena," signifies the things themselves, "it signifies what shows itself—*entities in the 'how' of their uncoveredness.*"⁷⁴² In this regard, *aletheia* must be about manifestation of being. In the words of John Caputo, the Greek way of truth as correctness (*aletheia*) of assertions arises from and presupposes the

⁷³⁸ Kiswahili is an African language spoken in Kenya, Tanzania (Tanganyika and Zanzibar), Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and parts of Mozambique. Kiswahili language borrows heavily from the Bantu languages. It has also some Arabic and Portuguese influence and even some German words owing to the German colonization. The native speakers of the language were mainly the Swahili people found mainly along the Eastern coast of Africa with strong ties with the ancient Sultanate of Oman. However, Kiswahili is today growing into a major African Language used as a national language in Tanzania and Kenya.

⁷³⁹ Makumba, 155. The translation of *Chenu ni Chenu* into English can be like "Yours is Yours" or "Your Own is Your Own."

⁷⁴⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans, John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), Section 44, 265.

⁷⁴¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 265.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, 262.

manifestation and openness of entities themselves.⁷⁴³ This means that the thrust is not simply on the un-concealment but being itself. The un-concealment in the words of M. King is the phenomena of truth.⁷⁴⁴ However, in the Heideggerian sense un-concealment does not entail the full essence of *aletheia*.

For Caputo, *aletheia* as the realm of un-concealment is the “concealed clue, the implicit horizon, the unconceived realm, within which the Greek experience of Being unfolds.”⁷⁴⁵ Truth as un-concealment for Heidegger must always first be seized from entities. The entities are “snatched” from their hide-out, their concealment. If the untruth as the concealed is the source of the un-concealed, then it makes sense when Caputo refers to *lethe* (concealment) as belonging to the heart of *aletheia*. Caputo believes that *lethe* as concealment also implies “self-sheltering.”⁷⁴⁶ In Heidegger there is a link between concealment and Dasein when he notes,

To be closed off and covered up belongs to Dasein’s *facticity*. In its full existential-ontological meaning, the proposition that ‘Dasein is in the truth’ states equiprimordially that ‘Dasein is in untruth.’ But only in so far as Dasein has been disclosed has it also been closed off; and only in so far as entities within-the-world have been uncovered along with Dasein, have such entities as possibly encounterable within-the-world, been covered up (hidden) or disguised.⁷⁴⁷

According to Günther Figal, Dasein’s mode of Being is primarily existence.⁷⁴⁸ Thus the un-concealment and concealment or truth and untruth are referents of existence. Dasein in its full existential-ontological meaning as truth and untruth is the foundation of beings. In this regard as Figal observes, Dasein “bears within itself the intrinsic possibility of every concrete factual humanity.”⁷⁴⁹ This means the neutral Dasein is not the one that exists. Instead Dasein exists as is expressed in the truth of being as its factual concretion.

What Figal calls the neutral Dasein is generally understood as the primal source of intrinsic possibility that springs up in every existence and makes it intrinsically possible. The object of concealment, I believe, is basically existence. Charles E. Scott believes that the word

⁷⁴³ John D. Caputo, *Demythologizing Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 18.

⁷⁴⁴ Magda King, *Heidegger's Philosophy, A Guide to his Basic Thought* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 141.

⁷⁴⁵ Caputo, *Demythologizing Heidegger*, 19.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁷⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 265.

⁷⁴⁸ Günther Figal, *The Heidegger Reader*, trans, Jerome Veith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 63.

⁷⁴⁹ Figal, *The Heidegger Reader*, 63.

concealment “points to the still unexperienced domain of the truth of being into which *dasein* *ek-sists*.”⁷⁵⁰ The focus here is on the domain as the space/source for plurality of beings. That domain is one of “letting be” of beings. In this brief exposition on Heidegger’s disclosure and hiddenness of Dasein, there is a marked movement from the Greek notion of *aletheia* to some unclaimed realm of *lethe* where concealment seems to reside. It is unclaimed since, according to Caputo, truth as *a-letheia* is the “opening itself, in which all Being and all truth (as phenomena) are given and granted.”⁷⁵¹ The concealment becomes the aperture within which, as Caputo observes, “every historical epoch occurs and by which it is granted.”⁷⁵² This is existence as the realm within which history unfolds. The task is now to show how Makumba envisages the moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* in terms of such notion of concealment or otherwise.

According to Makumba, *shienyu ni shienyu*’s deliberate concealment is founded on three aspects: (1) Its expression in neutral form, (2) in the totality of its rendering and (3) the context of its utterance. In the ordinary *Abaluyia* or Kiswahili language, *shienyu* or *chenu* are neuter words which imply your thing or simply yours. They refer to possessive objects (things). However, even though that ought to be the case, *shienyu* or *chenu* as Makumba observes refers to a human person. As such he paraphrases *shienyu ni shienyu* as “Your sister/brother is your sister/brother.”⁷⁵³ Ordinarily your sister or brother is understood in terms of blood kinship. That seems to be partly intended here but the fact that it is not vocalized is a pointer to much more.

Makumba further clarifies that the word *shienyu* is always addressed to the individual not simply as an individual but as a member of a community. Prior to Makumba, John S. Mbiti reflects on the relationship between the individual and the community:

In traditional [African] life, the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is simply part of the whole. The community

⁷⁵⁰ Charles E. Scott, *The Question of Ethics, Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1990), 140.

⁷⁵¹ Scott, *The Question of Ethics, Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger*, 25.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁵³ Makumba, 155.

must therefore make, create or produce the individual; for the individual depends on the corporate group.⁷⁵⁴

Mbiti in this text, apart from affirming the centrality of the community, touches on existence as an underlying principle, as will be explored below. But the fact that the individual existence is explained in terms of what are considerably external forces (other people, past generations, and contemporaries) is itself a telling scenario: the actuality of existence demands individual qua individual response. However, Mbiti in the above text recognizes the community vocation of producing individuals.

Makumba notes that *shienyu* in its neutrality conceals the power of community that in turn masks existential vagaries. This is likely the point when he explains about ‘your own’:

The ‘your own’ referred to is the community, as if to awaken in the individual strong feelings of belonging, a belonging that is bereft of meaning without the community that is the individual’s ‘sponsor’ and whose interests it is important to guard and protect as they come, both in particular individuals and in the community at large. This sense of belonging is not respected if one does not come to the aid of the community in its individuals.⁷⁵⁵

The community interests seem to override the individual’s. Coming to the aid of the community is an obligatory canon for the sense of belonging. As Bell observes the individual’s identity is part of a thoroughly fused collective we.⁷⁵⁶ And then Mbiti sums up the individual’s position in the community’s scheme of things with the assertion, “The individual can only say: ‘I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.’”⁷⁵⁷ Mbiti considers this maxim a cardinal point in the understanding of what he calls the African view of humanity. This point will be revisited later when considering Léopold Senghor on African socialism.

But a caveat is in order: if Mbiti is taking a Cartesian cue on his “I am,” then one wonders if this maxim will not suffer the fate of being contentless. The abstract “I am” may not be a purely African position given that empirical underpinnings of relationships are taken as paramount. Santosh C. Saha observes that Africans define themselves through a collective

⁷⁵⁴ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions & Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 108.

⁷⁵⁵ Makumba, 155. Refer to the footnote material.

⁷⁵⁶ Bell, *Understanding African Philosophy*, 60.

⁷⁵⁷ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 108.

dream of sharing resources and social equality.⁷⁵⁸ And such a collective world-view apparently affects the African intellectual lot too, who “[b]y choice, as well as necessity due to kinship ties, [...] are more responsive to and respectful of their immediate social bases of support.”⁷⁵⁹ In this regard, the individual’s sense of belonging, which is communal, manifests itself through the accompanying obligations to the “your own.” However, it seems that the aspect of the obligation to *shienyu*, your own is stressed based on something else.

That “something else” entails the second aspect by which Makumba accounts for the concealment of *shienyu ni shienyu*: totality. The full expression of the maxim reads, “*Shienyu ni Shienyu khali shihunyi bukundu.*” Makumba holds that the “inner and fuller meaning” of the phrase *shienyu ni shienyu* “can only be deciphered” from the added piece, *khali shihunyi bukundu*, which means “even should it stink!”⁷⁶⁰ *Bukundu* is a stink mainly from something rotten. I interpret the stink in this case to be an indicator of the vagaries of existence. Encountering existence is central to ethno philosophical tenets. Makumba describes the additional piece to the maxim as that which is “almost always left unsaid but almost always implied and is its completion.”⁷⁶¹ From the popular wisdom, the maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* with the implication of the full form is resorted to in moments of existential threat. Such moments call for marshalling all forces possible for survival, and none of such forces can be more formidable than fellow-feeling. The underlying principle of *shienyu ni shienyu* is like what T. U. Nwala refers to as the function of practical philosophies of life:⁷⁶² The practical philosophies of life refer “to the basic beliefs, ideas and mores without which [...] the community would cease to exist because it must have lost touch with reality and the source of their existence.”⁷⁶³ The popular wisdom among the *Abaluyia* ethnic group considers *shienyu ni shienyu* as one of her main practical maxims of life.

Makumba’s assertion that *khali shihunyi bukundu* is always left unsaid but always implied can be linked to the question of existence. That existence is implied follows from his

⁷⁵⁸ Santosh C. Saha, “Moral Ethnicity in Sub-Saharan African National Identity Issues: Ethnicity and State-Building” in *Ethnicity and Social Political Change in Africa and other developing Countries: A Constructive discourse in State Building* (Lexington Books, 2008), 13-14.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁰ Makumba, 155.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

⁷⁶² T. Uzodinma Nwala, *Igbo Philosophy* (Lagos: Lantern Books, 1985), 27.

⁷⁶³ Ibid.

interpretation that: “It does not matter how smelly *one of your own* is, you have an obligation to lend them a hand, almost by oath and under pain of being ostracized.”⁷⁶⁴ The protection, it must be remembered, that though the assistance could be individual, the operative scheme is always communal existence. I advance the argument that the moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* is one of the possible ways of responding to the tragic nature of existence. And that the power of the moral maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* lies in the aporetic question of existence. Hence, *shienyu ni shienyu*, to apply the words of MacIntyre on existence “disguises and conceals rather than illuminates and it depends for its power on its success at disguise and concealment.”⁷⁶⁵ And the way of *shienyu ni shienyu* seemingly privileges communal response towards that which it conceals, existence. P. Tempels apparently says as much on the human response amid existential challenges:

It is very possible, both with the individual and with the [ethnic or cultural] group, that the mysteries of life and death, survival and destruction, together with fear rising from all these mysteries, became the psychological agent that gave birth to certain behaviour patterns and to certain redemptive practices.⁷⁶⁶

Makumba’s position that *shienyu ni shienyu* demands the obligation to protect one’s own in both good and evil, is supposedly the redemptive response to the existential enigma.

The onus now is to unpack what *shienyu ni shienyu* may be concealing. What is emerging so far is that the *shienyu ni shienyu* maxim seems to encourage carrying *one of your own’s* “existential stinks.” Makumba holds that *shienyu ni shienyu* “is an instruction, a dictum, and a tenet by which every concerned member should endeavour to abide, and whose fulfilment all should aspire to achieve.”⁷⁶⁷ On this belief, *shienyu ni shienyu* is largely the community’s self-preservation dictum as a response to existence. With Makumba’s position that *shienyu ni shienyu* is a dictum that must be honoured, the underlying objective is a response to existence. It can be opined that what *shienyu ni shienyu* seeks to conceal is the enigma of existence that is essentially tragic. In this regard the dictum is meant to act as the bulwark against the insurmountable question of existence at the individual level.

⁷⁶⁴ Makumba, 155–156.

⁷⁶⁵ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue, a study in moral theory*, second edition (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1985), 109.

⁷⁶⁶ Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy*, trans, Colin King (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), 18–19.

⁷⁶⁷ Makumba, 156.

However, the question that will require a response is whether such a communal approach to the existential enigma is the befitting one indeed. There are undoubtedly some benefits of the communal approach to existence. The communal response to existence is intertwined with the values of generosity, compassion, solidarity, and social well-being.⁷⁶⁸ Makumba believes that *shienyu ni shienyu* properly conceived thrusts one into inclusive relations. He references such inclusive relationships as helpful and healthy.⁷⁶⁹ This brings to the fore the fact that what is being christened as “helpful and healthy” is the communal and not the individual. The underlying weakness here is the tendency to bracket the existential reality. With such a valorisation of the communal, there may be little room for individual emergence and for that individual to “smell his own existential stink.”

Even though Makumba observes that one’s own is meant to be “a crucial aperture to the other,” he seems to forget that this aperture is itself communally determined. This is because the *shienyu ni shienyu* essentially is addressed to the individual not as individual per se but as “a member of the community.”⁷⁷⁰ To appreciate Makumba’s assertion that *shienyu ni shienyu* is positively meant to be an aperture to the other, it is crucially important to look at his sources of justification. Makumba quotes an Ethiopian thinker by the name of Wäldä Hōywāt.⁷⁷¹

For Hōywāt, “fellow man” is not confined to relatives, friends, or members of the same faith. But that fellow man includes all humankind, given that “all men are our fellow men, whether they are good or evil.”⁷⁷² According to Claude Sumner, “[i]n Ethiopia, traditional philosophy in its written form is intimately linked with Christianity in general, and monasticism, in particular.”⁷⁷³ Such a claim is validated by the fact that certain sayings in classical Ethiopian philosophy are traced from some ancient sources, such as “*The Book of the wise philosophers*.”⁷⁷⁴ Hence, without being dismissive of Ethiopian thought, one must keep

⁷⁶⁸ Bell, *Understanding African Philosophy*, 64.

⁷⁶⁹ Makumba, 156.

⁷⁷⁰ Makumba, Footnote, 155.

⁷⁷¹ Wäldä Hōywāt, also written as Walda Heywat is the 18th century Ethiopian thinker who is considered the disciple of an original Ethiopian philosopher Zera Yacob who lived between 1599–1692 as per the Gregorian calendar. Refer, Makumba, 84–90.

⁷⁷² Makumba, 156.

⁷⁷³ Claude Sumner, “The Light and the Shadow: Zera Yacob and Walda Heywat: Two Ethiopian Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century,” in *A Companion to African Philosophy*, 174.

⁷⁷⁴ The book is a collection of sapiential Literature, as an anthology of sayings. The Geez text is a translation from the original Arabic work said to have been compiled between 1510 and 1522 by Abba Mikael, an Arabic-

in mind the influence derived from the above sources. In this regard, Hōyiwāt's "fellow man" and "humankind" may be a largely abstracted Christian response to a complex phenomenon. Such abstracted conception may not entirely bring out the existential nuances in their concrete form. Furthermore, regarding Hōyiwāt's conception of fellow man it is proper to point out his relationship with another Ethiopian's thinker: Yacob.

Yacob's philosophy focuses, among other themes, on the individual's approach to suffering with strong individual underpinnings. In the words of Sumner, "Yacob's philosophy is the fruit of his own personal reflection and not a translation or an adaptation from foreign sources."⁷⁷⁵ For Sumner, Yacob, given his experience of personal suffering, speaks of divine providence in personal terms. Yacob develops his treatise based on his individual searching and seclusions. On the other hand, Hōyiwāt's reflection on Yacob's treatise has an inkling of strong collectivism. In this regard, the standard position is that Hōyiwāt develops his ethics of love based on the doctrine of reason that in turn expresses the will of the creator.⁷⁷⁶ On such grounds, it is plausible for one to claim that Makumba's "fellow men" appeal from Hōyiwāt is possibly the rationalization of Yacob's existential reality. Hōyiwāt's social philosophy, among other themes, concentrates on the equality of all human beings. It develops the ethics of a love based on the Golden rule as the Christian teaching of mutual love. Hence, the argument about *shienyu ni shienyu* being an aperture to the other could as well be the rationalization of what the dictum demands. The dictum as it stands seemingly lacks a determination of the other from the individual standpoint. As such, *shienyu ni shienyu* determines even the realms of who the "other" is from the communal perspective.

Shienyu ni shienyu is a dictum that all concerned should endeavour to abide by, according to Makumba. In this regard existence is supposedly encountered at the communal level and largely informed by fellow-feeling. The situation is akin to Hollingdale's description of German's one folk-community. In such a community virtue means:

[F]eeling with one's *Volksgenossen*, loving what they love and hating what they hate. 'Freedom' consists in entering into the spirit of the folk with all one's heart,

speaking Egyptian. On Ethiopian Sources and Knowledge refer, V. Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University press, 1988), 201-203.

⁷⁷⁵ Sumner, "The Light and the Shadow: Zera Yacob and Walda Heywat: Two Ethiopian Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century," 174.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 178.

soul, and mind: in any other sense, freedom is merely a cover for a fall from virtue. To feel differently from the community, to oppose it, is proof of depravity.⁷⁷⁷

In this case one's identification with the spirit of the folk seems paramount. The underlying justification for such fellow-feeling is the character of moral ethnicity. Moral ethnicity refers to the "internal standard of civic virtue against which we measure our personal esteem."⁷⁷⁸ The moral ethnicity standard operates through dictums like *shienyu ni shienyu*. For Makumba, personal esteem is evaluated in terms of how one comes to the help of the needy in the community.⁷⁷⁹ From the domain of *shienyu ni shienyu* the proponents of communality believe that people should freely accept the norms to which they are subjected. In this way any form of hierarchy particularly one founded on difference of wisdom and other virtues is eliminated.

The privileging of community over and against the individual stands opposed to singular individuality enhancement. For Nyasani, a stress on community is susceptible to some inadequacies relative to the existential response: (1) the inability of the individual to assume or rise up to personal responsibility, especially the reluctance to face problems single-handedly; (2) the psychology of self-atrophy in particular and the deliberate penchant for dissolving into the uncanny and impersonal being for the sake of shirking responsibility even where it is clearly individualized; (3) The erosion of individual initiative and the spontaneous courage to own up to what sometimes may pass for an ineluctably personal fate. Nyasani's explanation for this scenario is that the "ineradicably collective conscience and inability to detach oneself from its clutches [...] is largely responsible for the serious maladjustment of the psychology and management of personal initiatives, creativity and, indeed, personal adventure."⁷⁸⁰ Nyasani's assertions will need further scrutiny, but the crux of the matter seems to be that a pure communal response to existence tends to hamper individual responsibility.

Anti-communitarians like MacIntyre dismiss the communal on the grounds that "local communities are always open to corruption by narrowness, by complacency, by prejudice against outsiders and by a whole range of other deformities, including those that arise from a

⁷⁷⁷ Hollingdale, *Nietzsche*, 25.

⁷⁷⁸ Saha, "Moral Ethnicity in Sub-Saharan African National identity issues: Ethnicity and State Building," 11.

⁷⁷⁹ Makumba, 156.

⁷⁸⁰ Nyasani, 100.

cult of local community.”⁷⁸¹ MacIntyre’s concern here is what he perceives as the communitarian’s mistake of attempting to make values of a local community normative for a larger society, such as the state. In this case, it is comparable to Makumba’s attempt to make *shienyu ni shienyu* an aperture to the larger society. Given its deformities and narrowness, the local community cannot be projected as a normative standard. Instead, MacIntyre is interested in the flourishing of humanly worthwhile practices and virtues and excellences that the communities bring into play.⁷⁸² Such virtues and excellences will entail the quality of the social practices that various local communities enable an individual to realize. MacIntyre’s approach seems to be the prevailing condition in cosmopolitan thinking today, where the individual is the unit of value and action.

In the case of *shienyu ni shienyu*, Makumba believes the normative standard is in terms of “the ‘unadulterated’ feeling of obligation to help ‘one of my own,’ which in itself is not restricted and does not inhibit my thrust towards the larger human family.”⁷⁸³ However, as it was already pointed out such a norm is largely envisioned from the rationalized point of view and may not necessarily reflect the existential situation. What seems to prevail even on Makumba’s own account is what he calls the “ugliness of *shienyu ni shienyu*.”⁷⁸⁴ He mentions the forms of ugliness expressed through clannism, nationalism, nepotism, and racism, among others. Makumba considers these “isms” inhibitors to the positivity of *shienyu ni shienyu*. Makumba does not venture into the possibility that *shienyu ni shienyu* moral dictum itself could be the greatest possible inhibitor for individuals or even communities themselves in encountering the tragic nature of existence.

Others, such as Kwame Gyekyes, in support of communal inheritance of values, believe that identity is formed thorough collective associations and obligations. Gyekyes argues:

In the communitarian moral universe caring or compassion or generosity, not justice—which is related essentially to a strictly rights-based morality—may be a fundamental moral category. In a moral framework where love, compassion, caring, friendship, and genuine concern for others characterize social relationships,

⁷⁸¹ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1999), 142.

⁷⁸² Ronald Beiner, “Community Versus Citizenship: MacIntyre’s Revolt Against the Modern State,” *Critical Review* 14, no. 4 (2000): 464.

⁷⁸³ Makumba, 157.

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

justice—which is about relations of claims and counter-claims—may not be the primary moral virtue.⁷⁸⁵

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that moral maxims justify not only ethnic groups as constructions, but embody some existential reality. The fact that such maxims entail the enigma of existence is enshrined in what they privilege: the values of compassion. There is a form of morality that emerges from such communal moral maxims, which Bell calls the moral sense of justice that is “communal and compassion based.”⁷⁸⁶ The basis of such a morality is the endeavour not to cause harm to another human being.

Nevertheless, the compassion-based morality that seems to ensue from the *shienyu ni shienyu* maxim entails within it a moral conundrum. In the words of Abraham, W.E, in morality built on the communal and compassion, “The authorship of actions become more interesting than the classification of the act.”⁷⁸⁷ This means that the doer of the act is what determines the classification of the act. In this regard Abraham observes that what might generally be perceived as the same act is punished or not according to who did it. Hence, he points out further that: “[m]oral epithets [are] attached first and foremost to agents and only derivatively to their actions.”⁷⁸⁸ In this scenario the determination of the right or wrong is in terms of who is the agent and such consideration may not be deemed as an expression of partiality.

Makumba ultimately grounds his philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* in what he calls “the human person and human values.”⁷⁸⁹ He explains that the philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* is only so “if it assimilates the universal principles of philosophy for application in the particularized community situations and such a philosophy should not appear a foreigner in the fold of philosophy.”⁷⁹⁰ Initially, it was seen that *shienyu ni shienyu* as a moral maxim ought to be understood as a response to an existential enigma where the stinks of one’s own are shouldered as an obligation. The problem with such an undertaking is that the vagaries of existence may never be properly encountered at the individual level. Furthermore, in

⁷⁸⁵ Kwame Gyekye, *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 70.

⁷⁸⁶ Bell, *Understanding African philosophy*, 66.

⁷⁸⁷ W.E. Abraham, *The Mind of Africa* (Cape Town: Sub-Saharan Publishers and Traders, 2015), 186.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁹ Makumba, 157.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.

MacIntyre's view, the proneness to narrowness and corruption by the local communities makes it difficult to make values ensuing from them normative. Instead of propagating universal principles drawn from such moral maxims like *shienyu ni shienyu*, the anti-communitarian MacIntyre hold that

[w]e need to set side by side for comparative study examples of different types of local community, examples of such communities at their best and at their worst, and most of all examples of communities that have been or are open to alternative possibilities and that sometimes move towards the better and sometimes towards the worse.⁷⁹¹

The comparative approach of MacIntyre is possibly promising as opposed to Makumba's universalizing endeavour. For MacIntyre, within the different social forms emerge networks and a variety of ways in which such networks can be sustained, strengthened, or even weakened and destroyed. MacIntyre's approach seems to be existentially grounded since as he notes, "Different conditions pose different threats that in turn require different responses."⁷⁹² These observations seem plausible enough, but they do not factor in Makumba's standpoint which is founded on the African philosophy of socialism. The evolution of African socialism and its underpinnings on the individual person further considers the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* from a broader perspective. The challenge remains: which is a more-grounded response and thus akin to the actuality of existence? So far, the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* seems to privilege the communal against individual. Such ontology confirms B. Hallen's observation about ethno philosophy that it: "presents itself as a philosophy of *peoples* rather than *individuals*."⁷⁹³ Such characteristic of ethno- philosophy partly explains the inadequacy of its adherents in appropriating existence as tragic.

⁷⁹¹ MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*, 143.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, 143.

⁷⁹³ Barry Hallen, "Indeterminacy, Ethnophilosophy, Linguistic Philosophy, African Philosophy" in *Philosophy*, Vol. 70, No. 273 (Cambridge University Press, July 1995), 383.

4.3 Evolution of the African Philosophy of Sociality

This section examines the evolution of the African philosophy of sociality. In Masolo's words, the discourse on African philosophy is generally associated with the "Western discourse on Africa, and the African response to it."⁷⁹⁴ Prima facie, Masolo's assertion could imply that the resultant discourse is largely reactionary. Wiredu reflecting on the discourse about *négritude* believes that its focus is on restoring in black people the pride in their being and culture that had been eclipsed by colonization.⁷⁹⁵ J. Paul Sartre in his work *Black Orpheus* interprets *négritude* first as the Negro's being against Europe and colonization and secondly in terms of Heidegger's language as "the Negro's being-in-the-world."⁷⁹⁶ From Wiredu's and Sartre's interpretations *négritude* tends to be understood through cultural and identity connotations. However, to provide a compelling case on *négritude* one needs to consider its originator Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), a black poet, writer and playwright from Martinique.

Césaire's notion of *négritude* is developed in his work: *Cahier d' un retour au pays natal* (*Notebook of a Return to my Native Land*, 1939).⁷⁹⁷ According to Mireille Rosello, the Notebook represents "an exhilarating moment of resistance" against the racist and paternalistic European discourse of the 1930s.⁷⁹⁸ One form of resistance entails the re-appropriation of the term "nègre," though filled with colonialist undertones, as an identity. Sartre on the appropriation of the supposedly negative connotations of the word *nègre* notes that: "having been insulted and formerly enslaved, he [Césaire] picks up the word [*nègre*] which was thrown at him like a stone, he draws himself erect and proudly proclaims himself a black man, face to face with white men."⁷⁹⁹ However, the appropriation of the term *nègre* by Césaire as it will be demonstrated is beyond the question of skin colour.

In general, the understanding of *Négritude* is linked to the events of slavery and colonialism. On this account, Masolo observes that black peoples "wanted to reaffirm their culture, derogated and nearly destroyed by Westernism, slavery, and colonialism."⁸⁰⁰ Based

⁷⁹⁴ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 1.

⁷⁹⁵ Kwame Anthony Appiah, "African Philosophy" in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, 98.

⁷⁹⁶ Jean Paul Sartre, *Black Orpheus*, 33 and 36.

⁷⁹⁷ This work is a poem. The Caribbean island where Césaire was born was part of the French Lesser Antilles.

⁷⁹⁸ Mireille Rosello, "Introduction" Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land, Cahier d' un retour au pays natal*, trans. Mireille Rosello and Annie Pritchard, French-English bilingual edition (Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 1995), 12. Hereafter, Notebook.

⁷⁹⁹ Sartre, *Black Orpheus*, 18.

⁸⁰⁰ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 3.

on these experiences, it seems the natural response is to seek for self-expression. On historical grounds, it is claimed that the Harlem Renaissance, understood as the outcome of political groundwork done by different Pan-African currents in the Americas, is the precursor to the Négritude movement. Harlem Renaissance is generally associated with Langston Hughes's poems, which urge the new black generation to express its "black personality."⁸⁰¹ Hence Masolo's position: that "Négritude was the black francophone version of this expression of black personality."⁸⁰² Though this observation is largely credible, it may not project the full picture of négritude, especially as it is developed by Césaire. The Notebook is famed for the elaborate theorization in "poetic form" of the term négritude:

My négritude is not a stone, its deafness hurled against the clamour of the day, my négritude is not an opaque spot of dead water over the dead eye of the earth, my négritude is neither a tower nor a cathedral, it reaches deep down into the red flesh of the soil, it reaches deep into the blazing flesh of the sky, it pierces opaque prostration with its straight patience.⁸⁰³

The exact meaning of négritude seems to be shrouded in ambiguity. Nevertheless, in the words of Garraway, négritude is "a neologism" that Césaire himself coined and its description in the above surrealist image suggests "an association of blackness, organic nature, and the irrational forces of the universe, in contrast to inert matter or the immobile, vertical edifices of Western reason."⁸⁰⁴ The surrealist image here correlates to the early twentieth century movement in art and literature that mostly dealt with the subconscious.

French Surrealism, according to D. Maclagan, is about "individual nonconformity whilst simultaneously promoting collective and anonymous forms of creativity."⁸⁰⁵ Thus surrealists feature the group of the unconventional, experimental or the avant-garde artists that promote the realm of imagery. Césaire's type of négritude must be conceived in terms of this

⁸⁰¹ Refer to the Journal, *The Nation* of 23 June 1926. Harlem is a place in New York, north of Central Park, mainly inhabited by black people. For people like Senghor, Harlem represents material deprivation but, more pertinently, human vitality. Senghor contrasts New York's Manhattan and Harlem in his poem *À New York (pour un orchestre de jazz: solo de trompette)*. Also refer to Roger Little, "Léopold Sédar Senghor, *À New York*" *Twentieth-Century French Poetry Acritical Anthology*, eds. Hugues Azérad and Peter Collier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 70-78.

⁸⁰² Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 10.

⁸⁰³ Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. Mireille Rosello with Annie Pritchard, French-English Bilingual edition (Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books Ltd, 1995), 115.

⁸⁰⁴ Garraway, "What is Mine: Césairean Négritude between the Particular and the Universal," 73.

⁸⁰⁵ David Maclagan, "Outsiders or insiders?" in *The Myth of Primitivism, Perspectives on Art*, ed. Susan Heller (London: Routledge, 1991), 33.

stance of avant-gardism which is seemingly not founded on a fixed object but is dynamic. In the words of D. Hopkins, “surrealism owing to its avant-gardism is opposed to being assimilated into the system.”⁸⁰⁶ In general terms, Césaire’s *négritude*, as it will be seen shortly operates basically within the realm of life which is organic.⁸⁰⁷ Sartre’s interpretation of Césaire’s *négritude* as a becoming which desires to abolish of “all kinds of ethnic privileges” ought to be understood on the account of the realm of imaginations.⁸⁰⁸ The imaginative aspect of Césaire’s understanding of *négritude* has largely been overshadowed by the overarching influences of Senghor. For instance, Makumba seems to ascribe a fixed notion of *négritude* to Césaire by alleging that “[h]e coined the word *négritude* to indicate the dignity or personhood of black people.”⁸⁰⁹ Then Masolo remarks that “Césaire uses the word ‘*négritude*’ ... to conceptualize the dignity, the personhood or humanity, of black people.”⁸¹⁰ On the contrary, Césaire is rather clear that his *négritude* is not about systems but is surrealistic. However, Césaire’s brand of *négritude* is not the only one.

The brand of *négritude* that Césaire is not keen to promote underpins the collective understanding in the context of “a general reappraisal of the cultural distinctiveness and vitality of African-descended peoples around the world.”⁸¹¹ This brand is linked to the *Négritude* movement in general. The *Négritude* movement at its foundation involved students from Africa and the Caribbean in Paris who included Léopold Sédar Senghor, Léon-Gontran Damas, Suzanne Roussy, and Aimé Césaire. They are responsible for developing the concept *négritude*. The context of the movement is the rehabilitation of the term *nègre* as Senghor attests:

It was against this tendency to use the word *Black* [*Noir*] as a noun that the ‘black students’ who launched the *Négritude* movement in the 1930s reacted [this is an allusion to the journal *L’Etudiant noir*]. Most of them had a solid background in classics, including Latin and Greek. So they were not unaware of the grammatical dimensions of this problem: they knew that the words *Noir* and *Nègre* were related, that *Noir* was of popular formation, whereas *Nègre* was borrowed from Portuguese and of a learned formation...

⁸⁰⁶ David Hopkins, *After Modern Art 1945–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 168.

⁸⁰⁷ This is the brand of *negritude* that hitherto not been allowed to blossom. The focus has largely been on identity-based *negritude*.

⁸⁰⁸ Sartre, *Black Orpheus*, 42 and 48.

⁸⁰⁹ Makumba, 116.

⁸¹⁰ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 1.

⁸¹¹ Garraway, “What is Mine: Césairean *Négritude* between the Particular and the Universal,” 73.

In the 1930s, [...] our ultimate goal was to work toward the rebirth of *Black African civilization* toward restoration, and to live its fundamental values, so we decided to give back, at the same time, to the word *Nègre* its truth and thus its dignity. And when it became necessary for us to conceptualize our vision and our plan, naturally and in the most orthodox manner, Aimé Césaire invented the word *Négritude*.⁸¹²

The text gives the general starting point for the Négritude movement. Both Césaire and Senghor initially envisaged the role of négritude in reactionary terms. Makumba on the *Notebook* of Césaire similarly interprets the meaning of the return in identity terms. He opines that the return is meant for all black people “to unite behind their common origin in order to defend their identity and affirm their culture” against the tenets of Eurocentricism like colonialism slavery and slave trade.⁸¹³ On his part, Masolo believes that Césaire’s idea of “return” gives the dignity, the personhood or humanity, of black people’s historicity; it turns it into a consciousness or awareness, into a state (of mind) which is subject to manipulations of history, or power relations.⁸¹⁴ These assertions about Césaire’s *Notebook* are largely plausible but as it was pointed out above in “my négritude,” there are other fundamental aspects beyond the identity thesis. These aspects will be explained below (penultimate section of Chapter Five). The identity-consciousness thesis is mainly propounded by Senghor. It is from Senghor that the discourse on African philosophy of sociality starts.

4.3.1 Senghor on Négritude

Négritude for Senghor designates the negro-world. He believes that négritude is equivalent to the assertion of the African being.⁸¹⁵ Senghor’s négritude is precisely culture understood as the sum total of the Africans’ cultural values.⁸¹⁶ His thesis entails the search for what is constitutively African. In 1966, while addressing the “World Festival of Negro Arts,” he notes that “the meaningful political, social, and economic development of the people of African descent the world over will only occur when the special values of the Negro cultures

⁸¹² This is cited by Christopher L. Miller, *Nationalists and Nomads, Essays on Francophone African literature and Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 39.

⁸¹³ Makumba, 116.

⁸¹⁴ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 1–2.

⁸¹⁵ Leopold S. Senghor, Rapport sur doctrine la propagande du parti Congrès Constitutif du Parti du Rassemblement Africain (PRA) mimeographed brochure, 14. Quoted in Lilyan Lagneau Kesteloot, *Les Ecrivains noirs de Langue française: naissance d’ une littérature* (Brussels: Institut de Sociologie de L’ Université Libre de Bruxelles), 80.

⁸¹⁶ Leopold S. Senghor, *Prose and Poetry* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 10.

are accorded their full place.”⁸¹⁷ Socially, the character of that view is the communal prioritization of African society. According to Francis Abiola Irele, Senghor’s conception of *négritude* is an enduring quality of being, constitutive of the Black race, and exempt from the exigencies of the historical process.⁸¹⁸ I must add that Senghor’s approach seems to be unresponsive to existential dynamics. Such a brand of *négritude* supposedly privileges being communal as African’s distinctive manner of relating to the world.

For Wiredu, in Senghor’s search for what is constitutively African, he stumbles on the communal taking “precedence over the individual.”⁸¹⁹ Wiredu further alleges that it is with the same endeavor that Senghor stresses the importance of the institution of the family understood as a kinship unit that includes “all persons, living and dead who acknowledge a common ancestor.” Senghor expresses his position on the distinctively Black values as follows:

In contrast to the classic European, the Negro-African does not draw a line between himself and the object, he does not hold it at a distance, nor does he merely look at it and analyse it. After holding it at a distance, after scanning it without analyzing it, he takes it vibrant in his hands, careful not to kill or fix it. He touches it, feels it, smells it [...] Thus the Negro-African sympathises, abandons his personality to become identified with the Other, dies to be reborn in the Other. He does not assimilate; he is assimilated. He lives a common life with the Other; he lives in a symbiosis.⁸²⁰

For Senghor, emotion as a mode of apprehension takes primacy of place among the Black race. As Masolo observes with such understanding, Senghor is being consistent with his position that culturally every people have “a certain way, particular to every group, of feeling, thinking, expressing and acting.”⁸²¹ Though Senghor is supposedly consistent, one must note reactionary vestiges in his claims apart from what was already projected in terms of slavery and colonialism. The reactionary inclination is influenced by Western academic discourse about Africa and Senghor’s personal experiences.

In responding to the external academic influence, one is mainly dealing with Western discourse about people of Black descent. Hegel in the introduction to *The Philosophy of*

⁸¹⁷ Ellen Conroy Kennedy, ed. “Léopold Sedar Senghor” in *The Negritude Poets* (New York: Thunders Mouth Press, 1989), 121.

⁸¹⁸ Francis Abiola Irele, “African Philosophy, Francophone” in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, 110.

⁸¹⁹ Wiredu, “African Philosophy Anglophone” in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, 98.

⁸²⁰ Léopold S. Senghor, *On African Socialism* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 72.

⁸²¹ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 26.

History divides Africa in three parts: First is Africa south of Sahara which he calls Africa proper “the Upland almost entirely unknown to [Europe],”⁸²² second is Africa north of the desert, which he calls European Africa; third is the river region of the Nile, which neighbors Asia. For Hegel, the land he calls Africa proper (Sub-Saharan Africa) in terms of history “has remained—for all purposes of connection with the rest of the World—shut up; it is the Gold-land compressed within itself—the land of childhood.”⁸²³ In Hegel’s thinking, “History means nothing but the thoughtful consideration of it.”⁸²⁴ In addition, reflection is considered essential to humanity.

Hegel considers the land of childhood in terms of consciousness, observing, “In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence – as for example, God, or Law.”⁸²⁵ Regarding these two examples, Hegel’s position is that the will is involved and God or law plays a role in the realization of one’s own being. In addition, he claims that the Negro has not yet attained the “distinction between himself and the universality of his essential being.”⁸²⁶ In such a state of affairs, the African remains in the uniform and undeveloped state of oneness of his existence. Masolo interprets the Hegelian African state of innocence (childhood) as implying that the Sub-Saharan Africans “are unconscious of themselves, as in the natural and primitive state of Adam and Eve in the biblical paradise before the emergence of reason and will.”⁸²⁷ The Hegelian assertions about people on the basis of their natural context were certainly familiar to Senghor when he talks of the particularity of African cultural values above.

In relation to Senghor’s context in Paris, the standard position is that the exhibitions of “art nègre” were a common feature that developed interest in Black performers. Based on the success of their dance performances, there developed a popular myth that “Blacks were supposedly more in touch with the world of the body, they had an innate sense for rhythm and dance and correspondingly no talent for rational and scientific disciplines.”⁸²⁸ Faced with such stereotypes, it is claimed that Négritude, and Senghor’s in particular, oscillated between the

⁸²² Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), 91.

⁸²³ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 91.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁶ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 93.

⁸²⁷ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 5.

⁸²⁸ Rosello, “Introduction,” 23.

desire to reject such designations and the temptation to accept and proudly celebrate the supposedly “non-rational side of their personality as an alleged Black essence.”⁸²⁹ This attitude is exemplified in the re-appropriation of the term nègro into Négritude as the black consciousness by Africans and Caribbean intellectuals. Now, it is plausible to suggest that Senghor’s narrative of the distinctive Black cultural identity is a reaction to the above Eurocentric stance about the Black race. That that seems to be the case is demonstrable from Senghor’s own experience as a teenager.

From a personal perspective, Senghor’s project of Black consciousness apparently is informed by the youthful experience in Dakar, the Senegalese capital. In 1921, at the age of fifteen in a secondary school, he reacted strongly against his teacher-priest who told him that they (Africans) were supposedly savages who had no traditions and no civilization and that they “were merely responsive to the hollow sound of words, without putting ideas behind them.”⁸³⁰ Later in 1966 Senghor reflects on that youthful experience, claiming that he “reacted against the things” he was told. He observes, “I was a child. But I had an intuition about African civilization, the intuition that we had roots in a profound spiritual tradition.” More pertinently, he claims that the experience made him want to defend the civilization his teacher was denying and it made him want “to demonstrate and illustrate it.”⁸³¹ The experience with the teacher-priest seems to have set the direction of his life as a scholar. On this account, Senghor’s négritude crystallized into an identity issue and as such influenced the desire to chart a different identity path from the Western one.

There are two overlapping themes that are apparently pertinent in cultural development. The question, “What is to be done?” is frequently displaced by “Who we are?” which is about identity.⁸³² These two approaches could be helpful in any attempt to differentiate between Césaire’s and Senghor’s stances on négritude. Though both are involved in the initial conception of négritude, the two develop different standpoints towards Négritude movement. Senghor’s brand of négritude is the one that has mostly influenced the understanding and development of the African philosophy of sociality. The underlying fact of

⁸²⁹ Rosello, “Introduction,” 23.

⁸³⁰ Kennedy, *The Negritude Poets*, 122.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² Sonia Kruks, “Fanon, Sartre, and Identity” in *Fanon: A Critical Reader*, eds. Lewis R. Gordon, T. Denean Sharpley – Whiting, Renée T. White (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 122.

Senghor's identity narrative is the communal characteristic of African society.⁸³³ Communality in this case is articulated in terms of the family.

The family could entail an entire village or more. This is because it includes all those who trace some kinship. In this regard, Senghor further observes that the African is held in a tight network of vertical and horizontal communities which bind and at the same time support him.⁸³⁴ The ground for Senghor's claims is what he calls "the spiritual tradition." The spiritual tradition is explained in nuances like the lack of dualism between subject and object, espousing the realm of emotions which include compassion. For Masolo, Senghor's Black man is characterized as a man of nature who

Traditionally, he is thought to live in, with, and by nature. He is a sensualist, a being with open senses and without an intermediary between subject and object; he is himself subject and object at the same time. He feels more than he sees. It is in himself, in his body, that he receives and tests the radiations emitted by objects of knowledge.⁸³⁵

These assertions must be read in conjunction with the motivations of Senghor. He is determined to defend the black civilization that his teacher was denying and teach the same to his people. In this context of justification, Senghor is criticized for substituting "an idea" with "an emotion."⁸³⁶ Hence, on Masolo's interpretations above the overriding claim for Senghor is the maxim that emotion is Black as much as reason is Greek. The implication of the maxim in Senghor's own words is not

that the black man has got no reason as others make me say, but rather that his reason is not discursive but synthetic; it is not antagonistic, but sympathetic. This is another way of knowing. While the European is analytic by utilization, that of the black man is intuitive by participation.⁸³⁷

I think what Senghor is alleging is that the Black people's understanding of reason is anti-Cartesian. Hence, he believes that for the Black people, it is not *cogito ergo sum* but "I feel, I

⁸³³ Senghor, *Prose and Poetry*, 58.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, 43 and 48.

⁸³⁵ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 26.

⁸³⁶ Kennedy, *The Negritude Poets*, 122.

⁸³⁷ Senghor, *On African Socialism*, 73.

dance the Other; I am.”⁸³⁸ In the text above, Senghor’s remark, “as others make me say,” is a possible reference to the youthful determination to respond to Western discourse about Africa.

According to Wiredu, it is on “reason as emotions and closeness to nature” that Senghor grounds the African philosophy of sociality. Wiredu observes, ‘The communalist cast of African society is a social manifestation of the sense of community which the African feels with the whole of creation.’ In addition, he holds that “[t]his manifestation traditionally took the form of social arrangements of mutual caring and support which ensured for the individual a reasonable amount of wellbeing.”⁸³⁹ The individual for Senghor is not devalued, but individuality is defined in terms of community, not vice versa. In Senghor’s construction, the social arrangement of mutual caring and support centres on the community as the owner of the land which is regarded as the main means of production. From this common ownership of land, it follows that for Senghor, African society is collectivist or socialist. Some scholars on *négritude* are critical of Senghor’s approach that apparently mystifies the question of Black identity. Senghor, in search for identity, seems to forget about the existential conditions that led to the question of *négritude* in the first place.

For Césaire what needed acceptance is not the colonial stereotype of blackness as essential irrationality, instead it is the condition of slavery and colonization. As aptly put by Garraway, “what emerges from the memory of the transnational, global black subject—the Caribbean child [...] and the exhibited African—is the realization that colonial discourse on blackness names not a trans-historical essence, but rather an ideological construction that obfuscates the real conditions of the oppression rooted in the capitalist economy of the sugar plantation.”⁸⁴⁰ The emergence of African consciousness may not be constructed through the rationalized or abstractive discourses that have no guarantee of confronting the existential conditions involved.

I thus hold that the designations “African philosophy of sociality” or “African socialism” or “African culture” are all encompassing schemes of thought that can be a convenient way of imposing a narrative on a plurality of experiences. Hans Prinzhorn reflecting on the psychology of the creators/artists and their works alleges,

⁸³⁸ Senghor, *On African Socialism* 73.

⁸³⁹ Wiredu, “African Philosophy, Anglophone” *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 99.

⁸⁴⁰ Garraway, “What is Mine: Césairean *Négritude* between the Particular and the Universal,” 78.

These works really emerged from autonomous personalities who carried out the mission of an anonymous force, who were independent of external reality, indebted to no-one and sufficient solely unto themselves. The innate primeval process of configuration ran its course, far from the external world, without plan, but by necessity, like all natural processes.⁸⁴¹

This point will be further developed in the next chapter on conditions for the possible envisioning of the African cultural world. The overarching concern here is that abstraction even when associated with attempts to find new ways of depicting some human conditions may easily be diagnosed as a “symptom of withdrawal from a reality identified.”⁸⁴² Senghor’s approach seems to seek unanimity in Black identity too quickly without letting the underlying existential conditions play out.

Senghor’s brand of *négritude* is largely immersed in trying to espouse some African niche different from the Western conceptual schemes at all cost, and in the process, it tends to be reactionary. Such is Masolo’s position: “Senghor’s version of *négritude* has been charged with being a reactionary movement and of being apologetic to the neo-colonial culture.”⁸⁴³ Worse still, *négritude* ascribed to cultural nationalism seems to be lost in what Mbiti christens “cultural *Zamani*” as seeking a revival of interest in traditional music, dance and folk stories.⁸⁴⁴ *Négritude* conceived in terms of developing an all-inclusive consciousness could degenerate into imposing structures inimical to differentiation.

Senghor’s all-encompassing structure, which he calls African socialism, could result in what some scholars on *négritude* have described as a derivative structure dependent on colonising culture. *Négritude* of such a nature “appears as a nineteenth-century European conception of culture as discrete, fixed, and grounded in foundational narratives of origin, which arguably risks producing new forms of exclusion.”⁸⁴⁵ Its weakness notwithstanding, Senghor’s intention was that the *négritude* ensuing from African socialism finds some place in the social and political institutions. Nyerere’s model of African socialism designated as *Ujamaa* seems to be an attempt to realize Senghor’s intention.

⁸⁴¹ Prinzhorn Hans, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* (New York: Springer Verlag, 1972), 272.

⁸⁴² Maclagan, “Outsiders or insiders?” in *The Myth of Primitivism*, 38.

⁸⁴³ Masolo, *African Philosophy in Search of Identity*, 27.

⁸⁴⁴ *Zamani* is a Kiswahili term for time in sense of ‘the past’. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁴⁵ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1998), 124.

4.3.2 *Ujamaa*: Nyerere's Model of African Socialism

Nyerere responds to both the question of identity (who we are) and of action (what is to be done). For Nyerere one of the basic assumptions appropriate for economic and social organization must be “within each nation state and the decision must be exclusively by the people of that nation.”⁸⁴⁶ In his context Nyerere rightly thought that it is the people of Tanzania to decide the path of their country. This section examines Nyerere's philosophy of *Ujamaa* and its possible influence on the development of singular individuality. With Nyerere there is a serious attempt to operationalize some aspects of African socialism as he interpreted them mostly from his own *Zanaki* ethnic group, and some Western philosophical influence.⁸⁴⁷

Most of Nyerere's claims about African socialism are in the form of political speeches he made in different fora. Apart from the speeches, there are policy statements too. Nyerere's term for African socialism is his own Kiswahili invention in political context as *ujamaa*. The term *ujamaa* is specifically chosen as the description of Nyerere's interpretation of socialism.⁸⁴⁸ *Ujamaa* is an abstract noun linked to an extended family situation. The translation given by Nyerere is *family-hood*. He writes: “Ujamaa, or ‘family-hood,’ describes our socialism.”⁸⁴⁹ This family-hood is further described as “an attitude of the mind.”⁸⁵⁰ Nyerere's usage of the term *ujamaa* entails connotations of extended family setting.

Nyerere is convinced that *ujamaa* as an attitude of the mind is what distinguishes a socialist from a non-socialist. One of the central claims of Nyerere about socialism as an attitude of the mind is its linkage to a moral obligation. The moral aspects of *ujamaa* are described in the following terms: “Socialism is a way of life, and a socialist society cannot simply come into existence. A socialist society can only be built by those who believe in, and who themselves practice, the principle of socialism.”⁸⁵¹ The attitude of mind in question is that of brotherhood. Nyerere later while in North Korea told his audience that “a spirit of co-

⁸⁴⁶ This is from Nyerere's address in Khartoum January 1973. The title of the address is “The Rational choice” *African Socialism in Practice, The Tanzania Experience*, ed. Andrew Coulson (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1979), 19–26.

⁸⁴⁷ Like Senghor, Nyerere's claims about African socialism are mostly borne out of his own experience from the *Zanaki* people and studies of Mill's utilitarianism. This is even though he talks of African socialism or culture.

⁸⁴⁸ Andrew Coulson, *Tanzania A Political Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 235.

⁸⁴⁹ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 7.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁵¹ Nyerere, *Essays on Socialism* (Dar es salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968), 17.

operation and human equality” is almost a definition of socialism itself.⁸⁵² In an address to a Swedish gathering in Stockholm in October 1969, he claims that the nature of a co-operative movement is the “spirit of brotherhood and common endeavour.”⁸⁵³ Therefore, the nature of *ujamaa* as a family-hood or brotherhood gives it a moral thrust that demands responsibility for the greater national good. It is this moral demand for the national good that warrants the popular assertion that socialism is reconciled with nationalism.⁸⁵⁴ Owing to such a moral demand, Nyerere is emphatic that “[t]he foundation, and the objective, of African socialism is the extended family. The true African socialist ... regards all men as his brethren—as members of his ever-extending family.”⁸⁵⁵ From the nature of *ujamaa* it crystallizes into a basic philosophy that hinges on equality and democracy.

For Nyerere, equality and democracy among the Africans are supposedly “givens,” since “[w]e in Africa have no more need of being ‘converted’ to socialism than we have of being ‘taught’ democracy. Both are rooted in our own past—in the traditional society which produced us.”⁸⁵⁶ From Nyerere’s prism, equality and people’s self-governing are inseparable tenets. In fact, he claims that “Socialism is not possible without democracy.”⁸⁵⁷ The claims around equality and governability of the people as inherently African are complex and need unpacking.

The basis of equality for Nyerere, like Senghor, is land. On land Nyerere appeals to what is supposedly traditional African communal ownership. It is supposedly traditional in the sense that it is basically drawn from his cultural upbringing which may not be the case all over Africa. The cultural anthropologists who have studied Nyerere’s ethnic land ownership system testify to the fact that

[t]he right to use land as well as access to resources was determined by the lineage, which, in this context, is another way of saying that the land was communally ‘owned.’ Traditionally the elders of the various descent groups were entitled to allocate land use, that is, they determined which individuals had the right to cultivate specific pieces of land. Individual ownership in the Western sense,

⁸⁵² Nyerere, *Freedom and Development, A selection from Writings and Speeches 1968–1973* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1973), 46.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁸⁵⁴ Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy*, 235.

⁸⁵⁵ Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity: A Selection from Writings and Speeches 1952–1965* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1965), 170.

⁸⁵⁶ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 7.

⁸⁵⁷ Nyerere, *Freedom and development*, 179.

including the right to sell land individually for cash, was unknown among the Zanaki.⁸⁵⁸

The *Zanaki* thinking on land ownership finds qualification in Nyerere's assertion that: "the African's right to land was simply the right to use it; he had no other right to it, nor did it occur to him to try to claim one."⁸⁵⁹ In Nyerere's socialist view land is one of the basic means of production and it is God given. The equality factor arises partly from the fact of distribution.

Some scholars like Wiredu have interpreted Nyerere as credibly stressing the equality of benefits. Wiredu alleges that "for Nyerere, socialism is a distributive dispensation and not primarily a system of production."⁸⁶⁰ While Nyerere's stress on distribution of wealth and later nationalization of private property in his country may warrant Wiredu's assertion, Nyerere's socialism envisages production too. Nyerere gives an elaborate argument on the value of work where both production and distribution are emphasized. Socialism of distribution must be envisaged within the overarching value of society.

In Nyerere's scheme of things, organized society entails individuals who work and are taken care of by the society. He seems to be convinced that in the traditional African society,

[b]oth the 'rich' and the 'poor' individual were completely secure in African society. Natural catastrophe brought famine, but it brought famine to everybody – 'poor' or 'rich.' Nobody starved, either for food or for human dignity, because he lacked personal wealth; he could depend on the wealth possessed by the community of which he was a member. That was socialism. That is socialism.⁸⁶¹

In addition to land as the basic form of assurance for sustenance, it seems that nothing could override the existential advantages of belonging to a larger society. In the above text it will seem strange that Nyerere mentions famine as a natural catastrophe. But famine must be understood as an existential threat among the people where farming relied heavily on the rain patterns. In the words of a *Zanaki* cultural expert, communal, mutual associations were necessary in order to deal with "recurrent conditions" of uncertainties.⁸⁶² The uncertainties

⁸⁵⁸ *Zanaki* is Nyerere's ethnic group found in Mara region of Tanzania. This citation is ascribed to a Tanzanian sociologist Benjamin Mkirya himself a *Zanaki*. Refer Viktoria Stöger-Eising, "Ujamaa Revisited: Indigenous and European Influences in Nyerere's Social and Political Thought" in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 119–123.

⁸⁵⁹ Nyerere, "African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice," 5.

⁸⁶⁰ Wiredu, "African Philosophy Anglophone" in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 101.

⁸⁶¹ Nyerere, "African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice," 3.

⁸⁶² Benjamin Mkirya, *Historia, Mila na Desturi za Wazanaki* (Peramiho: Tanzania: Benedictine Publications, 1991), 85.

included the insecurity during planting and harvesting with unreliable rains. Mutual cooperation could be handy in such moments as a safety net. The mutual cooperation was evidenced in periods of work and natural calamities which, as cultural experts assert, “constitutes a form of ‘life insurance’ that can sometimes spell the difference between flourishing and disaster.”⁸⁶³ It is within such existential conditions that safety was more guaranteed in the larger society than as individuals.

According to Komba, in Nyerere’s traditional African society ‘man was socialized to put the common good above individual good.’⁸⁶⁴ Komba claims further that for Nyerere the nature of ‘Africans’ as socialists is founded on the ‘extended family settings’ which were governed by three fundamental principles: “living together, working together, and sharing equitably the fruits of their work.”⁸⁶⁵ In such cultural settings people were encouraged to think of themselves as primarily members of a community. The three fundamental principles hinged on the basic *ujamaa* feeling “of recognition and respect for one another.”⁸⁶⁶ From the basic moral recognition and respect, communality of various forms could follow in place. Work is an inherent part of Nyerere’s *ujamaa* brand of socialism. He claims, “In traditional African society everybody was a worker. There was no other way of earning a living for the community.”⁸⁶⁷ Then he explains the implication of such a daring assertion:

When I say that in traditional African society everybody was a worker, I do not use the word ‘worker’ simply as opposed to ‘employer’ but also as opposed to ‘loiterer’ or ‘idler.’ One of the most socialistic achievements of our society was the sense of security it gave to its members, and the universal hospitality on which they could rely.⁸⁶⁸

Work is understood here by Nyerere as an individual’s contribution to communal sustenance. The individual’s work is considered as one’s fair share of contribution towards production for the commonwealth. He links community working and living with hospitality since he believes that

⁸⁶³ Viktoria Stöger-Eising, “Ujamaa Revisited: Indigenous and European Influences in Nyerere’s Social and Political Thought” in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (2000): 120.

⁸⁶⁴ Traditional African society here is an abstraction since the basis is Nyerere’s *Zanaki* upbringing.

⁸⁶⁵ Komba, “Contribution to Rural Development: Ujamaa & Villagisation,” 36.

⁸⁶⁶ Viktoria Stöger-Eising, “Ujamaa Revisited,” 130.

⁸⁶⁷ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 3.

⁸⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

[a]ny increase in the amount of wealth we produce under this system [community farming] would be ‘ours’; it would not belong just to one or two individuals, but to all those whose work had produced it. At the same time we should have strengthened our traditional equality and our traditional security. For in a village community a man who is genuinely sick during the harvest would not be left to starve for the rest of the year, nor would the man whose wife is ill find the children uncared for—as he might do if he farms on his own.⁸⁶⁹

Here both production and distribution are emphasized. But the two are not ends in themselves, since they are geared towards strengthening equality and what he calls traditional security. In this regard for the sake of traditional security, existential distribution seems to be privileged. Thus, Nyerere believes that uneven distribution of wealth poses danger for the communal security that entails caring for one another.

The theme of hospitality is enshrined in the basic philosophy of *ujamaa*. For Nyerere, human equality and human dignity are basic, and hospitality seems to be the expression of the acknowledgement of equal human respect. As seen above, for Nyerere, security, working, and hospitality are intertwined. What Nyerere calls traditional hospitality is projected with the understanding that every member contributed to the community well-being. On hospitality the argument is as follows:

Those of us who talk about the African way of Life, and, quite rightly, take a pride in maintaining the tradition of hospitality which is so great a part of it, might do well to remember the Swahili saying: [*Mgeni siku mbili, siku ya tatu mpe jembe*] ‘Treat your guest as a guest for two days; on the third day give him a hoe!’ In actual fact, the guest was likely to ask for the hoe even before his host had to give him one - for he knew what was expected of him, and would have been ashamed to remain idle any longer.⁸⁷⁰

The standard interpretation is that work and hospitality are constituent elements of *ujamaa*. Work-cum-hospitality as Stöger-Eising claims is “an ethos into which one is socialised.”⁸⁷¹ Nyerere is more emphatic: “There is no such thing as socialism without work.”⁸⁷² In this regard, hospitality is the possible assurance that there is “mutual involvement of all the members of a family unit” as it is demanded of by the spirit of *ujamaa*.⁸⁷³ Hence, it is plausible

⁸⁶⁹ Nyerere, *Socialism and Rural Development*, 352.

⁸⁷⁰ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 4.

⁸⁷¹ Viktoria Stöger-Eising, “Ujamaa Revisited,” 131.

⁸⁷² Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 4.

⁸⁷³ Komba, “Contribution to Rural Development: Ujamaa & Villagisation,” 37.

for one to claim that it is in hospitality that both production and distribution are grounded. Nyerere says as much in his assertion that “an individual who can work – and is provided by society with the means to work – but does not do so, is equally wrong. He has no right to expect anything from society because he contributes nothing to society.”⁸⁷⁴ However, at times distribution seems to be privileged. In the 1967 paper on practical aspects of *ujamaa* he argues that

it is not efficiency of production, nor the amount of wealth in a country which makes millionaires; it is the uneven distribution of what is produced. The basic difference between a socialist society and a capitalist society does not lie in their methods of producing wealth, but in the way that wealth is distributed.⁸⁷⁵

Though Nyerere emphasizes distribution of wealth, he is not so naïve as to forget about production where communal participation is demanded. The socialism principle of equality for Nyerere demands that production is about meeting the needs of the community. Thus, he further posits that the motive of production must be about “the needs of all— not the profit of few.”⁸⁷⁶ Such communal production and distribution require organization.

In addition he recognizes the need to propagate the principles of “equality and of social responsibility,” which are the essence of socialism.⁸⁷⁷ His conviction is that the African brand of socialism, *ujamaa*, may not survive if it only stops at the national boundary. Makumba had insisted that what he called the philosophicality of *shienyu ni shienyu* “consists in securing the good of the other.”⁸⁷⁸ In Nyerere the basis of that good of the other is founded on the affirmative response to the question: “Am I my brother’s keeper? [...] Yes, I am my brother’s keeper and every human being is my brother.”⁸⁷⁹ Nyerere needed to develop political institutions that were amiable to the reactivation of the *ujamaa* tenets as he envisaged them. Hence the second pillar of African socialism for Nyerere is democracy.

In his address to parliament on *The Arusha Declaration* which is meant to be the implementation of the politics and economics of *ujamaa* he observes, “For socialism is not an alternative to political democracy; it is the extension of it. It is a system by which political

⁸⁷⁴ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 4.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸⁷⁶ Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 128.

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁸⁷⁸ Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy*, 161.

⁸⁷⁹ Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 128.

democracy is made an effective reality in the lives of the people, because of their control over the instruments with which they earn their livelihood.”⁸⁸⁰ What Nyerere is alleging here at best could be rendered as statements of intent. Firstly, his experience of socialism is basically founded on his Zanaki ethnic group and Mill’s utilitarian notions. Secondly, his notion of democracy will require tremendous purification to suit the brand of socialism envisaged in relation to the size of the country called Tanzania. He states in the policy of his TANU party that it aims “to build a socialist state.”⁸⁸¹ Nyerere needed a testing ground for his *ujamaa* theorizations.

Nyerere needed to appropriate the *ujamaa* philosophy into the practical lives of his people. Hence, he launched the *ujamaa* villages. Such a move was necessitated by the fact that *ujamaa* as conceived by Nyerere was first “enshrined in traditional societies.”⁸⁸² As such, it is Nyerere’s claim that the African is not only essentially a socialist, but a democrat too. The weakness in Nyerere’s *ujamaa* is the overarching nature of the claims that easily gloss over the subterranean existential issues.⁸⁸³ The danger with subscribing naively to overarching claims, as John S. Saul observes, is the overvaluing of the African unity, nationalism, and political independence at the expense of a “frank discussion of the real challenges.”⁸⁸⁴ The overlooking of the relevant distinctions and differentiations within the people of Tanzania herself contributed immensely to poor implementation of *ujamaa*.

Thus, Nyerere’s claim about being raised in a perfectly democratic and egalitarian society must be interrogated within the political leadership of the *Zanaki* people. Historians’ position is that the people of the eastern side of Lake Victoria such as *Kuria* and *Zanaki* “were not ruled by chiefs but councils of elders.”⁸⁸⁵ In such places without central authority of leaders called chiefs the Germans appointed them from among the local people. It is through such appointments that Nyerere’s father became a chief. In communities that lacked a centralized authority in a sense ruled by a council of elders “there are no sharp divisions of rank, status,

⁸⁸⁰ Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 179.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸² Komba, “Contribution to Rural Development: Ujamaa & Villagisation,” 37.

⁸⁸³ In Chapter Five I will show that outside existence as tragic, even the ensuing structures could be found wanting.

⁸⁸⁴ John S. Saul, *The State and Revolution in Eastern Africa* (London: Heinemann, 1979), 144.

⁸⁸⁵ Juhani Koponen, *Development of Exploration: German Colonial policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1884–1914* (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1995), 128.

or wealth.”⁸⁸⁶ In traditional Tanzania a scenario of a council of elders does not obtain everywhere.

Among the *Chagga* people on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro they had a defined chief who wielded central authority. In this regard it may not be surprising that they are also among the least influenced by Nyerere’s *ujamaa* and developed tenets towards hierarchical thinking. The *Chagga* people exhibited accounts of privileges of rank, differences in wealth and power.⁸⁸⁷ In the absence of one central authority like among the traditional *Zanaki*, mediation was done through the council of elders. Such mediation seems to have adopted consensus building as a way of arriving at decisions. However, as Stöger-Eising observes, faithfulness to the authority of the council and its determinations became critical in the *Zanaki* way of life.⁸⁸⁸ The demand for faithfulness ought to be justified on the account of weak structures and as such the logic of demanding moral obligations like *ujamaa*.

Another key element about the *Zanaki* situation is the consensus model of mediation by the elders. The common position is that the elders discussed matters at great length supposedly “till they agree.”⁸⁸⁹ Nyerere will later utilize such supposed positions of consensus making in what he called the African democracy. Stöger-Eising, in view of Nyerere’s notion of “African democracy,” argues that

African democracy means ‘they talk till they agree’. His call for consensus finding through lengthy debates, the assumption that there is a true national interest which discussion will eventually bring to light, his emphasis on popular participation – in short, grass roots democracy – need to be traced back to his own experiences with the non-hierarchical society in which he grew up.⁸⁹⁰

Democracy in Nyerere’s purview is largely linked to striving for consensus on the part of the people in matters of their well-being. As Wiredu observes, Nyerere’s standpoint on democracy seems to favour a socialist society suffused with an ethos of “cooperativeness as opposed to

⁸⁸⁶ M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard, “Introduction” *African Political Systems*, eds. M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard (London: KPI Limited, 1987), 5.

⁸⁸⁷ For an elaborate study and analysis of the Chagga people and how the introduction of Nyerere’s Ujamaa impacted on their life refer: Kathleen M. Stahl, “The Chagga” in *Tradition and Transition in East Africa: Studies of the Tribal Element in the Modern Era*, ed. P.H. Gulliver (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 209–222.

⁸⁸⁸ Stöger-Eising, “Ujamaa Revisited,” 121.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

personal competitiveness.”⁸⁹¹ It must be understood that Nyerere’s *ujamaa* is an attempt to re-engineer a nation-state founded on some constructed notion of brotherhood/family-hood. In advancing the consensus form of democracy Nyerere’s position is that “the majority must be willing to maintain the argument until the minority has been convinced of the correctness of the decision which has been made.”⁸⁹² The ultimate purpose is cooperation in the implementation of the decision by “everyone.” Nyerere’s *ujamaa* is obsessed with the satisfaction of the greatest number, “the-everyone” mantra.

In Nyerere’s call for the quickest and greatest possible benefit to the people one cannot help but discern John Stuart Mill’s utilitarianism of distributing the greatest good to the greatest number. This is a plausible claim on the basis that Nyerere encountered Mill’s philosophy during his time at Makerere University and Edinburgh University.⁸⁹³ The principle of utility in Mill largely deals with the ultimate end of an action. In one of his claims on the subject he asserts that “[t]he creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness.”⁸⁹⁴ According to Mill scholars this passage gives the “clearest statement in *Utilitarianism* of Mill’s moral theory.”⁸⁹⁵ For Mill the notion of right in the text implies morally right given that he is speaking of the creed or theory of the moral foundation. In this text, Mill identifies the principle of utility with the greatest happiness as the probable estimation for right or wrong.

Mill’s actions are right in so far as they increase happiness. But the right action ought to be “morally best” action which in the words of Crisp means “morally best in utilitarian terms.”⁸⁹⁶ Mill considers utility as a moral standard. In the words of D.G. Brown, Mill’s moral

⁸⁹¹ Wiredu, “African Philosophy Anglophone” in *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 101.

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*, 63.

⁸⁹³ Before going to the University of Edinburgh, while studying at the University college of Makerere in Uganda Nyerere studied John Stuart Mill and apparently wrote an essay on Women subjection among his *Zanaki* people applying Mill’s perspective. In Edinburgh he wrote an essay on the problem of race in Africa. On these claims refer: Hatch, J. *Two African Statesmen: Kaunda of Zambia and Nyerere of Tanzania* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1976) and Smith, W. E. *We must Run while they Walk* (New York: Random, 1972).

⁸⁹⁴ John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, *Utilitarianism and other essays*, ed. Alan Ryan (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1987), 278. Utilitarianism is generally associated with two men: Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873). Bentham originated ‘the greatest happiness theory’ and carried out reflections upon that theory that seems to have defined Utilitarianism.

⁸⁹⁵ Roger Crisp, *Mill on Utilitarianism* (London: Routledge, 1997), 95.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

doctrine entails “the acceptance of Utility as the foundation of morality.”⁸⁹⁷ The principle of utility for Mill is the theory of life which is the promotion of happiness. Furthermore, Mill states what greatest happiness entails as “the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable.”⁸⁹⁸ In this regard Mill considers happiness understood as the desirable end as the directive rule of human actions.

Ultimately, the standard determination of happiness is not the individual agent’s “own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether.”⁸⁹⁹ The happiness altogether implies general happiness. Mill holds the position that the utilitarian morality recognises in human beings the power of ‘sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others.’ However he holds further that: “A sacrifice which does not increase, or tend to increase, the sum of happiness” is considered as wasted.⁹⁰⁰ On the contrary the befitting sacrifice is one devoted to happiness of others or to some of the means of happiness of others, “either of [humankind] collectively, or of some individuals within the limits imposed by the collective interests of [humankind].”⁹⁰¹ Mill’s position of the greatest happiness as a moral principle finds its place in Nyerere’s assertions in his *ujamaa* philosophy.

In the remarks during the ten-year anniversary of the Arusha Declaration (1977), Nyerere writes that the national ethic which is a socialist ethic is about “a concern for the well-being of all rather than a pride in material goods for their own sake.”⁹⁰² However, one of Nyerere’s strong utilitarian nuances is about wealth and leaders:

It is a ‘tool’ entrusted to them for the benefit of the people they serve. It is not ‘theirs’ personally; and they may not use any part of it as a means of accumulating more for their own benefit, nor as an ‘insurance’ against the day when they no longer hold the same positions.⁹⁰³

These words mirrors Mill’s on disinterestedness as a utilitarian demand from individuals: “the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent’s

⁸⁹⁷ D.G. Brown, “What is Mill’s Principle of utility?” *Mill’s Utilitarianism: Critical Essays*, ed. David Lyons (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 1997), 11.

⁸⁹⁸ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 283.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 282.

⁹⁰⁰ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 288.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰² Nyerere, “The Arusha Declaration Ten Years After” *African Socialism in Practice, The Tanzanian experience*, 44.

⁹⁰³ Nyerere, “African Socialism: Ujamaa in Practice,” 6.

own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be a strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator.”⁹⁰⁴ In disinterestedness, according to Mill, lies the essence of utilitarian ethics where self-sacrifice responds to the golden rule of loving one’s neighbour as oneself. Ultimately, the utilitarian ethic demands that laws and social arrangements place happiness of the whole high on the scale. Such a conception about happiness of the whole partly colours Nyerere’s *ujamaa* programme. In one of his remarks about development and Tanzania, Nyerere asserts, “By developing the people of Tanzania, we are developing Tanzania. For Tanzania is the people; and the people means everyone.”⁹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, despite the rhetoric on *ujamaa* it seems to have failed to realize fully its two core tenets of equality and democracy.

Nyerere’s enthusiastic motives for re-orientating his society through *ujamaa* villages, as some scholars opine, hinged on his objective of “detrribalizing the people in the interests of unity and building the nation on the pattern of African socialism and a classless society.”⁹⁰⁶ One observation is warranted here. Nyerere’s notion of traditional Africa society being classless is not entirely the case given what has been already stated above about the *Chagga* people being hierarchical with clear disparities in terms of property. Furthermore, Tordoff testifies to the existence of classes in West Africa. He observes,

In the forest kingdoms of West Africa and the emirates of (what was to become) Northern Nigeria, society was sharply divided between a chiefly strata, often supported by a well-organised bureaucracy, and commoners. Office-holding (especially at the higher levels) and wealth went hand in hand, though some commoners became successful traders.⁹⁰⁷

Nyerere was aware of this fact of class existence even in his country of Tanzania. The justification for this claim is his conception of *ujamaa* as an attitude of the mind. As such it needed to be constructed, and seemingly Nyerere needed some anchor notion that could encompass the new society of Tanzania that he envisaged.

It is on distribution that Nyerere’s conception of the classless society could be sustained. As Coulson aptly observes, Nyerere’s denial of class conflict in African society

⁹⁰⁴ Mill, *Utilitarianism and other essays*, 288.

⁹⁰⁵ Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 70.

⁹⁰⁶ Stahl, “The Chagga” 209.

⁹⁰⁷ Tordoff, *Government and Politics in Africa*, 91.

must be identified with “socialism as concerned with moral obligations.”⁹⁰⁸ This understanding seems to be shared with Stöger-Eising’s who interprets Nyerere’s *ujamaa* as “an ethos into which one is socialised rather than an ideological perspective that comes with the radicalisation of the proletariat.”⁹⁰⁹ It means *ujamaa* has more to do with the dynamics of the extended family unit than class conflicts associated with production in modern economy. Furthermore, the nature of moral constructions is basically to envisage abstract overarching scenarios which serve particular purposes.

4.3.3 Brief Critique of Nyerere’s *Ujamaa*

On the issue of de-ethnicisation, Nyerere seems to have largely succeeded in fashioning a unified nation out of the multifaceted ethnic groups and races that form today’s Tanzania. The success of a unified nation developed into strong nationalistic tendencies mostly evident in the inward-looking character of Tanzania. However, the experts’ opinion is that the unification aspect of *ujamaa* succeeded mostly due to Kiswahili language. In the words of J. Blommaert political ideology when it permeates language “construction of cultural identities” ensues.⁹¹⁰ With *ujamaa*, Nyerere’s endeavour was the construction of a new society which could be understood as an attempt in *cosmopoiesis*. On the political scale and specifically on independence, Nyerere like other African leaders of the time was taken into the romantic ideal about “the pre-European [ethnic] past, idealizing it as a time of perfect democracy in which everyone helped everyone else, in order to ground the evolving African socialism of today on this old [ethnic] heritage.”⁹¹¹ On the part of Nyerere that idealizing was needed in the form of a *ujamaa* philosophy as a possible way of galvanizing the people of a newly independent state.

In Nyerere’s *ujamaa*, there are nuances that are not discernible in many other African independent states then. It is Tanzania that attempts to construct their nationhood after their political independence. Nyerere after political independence claimed that “political freedom is [...] no longer enough.”⁹¹² That is largely what *ujamaa* set out to achieve through the design

⁹⁰⁸ Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy*, 235.

⁹⁰⁹ Stöger-Eising, “Ujamaa Revisited: Indigenous and European Influences in Nyerere’s Social and Political Thought”, 131.

⁹¹⁰ Jan Blommaert, “Ujamaa and the Creation of the New Waswahili” in *Continuity and Autonomy in Swahili Communities: Inland Influences and Strategies of Self-Determination*, ed. David Parkin (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1994), 65.

⁹¹¹ Stahl, “The Chagga”, 209.

⁹¹² Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 110.

of new structures as a way of changing the existing situation of poor human life. One of the major critics of the aftermath of the African colonial struggle, Frantz Fanon, in his observation of what he calls “This Africa to come,” asserts, “Colonialism and its derivatives do not constitute, truly speaking, the actual enemies of Africa. [...] For my part, the more I penetrate the cultures and the political circles [of Africa] the more the certitude imposes itself on me that the great danger that threatens Africa is the absence of ideology.”⁹¹³ Ideology in this case is understood as a programmatic self-understanding that leads to origination of values, methods and styles. Fanon’s assertion could have been entirely credible without Nyerere’s *ujamaa*.

The attempt at the utilitarian packed experiment of the quickest and the greatest possible benefit to the masses remains largely unobtained. The question that looms large over the ethno-philosophical approaches to social change is about the apparent lack of the necessary ingredients for the re-making of society. What seem to be largely forgotten is that social orientation is cultural in nature, in the sense that it is about affirmation of life first and foremost on the individual level. In this regard, Nietzsche proposes gradualness and a lesson from history of cultural development, in which the spirit of will to power is indispensable.

Conclusion

In contrast to the first three chapters of this dissertation, in which encountering existence is an individual task, in the present chapter, the African ethno-philosophy advocates a communal affirmation. More pertinently, against Nietzsche’s individual autopoiesis, elements like utilitarian-based happiness, preservation instead of overcoming, morality of compassion and fellow-feeling seem to be promoted. These elements form what in Chapter Three was described as the morality of custom. However, owing to the stress on the communal and the enduring, the full spectrum of existence as will to power fails to be grasped. The vagaries of existence are literally concealed from the individuals when the communal response is highly valorised.

The fellow-feeling moral maxims like *shienyu ni shienyu* or Nyerere’s *ujamaa* are conceived as models of affirming existence as tragic. However, though well-intentioned, such responses evolve overarching strait-jacket approaches that are repugnant to the task of singular individuality. African philosophy of sociality largely stresses the identity account,

⁹¹³ Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1970), 211.

overemphasizing the overriding conceptual schemes. The case in point is Senghor's Black consciousness and identity mantra, in which historical happenings are simply glossed over. Also, Nyerere's claims about ujamaa, as an attitude of the mind with the ensuing abstract notions of brotherhood, are devoid of the sense of the tragic. As such, the consequence is resorting to preservation models wanting in deep examination of the existential conditions.

In the philosophy of sociality, the key ingredients of developing culture founded on the quality of individuals are seriously impaired. For instance, Nyerere espouses cooperation at the expense of competition. The *ujamaa* system largely focuses on the "activities of the masses" geared towards the satisfaction of the greatest number.⁹¹⁴ Most of the characteristics espoused in ethno-philosophy—fellow-feeling, utilitarianism, Black consciousness and *ujamaa*—provide little room for an individual encounter with existence as such. I hold that the Senghor's failure and Nyerere's minimal success are due to their overarching claims, which disguise and conceal the nature of existence as tragic. With such flaws, it may not be surprising that African philosophy of sociality has not engineered much needed social development.

In this regard, Nietzsche's position that in the absence of the acknowledgement and appropriations of life as will to power, social development is compromised, seems to hold true. In other words, the culture that lacks the sense of tragedy denies itself the ground for anything further. Hence, envisioning a new society in Nietzsche's parlance requires appropriation of the tragedy that demands singular individuality. It is on singular individuality that any meaningful social development could possibly ensue. The centrality of the tragic in social development is the missing link in African philosophy of sociality. Chapter Five engages with the issue of social development within Nietzsche's philosophy of tragedy. Hence, individual *autopoiesis* centred on tragedy must be considered as the privileged space for *cosmopoiesis*.

⁹¹⁴ Kahama, et. al., *The Challenge for Tanzania's Economy*, 37.

Chapter 5: From *Autopoiesis* to *Cosmopoiesis*

For now we have to make the transition from the inward event to an assessment of the outward event; the eye has to be directed outwards so as to rediscover in the great world of action that desire for culture it recognized in the experiences of the first stage [...]. SE, §6.

Introduction

This chapter proposes that Nietzsche's philosophy, in prioritising individual *autopoiesis*, ipso facto demands *cosmopoiesis*. It will be shown that, in Nietzsche, individual *autopoiesis* is not for its own sake but for the enhancement of human life as it is encountered in social spheres. This chapter problematizes some stances found in Chapter Four, thus enhancing the critical dialogue between individual *autopoiesis* and ethnophilosophy. Overall, the African philosophy of sociality as it is presented in the African socialist tenet of *shienyu ni shienyu*, provides a limited space for proper individual enhancement. The response to existence is the common denominator between Nietzsche's project of individual/human enhancement on the one hand, and the African ethno-philosophical tenet of *shienyu ni shienyu* on the other. But the quality of the response depends on how the nature of existence as tragic is made manifest. This is elucidated in Nietzsche's evaluation of the Italian Renaissance and my examination of African philosophy of sociality.

In the preceding four chapters on how the tragic existence could be encountered two overarching positions have emerged. They could be framed as the singular individuality response and the communal response. The focus on singular individuality as Nietzsche's privileged response to existence forms the first three chapters of this dissertation. Then a communal response to the enigma of existence is more pronounced in chapter four. In the current Nietzsche scholarship, there are two main positions about the thrust of his philosophy: first, that Nietzsche commits himself only to social enhancement in general; and second, that Nietzsche's commitment is towards the production of singular individuality. In Chapters One, Two, and Three, Nietzsche's positive stance towards the production of singular individuality as the embodiment of his philosophy is argued for as the whole thrust for *autopoiesis*. In Chapter Four, however, the communal is privileged in responding to existential challenges within a particular African milieu. This final chapter must establish which of these two

responses (singular individuality and communality) properly affirms existence as tragic? Any privileged response must of necessity promote individual *autopoiesis*.

This chapter is structured as follows: firstly, I present the nature of *autopoiesis* and its correlation to tragedy in Nietzsche; secondly, consideration of the role of singular individuality in *cosmopoiesis* entails what Nietzsche calls the great world of action. It is shown that what has often been unnoticed is that Nietzsche proposes a formidable social change program which demands in-depth historical knowledge. It will also be argued that the failure of the Reformation for Nietzsche is a solid proof that it lacked not only historical knowledge but, more pertinently, the sense of the tragic; and thirdly, it is argued that any *cosmopoiesis* in Nietzsche's parlance is inseparable from the type *Übermensch*, as the affirmer of life as will to power and embodiment of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. The fourth and the final part of the chapter attempts to go beyond the African philosophy of sociality and seek a glimpse at the tragic, through two propositions: (1) Within the African philosophy of Césaire and Frantz Fanon, and (2) My proposition that instead of embracing one's own (*shienyu ni shienyu*) one needs to espouse the tragic world as *shibala*.⁹¹⁵ Hence, one's own becomes the tragic world within which singular individuality is envisaged.

5.1 The Nature of Individual *Autopoiesis* in Nietzsche

Autopoiesis as a term is not used anywhere in Nietzsche's corpus. However, numerous Nietzschean designations about the individual task have largely similar nuances. References in Nietzsche yield some nuances of *poiesis*: Nietzsche's demand that individuals develop out of themselves the capacity "to replace what has been lost, to recreate broken moulds."⁹¹⁶ In Schopenhauer as Educator Nietzsche believes that "[n]o one can *construct* for you the bridge upon which precisely you must cross the stream of life, no one but you yourself alone."⁹¹⁷ In *The Gay Science* he writes about having one's "own practical and theoretical skill interpreting and arranging events" of one's life and giving "style to one's character."⁹¹⁸ All these nuances about the individual task are understood from the standard interpretation as self-cultivation or

⁹¹⁵ *Shibala*: the *Abaluyia* term for the world. In this dissertation it implies the tragic sense of the world outside the protective devices of the communal and overarching tenets.

⁹¹⁶ *HL*, §1; KSA 1, 251 the emphasis is mine.

⁹¹⁷ *SE*, §1; KSA 1, 339 the emphasis is mine.

⁹¹⁸ *GS*, §§, 277 and 290 respectively; KSA 3, 522 and 530.

self-making or fashioning. It is from Greek thought especially that of Aristotle, from which some original nuances about *poiesis* must be sought.

Aristotle in the opening sentence of *Poetics* explains the nature, scope, and effects of poetry. He understands poetry as the inquiry into “how stories are put together.”⁹¹⁹ The importance of Aristotle’s *Poetics* lies in the fact that it is one of the earliest works in Greek thought to deal with an analysis of poetry as art. More importantly the work deals with the skill behind Homer or Sophocles as masters in putting together a story.⁹²⁰ In his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle gives three types of knowledge: *episteme*, *technē* and *phronesis*.⁹²¹ The three stand for what is rendered as scientific knowledge, craftsmanship-production and wisdom respectively. About the productive knowledge Aristotle believes that

[p]roduction and action are different (we can rely here also on our popular accounts). So the practical state involving reason is different from the productive state involving reason. Neither, therefore, is included in the other, since action is not production, nor production action. [...].

Since production and action are different, skill must be a matter of production, not action. There is a sense in which fortune and skill are concerned with the same things, as Agathon says: ‘Skill loved fortune, and fortune skill.’⁹²²

There is a distinction between production and action, because the Greeks, as Giorgio Agamben notes, “made a clear distinction between *poiesis* (*poiein*, ‘to produce’ in the sense of bringing into being) and *praxis* (*prattein*, ‘to do’ in the sense of acting).”⁹²³ In *poiesis* the origin of the product is in the maker and not in the thing made.

Furthermore, in Aristotle, the term poetry is a derivative of *poiein*, in two broad senses:

In one sense it refers to a large class of activities that include makings of all kinds, such as shipbuilding, carpentry, as well as the composing of poems and paintings. In a second more specific sense, it refers to what we would call the poetic arts, such as tragedy, comedy, and epic.⁹²⁴

⁹¹⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1447^a1–3.

⁹²⁰ David Gallop, “Aristotle: Aesthetics and Philosophy of mind” in *Routledge History of Philosophy, Vol. II, From Aristotle to Augustine*, ed. David Furley (London: Routledge, 1999), 78.

⁹²¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1139^b 18–1140^b 12.

⁹²² *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1140^a 1–23.

⁹²³ Giorgio Agamben, *The Man Without Content* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 68.

⁹²⁴ Angela Curan, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Aristotle and Poetics* (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis group, 2016), 22.

Thus, poetry is an example of the larger category of the productive arts which concern the art (*technē*) of making something. But my concern is the specific sense of poetry. As Agamben remarks, “the essential character of *poiesis*” for the Greeks in general was not the practical aspect “but its being a mode of truth understood as unveiling, [*a-letheia*].”⁹²⁵ The justification lies in the understanding of tragedy as a poetic art.

In tragic art one gets the image of the nature of existence. As Schacht observes in relation to Nietzsche, tragic art is the “potential foundation and guiding force of an entire form of culture and human existence.”⁹²⁶ The link between tragedy and *poiesis* is that *poiesis* unveils existence as tragic. Existence itself is chaotic and generally indifferent to general human designs. Nietzsche seems to have been aware of that link between tragedy, *poiesis* and the Greeks when he remarks, “Only from the Greeks can we learn what such a sudden miracle-like awakening of tragedy means for the innermost foundation of the life of a people.”⁹²⁷ However, Nietzsche is also aware that understanding of life as tragic is first and foremost at the individual level. On the tragedy of life expressed in the enigma of time, Nietzsche writes, “Man, [...] braces himself against the great and ever greater pressure of what is past: it pushes him down or bends him sideways, it encumbers his steps as a dark, invisible burden which he would like to disown and which in traffic with his fellow men he does disown.”⁹²⁸ The enigma of time expressed in “it was” for Nietzsche is the password which gives conflict and suffering access to man as a reminder of what his existence fundamentally is.

As is seen in Chapter Four above, any privileging of fellow-feeling has a high possibility of cushioning the individual’s encounter with existence as such. For Nietzsche, any weakening of the sense of tragedy from the individual level has ripple effects. On the need for the Dionysian spirit (the emblem of life as tragic) Nietzsche holds,

Dionysian loosening of the chains of the individual manifests itself first of all in a reduction of the political instincts, to the point of indifference or even hostility, then just as certainly on the other hand Apollo the genius of the *principium individuationis* is also the builder of states, and the affirmation of the individual personality is indispensable to the existence of the state and the sense of home.⁹²⁹

⁹²⁵ Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 69.

⁹²⁶ Schacht, *Nietzsche*, 497.

⁹²⁷ *BT*, §21; KSA 1, 132.

⁹²⁸ *HL*, §1; KSA 1, 249.

⁹²⁹ *BT*, §21; KSA 1, 133.

In the absence of the tragic approach to life the quality of the institutions is also left wanting. For Nietzsche cultural development demands what he calls “the tremendous power of tragedy which stimulates, purifies, and discharges the whole life of the people.”⁹³⁰ In this regard it can be credibly asserted that the role of tragedy in cultural development is similar to the power of strife vital for cosmic balance that is encountered in Chapter Three.⁹³¹ To have the sense of the tragic, good philology is paramount.⁹³² Good philology entails letting the actuality of existence as chaotic express itself without undue interference in terms of imposing conceptual schemes. This understanding of existence introduces an element of contemplation in the concept of *poiesis*.

Poiesis as linked to the unveiling of truth in the poetic arts is elucidated by Hannah Arendt on the predilection of contemplation in Greek philosophy.⁹³³ Arendt envisages the affinity between contemplation and *poiesis* as part of the Greek mind:

And the reason for this predilection in philosophy is by no means the politically inspired suspicion of action [...], but the philosophically much more compelling one that contemplation and fabrication (*theoria* and *poiesis*) have an inner affinity and do not stand in the same unequivocal opposition to each other as contemplation and action. The decisive point of similarity, at least in Greek philosophy, was that contemplation, the beholding of something, was considered to be an inherent element in fabrication as well, inasmuch as the work of the craftsman was guided by the ‘idea’, the model beheld by him before the fabrication process had started as well as after it had ended, first to tell him what to make and then to enable him judge the finished product.⁹³⁴

Whatever is happening in this assertion of Arendt is similar in one fundamental way to Caputo’s elucidation about *a-letheia* in Chapter Four on Makumba and the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu*. Caputo’s main allegation is that *a-letheia* is the space within which all “Being” and truth as phenomenon are guaranteed and made possible. This seems to be the implication of *poiesis* as the unveiling of truth in the current context of poetics. That truth is essentially tragic. And as Schacht observes, “In tragic art attention is focused upon individual figures who are no mere ordinary human beings” but the great and sublime forms.⁹³⁵ From Chapters One, Two

⁹³⁰ *BT*, §21; KSA 1, 134.

⁹³¹ Refer Greek thought and the Eternal Recurrence.

⁹³² Refer chapter three above on the formula of affirmation.

⁹³³ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 301–302.

⁹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 302.

⁹³⁵ Schacht, *Nietzsche*, 501; *BT*, §21; KSA 1, 137.

and Three above, these human beings of great sublime forms must be those espousing qualities of the type *Übermensch*. One of the defining qualities of the type *Übermensch* is that of overcoming as the affirmation of life. Nietzsche's operative scheme seems to be such that only those who espouse the qualities of the type *Übermensch* could firmly be deemed to be on the path of singular individuality.

Caputo's idea of *poiesis* as the unveiling is present in Plato and later in Aristotle. In the Dialogue *Theaetetus*, Socrates remarks that the "sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin."⁹³⁶ This Platonic assertion is repeated by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*, though in a different context when he avows, "For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize."⁹³⁷ More pertinently for the consideration of *poiesis* Aristotle links wonder to ignorance and myth since "the lover of myth is in a sense a lover of wisdom, for myth is composed of wonders."⁹³⁸ Thomas Aquinas interprets Aristotle's "love of myth" as a characteristic of the poets. Aquinas's justification for comparing the philosopher to the poet is "that both are concerned with wonders."⁹³⁹ The philosophers themselves are moved to philosophize because of wonder.

Philosophical wonder owes its origin, according to Socrates to a "good genealogist who made Iris the daughter of *Thaumas*."⁹⁴⁰ This is in reference to the goddess Iris that was at everyone's beck and call and related to wonder (*Thaumas*) as her father.⁹⁴¹ Given the singular place of what Arendt calls the "shocked wonder" (*thaumazein*) in Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy, wonder must be conceived as a state of contemplation and as the end of philosophy.⁹⁴² When these notions of *a-letheia*, contemplation and wonder are applied to philosophers as poets, then *poiesis* seems to have a deeper sense. In the words of Agamben, *poiesis* "constructs the space where man finds his certitude and where he ensures the freedom

⁹³⁶ Plato, "Theaetetus" in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato, Including Letters*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), 155^d.

⁹³⁷ Aristotle, "Metaphysics" in *A New Aristotle Reader*, ed. J.L. Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 982^b12.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 982^b 18–19.

⁹³⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, trans. John P. Rowan (Indiana: Dumb Ox Books, 1961), §55, 19.

⁹⁴⁰ Plato, "Theaetetus" 155^d Emphasis is mine.

⁹⁴¹ Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, Complete edition (London: Penguin Books, 1960), 128, 733.

⁹⁴² Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 302.

and duration of his action.”⁹⁴³ It is my considered position that such a notion of *poiesis* implies that the individual creates space within himself for being productive.

In this regard *poiesis* and praxis seem to be intertwined in the individual human being, expressed by Agambon as follows:

This productive doing [*poiesis*-praxis domain] now everywhere determines the status of man on earth – man understood as the living being (animal) that works (*laborans*), and, in work, produces himself and ensures his dominion over the earth. [...] An artistic pro-duction, which has now become creative activity, also enters into the dimension of praxis, albeit a very peculiar praxis, aesthetic creation or superstructure.⁹⁴⁴

The nature of *poiesis* must be thought of in terms of the space it renders in the unveiling of reality. However, as was demonstrated in Chapter Two on will to power, the domination sought is first and foremost understood as individual form-giving. The nature of *poiesis*, as Agamben holds, lays in “the production of truth and in the subsequent opening of a world for man’s existence and action.”⁹⁴⁵ Hence, *poiesis* is never an end in itself, as will be demonstrated from Nietzsche’s works, where singular individuality properly conceived is the privileged space for *cosmopoiesis*. It has been established that from the Greek understanding, *poiesis* is generally about the conditions that prevail within the individual himself as an aesthetic reality. In other words, the process of individual self-production demands some optimal conditions. Key among the conditions is the knowledge of existence as essentially tragic.

5.1.1 *Poiesis* and Tragedy in Nietzsche

Nietzsche in “*Attempt at a self-criticism*,” the 1886 preface to *The Birth of Tragedy* he speaks of art “as the highest/real metaphysical activity of man.”⁹⁴⁶ This statement may not really imply the works of art per se, but more importantly, the human beings as artists of their lives. In the same work Nietzsche calls for “our greatest dignity in our meaning as works of art.”⁹⁴⁷ Such an artist is associated by Nietzsche later in 1887 with “those who suffer from the *over-fullness of life*” and they cherish the Dionysian art and tragic view of life.⁹⁴⁸ This vision of art as *poiesis* is consistent with Nietzsche’s earlier impressions of Schopenhauer as the

⁹⁴³ Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, 69.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁹⁴⁶ *BT*, “*Attempt at self-criticism*,” §5.

⁹⁴⁷ *BT*, §5; KSA 1,47.

⁹⁴⁸ *GS*, §370; KSA 3, 620.

“magical outpouring of the inner strength.”⁹⁴⁹ In the words of Richard M. Shusterman, Nietzsche identifies the philosopher with the poet, since both try to interpret and so reshape the world.⁹⁵⁰ In this circumstance, Nietzsche’s case about the fashioning of singular individual is essentially drawn from Greek notion of tragedy. The ground for any interpretation and reshaping of the world in Nietzsche’s purview is not removed from the individual reality.

Nietzsche believes “the individual in the feeling of possessing all his powers” demands translating them into action.⁹⁵¹ The obtaining argument from this assertion and many others about *poiesis* and contemplation is that these two features provide access to existence as tragic. In the words of Schacht, tragic art constitutes a sort of transfiguring mirror for Nietzsche. However, in this mirror “we see reflected neither ‘appearances’ idealizingly transfigured, nor the character of the reality underlying them symbolically expressed. We are confronted instead with an ‘image of life’ – reflections of the (and our) human condition, highlighting both the individuation it involves and the fate bound up with the latter.”⁹⁵² The nature of transfiguration entails the defining form of a thing.

In this context of life as tragic, the kind of transfiguration envisaged is one that pertains to the perception of individual existence. Schacht argues that this existence is “individual rather than merely a part of an inexhaustible and indestructible flow of life, and is human rather than above and beyond the conditions to which man is subject.”⁹⁵³ The tragic conditions that the subject man is exposed to demand that *poiesis* first and foremost be conceived on the singular individual level, which ipso facto leads to the transformation of the external. Such singular individuals, in the words of Zachary Simpson, are like the tragic artists who can become “immersed in the object of art—which is existence—without succumbing to it.”⁹⁵⁴ The philosophy of sociability in Nietzsche seems to lie in what entails existence, which is tragedy. In this regard Nietzsche’s understanding of the properly cultivated individual is the privileged space for social action.

The theme of individual self-production is prominent in Nietzsche’s corpus. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche speaks of every human being as “uniquely himself to

⁹⁴⁹ *SE*, §2; KSA 1; 349.

⁹⁵⁰ Richard M. Shusterman, “Poetry” *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 7, 476.

⁹⁵¹ *D*, §42; KSA 3, 49.

⁹⁵² Schacht, *Nietzsche*, 499–500.

⁹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 500.

⁹⁵⁴ Zachary Simpson, *Life as Art: Aesthetics and the Creation of Self* (New York: Lexington Books, 2012), 3.

every last movement of his muscles.”⁹⁵⁵ For Nietzsche, artists are the ones who attempt to reveal such uniqueness of the human being in its nakedness. But more pertinently for human beings, the fact of man’s existence demands of him/her to be “the true helmsman of [that] existence.”⁹⁵⁶ Now, as a true helmsman, one must take what Nietzsche calls the bold and dangerous line with this existence. This implies embracing life as tragedy. In the same work, individual production is linked to the one who “feels himself perfect and boundless in knowledge and love, perception and power and who in his completeness is at one with nature, the judge and evaluator of things.”⁹⁵⁷ On the basis of this fullness such a one is called to “bring together what belongs together.”⁹⁵⁸ For Nietzsche culture demands of the singular individual not only the “inward experience” of that individuality but also the “assessment of the outward” event that eventuates into the world of action.⁹⁵⁹ This amounts to alleging that singular individuality demands involvement in social life. In this regard Lawrence J. Hatab notes in relation to the power domain in Nietzsche that “self-development never leaves the world untouched; some ‘Other’ will always be affected.”⁹⁶⁰ From the cited texts so far, it can be claimed that individual *autopoiesis* properly undertaken for Nietzsche leads to *cosmopoiesis*. This will be further elucidated in this chapter.

In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, on how can man know himself, Nietzsche opines “it is a painful and dangerous undertaking to tunnel into oneself.”⁹⁶¹ Then about *Daybreak* he holds, “In this book you will discover a ‘subterranean man’ at work, one who tunnels and mines and undermines.”⁹⁶² Hence, Nietzsche’s assessment of the human milieu is crucially important before any social programme could possibly be undertaken. Such analysis of the world is meant to dissuade one from misrepresenting it.

After assessment of the human milieu Nietzsche holds that there is a final demand, for action (*Tat*). The action as *Tat* entails the perfection of the social world of humanity. That action is described by Nietzsche as a “struggle on behalf of culture and hostility towards those

⁹⁵⁵ *SE*, §1; KSA 1, 337–338.

⁹⁵⁶ *SE*, §1; KSA 1, 337–338.

⁹⁵⁷ *SE*, §6; KSA 1, 385.

⁹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁰ Lawrence J. Hatab, “Nietzsche’s will to power and politics” in *Nietzsche as Political Philosopher*, eds. Manuel Knoll and Barry Stocker (Berlin: De Gruyter Inc, 2014), 131.

⁹⁶¹ *SE*, §1; KSA 1, 340.

⁹⁶² *D*, Preface, §1.

influences, habits, laws, institutions in which” the singular individual fails to recognize the goal of culture, the production of great individuals.⁹⁶³ On this account, Nietzsche seems to provide the standard upon which communality may be evaluated and the basis for any social advocacy. The individual engagement in culture is the process of continuous, enabling conditions for ‘self-production.’

5.2 Nietzsche on the Perfection of the Social World of Humanity

In Nietzsche’s view, the perfection of the social world of humanity presupposes two necessary conditions. First is the appropriation of the sense of tragedy, which for Nietzsche is projected in the capacity to affirm the Eternal Recurrence. In Chapter Three, it was demonstrated that the type with the capacity to affirm the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is the *Übermensch*. And the *Übermensch* as a type is the one within which the singular individuals can be envisaged. The implication is that the one who appropriates the sense of tragedy is most likely to espouse the character of singular individuality. The second condition is the deep knowledge of the human historical reality. Nietzsche in *Schopenhauer as Educator* seems to project knowledge as the transitioning element to action. After describing the continual production of individual great men as the objective of culture, he remarks,

I have to describe the further stage of this [commitment to culture], and I realize that here my task is more difficult. For now we have to make the transition from the inward event to an assessment of the outward event; the eye has to be directed outwards so as to rediscover in the great world of action that desire for culture.⁹⁶⁴

For Nietzsche, the enhancement of culture is enshrined in the continual fashioning of singular individuals. The longing for singular individuality according to Nietzsche must be employed by the individual as “the alphabet by means of which” he/she can understand the aspirations of humankind as a whole.⁹⁶⁵ This section of the dissertation seeks to engage with the parameters within which Nietzsche’s singular individuality or human enhancement ought to be understood. Such parameters will similarly obtain for Nietzsche’s conditions for individual *autopoiesis* in critical dialogue with ethno-philosophy and *cosmopoiesis*.

⁹⁶³ *SE*, §6; KSA 1, 386.

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁵ *SE*, §6; KSA 1, 386.

According to Young's interpretation, for Nietzsche, community interests take precedence over those of the individuals.⁹⁶⁶ For Kathleen Higgins, Nietzsche censures the crowd mentality since it constrains the individual to conformity.⁹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Higgins holds that Nietzsche's negative projections of the herd or crowd are not simply restricted to these groups but are extended to individual members of these categories. Ultimately, according to Higgins, Nietzsche's community is largely composed of exceptional individuals.

There are other Nietzsche scholars like B. Leiter and Ansell-Pearson who believe that for Nietzsche, society is only valuable insofar as it is a means to producing exceptional individuals.⁹⁶⁸ Their position seems to be consistent with Nietzsche's stance in *Schopenhauer as Educator* on humankind's task of continually producing individually great men.⁹⁶⁹ Finally, Clark and Wonderly believe that the good and the source of community is its value which depends on the things that it facilitates. And the greatest of that value is the "true individuality and especially the exceptional individual, one who exhibits the highest form of individuality."⁹⁷⁰ On this account, Clark and Wonderly allege that Nietzsche might accommodate a richer notion of community value than is commonly supposed. Hence, the community in some respects could be accorded the value that Nietzsche attributes to the exceptional individuals.

One key feature of these interpretations of what Nietzsche is "committed to" is their lack of a clear foundation in "existence as tragic." Right from his lectures on Greek state to the later period, as in *Twilight of Idols*, Nietzsche provides a programme for social action whose basis is tragic existence. Hence, the response to whether Nietzsche is "committed to" singular individuals or the flourishing community must consider his own programme as laid out in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. The realization of the singular individual, though paramount, is not an end in itself and is apparently a work in progress. That seems to be the import of Nietzsche's allegation that

⁹⁶⁶ Young, *Individual and Community in Nietzsche's Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 2.

⁹⁶⁷ Kathleen Higgins, "Festivals of Recognition, Nietzsche's idealized communities" in *Individual and Community in Nietzsche's philosophy*, 78–79.

⁹⁶⁸ Clark, *Nietzsche on Ethics and Politics*, 184.

⁹⁶⁹ *SE*, §6, KSA 1, 383–384.

⁹⁷⁰ Clark, *Nietzsche on Ethics and Politics*, 184.

Culture demands of him [an individual], not only inward experience, not only an assessment of the outward world that streams around him, but finally and above all an act, that is to say a struggle on behalf of culture and hostility towards those influences, habits, laws, institutions in which he fails to recognize his goal, which is the production of the genius.⁹⁷¹

In this regard any social involvement or struggle must be geared towards the production of great individuals. For Randall Halle, Nietzsche understood individual transformation as the goal and collective transformation as an outcome.⁹⁷² The justification of such an interpretation is based on the fact that Nietzsche envisages progression from within and not from without the individual sphere.

For Nietzsche, value does not arise from outside life, but is perspectival. Values are inherent to the conditions of the one who values. The values are not supervening upon the world. The highest value for Nietzsche encompasses a maximally affirmative attitude toward life. In the interpretation of E. E. Sleinis, in Nietzsche's philosophy, life is valuable to the degree that the affirmation of it is attained.⁹⁷³ Examination of Nietzsche's programmatic passage above (from *Schopenhauer as Educator*) may provide some justification of this claim, that Nietzsche's commitment whether to individual or community, properly conceived must be founded on existence as tragic. Let me now examine how Nietzsche justifies need for the sense of tragedy in human enhancement.

5.2.1 The In-Depth Knowledge of History: A Prelude to Social Involvement

In an unpublished text, *The Greek State* (1871–72), Nietzsche believes that the justification for the existence of the Olympian state lies in the generation and preparation of the genius. Nietzsche alleges that “[t]he actual aim of the state, the Olympian existence and constantly renewed creation and preparation of the genius, compared with whom everything else is just a tool, aid and facilitator, is discovered here through poetic intuition and described vividly.”⁹⁷⁴ This text precedes what he claims later in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, namely, that “[h]umankind must work continually at the production of individual great men—that and

⁹⁷¹ *SE*, §6; KSA 1, 386.

⁹⁷² Randall Halle, *Queer Social Philosophy: Critical Readings from Kant to Adorno* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 178.

⁹⁷³ E. E. Sleinis, *Nietzsche's Revaluation of values, A Study in Strategies* (Chicago: University Press of Illinois, 1994), 2.

⁹⁷⁴ KSA 1, 776.

nothing else is its task.”⁹⁷⁵ Nietzsche is not making these claims at this point in time without any basis. He has a historical backing given the lectures he attended during the early years at the University of Basel under Jacob Burckhardt, a Swiss historian. In a letter to Carl Von Gersdorff Nietzsche writes,

Jacob Burckhardt gave a public lecture on ‘Historical Greatness’ – entirely within the scope of our own thoughts and feelings. [...] I’m attending a one-hour-a-week lecture course of his on the study of history, and I think I am the only one in the class of sixty who follows his deep trains of thought, with their strange breaks and twists whenever they touch on something delicate.⁹⁷⁶

Apart from the appreciation that Nietzsche exhibits in the letter about these lectures, he also describes Burckhardt as the most singular man. Nietzsche not only developed a peripatetic relationship with Burckhardt, but also admired a certain philosopher in common with him: Schopenhauer. According to Nikola Regent, Burckhardt “exercised a dominant influence in the shaping of Nietzsche’s views of two great historical periods, (Greek) antiquity and the Renaissance.”⁹⁷⁷ Nietzsche’s first mention of the Renaissance appears in the *The Greek State* where it is construed in the same light as the Greeks, with the title of “*political men par excellence*.” He claims that

actually history knows of no other example of such an awesome release of the political urge, of such a complete sacrifice of all other interests in the service of this instinct towards the state – at best, we could honour the men of the Renaissance in Italy with the same title, by way of comparison and for similar reasons.⁹⁷⁸

Burckhardt’s lectures made the Renaissance meaningful for Nietzsche. In the context of *The Greek State*, Nietzsche apparently learned from Burckhardt the connection between the state, society, and the creation of higher men.⁹⁷⁹ To clarify this claim, some acquaintance with the Renaissance spirit as it is presented by Burckhardt could be helpful.

⁹⁷⁵ SE, §6; KSA 1, 383–384.

⁹⁷⁶ Letter of 7th November 1870. This is cited from the translation of Peter Fuss and Henry Shapiro, *Nietzsche A Self-Portrait from his Letters* (Massachusetts: Harvard University press, 1971), 12–13. It can also be found in KSB 3, 155.

⁹⁷⁷ Nikola Regent, “A ‘Wondrous Echo’: Burckhardt, Renaissance and Nietzsche’s Political Thought” in *Nietzsche Power and Politics: Rethinking Nietzsche’s Legacy of Political Thought*, Herman W. Siemens and Vasti Roodt eds. (Berlin: De Gruyter Inc, 2008), 631.

⁹⁷⁸ KSA 1, 771.

⁹⁷⁹ Manuel Knoll, “The Übermensch” as a social and Political Task: A study in the continuity of Nietzsche’s Political Thought” in *Nietzsche as Political Thinker*, 251.

Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897) in one of his works, translated into English as *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* analyses how Middle Ages Italy gave birth to individual singularity.⁹⁸⁰ The work has three main parts: “The State as a Work of Art,” “The Development of the Individual,” and “The Revival of Antiquity.” My focus will be on the development of the individual. As Regent states, “[I]t provided Nietzsche with a conception of the Renaissance man.”⁹⁸¹ For Burckhardt in Middle Ages Italy human beings were at first conscious of themselves in terms of generic categories, as members of a race, a people, party or corporation.⁹⁸² These categories then were melted into the state. And on the spiritual level man became a spiritual individual. Due to a political situation of having despotic governments, Italy of thirteenth and fourteenth centuries developed a strong inclination towards a free personality. Consequently, the individuals were not afraid to show their nature and character. Burckhardt continues that at the close of the thirteenth century Italy was swarming with exemplary individuals like Dante because it was no longer under the spell of race. He refers to Dante as “the august poet” who through “wealth of individuality” was the greatest herald of his time.⁹⁸³ Before further claims of Burckhardt are presented, it is pertinent to ascertain on what grounds his assertions about the Renaissance ought to be taken.

One argument against Burckhardt’s conception of the Renaissance in Italy is what some scholars have “contended that Burckhardt’s Renaissance is more truly a reflection of the ideas and ideals of the author and his age than of the reality he sought to portray.”⁹⁸⁴ It may be granted that many features of mid-nineteenth century culture were alive to Burckhardt. Clarification is required on whether Burckhardt’s portrayal of the Italian Renaissance is meant for factual exactitude or whether, as Erich Heller posits, “[i]ts authority is of a different nature.”⁹⁸⁵ It seems rather clear that Burckhardt’s preoccupation is not the chronological

⁹⁸⁰ Jacob Burckhardt, *The civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Volume 1* trans. S.G.C Middlemore (New York: Harper & Row, 1958). Originally published in German as *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, 1860. Another work that can serve as a complementary reading on Jacob Burckhardt is by Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind, Essays in modern German literature and thought* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1952).

⁹⁸¹ Regent, “A ‘Wondrous Echo’: Burckhardt, Renaissance and Nietzsche’s Political Thought,” 635.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*, 143.

⁹⁸³ Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 143.

⁹⁸⁴ Benjamin Nelson and Charles Trinkaus “Introduction to the Torchbook edition” *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, Vol. 1, 4

⁹⁸⁵ Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind, Essays in modern German literature and thought* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1952), 70.

history of the Italian Renaissance in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Nevertheless, Burckhardt draws freely from the chronicle sources of the likes of Matarazzo, “the Chronicler” of Perugia. The difference in the nature of authority lies in what these chronicles mean for Burckhardt: the authenticity of the mind, imagination, and spirit of the Renaissance. Hence, Heller believes that the spirit of Renaissance for Burckhardt reveals “the quality of the life of the period, or the *Geist* of the epoch.”⁹⁸⁶ What Burckhardt is doing is a history of culture.

Examining the history of culture is more difficult since it is not about ordinary techniques of critical investigation and, in fact, “it is not a technique at all, but rather creative sympathy.”⁹⁸⁷ The creative sympathy entails engaging with the values attached in this case to the Italian Renaissance spirit. Hence Burckhardt’s history is not about “the parts but the totality of Renaissance spirit.”⁹⁸⁸ The history of culture from the realm of creativity becomes what Heller notes of Burckhardt, that “throughout his life, history remained for him a poetic activity.”⁹⁸⁹ This is a pertinent development in relation to the role of *poiesis* in the scheme of singular individuality as it is demonstrated above (see the nature of *poiesis* above). Considering history as a poetic activity amounts to looking at history as the space for the production of singular individuals and states as works of art.⁹⁹⁰ In the case of Italy at the end of the feudal system there was no strong power to realize a national unity. Burckhardt observes that in the absence of national unity emerged a multitude of political units in the form of republics and despots. The situation of the balancing of power that later necessitates statecraft is described as follows by Burckhardt:

In them for the first time we detect the modern political spirit of Europe, surrendered freely to its own instincts, often displaying the worst features of an unbridled egoism, outraging every right, and killing every germ of a healthier culture. But wherever this vicious tendency is overcome or in any way compensated a new fact

⁹⁸⁶Heller, *The Disinherited Mind, Essays in modern German literature and thought*, 70.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁸ Nelson and Trinkaus “Introduction”, 4.

⁹⁸⁹ Heller, *The Disinherited Mind, Essays in modern German literature and thought*, 74.

⁹⁹⁰ Burckhardt in the first part of his book *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* considers the state of Italy as a work of art. This is because unlike others like France, Spain and England where the feudal system was so organized that at the close of its existence naturally they were transformed into unified monarchy, Italy practically was shaken off almost entirely. In this regard Italy needed statecraft. As such Italy presents a good case scenario of *cosmopoiesis*.

appears in history—the State as the outcome of reflection and calculation, the state as a work of art.⁹⁹¹

The point of focus for now is the notion of the state as a work of art. It is not a given reality but a task. In this regard Nietzsche believes that the manner of living in the Renaissance essentially demands the need to create.⁹⁹² As it will be seen below, one of the justifications for Nietzsche's appeal to an in-depth understanding of history, especially of the Renaissance, is possibly to show that with optimum conditions singular individuals are possible and even a new remaking of community is possible. However, as Nietzsche will observe in 1878, statecraft must always remain in progression since:

The state is a prudent institution for the protection of individuals against one another: if it is completed and perfected too far it will in the end enfeeble the individual and, indeed, dissolve him – that is to say, thwart the original purpose of the state in the most thorough way possible.⁹⁹³

Hobbesian and Machiavellian nuances can be discerned in Nietzsche's assertion: Thomas Hobbes's condition of war of "every man, against every man,"⁹⁹⁴ a situation prevailing in the absence of a common power; and what Nietzsche calls the domination of virtue.

Nietzsche observes that "one can achieve the domination of virtue only by the same means as those by which one can achieve domination of any kind, in any case not by means of virtue."⁹⁹⁵ He believes that the philosopher who comes closest to the description of the domination of virtue via non-virtuous means is Machiavelli. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, he calls for the imitation of the "tempo of Machiavelli."⁹⁹⁶ In this regard, as Regent observes, for Nietzsche war is conceived as an art-work.⁹⁹⁷ "War" here is understood as the space for enhancement of great individuals when understood through the scheme of the domination of virtue. Some scholars, like Hatab, interpret Nietzsche's "war" as the necessary obstacle. He

⁹⁹¹ Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the renaissance in Italy*, 22.

⁹⁹² KSA 8, 5[167].

⁹⁹³ HAH, §235; KSA 2, 197.

⁹⁹⁴ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), Part 1, Chapter XII, §8, 84.

⁹⁹⁵ WP, 304; KSA 13, 11[54].

⁹⁹⁶ BGE, §28.

⁹⁹⁷ Regent "A 'Wondrous Echo': Burckhardt, Renaissance and Nietzsche's Political Thought", 635. This point is taken from Burckhardt where he conceives tyranny as an accepted practice employed in Florence for removing the Medici. Refer Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 79. In Nietzsche the world as a work of art is also seen as that which gives birth to itself: Refer WP, 796; KSA 12, 2[114]. This understanding of the world is present in Greek thought where the world is understood as the unceasing strife.

observes that, for Nietzsche, life “is an overcoming of some obstacle or counterforce, so that conflict is a mutual co-constitution of contending forces.”⁹⁹⁸ It is opposition that generates development.

Burckhardt on the Renaissance envisages not only statecraft, but above all the fashioning of man. For Burckhardt, in the words of Heller, “Man, [...] not a Hegelian *Weltgeist*, is the centre of history.”⁹⁹⁹ This means that for Burckhardt, unlike for Hegel, no system could be expounded apart from and beyond historical aspects of human life. The history of culture must be understood in this case from Burckhardt’s own conception of culture.

The term culture according to Nelson and Trinkaus refers to “the generally shared outlook on life and characteristic modes of responding to situations on the part of a given socially related group of people.”¹⁰⁰⁰ This means that the history of culture deals with groups, institutions and political organizations, mental and emotional attitudes, not for their own sake but in relation to life. Thus, Burckhardt’s consideration of the Italian Renaissance is relevant to this project of singular individuality once it is recognized that “his primary aim was to depict the characteristic states of mind and underlying patterns of the Italian people during the fourteenth, fifteenth and seventeen centuries.”¹⁰⁰¹ One such underlying pattern involves statecraft, which similarly influenced the creation of the singular individual. Hence, Burckhardt on the development of the individual observes, “In the character of these states, whether republics or despotisms, lies [...] the chief reason for the early development of the Italian.”¹⁰⁰² Nietzsche on the positive forces within the Italian Renaissance notes one of them as the “unfettering of the individual.”¹⁰⁰³ And behind the emergence of such individuals there are some underlying reasons.

According to Burckhardt, Italians of the fourteenth century knew little of false modesty or hypocrisy in any shape, since “not one of them was afraid of singularity, of being and seeming unlike his neighbour.”¹⁰⁰⁴ This is because the despot fostered to the highest degree his own individuality and that of the men whom he protected or used as his tools. Such men

⁹⁹⁸ Hatab, “Nietzsche’s will to power and politics” in *Nietzsche as political thinker*, 122.

⁹⁹⁹ Heller, *The Disinherited Mind*, 78.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Nelson and Trinkaus, “Introduction” 6.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰⁰² Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 143.

¹⁰⁰³ *HAH*, §237.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 144.

were forced to prove themselves as poets or ministers and for that matter, they had to know and muster all the inward resources of their own nature (temporary or permanent). More importantly for culture, Burckhardt observes that fourteenth century Italian despotism led to the private man.

The private man means, the individual indifferent to politics, and busied partly with serious pursuits and partly with interests of a dilettante. The individual with such interests developed a highly cosmopolitan thinking and acting and avoided attachment to a fixed residence. It is within such a milieu that there arose the “all-sided man,” l'uomo universal who apparently belonged to Italy alone.¹⁰⁰⁵ During the Italian Renaissance there emerged artists who produced new and perfect works that have had a lasting impression on humanity. Among the artists, one notes especially Dante, who pours out a personal force in his writings. Burckhardt observes that Dante finds a new home in the language and culture of Italy and even beyond, whereby he attains a cosmopolitan flavour with the expression “My country is the whole world!”¹⁰⁰⁶ The overarching reason for the greatness of this period is the space it provides for the emergence of singular individuals. In a letter to his friend Rohde in 1870 Nietzsche writes,

I have delivered a lecture on ‘The Ancient Musical Drama’ before a mixed audience, and Feb. 1st I shall deliver a second on ‘Socrates and Tragedy.’ Every day I get to like the Hellenic world more and more. There is no better way of approaching close to it than that of indefatigably cultivating one’s own little self.¹⁰⁰⁷

The espousing of the Hellenic and Renaissance world for Nietzsche stems, as Church notes, from the belief that culture is central to individual ethical perfection and human excellence.¹⁰⁰⁸ Nietzsche’s praise of the Italian Renaissance must not only be conceived within the framework of its promotion of singular individuals, but also as the basis for an effective social involvement. One case in point for Nietzsche where social involvement fails given the lack of proper singular individuals and historical assessment, is the Reformation.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid., 147.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid., 145.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Letter to Rohde, “Bâle, End of January to February 15, 1870” *Friedrich Nietzsche Selected Letters*, 62.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Jeffrey Church, “Nietzsche’s Early Perfectionism: A cultural Reading of the The Greek State” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Volume 46, Number 2 (Penn State University Press, Summer 2015), 256.

5.2.2 Nietzsche on Failure of the Reformation

Though Nietzsche is largely read as an individual enhancement thinker, he has some tendencies that privilege community. Nevertheless, the failure of institutions is blamed on weaknesses of particular/influential individuals in society. Nietzsche scholars who hold that he cherishes the enhancement of society appeal to *The Birth of Tragedy*, particularly on the communal myth. Young, in support of the communitarian outlook in Nietzsche, holds that “the health of a society and of the individuals who belong to it, depends on a communal ‘myth’ or ethos, a shared understanding of the proper life of the community as a whole and of individuals in it.”¹⁰⁰⁹ This outlook is founded on the role of myth in Nietzsche. Apparently arguing against the emerging critical-historical spirit of his time Nietzsche defends myth since

without myth every culture forfeits its healthy, natural creative force: only a horizon defined by myths completes the unity of a whole cultural movement. Only myth can rescue all the forces of imagination and of the Apollonian dream from their aimless roaming. The images of myth must be the omnipresent but unnoticed daemonic guardians, under whose protection the young soul grows to maturity and whose signs enable the grown man to interpret his life and his struggle: and even the state knows no more powerful unwritten laws than the mythical foundation which guarantees its connection with religion, its growth from the mythical notions.¹⁰¹⁰

Nietzsche describes myth as “the compressed-world image.”¹⁰¹¹ What the myth compresses is the phenomenon of life, whose interpretation, as Young opines, depends on the communal ethos.¹⁰¹² The concern with myth at this point in Nietzsche’s philosophy must be linked to what J.P. Stern calls “the cultural situation of the German Empire of 1871.”¹⁰¹³ One such situation is the patriotic concern with the past. The aphorism under consideration from *The Birth of Tragedy* is generally interpreted as “an intensely nationalistic passage.”¹⁰¹⁴ In this regard, myth possibly serves the purpose of claiming the unity of the whole. In Young’s interpretation Nietzsche’s “unity of people and culture” points to his commitment to the

¹⁰⁰⁹ Young, *Individual and Community in Nietzsche’s Philosophy*, 2.

¹⁰¹⁰ *BT*, §23; KSA 1, 145.

¹⁰¹¹ *BT*, §23; KSA 1, 145.

¹⁰¹² Young, *Individual and community in Nietzsche’s philosophy*, 2.

¹⁰¹³ J.P. Stern, *Nietzsche* (Sussex: The Harvester Press Limited, 1978), 49.

¹⁰¹⁴ Duncan Large “Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation” in *Nietzsche and the German Tradition*, ed. Nicholas Martin (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2003), 118.

communitarian outlook.¹⁰¹⁵ For Nietzsche, myths serve as assurances for identity since “the man without myth” lacks roots.¹⁰¹⁶ In *The Birth of Tragedy* it is commonly held that Nietzsche espouses the rebirth of German myth.

In support of a supposedly communitarian outlook, Nietzsche in the same text refers to the German Reformation and its architect Luther. In Nietzsche’s interpretation, the German Reformation grew from the original force of the power of myths. The Reformation sought to reform the Catholic Church that was threatened by secularism and political crises. Two references to Luther are relevant here: (1) Luther’s adaptation of Catholic liturgical songs out of which the future melody of German music sprang¹⁰¹⁷; and (2) Luther as one of those who sought the inner necessity for the restoration of the German cultural spirit.¹⁰¹⁸ The period in which Nietzsche seeks the cultural restoration of Germany seems to coincide with the rise of nationalism. But as Large suggests, it is the period of overt cultural nationalism in which Nietzsche co-opts Luther for his cause.¹⁰¹⁹ There is a sense in which one can say that such co-opting was bound to happen. This is justified as follows:

As observed by Giles Fraser, “Luther so shaped the cultural landscape of subsequent generations that Nietzsche cannot have been but influenced by the theological revolution instigated by Luther.”¹⁰²⁰ This assertion is demonstrable from the early Nietzsche’s list of the great Germans. After *The Birth of Tragedy* in his lectures he writes about the spirit of Luther.¹⁰²¹ The German greats are given as Luther, Goethe and Schiller.¹⁰²² Another list has Schopenhauer, Wagner, Goethe, Schiller, Luther and Beethoven.¹⁰²³ In 1875, when Nietzsche was working on *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* the order is Luther, Goethe, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Beethoven and Wagner.¹⁰²⁴ Nietzsche’s recognition of Luther in relation to German cultural development seems incontestable.

In linguistic circles, Luther’s writings hastened the development of German as the language of intellectual life. The use of the Bible translated by Luther acted as the regeneration

¹⁰¹⁵ Maudemarie, *Nietzsche on Ethics and Politics*, 184.

¹⁰¹⁶ *BT*, §23; KSA 1, 146.

¹⁰¹⁷ *BT*, §23; KSA 1, 147; KSA 7: 9[10].

¹⁰¹⁸ *BT*, §23; KSA 1, 149.

¹⁰¹⁹ Large, “Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation”, 119.

¹⁰²⁰ Giles Fraser, *Redeeming Nietzsche, on the piety of unbelief* (London: Routledge, 2002), 33.

¹⁰²¹ KSA 1, 749.

¹⁰²² KSA 7:29[47].

¹⁰²³ KSA 7:8[94].

¹⁰²⁴ KSA 8: 12[9].

of German literature. Fraser holds that Luther's translation of the Bible "was the decisive move in establishing the East Central dialect of Early New High German as the basis of written German."¹⁰²⁵ Max Baeumer believes that "Nietzsche saw the Prussian State (or later the German Empire) and the Lutheran Church as the two institutions that determined the national life and glory of Germany."¹⁰²⁶ More pertinently, as Large observes, the nationalistic appropriation of Luther continued into the twentieth century Germany.¹⁰²⁷ Young and others who interpret the communal myth as the pointer to Nietzsche's commitment to the communitarian outlook may need to re-look at what is said in the foreword to *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Nietzsche fathoms the seriousness of existence when he warns that "those readers would be mistaken who approach this collection of ideas with an opposition between the patriotic movement and aesthetic indulgence in mind, an opposition between bold seriousness and the serenity of play."¹⁰²⁸ He further remarks about what he calls a "serious German problem [...] which we place right in the centre of German hopes, as the point around which they twist and turn."¹⁰²⁹ Nietzsche becomes more pointed when he talks of an aesthetic problem being taken seriously and then the "seriousness of existence." Nevertheless, the myth can still support the communitarian position. In the words of Baeumer, "Wagner's Teutonic operas and Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* [...] were determined in many respects by the national condition and nationalistic attitudes of the time."¹⁰³⁰ In any case the German perception of existence at this point in time could not escape such national attitudes as manifested and personified in its hero Luther.

Still, in *The Birth of Tragedy*'s 1886 preface, Nietzsche in his opening statement notes, "Whatever may lie at the bottom of this questionable book: it must have been a question of the greatest interest and appeal, as well as a deeply personal question."¹⁰³¹ On these scores *The Birth of Tragedy* is about existence which can be properly encountered at the singular,

¹⁰²⁵ Fraser, *Redeeming Nietzsche*, 33.

¹⁰²⁶ Max L. Baeumer, "Nietzsche and Luther: A Testimony to Germanophilia" in *Studies in Nietzsche and the Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, eds. James C. O'Flaherty, Timothy F. Sellner, and Robert M. Helm (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 146.

¹⁰²⁷ Large, "Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation", 113.

¹⁰²⁸ *BT*, "Foreword to Richard Wagner."

¹⁰²⁹ *BT*, "Foreword to Richard Wagner."

¹⁰³⁰ Baeumer, "Nietzsche and Luther: A Testimony to Germanophilia," 148. The implication is: out of the spirit of Wagner's German music.

¹⁰³¹ Nietzsche, "Attempt at self-criticism" *BT*, §1; KSA 1, 11.

individual level.¹⁰³² And in any case Nietzsche presents communal myth rightly as an abbreviation of a phenomenon.

According to G.S. Williamson myth can be understood in three possible ways: First as ‘mythology’ which is a system of narrating symbols and rituals; second as ‘mythos’ which implies the timeless basis of the human, and third as ‘mythus’ which is the “veil or veneer of appearance that would make the tragic insight of pessimism bearable.”¹⁰³³ Among the three the standard interpretation is that the third one is privileged in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Myth as a veneer on life is an aesthetic understanding. It is credible that for Nietzsche life requires a communal myth for it to be encountered but it may not be an abiding standpoint for him. Life is an enduring theme in Nietzsche. In the words of Reginster, Nietzsche sees “the affirmation of life” as the defining achievement of his philosophy.¹⁰³⁴ Williamson observes that Nietzsche and others interpreted Wagner’s phenomenon within the context of romantic scholarship on myth.¹⁰³⁵ Nietzsche’s distancing himself from Wagner focuses also on Luther’s cultural heritage. One such heritage is nationalism, and Luther seems to be part of that package that Nietzsche needed to leave behind.

Hence, the narrative of a communal myth in support of a communitarian outlook as Nietzsche’s commitment may not go beyond the Nietzsche of 1873. It is not an enduring position in Nietzsche and even in the early period communal myth is arguably a response to existence which is ultimately experienced as an individual phenomenon. In the words of Large, it became clear to Nietzsche that Luther is a protagonist in a “historical narrative which no longer sweeps through from the Greeks to the present with majestic vagueness.”¹⁰³⁶ Luther’s spirit apparently lacks broader historical context, given that it served the immediate nationalistic German needs. Instead, cultural enhancement that aims at production of great individuals may not ensue first and foremost from the restrictive nationalistic approach. The German Reformation on Nietzsche’s account failed to capture this trend of the Enlightenment.

¹⁰³² This is the import later in the book when the message of Silenus is unveiled and then explained on the need to encounter existence though tragic. Refer *BT*, §3; *KSA* 1, 35.

¹⁰³³ George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany Religion and Aesthetic culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 250–251.

¹⁰³⁴ Reginster, *The Affirmation of life, Nietzsche on overcoming Nihilism*, 1.

¹⁰³⁵ Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche*, 235.

¹⁰³⁶ Large, “Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation,” 121.

In support of the singular individual as the focus of any human enhancement in Nietzsche is the development of the notions of the Enlightenment and German Reformation.

From the outset, according to Nietzsche there may be great individuals who “appear [as] blunt and forceful spirits capable of great enthusiasm whose development is nonetheless retarded.”¹⁰³⁷ One such development considered retarded is Luther’s Reformation. Initially, the stunted development is not ascribed to individuals as such but to the fragility of science. Nietzsche observes that “science was as yet unable to raise its head.”¹⁰³⁸ In this regard, and as Ruth Abbey seem to recognize, Nietzsche acknowledges scientific thinking as the source of social progress.¹⁰³⁹ Science here among other implications stands for the rigorous method,¹⁰⁴⁰ the critical reflection,¹⁰⁴¹ and the focus on the human being as a historical reality.¹⁰⁴² In the absence of a strong scientific stance there are possibilities of conjuring “up again an earlier phase of humankind.”¹⁰⁴³ One such case of backward movement is Luther’s Reformation and the stifling of the Renaissance spirit. One wonders why the Lutheran Reformation among others should be held responsible for the delay of the Enlightenment if the problem is that of a weak scientific spirit. According to Nietzsche, historical philosophy is a necessity for whoever ventures in exposing human attitudes for progression.

Nietzsche partly understood the Renaissance Italians as those who appropriated for themselves the wisdom of antiquity. As such he praises Plutarch with a call to

[s]atiatate your soul with Plutarch and when you believe in his heroes dare at the same time to believe in yourself. With a hundred such men – raised in this unmodern way, that is to say become mature and accustomed to the heroic – the whole noisy sham-culture of our age could now be silenced forever.¹⁰⁴⁴

Nietzsche considered Plutarch an untimely figure and one of the bearers of “the banner of the Enlightenment.”¹⁰⁴⁵ Nietzsche ascribes to Plutarch a motto of daring and believing in himself. In 1784 *Berlinische Monatsschrift* posed a question: What is Enlightenment? It was put as a

¹⁰³⁷ *HAH*, §26; KSA 2, 46.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*, §26; 2, 46.

¹⁰³⁹ Ruth Abbey, *Nietzsche’s Middle Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 88.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *HAH*, §3; KSA 2, 25.

¹⁰⁴¹ Fink, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy*, 36.

¹⁰⁴² *HAH*, §§1 and 2; KSA 2, 23–24.

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*, §26; KSA 2, 46.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *HL*, §6; KSA 1, 295.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *HAH*, §26. The untimely in this case is a fighter against his age.

footnote question by Zöllner and responses came from among others Mendelssohn and Kant. In his response, Kant adopts the rationalist's motto *Aude Sapere* with a slight but with an important variation as the Enlightenment motto.¹⁰⁴⁶ About Horace as a Latin poet in his own day it is claimed "he was not just a modern poet but also a daring innovator who had to win acceptance on the face of conservative taste."¹⁰⁴⁷ Horace's poems are mainly thematic.

In general, his themes include the perennial enslavement of men to money, power, superstition, and sex. Such themes form a background to his maxim *Aude Sapere* (Dare to be wise). Horace writes "Well begun is half done: Dare to be wise. Start now. The man who postpones the hour of reform is the yokel who waits for the river to pass; but it continues and will continue gliding and rolling forever and ever."¹⁰⁴⁸ This part of the poem caught the eye of the rationalists who rendered it as "Dare to be wise." Kant interprets it as "Have courage to use your *own* understanding!"¹⁰⁴⁹ Though it is not clear whether Nietzsche ever read Kant's article on the Enlightenment, it is pertinent to observe that the Enlightenment is associated with the individual daring spirit. However, Nietzsche acknowledges the philosophical mode of life of Horace as not only "established by reason and habit," but "directed towards joy in living and in one's own self."¹⁰⁵⁰ Daring may be a needed spirit if one intends to be untimely in Nietzsche's view.

For Nietzsche, Luther represents the opposite of the daring spirit as opposed to Plutarch. In the view of Large, which is largely the standard interpretation, Nietzsche's respect for the Enlightenment grows in proportion to his respect for the noble humanism of the Italian Renaissance, which he sees as its cradle. Consequently, "Luther's Protestant Reformation becomes vilified as the baneful antithesis of those noble flowers, Renaissance values, its manliness a sad mockery of Renaissance *virtù*, its overall success one great cultural calamity [...]."¹⁰⁵¹ The noble humanism of the Italian Renaissance in Nietzsche's estimation contained

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Aude Sapere* originated with Horace. There is no evidence that Nietzsche was aware of the Kantian article. However, there have been responses to Kant's answer by among others Michel Foucault in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. Robert Hurley et.al (New York: The Penguin Press, 1997), 303–319.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Introduction to Horace: *Satires and Epistles, Persius: Satires*, trans. Niall Rudd (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 25.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Horace, *Epistles*, Book 1, Epistle 2, 40–43. (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65–8 BCE).

¹⁰⁴⁹ Kant "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" *Kant Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 54–60.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *WS*, §86; *KSA* 2, 592.

¹⁰⁵¹ Large, "Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation", 121–122.

within it what is called “the positive forces” required by modern culture.¹⁰⁵² The positive forces were generally meant to espouse the nature of the Enlightenment as an attempt to free humankind from superstitious religion, traditional philosophy and from oppressive political and social institutions.¹⁰⁵³ On the contrary, the German Reformation is labelled as “an energetic protest by retarded spirits who by no means had enough of the world-outlook of the Middle Ages and greeted the signs of its dissolution, the extraordinary transformation of religious life into something shallow and merely external.”¹⁰⁵⁴ The German Reformation here seems to be the generic German hostility to the Enlightenment as he later described it in *Daybreak*.

However, there may not be any serious distinction for Nietzsche between Luther’s spirit and the German Reformation. In the first clearly negative designation of Luther, Nietzsche refers to him as one of the “retarded” spirits.¹⁰⁵⁵ This rendering of Luther and the German Reformation it is not entirely something new; Nietzsche is being consistent. In the words of Baeumer, Nietzsche’s evaluation of Luther “whether affirmative or negative, always portrays [his] image of the German national character.”¹⁰⁵⁶ For Nietzsche, Luther seems to personify everything German. Therein is the consistency. Nevertheless, Nietzsche’s critique of Luther tends to be exaggerated and founded on his own Lutheran up-bringing.

In *Daybreak*, the contribution of the Germans of the eighteenth century to general culture is stated as follows: firstly, the German philosophers are termed speculative since they “were content with concepts instead of explanations;” secondly, the German historians and romantics are said to have brought “into honour older, primitive sensibilities,” especially Christianity, the folk-soul, folk-lore, folk-speech, the medieval world and oriental asceticism; then thirdly, the natural scientists are said to have “fought against the spirit of Newton and Voltaire.”¹⁰⁵⁷ For Nietzsche these three groups in Germany supposedly delayed cultural

¹⁰⁵² Those positive forces of Renaissance are enumerated as: Liberation of thought, disrespect for authorities, victory of education over arrogance of ancestry, enthusiasm for science and the scientific past of humankind, unfettering of individual, a passion for truthfulness and an aversion to appearance and mere effect (KSA 2, 199; *HAH*, §237).

¹⁰⁵³ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*, 1.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁵ *HAH*, §§, 26, 237; KSA 2, 46, 199.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Baeumer, “Nietzsche and Luther: A Testimony to Germanophilia”, 152.

¹⁰⁵⁷ *D*, §197; KSA 3, 171.

progression in Europe. The claim about the Germans being delayers of the Enlightenment is only apparent here.

Later, in *Anti-Christ*, Luther is held solely responsible for the German Reformation. In a considerably over-arching claim about the three German groups above, Nietzsche is emphatic that “[a]mong Germans one will understand immediately when I say that philosophy has been corrupted by theologian blood. The protestant pastor is the grandfather of German philosophy, Protestantism itself is its *peccatum originale*.”¹⁰⁵⁸ To substantiate his claim, Nietzsche makes reference to the German college of Tübingen, whence such major German philosophers like Leibniz and Kant trace their roots. Furthermore, Nietzsche remarks that in the German academic world at that time, three quarters were composed of “the sons of pastors and teachers.”¹⁰⁵⁹ These claims of Nietzsche seem to augment the standard understanding that Luther is a representative man in the history of German culture and is considered as the father of the German religion.

Hence even if Nietzsche makes general cultural claims, there is still individual culpability in the background. In *Anti-Christ* on the Renaissance, Nietzsche makes a general assertion that “[t]he Germans have robbed Europe of the last great cultural harvest Europe had to bring home—of the harvest of Renaissance.”¹⁰⁶⁰ Then, he elaborates on what the Renaissance stood for as the revaluation of Christian values and establishment of the noble values. On the contrary, that process was disrupted and hence Nietzsche asks, “What happened?” The German monk Luther is presented as being anti-Renaissance.¹⁰⁶¹ It is largely true that Nietzsche occasionally refers to epochs. For instance, he refers to the eighteenth century as “the century of enthusiasm,”¹⁰⁶² and the Middle Ages as the “era of the greatest passions.”¹⁰⁶³ The point is that for Nietzsche there are figures that warrant such general designations. In this regard, the foremost German delayer of the Enlightenment is Luther, due to the Reformation he initiated.

In Nietzsche’s scheme of things, the Reformation, apart from being a political reaction, also reveals the psychological state of Luther as a person. Nietzsche ascribes to Luther an

¹⁰⁵⁸ *AC*, §10.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁰ *AC*, §, 61.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶² *D*, Preface, §3; *KSA* 3, 14.

¹⁰⁶³ *WS*, §222; *KSA* 2, 654.

inking towards “unconditional trust,”¹⁰⁶⁴ the equivalent of “the convinced man as a fanatic,”¹⁰⁶⁵ and projected as a man of “vindictive instincts.”¹⁰⁶⁶ These are mostly noted as negative characteristics throughout Nietzsche’s philosophy. In one of several descriptions of conviction, he considers it “the belief that on some particular point of knowledge one is in possession of the unqualified truth.”¹⁰⁶⁷ The person who makes claims about possessing convictions in matters of knowledge is perceived to lack scientific inclinations. The claim to possession of unqualified truth is ascribed to one who is “retarded.”¹⁰⁶⁸ The vindictive instincts in Nietzsche’s view are about the weak will, given that self-mastery is impaired.¹⁰⁶⁹

Luther, on Nietzsche’s account, lacks the basic ingredient for cultural enhancement which is “the individual self-knowledge” as the condition of one who “enriches everything out of one’s own abundance.”¹⁰⁷⁰ Earlier in *Schopenhauer as Educator* an exemplary individual is one that oozes with “magical outpouring of the inner strength.”¹⁰⁷¹ But Luther in *Anti-Christ* is described as “[t]he religious man [who] thinks only of himself.”¹⁰⁷² In the words of Large, Nietzsche presents Luther as a tortured soul “who emerges from a troubled childhood, a dangerous fanatic who finds it impossible to live at peace with himself, a fundamentally violent man with psychopathic tendencies [...] thus in need of piety.”¹⁰⁷³ These designations against Luther characterize a man lacking in singular individuality. However, such histrionics may be pointers to Nietzsche’s own childhood experiences of religion, from which he later seeks to dissociate himself.

Still the polemics against Luther must be understood contextually. In 1879, in a letter to Peter Gast, he writes, “Dear friend, as to Luther, it is a long time since I have been able with honesty to say anything to his credit; this is the outcome of a mass of material about him to which Jacob Burckhardt called my attention.”¹⁰⁷⁴ He then refers to Janssen’s *History of the*

¹⁰⁶⁴ *D*, §207.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *AC*, §54.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁰⁶⁷ *HAH*, §630.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *HAH*, §633; *KSA* 2, Refer also *HAH*, §§635–638.

¹⁰⁶⁹ See chapter two on weak and strong wills.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *SE*, §6 and *TI* “Skirmishes” §9.

¹⁰⁷¹ *SE*, §2.

¹⁰⁷² *AC*, §61.

¹⁰⁷³ Large, “Der Bauernaufstand des Geistes: Nietzsche, Luther and the Reformation”, 125.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Letter “Nietzsche to Peter Gast, Naumburg, October 5, 1879” in *Friedrich Nietzsche Selected Letters*, 125–126.

German People. Nietzsche through this book seems to discover Luther's nationalistic tendencies. However, the accuracy of this reason for despising Luther seems doubtful. The mentioned book is of 1879, while according to Bluhm "Nietzsche changed his view on Luther radically between 1876 and 1878 with the appearance of *Human, All Too Human*."¹⁰⁷⁵ Hence, the standard position is that Nietzsche's earlier positive rendering of Luther is not removed from the general opinion held by most Protestants of the time. It can as well be added that such a positive opinion of Luther was largely related to nationalistic tendencies. In this regard, engagement with Luther seems to manifest one thing that was encountered in Chapter Two: the type *Übermensch* and form-giving.

For Nietzsche, Luther in his weak will represents the type that turned out badly which is the opposite of the type *Übermensch*. Nietzsche interpreted the Enlightenment in terms of life enhancement. Luther is presented as a poor discerner of historical realities since "[w]hat Luther saw was the corruption of the Papacy, while precisely the opposite was palpably obvious: the old corruption, the *peccatum originale*, Christianity no longer sat on the Papal throne! Life sat there instead! The triumph of life!"¹⁰⁷⁶ The implication here is that the Reformation was not necessary, given the course of the Enlightenment. On account of Nietzsche's linking the course of the Enlightenment with Renaissance and life, Luther lacked the perceptions that entail the fundamental will which is the will to power. Based on the scheme for commitment to culture given in *Schopenhauer as Educator* which entails the organization of the drives and the in-depth knowledge of the history of culture, Luther seems to lack both. For a better nuanced analysis, a brief look at the will to power as the fundamental will and commitment to better community is pertinent.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Max L. Baeumer, "Nietzsche and Luther: A Testimony to Germanophilia" *Studies in Nietzsche and the Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, eds. James C. O'Flaherty, Timothy F. Sellner, and Robert M. Helm (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 145.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *AC*, §61; KSA 6, 251.

5.3 *Cosmopoiesis and the Type Übermensch*

Nietzsche in *Anti-Christ* perceives Luther as the pathological fanatic, “the antithetical type of the strong, emancipated spirit.”¹⁰⁷⁷ The context of this assertion about Luther is the analysis opposing scepticism and conviction. In Chapter One, Montaigne’s scepticism is about being un-dogmatic as the mark for respect for the becoming nature of life. Then in Chapter Two, the strong willed are associated with those who have internalized the phenomenon of overcoming governed by the will to power. The strong wills and the emancipated ones espouse the activity of life as becoming and valorisation of the historical through and through. In general terms for Nietzsche life is meant to be the instinct for growth/power and “where the will to power is lacking there is decline.”¹⁰⁷⁸ In Nietzsche’s estimation, Luther seems to lack what entails strong wills. The purpose of this section is to show how Luther, not necessarily as a person but as a type, affected positively or negatively the Reformation and the course of the Enlightenment. The section will also delve into the possible reasons as to why Senghor’s and Nyerere’s communal character of African socialism fails in properly orientating new societies (*cosmopoiesis*).

In Chapter One, scepticism is justified on account of the becoming nature of reality which may not warrant dogmatic approaches. Hence, for Nietzsche the one who wants to do great things is necessarily a sceptic. He is such because he sees what Nietzsche calls “five hundred convictions beneath one—behind one.”¹⁰⁷⁹ It is such unprecedented openness that obtains the unconstrained perspective that is aligned to strong wills. Some Nietzsche scholars on *Anti-Christ*, such as Gary Shapiro, believe that Zarathustra is referenced as a great intellect given his scepticism because of his “non-narrative view of the world.”¹⁰⁸⁰ Shapiro’s view is that Zarathustra’s life espouses the totality of experience and links such totality to the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

The implication here is that the Eternal Recurrence as a non-dogmatic thought knows no isolated agents in “the sequence of events, but only the interconnection of all events; it knows no beginning, middle and end of the narrative but simply the continuous circle of

¹⁰⁷⁷ AC, §54; KSA 6, 237.

¹⁰⁷⁸ AC, §6.

¹⁰⁷⁹ AC, §54; KSA, 6, 237.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Gary Shapiro, “Nietzsche’s Graffito: A Reading of The Antichrist” in *Why Nietzsche Now?*, 136.

becoming.”¹⁰⁸¹ Based on what is elaborately discussed in Chapter Three, it can be plausibly claimed that Zarathustra so described espouses the “Moment.” One of the activities that ought to be associated with the “Moment” is overcoming. In overcoming, anything that seeks preservation must be fought. More pertinently, grand passion in Zarathustra is overcoming as a character of life itself which is “that which must always overcome itself.”¹⁰⁸² Life in the case of overcoming is will to power.

In the Notebook materials life, is understood by Nietzsche as a multiplicity of forces linked to “a common mode of nutrition” called life.¹⁰⁸³ The focus is on life, not in a universal realm, but “human life” as a biological concept.¹⁰⁸⁴ Such a conception of life for Nietzsche is the condition which makes all feelings, ideas, and thoughts possible. These three (feelings, ideas, and thoughts) stand for life’s character of a resistance to all other forces, analysis, and evaluation. Life as a grand passion, therefore, entails the perspectival character which is essentially non-dogmatic. This apparently means that convictions may be needed, but it becomes problematic when one privileges some of them and presents them simpliciter. A brief note on dogmatism is needed, given its nineteenth century linkage to experience and system-building philosophies.

In modern philosophy, reflection on dogmatism is given much weight in Kant and then later in Nietzsche. For Kant the problem of dogmatism originates in the peculiar nature of reason that “in one species of its knowledge is burdened by questions which, as prescribed by the very nature of reason itself, it is not able to ignore, but which, as transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer.”¹⁰⁸⁵ With the enduring questions, the work of reason always remains incomplete and in this situation reason is compelled to resort to *a priori* principles, thus overstepping the possible empirical employment. Although used by reason, *a priori* principles transcend the limits of experience. Kant refers to the field of these controversies of reason as metaphysics. Hence, for Kant, dogmatism is first associated with going beyond the limits of experience. In the preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he is more pointed against dogmatism as a “*procedure of pure reason, without previous criticism of*

¹⁰⁸¹ Shapiro, “Nietzsche’s Graffito: A Reading of The Antichrist” in *Why Nietzsche Now?*, 136.

¹⁰⁸² Z, II (On Self-Overcoming); KSA 4,148.

¹⁰⁸³ WP, 641.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Fink, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy*, 36.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1929), preface to first edition, A VII–X.

its own powers."¹⁰⁸⁶ The dogmatic principle in this case is the appeal to the *a priori* realm. In the words of Clark, dogmatism is Kant's name for philosophical systems that uncritically assume the capacity of pure reason.¹⁰⁸⁷ It must be discerned whether Nietzsche understands dogmatism in Kantian terms of pure reason.

Nietzsche associates dogmatic claims to finality, un-conditionality and audacious generalizations.¹⁰⁸⁸ The generalized claims normally originate in particular contingent conditions and are then mistakenly asserted to be so un-conditionally. In this regard, Clark's position is that Nietzsche's anti-dogmatism targets all spheres of knowledge that attempt to monopolize claims to truth.¹⁰⁸⁹ The problems with monopoly in truth-claims lie in the mistaken belief that one possesses the truth.

In the realm of interpretations there is some consensus that whatever is rendered as dogmatic is mostly an "objectification of a singular experience into a general belief" that fundamentally weakens the spirit of free inquiry.¹⁰⁹⁰ Such objectification must be said to partly account for much of what Nietzsche posits as justification for the failure of the German Reformation. In *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* two elements must converge to achieve greatness: "greatness of spirit in those who accomplish it and greatness of spirit in those who experience it."¹⁰⁹¹ The implication is that no event possesses greatness in itself. In the case of the German Reformation, its successes or failures are inseparable from the person of Luther and the general German social milieu.

I have shown that for Nietzsche, the German Reformation failed mainly because of Luther's supposedly weak spirit. Nietzsche believes that convictions firmly held, like dogmatism, are not only anti-will to power, but also shatter the possibility for the life of the type *Übermensch* to flourish. The type *Übermensch* is embodied as Danto opines, by whoever is "in possession of instinctual drives which do not overpower him. He is the master and not

¹⁰⁸⁶ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Preface to second edition, BXXXV.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Maudemarie Clark and David Dudrick, *The Soul of Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 20.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Refer to his assertions in the preface of *Beyond Good and Evil*. For Nietzsche the history of Western Philosophy is a struggle against dogmatism which he specifically links to Platonism. But Platonism in this context is about Christianity.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Clark, *The Soul of Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil*, 28.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Diana Behler, "Lessing and Nietzsche: Views on Christianity" *Studies in Nietzsche and the Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, 179.

¹⁰⁹¹ *RWB*, §1.

the slave of his drives.”¹⁰⁹² Given the mastery over the drives such a person is in a position to make something of himself (he is *autopoietic*). The language of mastery over the drives pertains to the psychology of the type *Übermensch* which is the will to power. One must restate that the will to power as the psychology of the type *Übermensch* functions as the explanatory key for whoever espouses this type. The will to power so understood may warrant Karl Barth’s conception of it as “the supreme and proper form of human existence.”¹⁰⁹³ The implication of understanding the will to power in such Barthian terms must be read consistently with notions of becoming/chaos/strife/agon/tragedy as the essential marks of existence.

Such an existence is the tragic one which demands the life of the individuals and whatever ensues from them as a work in progress. The weak wills which espouse unqualified demands through fixed identities and institutions have largely failed to grasp ontology as that which is becoming. The type *Übermensch* which is becoming simpliciter is, as I stated in Chapter Three, the affirmer of the Eternal Recurrence. In the words of Magnus, the Eternal Recurrence is offered by Nietzsche as an attitude of the life of the type *Übermensch*.¹⁰⁹⁴ Such an attitude is of being in the world, as in the involvement of the activity of life which is characterized by overcoming as the essential attribute of the type *Übermensch*.

The attitude of the type *Übermensch* is that of the highest affirmation of life as it is stated in Chapter Three. Attitudes in Nietzsche indicate “symptoms” (are perspectival) as in the conditions of whoever embodies the attitude. In *Twilight of Idols* Nietzsche speaks of the possession of values as “symptoms” for or against life.¹⁰⁹⁵ As an attitude of affirmation, as in the case of the type *Übermensch*, it entails the condition of the over-fullness of life. Following the interpretation of the Eternal Recurrence as an ethical-imperative, such an affirmation is about being disposed towards the “Moment.” The final question in *The Gay Science* on the Eternal Recurrence is “how well disposed would” one have to be oneself and to life to crave nothing but the ultimate eternal confirmation.¹⁰⁹⁶ The “Moment” in *Beyond Good and Evil* is described as “beyond good and evil and no longer, Like Buddha and Schopenhauer, under the

¹⁰⁹² Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher*, 199–200.

¹⁰⁹³ Karl Barth, “Humanity without Fellow-Man: Nietzsche’s Superman and Christian Morality” trans. G. W. Bromiley, *Studies in Nietzsche and Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, 357.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Magnus, “Jesus, Christianity, and Superhumanity” in *Studies in Nietzsche and Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, 314.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *TI*, “Socrates,” §2.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *GS*, §341.

spell and illusion of morality.” And finally through such a moment one opens up to “the most exuberant, most living and most-world affirming man” the embodiment of the Eternal Recurrence.¹⁰⁹⁷ It is the considered position of this dissertation, that ultimately, for Nietzsche, life as tragic is experienced through the embodiment of the “Moment” that could be possible for some through the type *Übermensch*. Only for some, since the Eternal Recurrence is an ethical selective process. It is within the “Moment” that Nietzsche envisions his revaluation of values.

However, revaluation and the incorporation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence are intertwined in Nietzsche. First and foremost, revaluation is like the Eternal Recurrence, conceived within the type *Übermensch* described in Dionysian terms of excess and proof of strength. However, revaluation is explained as a shadowy question mark that casts a “shadow over him who sets it up.”¹⁰⁹⁸ Now such language is not simply being introduced here; it is present in *Schopenhauer as Educator* about productive uniqueness, in that when someone becomes aware of such uniqueness, “there appears around him a strange penumbra which is the mark of his singularity.”¹⁰⁹⁹ Based on these two accounts, revaluation, tragedy, individuality, and the Eternal Recurrence are correlates. Revaluation, as Werner J. Dannhauser observes, is “the hardest and greatest of all tasks.”¹¹⁰⁰ The doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is similarly conceived in such terms as the “greatest weight,” the “hardest” or “most difficult thought.” The difficulty of revaluation and the Eternal Recurrence lies in what they reveal as life in its twin aspects of creativity and destructiveness.

Hence, the attitude in question is about the embodiment of existence as tragic in its twin manifestation of creativity and destructiveness. The type *Übermensch* in affirming the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, contrary to Buddha- or Schopenhauer-like resignation, embraces creativity and destruction. In the appropriation of creativity and destruction lies the greatest challenge in embracing Nietzsche’s tragic philosophy. Nevertheless, it is within this tragic conception that Nietzsche underscores the credible re-making/*cosmopoiesis* of society.

The tragic approach to life loathes overly prescriptive and systematic designations that largely seek to preserve identities. As such, communal responses to existence, such as Senghor

¹⁰⁹⁷ *BGE*, §56.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *TI*, Preface.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *SE*, §3.

¹¹⁰⁰ Werner J. Dannhauser, *Nietzsche’s View of Socrates* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), 193.

and Nyerere's *ujamaa*, seem deficient on the account of tragedy. Firstly, their appreciation of the tragic aspects of their own peoples' experiences of slavery and colonialism is hastily rationalized through their evolution of systems. Secondly, the two African thinkers largely lacked the thrust of historical knowledge in their estimations of what entails social change. Nyerere mostly operated on the level of ideology. The nature of ideological accounts is to be dogmatic and uncritical of the underlying principles which are mostly existential. Within African thinking, there are some thinkers like Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon who attempt to embrace the tragic, especially the African experiences of slavery and colonial activities as the springboard for possible social change. Their position lends credence to my argument that the sense of existence as tragic could be the basis for any individual and social enhancement.

5.4 Beyond African Philosophy of Sociality

The section on African philosophy of sociality (Chapter Four) considered two thematic questions: one on identity (who I am) and another on action/activity (what can I do). The section engaged in depth with the African identity approach of Senghor and Nyerere. The main weakness that emerged from the identity thesis is the evolving of the overarching frameworks and hasty solution to an *aporia*. Senghor and Nyerere in their search for a sort of identity seem to gloss over the theme of existential enigma or simply elect to avoid whatever could be possibly agonistic. I propose that the best response to Senghor's and Nyerere's overestimation is the theme of actuality, guided by the question: what can I do? In Aimé Césaire's Notebook, reflecting on the squalid living conditions of life, he poses the question: "What can I do?" and responds, "I have to begin." This response ensues into another question: "Begin what?" and there follows the final response: "The only thing in the world worth beginning: The End of the world, no less."¹¹⁰¹ I think the implication here is the call to break away from the imposed conceptual schemes in the name of identity and face the tragic aspects of the present existence through creativity and destructiveness.

¹¹⁰¹ Césaire, *Notebook*, 99. The wording in this text has been adjusted.

5.4.1 Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon: Towards African Existential Philosophy

I begin with Césaire's less considered and largely unfamiliar brand of *négritude*. As pointed out in Chapter Four, Césaire's *négritude* does not seek to be tied to a fixed notion of identity. Instead it cherishes the experimental nature of life. Césaire remarks that his *négritude* goes deep down the flesh and pierces opaque prostration with its straight patience. In his Notebook the existential fact is privileged when he alleges that the Martinican people are "swayed" from their own cry, and yet that could have been the only cry of their own.¹¹⁰² The cry is expressed in generic forms of poverty, hunger, rebellion and resentment. These are generic forms of the reality of suffering. In the thinking of Césaire the reality of suffering before seeking for any redemption must be acknowledged. The suffering alluded to here is related to "the critical analysis of the historical conditions of oppression."

This amounts to the narrative argued for in this dissertation, that the starting point of social change is the existence taken on its own terms. Such an approach favours the concrete life forms, in the case of Africa, the basis could be the existential challenges that ensue from slavery and colonialism. Instead Senghor's and Nyerere's African socialisms are generally founded on the reactionary models derived from "colonial subjection and to a certain myth of the black."¹¹⁰³ This means that whatever clichés of communality some African thinkers have ascribed to themselves as their stellar identity, in some ways (as was shown in Chapter Four) these clichés are a constructed response to the Western discourse. In any case, the response to existence qua existence ultimately demands an individual input, and mere glossing over may not be sustainable. Such a response entails a break away from the overarching tendencies, and this is the meaning of revolt in Césaire.

The revolt is aimed against the interiorized and mystified sense of identity. The position is that this "revolt" warrants the stress on action as the essential aspect of the opening up of possibilities. The concept of "revolt" for Césaire ought to be understood in the context of deconstruction of the pre-colonial and colonial discourse around African philosophy of sociality. For Césaire, the nature of "revolt" must be gauged in the highest existential terms possible in the first person: "I declare my crimes and that there is nothing to say in my defence. Dances. Idols. Relapse. I too have murdered God with my laziness my words my gestures my

¹¹⁰²Césaire, *Notebook*, 75.

¹¹⁰³ Garraway, "What Is Mine: Césairean Négritude between the Particular and the Universal," 79.

obscene songs [...].”¹¹⁰⁴ These words indicate the call for aversion towards claims that are dogmatic in nature and seemingly unresponsive to the existential conditions as such.

As discussed in Chapter Four, what Senghor calls black consciousness as a given reality fails to capture the existential conditions. Césaire’s response to Senghor’s identity-oriented négritude is the development of the life-oriented type. Césaire’s rebellion is directed towards generally abstractive approaches like Nyerere’s *ujamaa*. Hence, action as a form of “revolt” is envisaged as an affirmation confronting the squalid conditions of existence without hiding under overarching identity moral maxims like *shienyu ni shienyu*. Such a form of identity founded on Black consciousness, Césaire calls the “old négritude” which is gradually cadaverising.¹¹⁰⁵ One contends that the death of the identity-based approach, though not fully realizable, is above all initiated when the tragic nature of existence is brought to the fore.

Césaire, in a later reflection, though sympathetic to what he calls the old Black “courteous civilizations,” is rather emphatic that aspiring to “return” to them would be misplaced. He instead advises, “For us, the problem is not to make a utopian and sterile attempt to repeat the past, but to go beyond. It is not a dead society that we want to revive.”¹¹⁰⁶ The “going beyond” here implies continual “revolt” or resistance against any hegemonic system that includes what has above been called the critical analysis of the historical conditions. The objective of the revolt is the vision of a new society founded on the existential conditions. Those existential conditions must entail as Césaire opines “all the productive power of modern times, warm with all the fraternity of olden days.”¹¹⁰⁷ In the case of the African identity, tragedy must be encountered in the experience of the evolving life conditions. One of the proponents on the African existential conditions as the locus for social change is Frantz Fanon.¹¹⁰⁸ Fanon’s starting point is that every human problem must be considered from the standpoint of time.¹¹⁰⁹ This time is infused in an individual existence. In this regard Fanon explains further, “In no fashion should I undertake to prepare the world that will come later. I

¹¹⁰⁴ Césaire, *Notebook*, 95.

¹¹⁰⁵ Césaire, *Notebook*, 129.

¹¹⁰⁶ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 52.

¹¹⁰⁷ Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 52.

¹¹⁰⁸ Frantz Fanon, 1925–1961 was born in the French Caribbean island of Martinique Like Aimé Césaire. Later studied in France and worked in Algeria. He is associated with the Algerian armed struggle for Independence. Main works: *Peau Noire, Masques Blanc (Black Skin, White Masks)*, 1952 and *Les damnés la terre (The Wretched of the Earth)*, 1961.

¹¹⁰⁹ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 1986), 14.

belong irreducibly to my time.”¹¹¹⁰ One considers this assertion vital on existential grounds given that whoever is alive to the coordinates of life is most likely to be aware of the becomingness it entails.

But more pertinently the commitment to one’s existential condition will demand “revolting” against the pre-established categories and maxims in encountering life. The pre-established categories and maxims will include Senghor’s and Nyerere’s versions of African socialism that lay stress on the ideal of identity but are tremendously deficient in the agonistic character of existence as such. The challenge in Senghor and Nyerere is partly letting the past identities determine even the envisioning of their future. In Fanon’s diagnosis the problem envisaged here is situated in temporality. He explains that those who refuse “to allow themselves to be enclosed in the substantialized tower of the past” could be the ones who hold possibility for social change.¹¹¹¹ However, apart from “revolt” against the past, Fanon envisages new possibilities from those who refuse to hold the present (l’actualité) as definitive. This amounts to affirming the fact of becoming that even though it is unsettling, remains the appropriate means of envisioning social enhancement.

The possibility for social enhancement for Fanon hinges on two characteristics of life: (1) solidarity in action, not identity and (2) the body as a cultural sphere. The theme of action is related to “revolt” against unsolicited categorizations and fixations with prior domains. But this is not about ignorance of the past. On the contrary, Fanon advocates for the celebration of human cultural history which entails action. On cultural history, Fanon calls for the need to “recapture” the whole past of the world.¹¹¹² Solidarity with the past is not about identities but about activities, especially those that have tended to enhance culture. Fanon believes that “[e]very time a man has contributed to the victory of the dignity of the spirit, every time a man has said no to an attempt to subjugate his fellows, I have felt solidarity with his act.”¹¹¹³ The credibility of solidarity in action is founded on the fact of the human condition as such.

The challenge with the responses attributed to African socialism is mainly that of a poor historical sense that largely reduces life forms to levels of identity. Fanon’s demand for solidarity is action-oriented or existential. Though solidarity with all human beings is vital in

¹¹¹⁰ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 14.

¹¹¹¹ Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire masques blancs* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952), 183.

¹¹¹² Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 226.

¹¹¹³ *Ibid.*

Nyerere's *ujamaa*, I think it is mainly an abstract sense of solidarity. This is not the case with Fanon's action-oriented solidarity, which is not solidarity with "all human beings" in the abstract but with "actions" that particularly says no to subjugation.¹¹¹⁴ Such solidarity in action does not necessarily seek to create a type of Schopenhauer's community of "fellow-sufferers," resigned to such subjugations, but, in terms of the "revolt," creates a community with an edge over its subjugations. The basis for such a "revolt" is the individual as the singular unit of the subjugations. This leads me into Fanon's second element: the body as the cultural sphere.

Fanon ends his work *Black Skin, White Masks* with what he calls his final prayer: "O my body, make me always a man who questions!"¹¹¹⁵ The body domain here must be gauged in existential terms that *ipso facto* are linked to time. Fanon applies Merleau-Ponty's notion of the body as an object of consciousness in his attempt to explain black existential reality. For Merleau-Ponty, the body is considered as one's point of "view upon the world" and "one of the objects of that world."¹¹¹⁶ An object according to Merleau-Ponty is inhabited. The horizon within which the world is experienced is the body. Hence he believes that "[t]he body is the vehicle of being in the world and, for a living being, having a body means being united with a definite milieu."¹¹¹⁷ Fanon develops this notion of the body by ascribing it to the Black reality. In his critique of Senghor, he holds that the mistaken universal situation of Black consciousness is resolvable through appreciation of Black concrete existence. Fanon seems to appeal to Merleau-Ponty in his assertion of what he calls one fact that "*Wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro.*"¹¹¹⁸ The reality of being Black is experienced from a corporeal domain.

Fanon is analysing the reality of being Black from the colonial context of French colonies and particularly in France. Hence, it is in the body that the Black is attacked or lynched and as he observes, "It is as an actual being that he is a threat."¹¹¹⁹ Fanon sees a need to embrace the Black existential situation, which cannot be gauged on fixed categories or past modalities. The body becomes an element of culture when its role as the object of consciousness is

¹¹¹⁴ Bernasconi, "The Assumption of Negritude: Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and the Vicious Circle of Racial Politics." *Parallax*, 73.

¹¹¹⁵ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 232.

¹¹¹⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 2012), 73.

¹¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹¹¹⁸ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 173.

¹¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 163.

acknowledged. In Merleau-Ponty's construction, "the body can symbolize existence, [...] because it actualizes it and because it is its actuality."¹¹²⁰ I find Fanon's and Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the body relevant for highlighting the sense of existential tragedy in the African ethno-philosophical thinking. With the stress on the body as an existential compass, the notion of becoming cannot be side-stepped. If becoming is prioritized, then indeterminateness, also called "the priority of the unforeseeable"¹¹²¹ is important as well. The unforeseeable must be understood relative to the argument advanced in this dissertation about encountering existence on its own terms.

However, as shown in Chapter Four, there is a communal response to existence too, but its challenge is mainly an inadequate answer to the question, how can man face existence on its own terms? The "bold and dangerous line with existence" is first and foremost an individual endeavour that slowly filters into the social arena. The stance advanced in this dissertation is that the community's role is mainly to lay bare existence as tragic. An alternative to the African ethno-philosophical thinking of *shienyu ni shienyu* is proposed and constructed in terms of existence as tragic, rendered as *shienyu ni shibala*, as a possible horizon for conceiving social change.¹¹²²

5.4.2 *Shienyu Ni Shibala*: Appropriating the Sense of Tragedy

In the contemporary setting, one thinker who attempts to encounter a modern sense of life is Charles Taylor. In one of his works *Sources of the Self, The Making of the Modern Identity*, he refers to Max Weber's disenchantment with modernity, claiming that the dissipation of our sense of the cosmos as a meaningful order has destroyed the horizons in which people previously lived their spiritual lives. He goes on to observe that the modern standpoint is opposed to frameworks, and there is no horizon that can sink to the phenomenological status of the unquestioned fact.¹¹²³ Taylor's solution to this disenchantment is the appeal to the human agent. For him, the human agent presupposes the senses of inwardness, freedom, individuality, and embeddedness in nature.

¹¹²⁰ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 167.

¹¹²¹ Bernasconi, "The Assumption of Negritude: Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and the Vicious Circle of Racial Politics." *Parallax*, 73.

¹¹²² *Shienyu ni shibala*: your own is the 'tragic world.'

¹¹²³ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self, The making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 17.

Without contestating the primacy of human agent, one could concur with Taylor that, the starting point is the quality of the individual (individuality). Not frameworks, but the individual affirmation of the tragic life through self-overcoming, serves as the starting point for facing existence as such. As Blondel observes, for Nietzsche the problem of the value of life must take precedence over the tendency to horizons or speculative knowledge.¹¹²⁴ Desiring frameworks is not only inimical to the development of culture/life, but it is a contradiction about the nature of culture as largely anti-institutional. On Nietzsche's account, "[e]very philosophy which believes that the problem of existence is touched on, not to say solved, by a political event is a joke and pseudo-philosophy."¹¹²⁵ Existence requires a cultural response, and the nature of institutions to turn individuals into contented inhabitants of the earth must be continually checked. For the African ethno-philosophical thinking of *shienyu ni shienyu*, moving forward, the fact of tragedy needs to be made clearer through a new thinking away from identity-seeking to an open-ended realm of *shienyu ni shibala*.

Shibala here entails the world in its existential element of being tragic. This dissertation has generally advanced the Nietzsche's claim that the embodiment of existence as tragic is the *terminus aquo* for singular individual's *autopoiesis*. Such a tragic embodiment of existence presupposes a philological exercise of genuinely listening where, one is required to be a true helmsman of his life. This need for listening to existence implies that what *shienyu ni shienyu* conceals must be made the starting point for any *cosmopoiesis* to be properly conceived. Chapter Four showed that the maxim *shienyu ni shienyu* seeks to conceal existential stink through fellow-feeling. However, cultural development demands open engagement with the existential stink through *shienyu ni shibala*. This maxim is a way of rendering existence in tragic terms.

Though sounding pessimistic, *shienyu ni shibala* implies the honest way of rendering the human condition. It is out of this honesty that affirmation of the same could be envisaged through cultivation of singular individuality. In other words, what is demanded of the community is not concealing the vagaries of life but possibly laying them bare as the basis for the individual navigating his way through them. In Nietzsche's terms, facing *shibala* is the appropriation of the becoming nature of life espoused by the type *Übermensch*. The societal

¹¹²⁴ Blondel, *Nietzsche: The body and culture*, 52.

¹¹²⁵ *SE*, §4.

responsibility must go beyond Makumba's obligation of simply lending one's own a hand. On the contrary, the role of the society is possibly to expose one's own to the vagaries of existence. This seems to be a big challenge owing to the ingrained philosophy of sociality.

However, one radical proposal, consistent with the embodiment of tragedy as the starting point, can be proffered in favour of *shienyu ni shibala*. The world (*shibala*) designates a realm where the individual is left to his own imaginations without communal protection. *Shibala* stands for vulnerability since it portends danger and considered an uncharted domain where the individual should not venture outside the communal framework. The argument here is that it is this world that needs embracing first from the singular level and then communally. It is within such an uncharted realm that the question, 'what can I do?' is properly posed. The nature of the *shibala* is explained in two ways.

From the African ethno-philosophical perspective, the notion of 'the world' as a scary realm must be explained within the phenomenon of curse. For the ontology of *shienyu ni shienyu* to function, it must be tied to some ancestral lineage (see Chapter Four on the ethnogenesis of the *Abaluyia*). The ancestral lineage in the descending order consists of the dead members; the elders who are the living custodians of the community; and the junior members. Here the elders are considered as the representatives of "the entire legal and mystical authority of the lineage."¹¹²⁶ Such a mystical lineage encompasses moral maxims like *shienyu ni shienyu*. Owing to this authority, the elder is supposedly conferred mystical powers over the juniors. Hence, a curse implies the removal of the mystical protection of the lineage from the juniors. This is what Makumba describes as ostracising. The curse supposedly removes the protective powers of the lineage over the individual.

The supposedly "cursed individual" is considered exposed, ostracized from the lineage of the community, and as such is "outside." The image of being "outside" projects the world in its proper spectrum as a dangerous space given that one has no attachment to the lineage. Therefore, the radicality in encountering *shibala* hinges on the courage to embrace being "outside" the lineage, in a revolt from the identity-based maxims. Hence, embodying existence in its tragic form calls for the willingness to be exposed to the "world" as "a dangerous place

¹¹²⁶ Igor Kopytoff, "Ancestors as Elders in Africa" *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 41, Number 2 (Cambridge University Press, April 1971), 131.

to be in when one is not attached to a kin-group.”¹¹²⁷ It is within this dangerous space that the possibility of singular individuality can be fashioned. Engaging with the world as a dangerous space is akin to Nietzsche’s call for taking a “bold and dangerous line with existence” as a condition to singular individuality.¹¹²⁸ Accordingly, this dissertation, dialogically extends Nietzsche’s idea of life as will to power to *Abaluyia*’s notion of existence.

In Zarathustra’s second part “On Redemption” the following scene is given: Zarathustra is surrounded by the cripples and the beggars. The hunchback tells Zarathustra: “The blind you can cure and the lame make to walk again; and from him who has too much on his shoulders [the hunchback’s conditions], you could well take a little away – that, I think, would be the right way to make the cripples believe in Zarathustra!”¹¹²⁹ Zarathustra declines the request of the hunchback by appealing to popular wisdom which suggests that “[i]f one takes the hump away from the hunchback, one thereby takes away his spirit.” The focus here will be specifically on the hunchback as a symbol for the tragic nature of existence in *Abaluyia* ethnic group.

Among the *Abaluyia* people the hunchback (*Sikufu*) is interpreted negatively since it is considered as a sign of existence gone awry and as such, a terrible sight to behold (human existential malady). The term *sikufu* (literally, what burdens) shares the same etymological root with *omufu* (the dead one). The hunchback for the *Abaluyia* symbolizes the ultimate burden of existence. And yet removing the hunchback is regarded as removing the spirit of existence. The spirit (*Geist*) is understood by Nietzsche as “the life that itself cuts into life: through its own torment it increases its own knowledge.”¹¹³⁰ The spirit of existence is expressed through suffering. The spirit is thus an instrument used by life to enhance itself.¹¹³¹ This is Nietzsche’s later description of life as the will to power.

In the Notes, Nietzsche describes the becoming nature of the world as follows: “it becomes, it passes away, but it has never begun to become and never ceased from passing away – it maintains itself in both. – It lives on itself: its excrements are its food.”¹¹³² Such terms as “lives on itself” or “its excrements are its food” show what overcoming entails.

¹¹²⁷ Kopytoff, “Ancestors as Elders in Africa”, 131.

¹¹²⁸ *SE*, §1.

¹¹²⁹ *Z*, II, 20 (On Redemption).

¹¹³⁰ *Z*, II, 8 (On the famous wise men).

¹¹³¹ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 271.

¹¹³² *WP*, 1066.

Zarathustra does not endeavour to remove deformities. Instead, everyone is to take on the burden of existence (as the spirit, which is the way to self-perfection/singularity).¹¹³³ That spirit is the one that essentially defines life as overcoming. The picture from *Zarathustra* is that all human beings are maimed in one way (severed limbs and fragments) or the other, and the only redemption Zarathustra proposes is affirmation (of the type *Übermensch*). He demands to redeem that which has passed away and to re-create all “It was” into a “Thus I willed it”—“that alone should I call redemption.”¹¹³⁴ Willed the past is untenable since we cannot break into the cycle of time. The non-deceptive picture of the human condition is the knowledge of its tragedy. And Nietzsche’s response to tragedy is individual affirmation (“Thus I willed it”) as a continuous task.

Conclusion

The overarching thematic thrust of this chapter has been the justification of the claim that, in Nietzsche, *autopoiesis* presupposes *cosmopoiesis*. *Cosmopoiesis* in Nietzsche is the realm of social action referenced in *Schopenhauer as Educator* as “the outward event.”¹¹³⁵ In this final chapter of the dissertation it has been demonstrated that the picture of life as tragedy or the will to power not only envisions singular individuality through *autopoiesis*, but is central to any re-making of the society. The in-depth analysis of the general notion of *poiesis* in Greek thought entails its artistic sense as the privileged space for production. That space is the tragic, where art ensues. It is in this sense that *poiesis* is regarded as a pointer to existence as essentially chaotic. In this chapter, consideration of *poiesis* as a tragic domain in Greek thought brings about a realization that Nietzsche’s sense of tragedy is nuanced. In Chapter One, Nietzsche’s sense of tragedy is mostly from Schopenhauer’s existential considerations. But there is a more basic understanding of tragedy from the domain of chaos as becoming. Hence, *poiesis* becomes a process of giving style or fashioning of sorts. Though mostly unacknowledged, this is a lesson from the Aristotelian understanding of *Poetics*. However, Nietzsche concretizes the relevance of tragedy into the human individual sphere and by

¹¹³³ Refer to the introductory material of the Cambridge translation of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Introduction is by Adrian Del Caro and Robert Pippin, XXXI.

¹¹³⁴ Z, II, 20 (On redemption).

¹¹³⁵ SE, §6.

extension a guarantee of social change by appealing to the in-depth knowledge of history and the outcome of the German Reformation.

Cosmopoiesis demands not only the acknowledgement, but the appropriation of the tragic sense. Hence, *autopoiesis* must be made always the goal with *cosmopoiesis* as the outcome. This is the import of Nietzsche's programmatic assertions about culture in *Schopenhauer as Educator* as a struggle and hostility towards those influences, habits, laws, institutions in which the goal of singular individuality is indiscernible. In this regard, if Nietzsche at all praises some epochs, it is because they are sufficiently promising in realizing the goal of singular individuality and not merely for their sake. This is what Nietzsche learned through his engagement with Jacob Burckhardt's history of culture. Through Burckhardt, Nietzsche came to discern the underlying force for individuality and statecraft as the sense of the tragedy. Though Nietzsche is scanty in details about *poiesis*, it is clear that, from his lectures on *The Greek State* to the assertions in *Beyond Good and Evil*, he understood tragedy as an artwork. Such an understanding is founded on Burckhardt's history of culture in which the Italian Renaissance history is prominent. From the Renaissance, Nietzsche not only captures the spirit of culture as a response to life as tragic, but also discovers in it the continuation of the Enlightenment spirit that is fundamentally individual.

But, for Nietzsche, inimical to the positive history of culture espoused in the Renaissance is the Reformation. In general terms, the Reformation on Nietzsche's analysis is bereft of the spirit of cultural enhancement. Inherent in the spirit of the Reformation is the notion of communal myth. On account of the need for revival of German culture, Nietzsche initially had dalliance with the Wagnerian music which is coupled with the spirit of Luther. However, this dalliance came to an end when Nietzsche realized that they (Wagner and Luther) espoused retarded spirits that basically are anti-Enlightenment. Luther's Reformation comes to epitomize that anti-Enlightenment spirit. Among other characteristics, such a spirit entails scepticism, value for the historical sense and above all the appropriation of life as the will to power. Unfortunately, in Nietzsche's estimation, Luther is lacking in all these. It is such a lack that accounts for the failure of the Reformation. Though Nietzsche is critical of Luther, this criticism is not holistic enough. Nietzsche's polemics against Luther are mostly around the areas of nationalism, history, and culture.

More pertinently, Nietzsche seems to criticize Luther mostly as a type that espouses the retarded spirit deficient in the sense of life as will to power. Furthermore, in light of this dissertation's appropriation of Nietzsche's philosophy of singular individuality as a task, the failures in Luther's Reformation are also discernible in the African philosophy of sociality. The problem with the African philosophy of sociality as espoused by Senghor and Nyerere is the inadequacy of the sense of existence as tragic, which largely accounts for their failure. However, this chapter also shows the opening within the African philosophy itself where there is a possibility of transitioning from *shienyu ni shienyu* as identity-oriented thinking to embracing the tragedy through *shienyu ni shibala*. In embracing *shibala* (tragic world), new solidarity emerges: solidarity in action as opposed to solidarity in identity.

General conclusion

The two parts of this dissertation—Nietzsche on individual *autopoiesis*; and critical dialogue with ethno-philosophy and *cosmopoiesis*—find their nexus in the sense of existence as tragic. Through the positive reading of Nietzsche’s philosophy on tragedy, it has been shown that tragedy necessarily warrants a commitment to singular individuality. However, individual *autopoiesis* as the process of singularity demands, apart from having mere sense of the tragic, the appropriation of the optimal conditions that espouse such existence. It is on the appropriation of the tragic, that the African ethno-philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* and its claims for social change are found wanting. Additionally, the question of whether Nietzsche is committed to singular individuality or to communal human enhancement must be undertaken within the framework of his philosophy of tragedy. It is shown that for Nietzsche, wherever the tragic is deeply espoused, singular individuality emerges through the process of *autopoiesis* as the privileged response to such existence. On the contrary, where the tragedy of existence is not properly espoused, communal-cum-universal responses that are not well-grounded ensue. Thus, where the sense of life as will to power is weak, the chances are that there will emerge a poor conception of what entails *cosmopoiesis*.

This dissertation has brought to the fore some nuances about Nietzsche’s corpus which has not been hitherto sufficiently examined. One such work is *Schopenhauer as Educator*. It is rather clear that the existential questions posed in this work find better and clear treatment in the later works. This early work, however, as revealed in this dissertation, is a serious work in the development of Nietzsche’s philosophical themes. The theme of singularity in Nietzsche starts to appear in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, where conditions for its production are laid out. The underlying narrative in this work is that singular individuality is credibly presented as the solution to an existential aporia. The solution entails the parameters laid out in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, and comes to fruition in Nietzsche’s doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence. There are two overriding questions in *Schopenhauer as Educator*: “But how can we find ourselves again? How can man know himself?” It is largely demonstrated that these questions guide not only what Nietzsche is doing in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, but also his philosophical journey. It has been demonstrated that the “how” points to the fact of singularity as a task. However, such a task requires an inducer, who in *Schopenhauer as Educator* is called the Exemplar, a role later assumed by the type *Übermensch*. The type *Übermensch* is marked by striving or

overcoming. Striving as a process of individual differentiation in *Schopenhauer as Educator* is grounded in honesty about the constitutional and existential conditions of human reality.

Honesty emerges as another pertinent element from Nietzsche's philosophy in this dissertation. The solution to the question, how do we honestly respond to existence? Nietzsche's critique of the uncharted path to individual *autopoiesis* is largely founded on what he refers to as the youngest of the virtues: the virtue of Honesty. Nietzsche's affirmation of the centrality of drives and affects as the physio-psychological phenomenon is reasonably justified in what entails the Nietzschean virtue of honesty. Part of that honesty is the realization that, as a task, singular individuality presupposes hard work where embracing of becoming is paramount. This means that singular individuality is a struggle in self-examination, as opposed to self-contentment. The struggle for honesty in the process of individuality entails continuous purifications and evaluations, which is difficult. Such difficulty in evaluations is explained in *Daybreak* as either original or adopted modes.¹¹³⁶ Hence, honesty properly pursued entails striving, struggle, and inner strength, brought to the fore as the nature of life: will to power. Therefore, in Nietzsche, the authentic mode of existence accrues from attempting to live by the "original evaluations" which espouse life as will to power. However, in *Schopenhauer as Educator* these characteristics are embodied in the exemplar. One of the pertinent inferences from Chapter One is that, already in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche has a scheme for the key facets of his philosophy that later develop as will to power and the Eternal Recurrence, under the auspices of the type *Übermensch* and its nemesis, the type last human being. However, what distinguishes one type from the other is honesty towards existence.

Honesty towards existence is a result of Nietzsche's philological training. There is a correlation between philology and Nietzsche's virtue of honesty. Philology as the art of "reading" well is employed by Nietzsche in his "listening" to existence. This paradigm aids Nietzsche's radicalization of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, employing its cosmological underpinnings in the explanation of its existential-ethical imperative for individuals. Good philology for Nietzsche does not falsify through hasty universalization and overarching

¹¹³⁶ D, § 104: All actions may be traced back to evaluations, all evaluations are either original or adopted- the latter being by far the most common. Why do people adopt them? From fear- that is to say, we consider it more advisable to pretend they are our own – and accustom ourself to this pretence, so that at length it becomes our own nature. Original evaluation: that is to say, to assess a thing according to the extent to which it pleases or displeases us alone and no one else- something excessively rare!

frameworks. Good philology, applied to philosophy of sociality, with its hastily superseding identities, glosses over the existential issues, due to a poor conception of reality as becoming. Such a poor philology promotes a technics of preservation inimical to *cosmopoiesis*.

If overcoming, as stated, is the singular designation of the type *Übermensch*, then preservation is the apt description of the type last human being in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The type last human being essentially lacks honesty towards existence. Where the virtue of honesty is in doubt, even the origination of value is thrown into disarray. The virtue of honesty as good philology in Nietzsche's case must first and foremost be applied to the one who claims to value.

Thus, another pertinent inference from this dissertation concerning Nietzsche's philosophy of tragedy is not only the locus of value, but the perspectival nature of the one who values. Any philosophy that misunderstands the human physiological basis of valuations is bound to falsify not only the human reality, but anything ensuing from it. Such is the case in *The Gay Science*, in which the claim to pure objectivity is a disguise:

The unconscious disguise of physiological needs under the cloaks of the objective, ideal, purely spiritual goes to frightening lengths—and often I have asked myself whether, taking a large view, philosophy has not been merely an interpretation of the body and a misunderstanding of the body.

Behind the highest value judgements that have hitherto guided the history of thought, there are concealed misunderstandings of the physical constitution—of individuals or classes or even whole races.¹¹³⁷

Nietzsche's values are necessarily traceable from the reality of human beings. From *Schopenhauer as Educator* onwards, I show various nuances to misinterpretations of human reality. They include the contentedness that latches on to the conventional operations opposed to striving and promoting utilitarian ends in life. The utilitarian ends, like the simply happy person, lack the realization that true individual cheerfulness presupposes tragic knowledge and being burdened with the toils of existence. Singular individuality is embarked on in the environment where affirmation of the terrors of existence and its nature as becoming are paramount. Consequently, the type *Übermensch*, through its psychology of the will to power

¹¹³⁷ *GS*, Preface, 2.

and the affirmation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence, becomes the guarantor for singular individuality.

Nietzsche's notion of psychology is also quite innovative and works in tandem with the type *Übermensch*. In Chapter Two, the underlying psychology of the type *Übermensch*, the will to power, gives the mechanism for the fashioning of singular individuality. The psychology envisaged as the will to power is the privileged path to the reality of life as tragic in the sense of its terrors that accrue from its nature as becoming. Consistent with the types *Übermensch* and the last human, psychology for Nietzsche is also understood in a two-fold manner. The psychology akin to the type *Übermensch* is drives-based, while the last human in Nietzsche's examination aligns itself with a psychology tied to conventional morality. The drives-based psychology espouses life as will to power, unveiling the path to the tragic nature of human existence. It is only through the will to power that one can possibly tunnel into life as the basic human drive. Effective individual *autopoiesis* and subsequently *cosmopoiesis* may not obtain in the absence of the knowledge of the depth of life as fundamentally tragic and chaotic. Life conceived as basically will to power does not envisage its analysis from a privileged standpoint which could be universalized. Instead, the will to power typifies the human condition and human actions in their diversification. When drives-centred psychology is privileged, the will is no longer considered as a faculty but an affect of command. Thus, in conjunction with his privileged psychology of the types, Nietzsche's reflection on the efficaciousness of the will is unparalleled in his time.

The will to power is the fundamental will that is perpetually efficacious. The will in its own overcoming is pure becoming. Pure becoming is an aspect of the type *Übermensch*, incomplete in the absence of power. The power here entails form-giving. And when the type *Übermensch* unleashes form through its psychology of will to power, it justifies itself through differentiated entities. Hence, the will to power as the psychology of the type *Übermensch* enables overcoming and form-giving which are essential characters for singular individuality. It is owing to its psychology that the type *Übermensch* is proposed as the reservoir of boundless possibilities, only realizable through diverse singular individuals. One pertinent conclusion at this juncture from Chapter Two is that, ultimately the notion of tragedy, as becoming and horrific aspects of life, is summed up as will to power. Nevertheless, the will to power as the

psychology of the type *Übermensch* is also Nietzsche's response to morality, that conceives the will as a faculty.

The psychology tied to conventional morality is vilified by Nietzsche on its universalistic claims and approaches. The basic assumption of a conventional morality is the primacy placed on intentions in acts. Such a morality operates on other assumptions and opposites like the unified self/subject; cause and effect; the doer and the deed. Its general operative framework is the existence of opposites, within which there are enduring realities opposed to Nietzsche's becoming. The key aspect of intention-based morality is that of consciousness. For Nietzsche, consciousness serves a peripheral role and is very much removed from individual endeavours as such. Hence, it does not aid much in understanding life as will to power. In any case, consciousness, like the search for intentions, is inimical to life-enhancing undertakings, given the rationalization and overarching claims that accrue from it. The two psychologies (the drive-oriented and the conventionally oriented) consequently yield strong and weak wills, respectively, depending on their promotion of life as will to power. In Nietzsche's scheme, weak wills are akin to the last human, best represented by the dwellers of the Motley Cow in the prologue of *Zarathustra*. If actions are to be valued differently, in relation to the will, then it is the realm of unintentionality that one needs to turn to.

The realm of unintentionality, which has hitherto not received much attention, could be the starting point for developing the ontology of becoming. In this regard, ontology as a broad area of "metaphysics that focuses on reality as becoming" is an avenue for examining the question of tragic existence. One characteristic of intention-based morality is the categorization of actions as good and evil. Chapter Three shows that to transcend such categorization, the life of the type *Übermensch* must be conceived on an extra-moral/unintentional domain. Such an unintentional life of the type *Übermensch* is marked by transience and destruction. The life of transience and destruction justifies the type *Übermensch*'s singular character of overcoming and form-giving. It is in Nietzsche's doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence that the type *Übermensch*'s transience and destruction properly plays out. However, Nietzsche sources the doctrine from Greek thought about the cosmos and radicalizes it in the search for a suitable way of interiorizing life as will to power. For the Greeks, the nature of the cosmos is marked by becoming. Such becoming correlates with the principle of the cosmos, fire, where destruction is part and parcel of its continual existence.

Nietzsche learns from Heraclitus the notion of strife as the basic justification for the cosmos, founded on the harmony of the opposites. Hence, the ontology of becoming takes life on at its own game, as will to power, undertaking individual *autopoiesis* and the ensuing social development. How the ontology of becoming can be undertaken is seen in the radicalization of the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.

Nietzsche radicalizes this doctrine, not only when he brings in the question of the value of such existence, but also in his demand that Eternal Recurrence must be incorporated into individual, ethical reality. Through this incorporation, one may face the question of tragedy in espousing the character of the type *Übermensch*. Such a demand means that the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence as an ethical-existential formula helps interiorize the enigma of existence as tragic. The type *Übermensch* exhibits overcoming and form-giving, which are the roles of the will to power because of its lifestyle. Such a lifestyle is marked by an unintentionality best described as the “Moment,” in the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence.

The task of singular individuality which presupposes overcoming and form-giving will only happen in embracing the “Moment.” The doctrine of Eternal Recurrence fundamentally seeks to emancipate the will from the tyranny of time. The conception of time as cosmic or linear fails the test of implicating the human being properly into the phenomenon of existence as tragic. In fact, Nietzsche’s philosophy, from the larger perspective, intends to liberate the individual from the anguish of existence. The solution lies in Nietzsche’s revisionist understanding of time as perspectival. The term “perspectival” here implies the integration of the personal element as constitutive of one’s condition. The attitude towards time as presented in the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence has ripple effects on the affirmation of life through singular individuality and *cosmopoiesis*. The question is how does Nietzsche make time a material element of human life? Or more simply, how does he reconcile time and the will? The existential torment of the will is worsened by its inability to will backward. It is the considered position of this dissertation that such a reconciliation and healing of the will is what the notion of the “moment” accomplishes through the appropriation of the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence.

In the late Stoic philosopher Aurelius, the moment is the “space” within which every activity of life is undertaken. Though Nietzsche fails to acknowledge Aurelius’s observation on the moment, he conceives the “Moment” as the quintessential aperture to life as will to

power. The “Moment” is described by Nietzsche in the following terms: “the Moment is related to eternity”; as a sort of “centripetal” force where “all things, knotted together so tightly that” it “draws after it all things that are to come.” The “Moment” is also described as “pure becoming.” In this regard, the “Moment” contains the conditions for the plenitude of reality as action. This action in its fullness entails transience and destruction, and as such, the descriptions of the “Moment” fit life as will to power, best espoused by the type *Übermensch*.

However, the relation of eternity to the “Moment” is a major insight in Nietzsche’s attempt to heal the will from the torment of time. In traditional Western philosophy and theology, the tendency is to decouple eternity from the realm of time. However, Nietzsche conceives of eternity and time under one realm of becoming. It is in this regard that eternity implies “no end.” Nonetheless, eternity must be justified as time in singular individuality. Eternity as pure becoming becomes the source of differentiation and thus the source of time as a perspectival reality so conceived in singular individuality. Now eternity as pure becoming is espoused in the unintentional life of the type *Übermensch*, marked with no praising and no blaming. Therefore, appropriating the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence is hugely important in transfiguring the human into the life of the type *Übermensch* thus guaranteeing the possibility of embarking on the trajectory of individual singularity. However, Nietzsche’s notion of the ‘Moment’ as some contemporary philosophy shows, evolves the question about the value of the present.

The nature of Nietzsche’s critique is value oriented with an arguably singular focus on conditional tenets of whoever values or possesses values. The present becomes the meaningful locus for action. However, more pertinently, Nietzsche’s philosophy of the “Moment” has reverberated in Michel Foucault, with his ontology of the present as a form of critique. For Foucault, clearly echoing Nietzsche’s critique, alleges that

That criticism is no longer going to be practiced in the search for formal structures with universal value, but rather as a historical investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves and to recognize ourselves as subjects of what we are doing, thinking, saying. In that sense, this criticism is not transcendental, and its goal is not that of making a metaphysics possible: it is genealogical in its design and archaeological in its method. Archaeological -- and not transcendental -- in the sense that it will not seek to identify the universal structures of all knowledge or of all

possible moral action, but will seek to treat the instances of discourse that articulate what we think, say, and do as so many historical events.¹¹³⁸

Foucault makes a plausible point regarding the events constituting the subject in the present. However, it is not sufficiently radical compared to Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, the “Moment” is the capsule of the fundamental demands for overcoming and form-giving. In Nietzsche, the point of departure is the physio-psychological situation of the one who values. In the “Moment,” one finds the summary of the life of the type *Übermensch* marked by unintentionality, where overcoming thrives. However, the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence as espoused by Nietzsche, when appropriated (through the “Moment”), allows for understanding of the cosmic or linear recurrence in better light. One such light is the realization that life merely seen as cyclic is too superficial to be lived.

The envisaged superficialities unfavourable for the appropriation of the doctrine include the morality of custom and its allied notion of pity as the supposed alleviation of human suffering. The approaches of the morality of custom to the existential enigma lack depth not only in their understanding of tragedy, but also and more so in their response. The morality of custom seeks to alleviate suffering through preservation strategies like utilitarianism and fellow-feeling. The communal maxims inspired by conventional morality, while attempting to confront the enigma of existence, mostly descend into universalized-disinterested responses. To appropriate the sense of the tragic, firstly, proper knowledge of existence as such is paramount and then secondly, a commensurate response that promotes its affirmation through singular individuality must be promoted.

Chapter Four elucidates the morality of custom of an ethnic group in which fellow-feeling is privileged as the suitable response to the enigma of existence. It explores the morality of custom, not from Nietzsche’s perspective, but from an African ethno-philosophical stance of *shienyu ni shienyu*. It is such a morality of custom that is put into critical dialogue with Nietzsche’s condition of individual *autopoiesis*. What is problematized is the *shienyu ni shienyu*’s valorisation of the communal through fellow-feeling as a response to the enigma of existence. Hence, its *shienyu ni shienyu* as a fellow-feeling moral maxim is considered

¹¹³⁸ Michael Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” Qu’ est – ce que Lumières? In *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 41.

pertinent for existential reasons. Such moral maxims unfortunately do not escape from the challenge of overarching claims.

Such claims are found in Senghor and Nyerere's approaches to African socialism where much emphasis is placed on an abstracted African identity. In their search for an overriding African character, they fail to raise the existential questions of slavery and colonialism and their effects on the African individual. Given that the existential challenges are not deeply probed and analysed, the solutions are largely found inadequate. Hence, from the moral maxim of *shienyu ni shienyu* and African sociality, what ensues are identity-based claims, weak on individual existential condition. The existential challenges demand a question geared towards action, not identity. Some of the cultural features inimical to individual enhancement prevalent in African philosophy of sociality include unbridled fellow-feeling; morality of pity; utilitarianism; and the general stress on the overarching moral maxims. If one is to enquire as to why for instance Senghor's or Nyerere's projects failed, the response lies in answering the question, what can I do? Answering this question largely demands affirming and plunging oneself into existence as tragic.

Chapter Five, "From *Autopoiesis* to *Cosmopoiesis*," recapitulates the claims of the four chapters with the affirmation of tragedy as the basis for world-making. The notion of tragedy as I have explored in this dissertation is two-fold: 1) the specific understanding as the horrific, the absurd, and the dreadful; 2) the broad understanding as chaos and becoming. Such a conception of tragedy summarized as the will to power is the ground for poiesis. Making presupposes chaos and is also the aesthetic process. As the world-making process, *cosmopoiesis* presupposes honesty with existence, as demonstrated by reference to Nietzsche's engagement with the history of the Italian Renaissance. Hence, apart from tragedy as the quintessence for not only *autopoiesis* but *cosmopoiesis*, in-depth knowledge of history is needed for any sustainable social change. From the knowledge of history, one dialogues with the underlying spirit which has brought about meaningful cultural enhancement. In the absence of the sense of the will to power/tragedy and an in-depth sense of history, one is bound to evolve overarching schemes that rarely amount to meaningful change. Such is the case with the example of Luther and the failure of the Reformation. In this regard, reference to critical dialogue is not simply with the ethno-philosophy, but also within Nietzsche's condition of *autopoiesis*, particularly his program for social change. While Nietzsche is overly and

unjustifiably polemical against Luther, the point is that the latter as a type is considered inimical to life as will to power.

On the part of the African ethno-philosophy of *shienyu ni shienyu* and its weaknesses regarding individual enhancement, the proposal is to develop some form of African existential philosophy opposed to philosophy of sociality. The idea of existential philosophy is needed for the reality of existence as tragic to shine forth. Hence, it becomes paramount to face the horrific existence symbolized by the “world,” (*shibala*) as a space for evolving individual singularities.

A positive reading of Nietzsche on tragedy, especially with its emphasis on action of the will, opens frontiers beyond categories of identity. The forms of life, as opposed to particular identities, become the avenue for engagement. Nietzsche’s philosophy of tragedy with the focus on the singular individuality opens new frontiers for re-examination of what entails social transformation. Nietzsche’s focus on singular individuality could be promising enough in today’s cosmopolitan thinking. How promising that could be is a matter of further research. However, one pointed outcome from this dissertation that often goes unnoticed is the need to re-think the excessive valorisation of “abstraction,” which could remove one from the existential demands of life. Nietzsche, the proponent of the affirmation of life as will to power, is about overcoming “universality in favour of singular individuality.” Through cultivation of singular individuality, life, though tragic, is outsmarted at its own game.

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