

NIETZSCHE'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCRATES

NIETZSCHE'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCRATES

BY

SEAN STEEL

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

MASTER OF ARTS (1998)
(Religious Studies)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Nietzsche's Understanding of Socrates

AUTHOR: Sean Steel, B.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Z. Planinc

NUMBER OF PAGES: xi, 293.

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ABSTRACT

From Nietzsche's early writings to those marking the end of his intellectual life, Socrates remains a permanent figure for his scrutiny. In his own words, Nietzsche writes, "*Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting him". As a physician, a gad-fly, and a philosopher, as a man of strong character, and yet also as a self-confessed decadent, Nietzsche both identifies with Socrates and opposes him. In the following investigation, I examine Nietzsche's philosophical and intellectual struggles against Socrates. In pursuit of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates, I undertake a chronological study of the entire corpus of his writings, and I provide a detailed analysis of each reference made to Socrates, the "Socratic", the "Socratic schools", and "Socratism". By noting the various changes and continuities in Nietzsche's view of Socrates throughout his writing career, I illustrate how Nietzsche comes to understand his own "task" as a philosopher through this struggle against his most worthy adversary. Finally, through my critical analysis of his views concerning Socrates, I will demonstrate to what extent Nietzsche's own "task" is itself Socratic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are due to Dr. John C. Robertson for directing me towards excellent secondary literature concerning my topic, as well as to Dr. P. Travis Kroeker for having offered me continuous challenges throughout my time at McMaster University as a graduate student. I am especially indebted to Dr. Zdravko Planinc for the last seven years of my education, for his friendship, for teaching me about philosophy and the gods, and for encouraging in me a love for both Plato and Nietzsche (and of course, for Socrates!).

This thesis could not have been written without the love and generosity of my two wonderful parents, Doug and Sylvia Steel, who have always supported me in my interests, both emotionally and financially.

Just as Nietzsche honours friendship above all things, so too would I give thanks to my friends (you know who you are!) both at home and abroad for having shown me the truth of Nietzsche's words.

Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to two very special women: Rebekah Whiteley and baby Jasmine:

τὸν δὲ λόγον τὸν περὶ τοῦ Ἔρωτος, ὃν ποτ' ἤκουσα
γυναικὸς... ἢ ταῦτά τε σοφὴ ἦν καὶ ἄλλα πολλά... ἢ δὴ
καὶ ἐμὲ τὰ ἐρωτικὰ ἐδίδαξεν.

-Plato's *Symposium*, 201d.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

I. Nietzsche's Published Works

- A.* *The Antichrist*
- BGE.* *Beyond Good and Evil*
- BT.* *The Birth of Tragedy*
- D.* *Daybreak*
- EH.* *Ecce Homo.* The first three and final sections of this work are cited in the text as *E:I*, *E:II*, *E:III*, and *E:IV*. In those sections wherein Nietzsche comments on his earlier works, I have abbreviated these as *EH:BT* (*The Birth of Tragedy*); *EH:UM* (*Untimely Meditations*); *EH:Z* (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*); *EH:CW* (*The Case of Wagner*).
- GM:I* *On The Genealogy of Morals*, the first essay; *GM:II*, the second essay; *GM:III*, the third essay.
- GS.* *The Gay Science*
- HH:I* *Human, All Too Human*, Vol. I
- HH:II.i* *Human, All Too Human*, Vol. II: "Assorted Opinions and Maxims"
- HH:II.ii* *Human, All Too Human*, Vol. II: "The Wanderer and His Shadow"
- TI:I* *Twilight of The Idols*, chapter 1; *T:II*, chapter 2, etc..

- UM:H *Untimely Meditations*: "On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life".
- UM:S *Untimely Meditations*: "Schopenhauer as Educator".

II. Nietzsche's Unpublished Works

- G. "The Greek State"
- HC. "Homer's Contest"
- HT. "Philosophy in Hard Times"
- P. "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle between Art and Knowledge"
- PC. "The Philosopher as Cultural Physician"
- PTA. "Philosophy During the Tragic Age of The Greeks"
- SL. *The Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*
- SSW. "The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom"
- W. "We Philologists"
- WP. "The Will To Power"

In the text all abbreviations for published works are in *italics* and those for unpublished works are not italicized. Each abbreviation is followed by an Arabic numeral which designates the aphorism or section number. A lower case "p" indicates "preface". Because *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Untimely Meditations*, as well as some of the unpublished works are not aphoristic and the sections into which they have been divided

are lengthy, I have also provided page references from the editions listed in the bibliography. These page numbers, where they are provided, are designated by a number which follows immediately after the semi-colon within citations.

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps one of the best ways to approach a study of Nietzsche is through an examination of his passion for music. Nietzsche was very fond of music. He studied Schumann diligently. As a freshman at Bonn, and later at Basel, he composed many songs for various voices and piano, as well as piano works, chamber music, and solo music for both violin and piano. Nietzsche is also credited with having created an experimental form of music known as "melodrama for voice and piano". In many ways, his desire to experiment, to wander, and to explore is prefigured in his talents as a composer. However, Nietzsche truly displays his abilities as a musician only through his writings; it is here that we discover how terribly important music was for Nietzsche. Indeed, he claimed that his own *Thus Spake Zarathustra* "may be reckoned as music"(EH:Z.1). Just as Nietzsche considered his own philosophical writings to be music, so too did he view the entirety of life much like a musical composition. Life -- and therefore also philosophy, which is a way of life for Nietzsche -- may very well be evaluated according to how it would sound if it were music. Fundamentally, Nietzsche's ear for music is the source of his criticisms of modernity, morality, Christianity, modern philosophy, and in our study, Socrates.

According to Nietzsche, to read his works properly

one has to suffer of the fate of music as of an open wound. -- *Of what do I suffer when I suffer of the fate of music? That music has been done out of its world-transfiguring, Yes-saying character, so that it is music of decadence and no longer the flute of Dionysus.* (EH:CW.1)

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is presented as the proto-typically non-Dionysian and

unmusical man. Nietzsche claims to have been the first human being both to have truly articulated an understanding of Dionysian phenomenon, and to have recognized the perils of "Socratism". Nietzsche defines "Socratism" as the "'rationality' at any price", and as "a dangerous force that undermines life" (*EH:BT.1*).

These insights into the Dionysian and "Socratism" are earlier rendered in music by the Austrian composer, Franz Joseph Haydn. Nietzsche was certainly no friend of Haydn. Although he recognized Haydn's "genius", he deemed it to be limited by Haydn's thoroughgoing moralism.¹ Nevertheless, Haydn's portrayal of a philosopher in his so-called "Philosopher Symphony"² is an accurate rendering of all that Nietzsche found despicable about philosophy. Haydn's philosopher is a "flathead", to borrow Nietzsche's term. His philosopher is too exhausted for the heights; he constantly turns away from them. And yet he is at the same time too cowardly for the depths; he could not bear to suffer the darkness or the loneliness of any abyss. Rather, Haydn represents the philosopher musically as one whose ultimate concern is with consistency, and with maintaining measured speech to such a degree that it becomes ridiculous and plodding.

There is a mild tension expressed in the music but it is never allowed to increase or to deepen. As soon as the slightest whiff of a soaring melody arises, it is immediately stifled, buried under argument after argument. Neither is there any great desire to suffer in this music; there is only a constant shying away from suffering and from evil, from dangerous heights, and from acts of courage: in short, from all that is great and glorious in Nietzsche's estimation. Haydn's "Philosopher Symphony" is quite simply unbearable and suffocating

¹ Consult especially *HH:II.ii.151*.

² Symphony No. 22 in E-flat major.

music. Nietzsche would agree with Haydn's musical assessment of the philosopher; and for Nietzsche, "the" philosopher is Socrates. Nietzsche's ear is finely attuned to Socrates' bad music.

i. *A Review of Scholarship*

Nietzsche's view of Socrates has been the subject of much discussion. In particular, I wish to focus upon the work of four English-speaking scholars as representative of this discussion. Paul R. Harrison and Werner J. Dannhauser have written lengthy and thorough accounts of Nietzsche's view of Socrates. Stanley Rosen and Eric Voegelin emphasize Nietzsche's "Platonism", and they offer the most thoughtful and philosophical accounts, more attuned to Nietzsche's own musical concerns, as I have discussed them above. All four of these scholars differ in their understanding of Nietzsche's view of Socrates, and yet all four are partly correct in their understanding. The variance between their different positions attests to something truly problematic about Nietzsche's work itself; namely, it reflects both the profound ambiguity of Nietzsche's view of Socrates and Plato, and of his writings in general.

In his book, *The Disenchantment of Reason: The Problem of Socrates in Modernity*, Harrison primarily discusses Nietzsche's Socrates as a "theoretical man". Harrison finds three views of Socrates presented in Nietzsche's works, corresponding to the three "periods" of his writing career, as outlined by Karl Lowith.³ According to Lowith, the first, early period spans

³ See Karl Lowith, "The Periodization of Nietzsche's Writings," *Nietzsches Philosophie der ewigen Wiederkehr des Gleichen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956) 25-31. Werner J. Dannhauser also adopts this view in *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1974) 19-20.

from *The Birth of Tragedy* to *Untimely Meditations*. The second, middle period begins with Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, and ends with the fourth book of *The Gay Science*. The final or late period begins with *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and ends with *Ecce Homo*.⁴ Harrison and most other scholars think that this periodization of all of Nietzsche's work is also reflected in his references to Socrates.

Harrison writes that Nietzsche's "preoccupation with Socrates, although it can be discerned throughout his oeuvre, is particularly intense during the period of *The Birth of Tragedy* and in the post-*Zarathustra* period".⁵ In the early period, Harrison finds that Nietzsche describes Socrates as a "theoretical man": as a "passive nihilist" in whom logic and reason become both "an obstacle to the creativity embedded in nature", and "an obstacle to the radicalization of the nihilistic impulse". Harrison emphasizes the "purely destructive force" of Socrates' "passive" or "reactive" nihilism in this period. The early Socrates, as a "theoretical man", uses reason to destroy and to "disrobe" everything -- as Nietzsche suggests -- for the love of destruction. In this regard, Harrison finds that the destructive force of reason is emphasized in Nietzsche's early period. Consequently, his Socrates of this period is not a creative, or "active", nihilist; for his nihilism "leads to a decline and not to an increase in

⁴ The periodization of Nietzsche's works is thought by Harrison to be legitimized further by Nietzsche himself, who suggests in his notebooks that there are three paths to wisdom. The first path is that of collecting all values worthy of admiration and setting them against one another; the second path is that of shattering and re-evaluating those values; the third path is that of "world affirmation, of the overthrow of all idols, and of the triumph of the creative instinct over all reactive forces." See Paul Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason: The Problem of Socrates in Modernity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) 135. However, although Nietzsche speaks generally about three paths to wisdom, he never suggests, as does Harrison, that any one of these paths exclusively describes any particular period of his writing. In fact, Nietzsche may be viewed equally well as walking down all three of these paths at any time during his writing career.

⁵ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 135.

the power of the spirit".⁶ It is this early Socrates, as a "theoretical man", who is "the downfall of Greek tragedy".⁷

In the final, "post-*Zarathustra* period", Socrates is viewed as "a precursor of a Christian ethos".⁸ Socratic irony "becomes a kind of plebeian nihilism against aristocratic custom, and the Socratic employment of reason is read as the revenge of the supra-sensible world on the sensible one". Harrison views Nietzsche's later reading of Socrates as "a Platonizing one insofar as the constructive, rather than corrosive, side of reason is both emphasized and impugned". In his final period, Nietzsche describes reason as creative, but only as a force of decadence. The later Socrates is "the archetype of intellectual resentment"; he is "the chief obstacle to the counter-movement against nihilism".⁹

Harrison recognizes that a different Socrates is described in Nietzsche's "middle period". He remarks that it is during this period that Nietzsche speaks most favorably of Socrates. However, according to Harrison, this middle period "is not a time spent re-evaluating Socrates". For Harrison, Nietzsche's portrait of Socrates during this time "is probably the mildest and kindest portrait of Socrates that Nietzsche draws, and it is the least interesting because of that fact. The hostility of the early and late Nietzsche toward Socrates contains truth only because of its exaggerations".¹⁰ Harrison supposes that Nietzsche's early and late depictions of Socrates are his most fruitful ones, and that they are more important

⁶ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 122-123.

⁷ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 137.

⁸ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 162.

⁹ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 124.

¹⁰ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 136.

than those of his middle period because of their similarity: "Nietzsche's later work on Socrates is remarkable for its return to his most original insights". Harrison believes that Nietzsche's "return" to his earlier insights during his late period "further underlines the relative unimportance of Nietzsche's work on Socrates between his two most fruitful periods".¹¹

Harrison's interpretation of Nietzsche's view of Socrates is insightful insofar as he recognizes some of the importance of Nietzsche's early and late portrayals of Socrates. In his early period, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as "the downfall of Greek tragedy". Socrates marks the dawn of a new type of individual, "the theoretical man"; and to this extent, Nietzsche presents him as the first modern man, as the destruction of the ancient world, and as the main agent and representative of the nihilism which has afflicted modern human beings. In his early period, Nietzsche's primary concern is to offer a criticism of what is modern by means of understanding what is ancient.

In his late period, Nietzsche identifies Socrates with Christianity as the real cause of modernity. Moreover, as Harrison notes, there is something "Platonizing" about Nietzsche's later reading of Socrates. However, in Harrison's opinion, the difference between Nietzsche's Plato and Nietzsche's Socrates appears to be that, for the former, reason is "constructive", but for the latter, it is "corrosive". In his estimation, Nietzsche "Platonizes" during his final period only insofar as he uses Plato's "constructive" understanding of reason in order to criticize Socrates' corrosive use of reason, while at the same time under-mining Plato's own conception of reason along with that of Socrates.

It is in this regard that Harrison fundamentally misrepresents what is especially

¹¹ Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 138.

"Platonizing" about Nietzsche's final impressions of Socrates; he does not see that Nietzsche's "Platonizing" criticism of Socrates is, in fact, related to his so-called "unimportant" and "least interesting" vision of Socrates during the middle period. In the final period, Nietzsche himself becomes like Plato in order to distinguish himself from Socrates, whom he treats the same as he does Christianity. In this period, both Socrates and Christianity are deemed to be the cause of our modern problems. For instance, his dialogic masterpiece, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, is his own attempt to "Platonize" in an anti-Christian manner, during a period in which he considers Socrates to be a proto-Christian, and therefore, the first modern. Similarly, in *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche invokes Plato's understanding of lies in order to criticize Christianity (*GM:III.19*); and in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explicitly mentions his own "Platonizing" manner, suggesting that "Plato employed Socrates" in the same fashion as he himself employed Schopenhauer and Wagner (*EH:UM.3*). Harrison cannot see what is "Platonizing" about Nietzsche in his final period because he overlooks what Nietzsche finds favourable about Socrates during his middle period, namely, what distinguishes Socrates from both Jesus and Christianity. Just as Nietzsche separates Socrates from Jesus and Christianity in his middle period, so too, in his anti-Christian "Platonizing", does Nietzsche separate himself from Christianity and Socrates in his final period. In other words, Harrison does not recognize that what makes Nietzsche "Platonizing" in his final period is also what makes him Socratic in his middle period.

Nietzsche's representation of Socrates during his middle period is more important and interesting than Harrison suggests. Because Harrison overlooks Nietzsche's positive portrayal of Socrates, he fundamentally misunderstands the character of Nietzsche's writings during all three periods. On the one hand, he refers to Nietzsche's middle period as his "more nihilistic

period";¹² and yet, Nietzsche's positive description of Socrates in this period is the least nihilistic. Indeed, Nietzsche himself speaks of his writings during this period as "Yes-saying" books, "deep but bright and gracious", pouring out love and tenderness "upon ever so many wicked things" (*EH:D.1,G.1*). In Nietzsche's own self-understanding, this period of his writings is certainly not "more nihilistic". On the other hand, because Harrison is dismissive of Nietzsche's positive portrayal of Socrates in his middle period, he fails to recognize the overall ambiguity of Nietzsche's works in all three of his writing periods. His negative presentation of Nietzsche's Socrates in the early and final periods is too negative, and his positive presentation of the Socrates of Nietzsche's middle period is too positive.

In his book, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, Dannhauser is attentive to Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates in all three periods of his writing career.¹³ According to Dannhauser, the first period of Nietzsche's thought is marked by "an attempt to see and justify life as an aesthetic phenomenon, a great hope in a revival of German culture, and an admiration for Richard Wagner"; the middle stage is characterized by "disillusionment and a turning to Western positivism"; and "Nietzsche's final position is articulated in *Thus Spoke*

¹² Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 160.

¹³ Like Harrison, Dannhauser follows Lowith's method of periodization. He argues that the "division of Nietzsche's thought emerges naturally from a study of his writings", and that such a division "is suggested by Nietzsche's own understanding of his thought and books as expressed in his 1886 prefaces to his earlier works, in his comments on those books in *Ecce Homo*, and in the section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* entitled 'Of The Three Metamorphoses'". See Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 19-20. However, there are difficulties with interpreting the images of the camel, lion, and the child in "Of The Three Metamorphoses" in this manner; for, if we are attentive to Zarathustra's use of this imagery, we can see that Nietzsche was equally well a camel and a lion throughout his writing career, and that he never truly became child-like in the sense of this metaphor.

Zarathustra and the books following it".¹⁴ Unlike Harrison, Dannhauser does not dismiss any of Nietzsche's references to Socrates as unimportant or uninteresting. For this reason, his study is much more perceptive of the consistent and fundamental ambiguities apparent in Nietzsche's view of Socrates.

For Dannhauser, Nietzsche relates himself to Socrates in a perpetual quarrel. Nietzsche's own admission in his notebooks from 1875 concerning his approach to Socrates becomes the organizing principle of Dannhauser's entire book: "Simply to acknowledge the fact: *Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting with him" (SSW.188). Dannhauser's book therefore provides a thorough account of Nietzsche's various grapplings and struggles with his best opponent and favourite enemy, Socrates. According to Dannhauser, Nietzsche's over-all view of Socrates is negative; he esteems Socrates as "the first villain" and himself as "the final hero".¹⁵ However, as a spectator to this struggle, Dannhauser sees no clear winner. He is only willing to say that, in his estimation, it is "doubtful Nietzsche achieves victory" in his personal contest, or *agon*, against Socrates.

There are two main difficulties with Dannhauser's book. First, Dannhauser does not want to evaluate Nietzsche's quarrel with Socrates. He claims that "only a philosopher can do justice to a quarrel between philosophers",¹⁶ and that he himself is only a scholar. For this reason, although Dannhauser's study of Nietzsche's view of Socrates is very thorough, it is not sufficiently evaluative or philosophic. In order to truly understand the significance of Nietzsche's view of Socrates, one must be willing to follow him into battle, participating with

¹⁴ Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 19-20.

¹⁵ Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 272.

¹⁶ Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 273.

him in a philosophic struggle. One must question his "valuations". In fact, Nietzsche encourages his readers to be evaluative; he shocks and he criticizes us in order to evoke our criticism, and to encourage all like-minded spirits to practise philosophy. The first failing of Dannhauser's book is that, although it provides both an extensive and descriptive study of Nietzsche's references to Socrates, and although Dannhauser describes at some length the similarities and the differences between Socrates, Nietzsche, and their respective teachings, he does not actively engage in an attempt to evaluate the meaning of Nietzsche's struggle with Socrates. Dannhauser's interpretation fails insofar as it does not ask the question, What does Nietzsche's struggle with Socrates truly signify?¹⁷

Second, another partial failing of Dannhauser's book is his unquestioning adoption of Lowith's particular manner of periodization, in which Nietzsche's middle period is considered to be his "positivistic" period.¹⁸ This form of periodization suggests that Nietzsche does not come seriously to entertain either the benefits of science, or the dangers of both mysticism and the artistic tendencies until Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, at which point, ostensibly, his thought becomes "positivistic". However, throughout Nietzsche's so-called

¹⁷ In her review of *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, Debra B. Bergoffen writes that Dannhauser's study "is most valuable as an account of the historical development of Nietzsche's thought" (218). However, she is critical of his reluctance to indulge in philosophical examination of Nietzsche's references to Socrates. In her opinion, Dannhauser's book on Nietzsche remains too ambiguous because "the thematic unity of Nietzsche's philosophical perspective, though mentioned, is neither emphasized nor vigorously pursued" (218). See Debra B. Bergoffen, Review of *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, (*Man and World*: 11, nos.1/2, 1978) 216-223.

¹⁸ For other examples of scholars who claim that Nietzsche's middle period is positivistic, see Frederick Copleston, *Friedrich Nietzsche: Philosopher of Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975) 14, 31; Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Columbia UP, 1965) 69, 82-83; Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche* (Trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz, Southbend: Regnery/Gateway Inc., 1979).

"positivistic" period, there is ample evidence that Nietzsche's thought is not positivistic.¹⁹

Dannhauser is correct to note that there are three periods that may be discovered in Nietzsche's writings. However, it is an error to use Nietzsche's supposed "positivism" in order to designate a period of transition between his early and late writings. Moreover, Dannhauser justifies his own study of Nietzsche's view of Socrates as an expression of the truth of Lowith's periodization. He believes that this periodization "provides a singular justification for considering Nietzsche's view of Socrates. Nietzsche's concern with Socrates runs through all his writings and can thus be used to explore that which changes and that which remains unchanged in the course of Nietzsche's development".²⁰ Dannhauser is correct to view Socrates as a kind of barometer for Nietzsche's philosophical concerns during the different periods in his writing career. However, he is incorrect to suppose that the favourable image

¹⁹ As evidence for this strong claim, I direct my readers towards Nietzsche's distinction between good and bad art (*HH:II.115,135; II.ii.169*). Also see Nietzsche's own claims to be a poet and an artist (*HH:II.i.212; D.p4*). See Nietzsche's claim that art, and not science, makes human beings hunger virtue (*D.219*). For the short-comings of art, see (*D.269,433,531*). For the superiority of science to art, see (*HH:I.122, 223; II.i.169*). For his criticisms of art and philosophy, see (*HH:I.p3; II.i.182; D.6*). For Nietzsche's views on the strength of science, see (*HH:I.128,244,256; II.i.98; D.6,41,269, 270,424,425,450; GS.107*). According to Nietzsche, there is a sick and a healthy way to practise science. The sick require art as an accompaniment to science, whereas for the healthy, science is a toy in the hands of philosophy. See (*D.424,425*). For the attractiveness of science to modern human beings, see (*HH:II.i.169; D.429*). For Nietzsche's criticisms of science as enfeebling the will and causing a loss of "heat" or energy, see (*HH:II.i.206*). For more criticisms of science, see (*GS.107,344*). For Nietzsche's warnings against viewing science positivistically, see (*HH:I,251,256,432,483*). For Nietzsche's criticisms of August Comte and positivism, see (*D.132,542; GS.347*). For Nietzsche's criticisms of positivistic "conviction", see (*HH:I.483,630*). Nietzsche contends that science alone is insufficient for the good life (*GS.107*); it needs to be accompanied either by art (*GS.85,107,299*), or ruled by philosophy (*D.425*), or both. On the need for both art and science, see (*HH:I.251,257,278*). For the superiority of philosophy to art, see (*D.531; GS.85*).

²⁰ Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 20.

of Socrates in Nietzsche's middle period can be accurately interpreted to indicate Nietzsche's "positivism". Rather, it is more accurate to view the Socrates of Nietzsche's middle period as indicative of what is Socratic, in the best sense, about Nietzsche himself.

In summation, the second main difficulty with Dannhauser's approach to the study of Nietzsche's view of Socrates, therefore, is that it operates as a tool in the service of Lowith's methodology, and at the expense of an accurate appraisal of Nietzsche's view of Socrates. Dannhauser is concerned that his own book demonstrate the truth of Lowith's periodization. He begins with a general theory of periodization for all of Nietzsche's work, and his study proceeds under the assumption that this theory applies in particular to Nietzsche's references to Socrates. Consequently, he fails to see that a careful study of Nietzsche's view of Socrates illustrates the inaccuracy of Lowith's divisions.

My own study of Nietzsche's view of Socrates is unique in this respect; whereas others begin with a general theory of periodization, and then search for its expression in Nietzsche's view of Socrates, I begin by examining Nietzsche's view of Socrates and move towards a theory of periods. The evidence I gather in my study demonstrates that Lowith's periodization is slightly askew. If we look simply at Nietzsche's view of Socrates on its own terms, and if we do not distort our findings to mirror Lowith's methodology, we find three points of relative clarity in Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates. Each of these marks the beginning of a new period in Nietzsche's thought about Socrates. The first period of relative clarity begins with *The Birth of Tragedy*, and the last with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as Lowith suggests. However, careful attention to Nietzsche's struggle against Socrates shows that his middle period does not begin with the first volume of *Human, All Too Human* (1878), as Dannhauser, Harrison, and Lowith argue, but with the second volume (1879-80); for it is only

in the second volume that Nietzsche gains a new-found clarity concerning the root causes of modernity; it is in Volume Two that Nietzsche first explicitly compares and contrasts Socrates with Jesus, and it is through this contrast that Socrates appears most favourable to Nietzsche.

Although Dannhauser fails to offer a philosophic appraisal of the meaning of Nietzsche's struggle, other authors have tackled the problem by speaking about "Nietzsche's Platonism". I shall briefly outline the views of two very different scholars on this subject before offering my own view. The scholars I wish to speak about are Stanley Rosen and Eric Voegelin.

Rosen denies that either Nietzsche or Plato were "Platonists", in the sense that the philosophy of neither one is encapsulated by the traditions of metaphysics, rationalism, and idealism which Nietzsche criticizes as Platonism or Socratism. Nietzsche himself speaks of his own philosophy as the opposite of Platonism, and neither Plato nor Nietzsche are Platonic idealists, in Rosen's estimation. Rather, Rosen defines "Platonism" in another way. For Rosen, Nietzsche's use of lies is the basis of his Platonism. Nietzsche "employs a *genaion pseudos*, a noble lie that is the foundation of the distinction between the noble and the base, the high and the low, the active and the passive nihilism. The noble lie is the concealment of the truth about chaos, but not in the sense that this truth is never stated."²¹ According to Rosen, both Nietzsche and Plato use the noble lie because it enables them to educate, to conceal their greatness, and to express "a kind of aristocratic playfulness."²² In this way, lies become the privilege of the wise, noble, and strong few who use them to rule over the ignoble

²¹ Stanley Rosen, "Remarks on Nietzsche's Platonism" *The Quarrel Between Philosophy and Poetry*. (New York: Routledge, 1988) 197.

²² Stanley Rosen, "Poetic Reason In Nietzsche" *The Ancients and The Moderns: Rethinking Modernity* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989) 224.

and weak majority.

Rosen locates such a double-standard for truth in both Nietzsche and Plato: "In Platonic language: stable illusion for the citizens of the city of *praxis*; freedom from illusion for the genuine, transpolitical."²³ According to Rosen, Plato's dialogues are "esoteric": they advocate one teaching for the few and another for the many. In a similar vein, Rosen argues that Nietzsche does not deny that there is truth to be revealed;²⁴ rather, he notes that the many cannot handle the truth -- namely, that all is chaos -- and therefore they require art, horizons, and perspective in order to conceal the truth and to make it bearable. However, unlike the many, the philosopher is strong enough to seek truth above art and beyond perspective; he has overcome the weaknesses that make human beings dependent upon art. According to Rosen, "Nietzsche is thus guided by the same practical goal as is Plato: to extract humankind, in the persona of the philosopher, from *Schein*," which Rosen translates as the "perspectival".²⁵

²³ Stanley Rosen, "Nietzsche's Platonism" *The Question of Being* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993) 148.

²⁴ See especially Rosen, "Nietzsche's Platonism" 152.

²⁵ Rosen, "Nietzsche's Platonism" 153-154.

Maudemarie Clark argues that there is no manner of seeing that is not perspectival for Nietzsche: "A non-perspectival seeing would be a view from nowhere" (129). For Clark, Nietzsche's "metaphor of perspective" is meant "to help us avoid the snares of the idea that we can have knowledge of things as they are in themselves" (132). Moreover, perspectivism rules out the assumption that "there *must* be a highest perspective" (144); for in order to rank perspectives in order of their degree of knowledge, one would need to do so from a standpoint that was something more than perspectival. However, Clark notes that the perspective metaphor invites us "to think of a thing that is independent of the perspectives on it" (136). And yet, this is precisely the thing of which we can have no knowledge that is not perspectival. Clark's analysis of Nietzsche's perspectivism does not extend further than this impasse. Unlike Rosen, she does not continue to discuss Nietzsche's concern for what lies beyond perspective. Clark does not study the significance of Nietzsche's constant longing for the non-perspectival, for the hiding and playful god, Dionysus. See Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*

In this way, art is only superior to truth for those who are weak and sickly. Nietzsche's Platonism, according to Rosen's view, is therefore expressed in the shared understanding of both Plato and Nietzsche that the "philosopher ought to *know what is needed*; and the artist ought to *make it*."²⁶

I think that Rosen has uncovered some very insightful resemblances between Nietzsche and Plato. Clearly, both philosophers are aware of the utility of lies, and clearly, both authors make use of them. I think it is also helpful that Rosen has shown that Nietzsche seeks beyond all perspectives and that, as a philosopher, he is not interested in duping himself into believing lies, nor does he argue that there is no truth. Rosen is also very perceptive for noting that Nietzsche frequently expresses himself on two levels: a level on which the pursuit of truth is criticized as an error, and a level on which truth is most highly prized and sought after by the philosopher who has enough strength to do so. Indeed, Nietzsche uses these different perspectives on the truth in order to account for a greater breadth of human types and experiences. However, I do not think that this is truly the substance of his Platonism. Nietzsche's Platonism runs deeper, as Voegelin suggests, and as I wish to argue.

According to Voegelin, Nietzsche's Platonism stems from his position that "an order of society can arise only out of a well-ordered soul."²⁷ In his Platonism, Nietzsche faces the problem "of creating an image of man and society that will serve, or is supposed to serve as an ordering principle in the historical situation." Voegelin finds two phases in Nietzsche's

(Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990).

²⁶ Rosen, "Nietzsche's Platonism" 174.

²⁷ Eric Voegelin, "Nietzsche, The Crisis and The War" (*The Journal of Politics* Vol. 6, No. 2, 1944) 185.

Platonism. Before his break with Wagner in 1876, Nietzsche expressed the hope that "out of the German social materials some model could be created that would overcome the state of civilizational disintegration."²⁸ This is the time during which Nietzsche expresses special concern for educational institutions; he has great plans "for the foundation of a cloistered society of like-minded friends",²⁹ and he has high hopes in Bayreuth. After 1876, "he considered the state of disintegration hopeless and turned to the analysis of the crisis." Nietzsche's Platonic endeavours are said by Voegelin to have failed because "the materials at hand seemed contemptible and the image had to be concocted out of heterogeneous fragments." In effect, Nietzsche could find no adequate image of man and society that would serve as an ordering principle in his historical situation.

Voegelin finds that the Platonism of Nietzsche was both broken and vitiated:

It was broken by the despair to find the human substance for a spiritual order of society; and it was vitiated through the unique structure of Nietzsche's spiritual life; his soul was closed to transcendental experiences and suffered in the vivid consciousness of this demonic limitation.³⁰

Nietzsche's own experiences of the transcendent ground of being are not Dionysian, according to Voegelin. Rather, Nietzsche is described as being plagued by two different gods:

The God of his immediate experiences was not the Dionysus who figures in his philosophy... He was a mysterious hunter whom he met in his dreams, a storm that raged through his soul and bent it to its service, a cruel hunter behind clouds who pierced him with the flashes from his eyes, a torturer and hangman.³¹

²⁸ Voegelin, "Nietzsche" 195.

²⁹ Voegelin, "Nietzsche" 196.

³⁰ Voegelin, "Nietzsche" 198.

³¹ Voegelin, "Nietzsche" 193-194. Voegelin finds a record of this dream in the diary of Nietzsche for August 27, 1859, when he was fifteen years old. On the "Wotanism" of Nietzsche, see Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion* (New Haven: 1938)

This god is "Wotanistic", according to Voegelin. He is an awesome god; however, he offers no order for the soul or society; he does not assist mortals, but fills them with terror and threatens them with destruction. The other god for whom Nietzsche constantly longed yet was never allowed passage towards was in fact, in Voegelin's estimation, the Christian god!

Voegelin writes:

In the context of the *Ecce Homo*... Nietzsche also resumes the *Song of the Night* from *Zarathustra*: "Night is now: and now awaken the songs of the lovers... There is a desire for love in me... But I am Light; oh, that I could be Night! But this is my solitude that I am girded with light... But ice is around me, and my hand burns with the touch of ice!... Night it is now: Oh, that I have to be Light." There is nothing here of "Wotanistic" experiences; this is the voice of the Christian spiritual who suffers deeply in the consciousness of his demonic hardening against transcendental reality; the mystic night is denied to him, he is imprisoned in the icy light of his finite existence, and from this prison rise the plaint and the prayer: "And my soul, too, is the song of a lover."³²

Voegelin finds genuinely Christian-Platonic desires in Nietzsche. However, due to the historical environment in which Nietzsche finds himself enfolded, and due to his own incapacity for certain spiritual experiences, Nietzsche's Platonism never quite blooms. He always remains lost and directionless in his love. Voegelin's stance on Nietzsche's eroticism or spirituality marks the point of departure for my own analysis of Nietzsche's Platonism. Whereas Voegelin maintains that the madness of Nietzsche is fundamentally different from the madness of Socrates, I wish to examine both the similarities and differences between Nietzsche's Dionysian madness and Socratic eros.

My own view on Nietzsche's Platonism is closest to Voegelin's conception: despite what Nietzsche says about Plato, Nietzsche is very Platonic, but in a broader sense than Rosen

33, 118ff.

³² Voegelin, "Nietzsche" 197.

suggests. However, Nietzsche's Platonism is not simply exemplified in his desire for psychic and social representation, as Voegelin suggests; rather, Nietzsche's Platonism extends to larger, erotic concerns. For Voegelin, Nietzsche's eroticism is fundamentally different from the eroticism of Plato's *Symposium*: it is "Wotanistic". Moreover, Voegelin does not think that Dionysus accurately represents Nietzsche's own psychic experiences. Rather, he argues that Nietzsche has no experience of Dionysus. For Voegelin, Nietzsche's own erotic experiences are fundamentally cut off from the Christian god, and, bereft of Dionysus, Nietzsche therefore also lacks a mediator for the transcendent relation which he craves. In Voegelin's estimation, Nietzsche's psyche is totally hardened against "transcendental reality": "His soul was closed to transcendental experiences and suffered in the vivid consciousness of this demonic limitation". Nietzsche's Platonism is therefore restricted to his concerns about the problems of representation. In his spiritual life, Nietzsche was wholly unlike Plato, let alone Socrates.

In my thesis, I demonstrate that, contrary to Voegelin's opinion, Nietzsche rightly refers to himself as a "disciple of Dionysus". As a Dionysian, Nietzsche is therefore not only a Platonic philosopher in a higher sense than Voegelin allows; he is also very Socratic. My interpretation of Nietzsche's Socratism is founded upon a different understanding of what is Apollonian and Dionysian. Contrary to the arguments of Voegelin and Rosen, I argue that Nietzsche's Dionysus is akin to the Eros of Plato's *Symposium*, and furthermore, that Nietzsche's Dionysus is akin to Plato's depiction of the Dionysian in *The Laws*.

ii. *The Parameters of My Own Study*

In my study of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates, I illustrate the Socratic nature of Nietzsche's project. I demonstrate that erotic, Dionysian concerns are the constant, driving force behind his writings. In this respect, Nietzsche is always doing the same thing: he is always posing as a Socratic physician of the soul attempting to cultivate a healthy, strong, noble, and masterful eros. He is constantly concerned with the cultivation of what is Dionysian, and with the overcoming of what stands as an impediment to the Dionysian. For this reason, he is also constantly drawing distinctions between what is sick and what is healthy, what is weak and what is strong, what is noble and what is ignoble, what is masterful and what is slavish. Nietzsche views the general problem of modernity to be our Dionysian incapacity, or our stifled eros. His solution to this problem is to become himself like "dynamite" (*EH:IV.1*), and thereby to destroy all that he judges as being stifling and suffocating of these erotic or Dionysian relations. Nietzsche approaches the figure of Socrates with this problem or sickness and its solution or treatment continually in mind. In this respect Nietzsche's attitude towards Socrates is always the same: he is viewed partly as the cause of our modern erotic incapacity, and partly as a key to its solution.

There are two levels to Nietzsche's discussion of Socrates. On the most serious level, Nietzsche is uncertain as to whether Socrates should be viewed as a great symbol, and as a representative of the problem of Dionysian incapacitation, or whether he signifies its solution. In the former case, Socrates becomes a symbol for what is anti-Dionysian; he is an impediment and a demonic limitation to any cultivated eroticism. In this sense, Socrates is anti-Socratic. This symbolic usage of Socrates is most pronounced in Nietzsche's early period,

and in particular, *The Birth of Tragedy*. In the latter case, Socrates becomes symbolic of what is Dionysian; he is a representative of the best erotic disposition, such that he himself -- as an embodiment of the Socratic -- becomes the best mediator, and the "most imperishable of intercessors" (HH:II.ii.86). This symbolic usage of the figure of Socrates is most pronounced in Nietzsche's middle period, and in particular, Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human*.

Second, Socrates is often used by Nietzsche on a lower level as a detail in larger problems and concerns. In this second usage, the figure of Socrates stands as one of Nietzsche's many "altogether undiagnosed types". He becomes a tool for Nietzsche "to say something" (EH:UM.3). This usage of Socrates is prevalent throughout all three periods of Nietzsche's writing career, but it is only explicitly spoken about in Nietzsche's final period, in particular, in *Ecce Homo*. I will study the second, lower level of details about Socrates in order to demonstrate my explanation of the first, higher level of Nietzsche's writings, on which Nietzsche is consistently inconsistent about the Socratic, the Platonic, and the Dionysian.

Although Nietzsche's Socratic, erotic, or Dionysian concerns are a constant presence throughout his writing career, I find that his thoughts on the problem of Socrates may be distinguished in three periods. Each period begins with a degree of clarity and a conclusion about where Socrates belongs in the grand scheme of Nietzsche's general Dionysian concerns; however, by the end of each period, this clarity decays into ambiguity. I have divided my study of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates into three parts corresponding to these three periods. The first period begins with *The Birth of Tragedy* and ends with Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*. During this period, Nietzsche speaks broadly about his Socratic project; he attempts to understand and to criticize the modern world by means of examining and understanding what is healthy or Dionysian about the ancient world of the Greeks. In *The*

Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche is initially fairly clear that Socrates is symbolic of the beginning of what is modern and anti-Dionysian, and that he marks the demise of what is ancient and Dionysian. However, the clarity of this initial conclusion fades throughout his early period, because the figure of Socrates is used to represent both what is modern and what is ancient, what is anti-Dionysian and what is Dionysian. Throughout this early period, Socrates becomes an increasingly problematic figure, and Nietzsche's initially negative conclusions about Socrates decay, becoming ambiguous. I discuss this period of Nietzsche's writings in Part One of my thesis, "Socrates: Ancient or Modern?".

The second period begins with Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human* and ends with *The Gay Science*. At the beginning of this period, Nietzsche's first comparison of Socrates and Jesus appears. After the initial comparison, Nietzsche's thought becomes very clear, and he draws a strong conclusion about where Socrates fits in his problem; he realizes that the root difficulty and cause of our modern incapacity for Dionysian relations is not to be found in ancient Greece, nor is it to be found in Socrates. Rather, Jesus and Christianity are now viewed as the source of our modern, anti-Dionysian affliction. The separation of what is healthy from what is sick, what is noble from what is ignoble, what is strong from what is weak, and what is erotic, or Dionysian, from what is unerotic, or anti-Dionysian, is presented most clearly in Nietzsche's separation of Socrates from Jesus during this period, in which the Socratic is the Dionysian, and the Christian is the anti-Dionysian. However, the clarity of Nietzsche's initial conclusion during his second period also decays into ambiguity by its end. I discuss this period of Nietzsche's writing in Part Two of my thesis, "Socrates versus Jesus and Modernity".

The third period begins with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and ends with *Ecce Homo*. I

discuss this period in Part Three of my thesis entitled, "Nietzsche as 'Platonizer' versus Socrates" because, beginning with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche tries to "Platonize" in an anti-Christian manner. Many scholars besides myself hold the view that Nietzsche's work during his final period is very Platonic.³³ I have taken the term "Platonize" from Harrison's book, but I have re-worked its usage. Nietzsche "Platonizes" during his final period on at least three levels. First, Nietzsche remains Platonic in the sense discussed above; namely, he is consistently erotic, or Dionysian. Second, Nietzsche writes from a standpoint in which he identifies himself with Plato. For instance, Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, like the works of Plato, is a dialogic masterpiece. Just as Plato, the composer, wrote dialogues, so too does Nietzsche compose *Zarathustra*, and he uses its Christian symbolism in order to undermine Christianity from within. Similarly, in *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche identifies himself with Plato, whose use of the noble or "'honest' lie" Nietzsche invokes in order to criticize dishonest moralizers (*GM:III.19*); and in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche identifies his own use of Schopenhauer and Wagner with Plato's use of Socrates (*EH:UM.3*). Third, just as

³³ Besides Nietzsche's many references to the similarities between his own work and Plato in his final writings, Leon Craig also notes similarities between Plato's *Apology* and Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*. See Leon Craig, "Nietzsche's 'Apology': On Reading *Ecce Homo*" (Presented to The Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Ottawa, June 1982). Walter Kaufmann makes a similar observation. See Walter Kaufmann, "Nietzsche's Attitude Toward Socrates" *Nietzsche; Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (4th ed., Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974) 408-409. Stanley Rosen notes the Platonizing character of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. He points out that Nietzsche writes *Zarathustra* in the same manner as Plato composed his own dialogues. Rosen also directs his readers' attention to Nietzsche's letter to Overbeck dated 22 October, 1883, in which Nietzsche admits that *Zarathustra* is a Platonizer. See Stanley Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment: Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 185. As shown above, Harrison too describes Nietzsche's final writing period as his "Platonizing" period. Leo Strauss notes the Platonic character of *Beyond Good and Evil* in his collection of essays on Platonic political philosophy. See Leo Strauss, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*", *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 174-191.

Nietzsche separates himself from Christianity by adopting the stance of Plato in his final period, so too does he separate himself from Socrates, whom he treats very much as though he were a pre-cursor to Christianity, and therefore the first modern. In this way, Nietzsche's Socratism of the second period becomes his Platonism in the third period; and as a "Platonizer", Nietzsche criticizes Socrates and Christianity, distinguishing himself from both. Initially, therefore, Nietzsche's treatment of Socrates during this period is quite negative. However, by 1888, Nietzsche's view of Socrates once again lapses into ambiguity.

The three parts of my thesis described above are followed by my conclusion, and I have divided each of the three parts of my thesis into chapters. In Part One, chapter one, I begin my study of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates by examining *The Birth of Tragedy*. In this book, Socrates is mainly a negative figure. He becomes a symbol for what is anti-Dionysian, and he marks the beginning of our modern sickness.

In chapter two, I survey the references made to Socrates by Nietzsche in his early notebooks (1872-3). Nietzsche offers no coherent account of Socrates in these notebooks, but only random observations. Socrates is discussed both as the first modern figure, and as the last ancient. During this time, he views Socrates from various perspectives, and shifts from a negative to a more positive view.

In chapter three, I examine Nietzsche's references to Socrates in *Untimely Meditations*. In these essays, Nietzsche expresses an affinity with Socrates as a physician for the soul. Nietzsche begins to look to Socrates as an ancient figure who offers certain cures for our modern ailments.

In chapter four, I discuss Nietzsche's view of Socrates as presented in the later notebooks of his first period (1874-5). Again, no coherent argument about the status of

Socrates is presented. It is during this time that Nietzsche encapsulates his own relation with Socrates in the words, "*Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting with him" (SSW.188). During this time, Nietzsche is simply wrestling with Socrates in a personal *agon*, now attacking, now giving ground, always trying different holds, and always finding that Socrates somehow breaks free from them.

Chapter five offers a discussion of Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*. In this chapter, I demonstrate that Volume One is a restatement and a summary of the various positions taken by Nietzsche for and against Socrates in his first period. Volume One illustrates how Nietzsche's initial conclusions about Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* decay into ambiguity by the close of this period.

Part Two of my thesis begins with chapter six, in which I discuss Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human* (1879-80). This volume marks a turning point in Nietzsche's thoughts about the Dionysian; for in 1879, he begins to compare Socrates with Jesus, and by 1880, he has separated Socrates from Jesus. The status of Socrates in relation to his problem becomes clear to him: the Socratic is the Dionysian, and the Christian is the anti-Dionysian. Nietzsche therefore identifies his own Dionysian concerns with the Socratic and the erotic, and he separates out both Jesus and Christianity as the source for our modern sickness, or incapacity for Dionysian relations. In Volume Two, Nietzsche begins to portray Socrates as an entirely positive figure.

In chapter seven, I discuss Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates in *Daybreak*. In this book, Nietzsche's initial clarity about Socrates begins to decay. Socrates once again becomes an ambiguous figure. In chapter eight, I discuss Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates in *The Gay Science*. In this book, Socrates remains an ambiguous figure for Nietzsche. The ambiguity

in his representations of Socrates in both *Daybreak* and *The Gay Science* may be seen as a restatement of the ambiguities presented in Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*.

Because there is no explicit mention of Socrates in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I begin Part Three of my thesis with a study of the first of Nietzsche's post-*Zarathustra* writings, *Beyond Good and Evil*, which I discuss in chapter nine. Continuing in the Platonizing role which he adopts in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche's view of Socrates in *Beyond Good and Evil* is primarily negative. He does not use the figure of Socrates as an over-arching symbol for either the anti-Dionysian (as he did in *The Birth of Tragedy*) or the Dionysian (as he did in the second volume of *Human, All Too Human*). Rather, Nietzsche, as "Platonizer", uses the undiagnosed type, Socrates, in order "to say something".

In chapter ten, I discuss Nietzsche's already ambiguous use of Socrates in *On The Genealogy of Morals*. In this work, Socrates is, at most, a peripheral figure, but he is ambiguous enough in order to allow Nietzsche to say many different things. Some of these are positive; others are negative.

In chapter eleven, I discuss Nietzsche's final writings in 1888, his most prolific year. I refer to these writings -- namely, *Twilight of The Idols*, *The Antichrist*, and *Ecce Homo* -- as Nietzsche's "Twilight Writings". Nietzsche adapts his extremely negative portrayal of Socrates in *The Will To Power* notebooks (excerpts from 1885-88) in order to offer a somewhat less negative picture of Socrates in *The Twilight of The Idols*. In *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche's brief portrayal of Socrates is almost positive, and the reader is encouraged implicitly to compare Socrates with Jesus -- a comparison in which Socrates shines as a "good enemy." In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explicitly speaks about his own Platonizing use of "altogether undiagnosed types" such as Socrates. Socrates is demonstrated by Nietzsche in

Ecce Homo to be a positive figure insofar as he is a good enemy; however, Nietzsche also makes negative references to Socrates in this final book as well. In this way, Nietzsche's "twilight" year of his final period is itself an expression of the fundamental ambiguity of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates; for whereas *Twilight of The Idols* portrays Socrates in a fairly negative manner, both *The Antichrist* and *Ecce Homo* depict him in a fairly positive light.

In the conclusion to my thesis, I demonstrate that Nietzsche is Socratic in spite of what he says about Socrates. Nietzsche's Dionysian aspirations are in partial agreement with what Socrates says about Eros in the *Symposium*, and this is the reason why Socrates always both attracted and eluded Nietzsche. In my final analysis of Nietzsche's Socratism, I investigate the similarities and the differences between Nietzsche's conception of Dionysian madness and Socrates' erotic *mania*. I conclude that Nietzsche was an erotic, or a Dionysian, and that all he had to do was carry his understanding of Dionysus one step further, viewing Dionysus as a mediator, or as a messenger for a greater god, and he would have understood what Socrates knew about the god. In order to demonstrate that Nietzsche is Socratic, I examine Nietzsche's understanding of Dionysus, and I compare it with both Plato's representation of Socrates' understanding of Eros, and Plato's understanding of Apollo and Dionysus, as it is demonstrated in his *Laws*. I conclude that, fundamentally, Nietzsche is Socratic because his Dionysus is Plato's Dionysus, and Plato's Dionysus is Socrates' Eros. However, Nietzsche is not Socrates, nor is he Plato; for he fails to understand that Eros and Dionysus serve as messengers for a higher god. In this respect, Nietzsche misunderstands the significance of both Apollo and Dionysus. Nietzsche had a Socratic disposition, but he failed to carry it far enough.

PART ONE: SOCRATES -- ANCIENT OR MODERN?

Beginning with *The Birth of Tragedy* and ending with Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche is concerned with examining what is healthy, strong, and noble about the ancient world in order to better understand what is sick, weak, and ignoble about the modern world. Fundamentally, he is concerned with the problem of our modern Dionysian incapacities, and how we might overcome them. During this period of his writing, Nietzsche approaches this problem by pitting what is ancient against what is modern. Socrates is a key figure in Nietzsche's reflections upon this quarrel. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, he is viewed as the first modern figure, and therefore as the beginning of our modern Dionysian incapacities. However, as Nietzsche continues to think about the ancients and the moderns, he is no longer certain that the problems of modernity can be properly dealt with according to the parameters of this ancient-modern quarrel. He becomes uncertain about what precisely is ancient and what is typically modern, and his uncertainty in these matters is exemplified in his increasingly ambiguous portrayal of Socrates during this period. Nietzsche is no longer clear about whether Socrates is a modern or an ancient figure, whether he is part of the problem, or part of its solution. Consequently, by Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche has rejected this manner of investigating his Dionysian concerns. After the first volume, Nietzsche no longer articulates the problem of modernity as having arisen due to a victory of what is modern over what is ancient.

1. The Birth of Tragedy (1872)

Nietzsche begins to write his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*, in 1870, and it is first published in 1872. His major concern in this book is first to understand what is healthy, noble, strong, and wise in the ancient Greek world, in order next to understand what is sick, ignoble, weak, and unwise about the modern world. Nietzsche wants to know what it is that we know longer understand, and what it was that the Greeks understood so well. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, he views modernity as a sickness, and he sees what is ancient and healthy as having been corrupted by what is modern. In order to explore the strengths present in ancient understanding, yet lacking in modern understanding, Nietzsche develops his own use of the terms, "Dionysian" and "Apollonian". In his first book, he locates the roots of what is modern or sick in a nihilistic denial of the ground of being, which he refers to as the Dionysian ground. This nihilistic will is described by Nietzsche as a hypertrophied Apollonian rationalism. However, he refers to this nihilistic drive as Socratism, because he views Socrates as the main exponent of this new rationalism. Socrates is depicted in *The Birth of Tragedy* as the first modern human being, as the primary agent for the spread of nihilistic contagion, and therefore, as an extremely negative figure. He becomes a grand symbol to represent the destruction of the ancient world along with its wisdom, its health, and its strength; and yet he also marks the beginning of the modern world, in which proper distinctions between the Apollonian and the Dionysian are fundamentally denied.

However, although Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates in his first book is primarily

negative, it also expresses much ambiguity due to its complex relation with Nietzsche's larger concerns. Nietzsche's discussion and evaluation of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* is itself unclear for three reasons. First, it is related to his broader discussion of Apollo and Dionysus. For this reason, my study of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* will begin with a discussion of Nietzsche's conception of the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

Second, Nietzsche discusses Apollo and Dionysus in at least three different ways: (1) He uses the terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" to denote what he considers to be fundamental aspects of experience that are in constant tension. Hence, the terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" are used descriptively and analytically, as a way of dissecting experience, and of understanding the tensions given to existence; (2) The terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" are also used critically and pejoratively. For instance, although all people and things participate in both the Apollonian and the Dionysian aspects of existence, Homer is considered by Nietzsche to be Apollonian in character, whereas Aeschylus is more Dionysian. Homer's Apollonian leanings are looked upon favourably by Nietzsche, as are the Dionysian leanings of Aeschylus. However, according to Nietzsche, one can also be Apollonian or Dionysian in a negative sense. For example, Nietzsche speaks of Doric culture as being anti-Dionysian because it is excessively Apollonian, to the point of rigidity (*BT.4;35*). Similarly, if one is deficiently Apollonian and excessively Dionysian, one becomes barbaric and uncultured. In this way, Nietzsche uses the terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" in order to make judgements about individual characters and the proper tensions that ought to exist within their psyches; (3) The terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" are used by Nietzsche to discuss healthy and proper forms of art, which are those that reflect both the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of experience in their proper tension. Although Nietzsche favours Dionysian art, he admits

that good art can be either truly Apollonian or truly Dionysian. The important thing is that the tension between these two opposing art-creating forces is not relinquished, that one force does not become overly powerful and the other overly weak, such that the one force cannot offer effective resistance against other, and is therefore unable to sustain this tension.

Third, Nietzsche's distinctions between Socrates and Socratism need to be clarified because they all designate slightly different things. Therefore, my discussion of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* will involve distinguishing between the relations of Socrates and Socratism to both the Apollonian and the Dionysian drives. Briefly, Socratism is a kind of rationalistic optimism that was spread throughout the ancient world by Socrates' daemonic influence. Moreover, this Socratism, as the influence of the Socratic daemon upon posterity, has persisted until present times. As a kind of rationalistic optimism, Socratism is fundamentally nihilistic; it serves to negate what is real -- namely, the Apollonian and the Dionysian drives, and the tension between them -- in favour of what is unreal; namely, a world that is completely rational, conscious, and knowable. In short, Socratism denies the real world and its tensions that must be suffered, in favour of a purely Apollonian world: a world without the Dionysian, and therefore without any tension to be suffered between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. The term "Socratic" is used to designate anything and anyone that exemplifies this negation of reality.

Socrates' relation to the Apollonian and the Dionysian is somewhat different than that of Socratism to the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Socratism is spread by Socrates, who Nietzsche describes poetically as a daemon due to his far-reaching ability to influence and to possess human beings throughout time with his errors. For this reason, the view of Socrates presented in *The Birth of Tragedy* is a very negative one; for Socrates is viewed, in this

respect, as the most effective and dangerous agent for the spread of the Socratic contagion. However, Nietzsche's view of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* is not entirely negative for two reasons. First, the corrupting influence of the errors of Socrates upon posterity is considered by Nietzsche to have offered human beings a great opportunity for struggle and for building strength of character. He looks upon the rationalistic disease of Socrates as a means to a higher health, and an immunity to the problems created by Socratic optimism. Second, Socrates is thought to have been superior to his own Socratism; for in his final hours, Socrates realizes his own errors, and with an heroic act, he is freed from them. This makes Socrates, to a certain extent, at least, an admirable character in *The Birth of Tragedy*. However, Socrates is considered to have overcome the errors of Socratism only in his final hours, and only with the help of his own *daimonion* (δαίμόνιον), which is a different daemon than the daemonic power which is attributed poetically to Socrates whereby he is able to mislead and to corrupt other human beings with the errors of Socratism, as will be shown.

Nietzsche distinguishes between Socrates and Socratism. However, he also suggests that the Socratic drive itself is a power akin to the Apollonian and the Dionysian, such that, after Socrates, the only true rivalry is not between Apollo and Dionysus, but between Socrates and Dionysus. My view of Nietzsche's conception of the relationship between the Apollonian, the Dionysian, and the Socratic drives differs somewhat from the views of other scholars. Like Walter Kaufmann, I think that Nietzsche distinguishes both the Apollonian and the Dionysian from the Socratic.³⁴ However, other scholars, such as James C. O'Flaherty claim that Nietzsche simply equates the Socratic drive with an over-development of the Apollonian

³⁴ See Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974) 394.

faculties, and with an under-development of the Dionysian.³⁵ Tracy B. Strong also suggests that Socrates asserts a purely Apollonian form.³⁶ For Strong, there are two tendencies: the Apollonian and the Dionysian. The Socratic tendency is only a purely Apollonian tendency. I partially agree with the interpretations of O'Flaherty and Strong. It is true that, for Nietzsche, the Socratic tendency attempts to destroy all Dionysian awareness by means of excessive Apollonian rationality. The Apollonian principle would seem to become monstrous as the Socratic drive by employing the Apollonian tools of logic and reason in an extreme and improper fashion. As both Strong and O'Flaherty suggest, the Apollonian faculties become hypertrophied when harnessed by the Socratic orientation, and the Dionysian faculties wither away. Consequently, there can be no great opposition or *agon* between them. However, the strength of neither tendency can be sustained without the conditioning and opposition of the other. Therefore, against these scholars, the Socratic tendency is, in my view, rather the denial of both the Apollonian and the Dionysian tendencies. It makes use of the Apollonian aspects of existence in an attempt to destroy the Dionysian aspects; yet it simultaneously weakens all that is Apollonian about itself by doing so. Unlike the Apollonian drive, the Socratic drive is fundamentally nihilistic. According to Nietzsche, it would be impossible to assert a purely Apollonian form, because when Dionysus is deserted, so too is Apollo deserted.

Nietzsche describes existence as a tension between two opposed, art-creating tendencies which he calls the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Named after Dionysus, the god of wine and

³⁵ See James C. O'Flaherty, *Studies in Nietzsche and the Classical Tradition* 137.

³⁶ See Tracy B. Strong, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) 122.

ecstasy, the Dionysian designates "the mystical Oneness" (*BT.1;23*), "the primordial One" (*BT.1;24*), and the "original pain" which is "the sole ground of being" (*BT.4;33*). Elsewhere, Nietzsche refers to Dionysian reality as "the primal architect of the cosmos" (*BT.5;42*), "the Original Mother" (*BT.16;102*), and the very womb of things" (*BT.21;126*). The Dionysian names the fundamental reality which human beings experience through different kinds of intoxication and ecstasy. In Dionysian experience, "not only does the bond between man and man come to be forged once more... but nature itself, long alienated or subjugated, rises again to celebrate the reconciliation with her prodigal son, man". Moreover, by virtue of Dionysian existence, "each individual becomes not only reconciled to his fellow but actually at one with him" (*BT.1;23*). The individual is "shattered", forgetting himself completely as he merges with "the mystical Oneness". Through this Dionysian merging, the individual participates in a "higher community" and a Oneness that knows no boundaries. This awesome experience of the Dionysian ground of all things is the beginning of wisdom, according to Nietzsche.

Nietzsche describes what he considers to be the fundamental Dionysian insight by adopting the voice of "the wise Silenus, companion of Dionysus". When forced to answer the question as to "man's greatest good," Silenus laughs:

Ephemeral wretch, begotten by accident and toil, why do you force me to tell you what it would be your greatest boon not to hear? What would be best for you is quite beyond your reach: not to have been born, not to *be*, to be *nothing*. But second best is to die soon. (*BT.3;29*)

This is surely a hard wisdom. Insight into the Dionysian ground of all things is unbearable for the living, because with it comes the dissolution of the individual into the womb of all things, as well as the destruction of all distinction, and therefore of all order, in Oneness. Dionysian reality, "the sole ground of being", is experienced as chaos and destruction. The wisdom of Silenus, by giving a true glimpse of "original pain", petrifies human beings for

action: "They realize that no action of theirs can work any change in the eternal condition of things, and they regard the imputation as ludicrous or debasing that they should set right the time which is out of joint" (BT.7;51). For life to proceed and to overcome "the apprehension of truth and its terror", for the individual to exist who himself has been dissolved into the Oneness, for any sort of action whatsoever, "fair illusions" are needed which might enable human beings to rejoice in their existence.

Nietzsche uses the Apollonian to name this capacity and drive for illusion. As "the soothsaying god" of visions and dreams, Apollo is also the god of the poets and musicians. Dreams are the most basic Apollonian phenomena, "in the production of which every man proves himself an accomplished artist". All human beings, as dreaming artists, forget the waking world in order to enjoy their dreams, saying of these fair illusions, "It is a dream! I want it to go on" (BT.1;20-21). In this way, Apollo bestows upon human beings a kind of "naivety"³⁷ that allows them to enjoy dreams that they know to be dreams, and to forget the waking world while they dream on.

Furthermore, the Apollonian aspect of existence bestows upon the chaotic, Dionysian womb of things what Nietzsche refers to as "the *principium individuationis*" (BT.1;22). By this principle human beings gain the illusion of distinction between themselves and the oneness of which they are a part. Along with this distinction, they gain those of order, regularity, and beauty. In this way, the Apollonian serves to oppose the Dionysian in a kind of *agon*. Out of this struggle life is stimulated, art is produced, and the barbarism against which Silenus warns, the result of knowing the Dionysian nature of things, is counter-acted.

³⁷ For a discussion of the importance of naivety in *The Birth of Tragedy*, consult Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 68.

The Apollonian and the Dionysian are always in tension and opposition, "each by its taunts forcing the other to a more energetic production, both perpetuating in a discordant concord that *agon* which the term *art* but feebly designates" (*BT.1;19*). When the tension between these two opposing forces is fierce, tragedy and Dionysian art are begotten. However, even if this tension is not carried to its highest apex, as it is in tragedy, all human beings still nevertheless suffer this tension to greater or lesser degrees. The Apollonian and Dionysian are primary opposing traits given to all of existence. When these tendencies are improperly balanced, degenerate individuals result, as do the degenerate art forms which serve these forms of life. Both these individuals and art forms are fundamentally weak because they are not tempered by the strongest tension between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. When, however, the interaction of drives is rightly balanced and the tension is therefore maximized between the Apollonian and Dionysian, at such times, Nietzsche argues, there is "redemption" and "transfiguration" (*BT.2;26*). The "original Oneness" or "the ground of Being" is described by Nietzsche as "ever-suffering" and "contradictory"; because of this, it has constant need of "rapt vision and delightful illusion to redeem itself". This transfiguration or redemption is "the eternal goal of the original Oneness" (*BT.4;32-33*).

The redemption of the original Oneness occurs when the Dionysian is mirrored in the Apollonian illusion in such a manner that human beings may revel and rejoice in the ground of their being and in their existence as participants in this original pain and contradiction. This is the "metaphysical solace" of tragedy; namely, "that, despite every phenomenal change, life is indestructibly joyful and powerful" (*BT.7;50*). In tragedy, we see a reflection of original pain, the sole ground of being. The Apollonian "illusion" here is a reflection of eternal contradiction, the "begetter of all things". From this illusion "there rises, like the fragrance

of ambrosia, a new illusory world, invisible to those enmeshed in the first: a radiant vision of pure delight, a rapt seeing through wide-open eyes" (*BT.4;33*). This is Nietzsche's view of the redemption of Oneness in Dionysian art: it is illusion grounded in the experience of reality and reflected in a way that leads to eternal rejoicing in all of existence.

Both the Dionysian and Apollonian tendencies must be present in opposition to one another. If one god is deserted, then the other god will also abandon the deserter: "[B]ecause you had deserted Dionysus, you were in turn deserted by Apollo" (*BT.10;69*). Without the Dionysian experience of Oneness there is no wisdom or feeling for reality. Similarly, without a strong Apollonian leaning there is only savagery and barbarism. If the Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies are not properly related to one another, then the individual becomes "egoistic" and "unartistic". Such a subject -- the striving individual bent on furthering his egoistic purposes -- can be thought of "only as an enemy to art, never as its source". Nietzsche is clear that art is not the product of any individual subject or will. Rather, art and the artist are themselves tools in the hands of the original Oneness for its own redemption: "[T]o the extent that the subject is an artist he is already delivered from individual will and has become a medium through which the True Subject celebrates His redemption in illusion". Nothing about art is egoistic for Nietzsche. "[T]he entire comedy of art is not played out for our own sakes -- for our betterment or education, say -- nor can we consider ourselves the true originators of that art realm". We are simply "aesthetic projections of the veritable creator and derive such dignity as we possess from our status as art works" (*BT.5;41-42*).

As the redemption of the ground, tragedy is the revelation of reality through the right combination of Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies, and it brings forth individual human beings who celebrate and revere the tragic character of existence. Nietzsche describes such

creatures in the following passage:

We might picture to ourselves how the last of these [the Dionysian ecstatic artists of tragedy], in a state of Dionysian intoxication and mystical self-abrogation, wandering apart from the revelling throng, sinks upon the ground, and how there is then revealed to him his own condition -- complete oneness with the essence of the universe -- in a dream similitude. (BT.2;25)

Here we have the full wisdom of Dionysus informing the Apollonian dream similitude which orients the soul of the wandering individual, who is thereby able to revere and praise all of existence. Tragedy, as "an Apollonian embodiment of Dionysian insights and powers" (BT.8;56-57), enables the ecstatic Dionysian to separate as an individual and to wander in solitude as an Apollonian embodiment of Dionysian insights and powers. Such a man himself becomes the highest form of art, according to Nietzsche.

Socrates is condemned by Nietzsche as the death of tragedy.³⁸ In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche first discusses Socrates by way of Euripides. According to Nietzsche, Euripides did not understand tragedy. Rather, "he looked upon reason as the fountainhead of all doing and enjoying" (BT.11;75). Misinterpreting the Dionysian component of tragedy as a kind of flawed solution to moral quandaries, as "problematical" and "irregular" due to its unreason, its tropes and its hyperboles, Euripides sought to uproot what he considered to be

³⁸ Nietzsche's quarrel with Socrates concerning his devastating effect on tragedy can also be seen in a letter to Rohde, dated July 16, 1872: "On the attitude of Socrates to the tragic art, there is an extremely remarkable passage in Aristophanes, *Ran* [*Frogs*] 1491 χαρίεν οὖν μὴ Σωκράτει | παρακαθήμενον λαλεῖν | ἀποβαλόντα μουσικὴν | τὰ τε μέγιστα παραλιπόντα τῆς τραγωδικῆς τέχνης..." (SL.42).

"And so it is tasteful not by Socrates | sitting around to chatter, | stripping away music | and neglecting the best things about the tragic art" (my translation).

the errors of tragedy. His drive was to remove Dionysus from tragedy and to rebuild tragedy in its place as a non-Dionysian art (*BT.12;76*).

However, Euripides needed assistance. He needed a daemon and a judge to guide him. Euripides did not trust the *demos* to be his judges; they instinctively sensed that he was wrong. They "gave him only a smile of distrust; none of them would tell him why, not withstanding his misgivings and reservations, the great masters were right nonetheless" (*BT.11;75*). The *demos* had greater soul than Euripides because it was still oriented by Dionysian art. Euripides could not turn to them for a favourable judgement. According to Nietzsche, he could turn only to the spectators who did not understand tragedy and who spurned Dionysus. These were Euripides himself and Socrates.³⁹

Socrates serves as a daemon to Euripides. However, he also serves as a daemon to Greece, and is himself counselled and led by his own *daimonion* (δαίμόνιον), or divinity. Further, all these daemons are different. The first two usages are poetical,⁴⁰ whereas the third usage is literal. Briefly, a daemon is considered to be a kind of spirit existing between gods and human beings that can possess human beings and act as a mediator between them and the gods. In Greek terms, a daemon is akin to a divine messenger, or a helping spirit that can divinize human beings. However, with the rise of Christianity, this pagan understanding of the daemonic fades and "daemon" becomes a derogatory term used to designate an evil and corrupting spirit. Nietzsche's various references to daemons in *The Birth of Tragedy* assume

³⁹ Writers such as Diogenes Laertius and Cicero mention that Socrates helped Euripides with his plays. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* II, 17. Also see Cicero, *Aeschines* (4, 29, 63).

⁴⁰ Socrates is only metaphorically a daemon. In reality, he is simply a human being.

both the pagan and Christian interpretations. Nietzsche adopts the Christian use of the term "daemon" when he uses it poetically to refer to Socrates, but he appeals to its Greek usage when he refers to Socrates' own δαιμόνιον, or his "instinctual wisdom".

As a daemon to Euripides, Socrates is a wholly negative influence that destroys music and tragedy. As a daemon to Greece, Socrates is both a good and a bad daemon. As we shall see, he is a good daemon insofar as he saves the Greeks from the barbarism and destruction which would result if their own tyrannical instincts were left unchecked; and yet, he is a bad daemon insofar as his Socratism serves to weaken human beings and to make them decadent. As a daemon, Socrates' impact upon Euripides and his ability to possess the souls of the Greeks also extends to the entirety of western civilization, according to Nietzsche. However, by contrast, Socrates' own δαιμόνιον is portrayed in *The Birth of Tragedy* strictly as a good daemon. It is Socrates' δαιμόνιον, or his "instinctual wisdom", that leads him to reject Socratism. Socrates' δαιμόνιον is depicted as the source of his heroism in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

As a daemon to Euripides, to the Greeks, and to western civilization, Socrates possesses human beings with rationalistic optimism: with the assurance that not forgetfulness but knowledge is the way to live the best life. This is a rejection of both the Apollonian and the Dionysian, according to Nietzsche. It is not a seeking after, but a turning away from knowledge of the Dionysian ground; nor is it a forgetting of the self and its dissolution by means of Apollonian illusions; rather, it is a lingering upon the self, and a fascination with its appearance. This is the problem of "Aesthetic Socratism", which Nietzsche defines as the assumption that "whatever is to be beautiful must also be sensible". The parallel Socratic notion to this is that "knowledge alone makes men virtuous" (*BT.12;79*).

In the ejection of Dionysus from tragedy, and in the refounding of tragedy upon "purely un-Dionysiac elements", the drama of the tragedy becomes Apollonian in a way that no longer reflects Dionysian reality. However, the charm of the new illusions expressed in Euripides' tragedies does not simply revert back to older Apollonian art forms; for although these older forms do not address the Dionysian, they are not used to deny the existence of the Dionysian. Rather, Apollonian art forms simply allow human beings to revel in the majesty and power of poetic illusions (such as the works of Homer), thereby elevating them. Euripides' rejection of Dionysus is not as good as the Apollonian art of the rhapsodists because it lacks "any trace of epic self-forgetfulness", of "the true rhapsodist's cool detachment", of even the forgetfulness of the simplest Apollonian experience given to the dreamer who forgets his waking life in order to revel in his dreams. Euripides, under the spell of his daemon Socrates, seeks to excite and to titillate the individual. The aim of his writing is not to forget about the dissolution of the individual into the chaotic ground, and to delight in illusions which would bring about rejoicing in the ground of such an existence; rather, the aim is to stimulate, to affect the emotions, and to dazzle -- to draw attention to the individual and away from the ground. As a daemon, Socrates seeks to turn attention away from the ground by manipulating "novel stimulants" which shock the soul, now freezing it with "cold paradoxical ideas in place of Apollonian contemplation", later consuming it with "fiery emotions put in place of Dionysian transports" (*BT.12;78-79*). In this way, the novel stimulants of the daemon Socrates sever the individual from both gods. The Apollonian effects of forgetting and delight cannot be achieved, because the individual is not allowed to forget; rather, he is made to dwell pensively upon his own individuated, waking ideas. Similarly, the victim of Socratism loses his Dionysian awareness of the ground by being

turned away from the ground, and by being continuously occupied with his own emotional reactions to appearances and stimuli.

Nietzsche claims the "Euripidean prologue" is an example of Aesthetic Socratism. Like Socrates, Euripides views tragedy as "something quite abstruse and irrational, full of causes without effects and effects seemingly without causes" (*BT.14;86*). To relieve what he perceived to be the great inadequacy and illogic of tragedy, Euripides devised his own brand of prologue in order to provide the spectator with a causal description of what preceded the drama and "even what is about to happen in the course of the play". The entire drama is rationalized and made calculable, ruining any element of suspense and destroying its tragic representation. The new tragedy of Euripides either relays conscious perceptions to his audience, or stimulates them with "lyrical rhetoric in which the passion and dialectic of the protagonist reached heights of eloquence". Euripides' concern to render conscious perceptions on the stage stems from the Socratic adage that "whatever is to be good must be conscious". Whatever is unconscious or not understandable is, as a result, considered to be bad, and needing correction. By applying this new form to tragedy, Euripides considered himself to be the first rational tragedian (*BT.12;79-81*).

Nietzsche sees this radically new prestige of knowledge and conscious intelligence most clearly expressed in Socrates' claim to ignorance. Not only did Socrates profess his own ignorance, but he showed that nobody else knew anything either. Most notably, Socrates demonstrated that artists "lacked true and certain knowledge of their callings and pursued those callings by sheer instinct". This reliance upon "sheer instinct" was unacceptable to Socrates, and he sought to correct it by means of dialectics. Socrates sought to expose all instinctual wisdom or Dionysian awareness by means of excessively applying Apollonian

forms, logic, and reason to everything. He assumed that everything is Apollonian and therefore must be rendered rational. Consequently, anything that is not Apollonian (i.e., the Dionysian) appeared to Socrates to be ignorance, and he considered that it needed to be rationalized. In this way, Socrates, a "solitary" and "arrogant" man who was totally inferior to the culture and the art he was rejecting, dared single-handedly to challenge the entire Hellenic world. And yet, although Socrates was inferior to the rest of the Greek world, he came to loom over it as a "daemon" and a "demigod" (*BT.13;83-84*).

Nietzsche closely examines how Socrates was inferior to the Greek world by drawing attention to his δαιμόνιον. Whenever Socrates' intellect faltered, "he was able to regain his balance through the agency of a divine voice, which he heard only at such moments" (*BT.13;84*). Socrates' δαιμόνιον always spoke to dissuade; it was a "No"-saying voice. Nietzsche interprets Socrates' δαιμόνιον as his "instinctual wisdom", which on occasion defied his rational judgements. Hence, Nietzsche finds in Socrates the two poles of rational consciousness and instinct: reason is the affirming, Apollonian creator and instinct is the dissuading, Dionysian critic. For Nietzsche, among the better Greeks of the tragic age, these poles of instinct and reason are reversed: instinct is the affirmative, Dionysian, "Yes"-saying, creative voice, whereas reason is the dissuading, Apollonian critic. At first glance, therefore, one is tempted to portray this Socratic reversal, referred to by Nietzsche as "logical Socratism", as follows:

Table A:

<i>Reason, Rational Consciousness</i>	critical, dissuading, (Apollonian)	creative, affirming, (Apollonian)
<i>Instinct, Wisdom</i>	creative, affirming, (Dionysian)	critical, dissuading, (Dionysian)
	<i>Healthy Greek</i>	<i>Socrates</i>

This table accurately describes the views of certain scholars mentioned above, who recognize that Socrates, as the reversal of the healthy Greek, employs Apollonian mechanisms of reason, argument, and logic in order to create his own brand of bad art, to subdue all Dionysian awareness, and that only his δαιμόνιον dissuades him from his dialectical pursuits. However, in my view, although this table accurately depicts the Socratic reversal, it does not accurately depict Socrates' peculiar relation to Apollo and Dionysus. Socrates certainly uses his Apollonian faculties to create; however, what he creates is equally as anti-Apollonian as it is anti-Dionysian, as we shall see.

In terms of Nietzsche's Apollonian and Dionysian distinctions, the creativity of the healthy Greek of the tragic age arises from his instinctual wisdom, or his knowledge of the Dionysian ground. The Apollonian aspect of the healthy Greek -- namely, the rational consciousness -- both dissuades him from barbarism, and provides him with a sense of order and distinction, stability and beauty. In contrast, the creativity of Socrates arises not from an instinctual knowledge of the Dionysian ground, but from a rejection of this sort of wisdom, and from a refusal to recognize any experience of this ground as valid. Although Socrates

utilizes Apollonian faculties in order to create, he uses these Apollonian faculties to deny the Dionysian, and for Nietzsche, to abandon Dionysus is simultaneously to be abandoned by Apollo. Hence, the creativity of Socrates arises from neither Apollonian nor Dionysian capacities, but from a rejection of both.

As I have shown in Table A above, one might be tempted to suppose that Socrates, as the reversed image of the healthy Greek, can easily be described by suggesting that, whereas in the healthy Greek, Apollonian consciousness is the dissuading critic and Dionysian instinctual wisdom is the creator, in Socrates the Apollonian is creative and the Dionysian is dissuading. However, I think that this interpretation is too simple and renders the reversal too symmetrical. For instance, it does not account for the difference between the Socratic and the Apollonian. We cannot distinguish between Socrates and Homer in this manner. According to this interpretation, Apollo would be the creative aspect in both Homer and Socrates, and Dionysus would be the dissuader.⁴¹ Rather, I wish to suggest that, for Nietzsche, Socrates' "Yes"-saying, creative voice, unlike Homer, is a nihilistic negation of both the Apollonian and the Dionysian. For Nietzsche, even nihilism is creative: by saying "No" to all that exists, the nihilist says "Yes" to nothing, and he creates a kind of bad, nihilistic art. In this way, Socrates' affirmative voice is not Apollonian, as a strictly symmetrical reversal of the healthy Greek constitution would suggest. Rather, Socrates' creativity arises from his own rejection of the Dionysian ground, and, as Nietzsche points out, when Dionysus is abandoned, one is

⁴¹ I do not here suggest, nor does Nietzsche, that Homer was an unhealthy Greek. Homer is never referred to as a "monstrosity", unlike Socrates. Nietzsche favours a constitution in which the Dionysian is given Apollonian representation, as in Dionysian art and tragic culture. However, Nietzsche likes Homer's Apollonian art too; although it does not render the Dionysian in Apollonian form, it still maintains the necessary tensions between Apollonian and Dionysian forces in the psyche, and is therefore considered healthy for human beings.

consequently abandoned by Apollo.

My interpretation allows us to distinguish between Homer and Socrates. Apollo was the creative force in Homer because Homer did not reject Dionysus; he simply revelled in beautiful poetical illusions as a means of forgetting the "original pain" of existence, according to Nietzsche. Unlike Socrates' nihilistic art (i.e., his optimism), Homer's art did not negate existence or its ground; rather, through teaching human beings to forget about this pain, he encouraged them to rejoice in their own existence and divinity. In Homer, although Dionysus is never spoken about, he is never rejected. Rather, Homer's Apollonian art bears witness to the presence of Dionysus, who must be given his due reverence, and must not be abandoned if Apollonian art is to thrive. For Homer, and for all Apollonian artists, Dionysus acts as a dissuader from nihilism -- from illusions which serve to deny the Dionysian ground of being.

Socrates, in contrast to Homer, is a reversal of the healthy Greek in the worst possible sense. Socrates' creativity stems from his nihilism -- from his negation of both the Dionysian and the Apollonian. Socrates' creativity is not Apollonian because there is no effect of forgetting the "original pain". No delight in existence is achieved by his optimistic art. Instead, Socrates' creativity encourages the individual not to forget but to dwell pensively upon his own individuated, waking ideas, losing his Dionysian awareness by being turned away from the ground and continuously occupied with his own emotional reactions to appearances and stimuli. Socrates' dissuading voice -- his *δαίμωνιον* -- arises from what his own creative urges seek to deny and to "fix"; namely, the Apollonian and Dionysian forces at work within him. His dissuading voice is Apollonian insofar as it commands him to practise music and to write poetry, for Apollo is the god of musicians and poets. And yet it is also Dionysian insofar as it speaks to him with "instinctual wisdom". In order to make the above

discussion of the various reversals of reason and instinct more clear, I have outlined the distinctions that Nietzsche makes between healthy Greeks with Dionysian leanings, Apollonian leanings, and Socrates' own nihilistic leanings in the following table:

Table B:

<i>Reason, rational consciousness</i>	critical, dissuading, (Apollonian)	creative, affirming, (Apollonian)	creative, affirming (nihilistic, anti- Apollonian, anti- Dionysian)
<i>Instinct, wisdom</i>	creative, affirming, (Dionysian)	critical, dissuading, (Dionysian)	critical, dissuading (Apollonian, Dionysian)
	<i>Healthy Greeks, Dionysian artists</i>	<i>Healthy Greeks, Homer, Apollonian artists</i>	<i>Socrates, Socratic Artists</i>

In this table, we can clearly see that Socrates is the reversal of only the healthy Greek with Dionysian leanings; he is not the reversal of the healthy Apollonian Greek. However, due to his nihilistic optimism, Socrates is much different from both the healthy Dionysian and the healthy Apollonian. Although Socrates is not a reversal of the healthy Greek in this regard, his nihilism, or his relation to both Apollo and Dionysus, makes him a "monstrosity" (BT.13;85).

As a "monstrosity" Socrates lacked every mystical talent; he was the perfect non-mystic in whom "the logical side has become, through superfetation, as over-developed as has the instinctual side in the mystic". Nietzsche refers to this monstrous lop-sidedness of Socrates' soul as "logical Socratism", and he views Socrates as the prime vehicle for the spread of this deformity. In fact, Socrates himself considered it "his divine mission" (*BT.13;85*) to deform all people, even insisting on the death penalty for himself in order to implicate Athens against him, that he might further endear himself to the best and the brightest young Athenians as a martyr, corrupting them.

Socrates' psychic deformity and ugliness was his "great Cyclops' eye". With only one eye, Nietzsche suggests metaphorically that Socrates lacked perspective: he could not judge depth. Without binocular vision, all appeared flat and two-dimensional to him. With Cyclopic vision, Socrates could not perceive the Dionysian depth to all things. Such depth appeared to him as a ridiculous and illogical excess of which human beings, as flat creatures, have no experience. Socrates' "great Cyclops' eye... never glowed with the artist's divine frenzy" (*BT.14;86*). He could take no pleasure looking into the "Dionysian abysses" of tragedy.

Socrates thought that tragedy did not tell the truth, and therefore that tragedy only addressed "non-philosophers". The only poetry that appealed to Socrates was the writing of Aesop's fables: moralizing stories told by a slave as ugly as himself.⁴² In order to make poetry tell "the truth" (i.e., in order to make it moral), Socrates needed "to force poetry into entirely new channels" (*BT.14;86-87*). The symbolism of poetry was severed from its tragic and Dionysian foundations and subdued for anti-Dionysian purposes. This severing of poetry,

⁴² Herodotus suggests that Aesop was a slave belonging to Iadmon, a citizen of Samos. See Herodotus, *The Histories* II, 134. Legend states that Aesop was, like Socrates, ugly and misshapen.

myth, and symbol from the Dionysian ground is achieved when they are put in the service of "optimism", according to Nietzsche.

Once this "optimistic element had entered tragedy, it overgrew its Dionysiac regions and brought about their annihilation". The optimism of Socrates "entirely destroyed the meaning of tragedy -- which can be interpreted only as a concrete manifestation of Dionysiac conditions" (*BT.14;88-89*). Optimism is the view that this world must be the best of all possible worlds, or that the best possible world can be realized by human activity to correct what is wrong with the existing world. However, optimism suffocates the hero of tragedy who knows that "whatever exists is both just and unjust, and equally justified in both" (*BT.9;65*), or that, even if this existence is the worst of all possible worlds, it is still justified. As a result of optimism, "the virtuous hero must henceforth be a dialectician". The dialectical hero cannot simply act from the strength of his instincts, or his Dionysian awareness. To act from this strength is to act from ignorance, not from reason or knowledge. For this reason, the dialectical hero must justify all of his actions with "proof and counterproof", and what cannot be understood in these terms -- the tragic content of existence -- is consequently treated as accidental and dispensable. Hence, "optimistic dialectics took up the whip of its syllogisms and drove music out of tragedy" (*BT.14;88-89*).

Nietzsche is careful to point out that these anti-Dionysian tendencies predate Socrates. He suggests that they are always present as part of the contradictory nature of the original Oneness. For example, he finds such tendencies in the tragedies of Sophocles. Sophocles demonstrates "some embarrassment with regard to the chorus", while Nietzsche views the chorus as "the Dionysiac floor of tragedy" (*BT.14;89*). Nietzsche also seems to find the anti-Dionysian tendency in Doric art, which, having survived the first onslaught of Dionysus

among the Greeks, became a stronghold for the Delphic god Apollo.⁴³ In this way, Doric art may be seen as anti-Dionysian in its Apollonian rigidity. Indeed, for Nietzsche the Doric state is "a perpetual military encampment of the Apollonian forces" (*BT.4;35*). So Nietzsche focuses his criticisms upon Socrates, not because Socrates is the origin of the anti-Dionysian element; this element is given to the nature of all things at all times in different degrees. Rather, Nietzsche criticizes Socrates as the "most brilliant exponent" of the anti-Dionysian tendency (*BT.14;89*). This is part of Socrates' greatness, in Nietzsche's view.

Nietzsche's fascination with Socrates stems from his suspicion that Socrates points towards some other figure. He asks: "Toward what does a figure like Socrates point?". Nietzsche does not view Socrates simply as "an agent of disintegration" (*BT.14;89*). Socrates also produces something: a kind of bad art, as we shall see. What is more, Nietzsche also sees Socrates as leading human beings towards something radically new: Socrates offers them himself as their enemy and obstacle -- as one who must be overcome. Socrates is the greatest opponent of Dionysus, but so much so that the only real antagonism after Socrates is between the Dionysian and the Socratic (*BT.12;77*).⁴⁴ Through his unique challenge to be overcome, Socrates offers human beings a greater height than the Greeks ever reached by means of their tragedies.

⁴³ The historian Erwin Rohde, a friend of Nietzsche, argued that Dionysus was a young god who had emigrated from Thrace to Greece. This thesis was accepted for a long time, but since then, new evidence has established that Dionysus has a much older history in Greece than Rohde attests, and that Nietzsche assumes. See Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Trans. John Raffan, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1985) 161-167.

⁴⁴ Although, to a certain extent, Nietzsche avoids the problems of historicism by showing that the constituent parts of reality are always constant, he finally succumbs to these problems insofar as he argues that Socrates offers something radically new to human beings, and that human beings since Socrates have a greater potential for overcoming than did pre-Socratic individuals.

Nietzsche undertakes his inquiry into what Socrates creates and what he points towards by discussing the relation between Socrates and art. Are they diametrically opposed? Can there be a Socratic artist? Nietzsche gives several seemingly contradictory answers to such questions. On the one hand, as we shall see, Nietzsche thinks that there might be such a thing as a Socratic artist. A Socratic artist is either a very bad artist with no vision for depth (the artist of the Cyclops' eye); or he will be the "musical Socrates" -- the best artist of the future. On the other hand, Nietzsche also says that there can be no such thing as a Socratic artist, because the Socratic daemon is wholly unartistic, anti-Dionysian, and the destroyer of art and tragedy. Despite the seeming contradiction of these answers, however, Nietzsche considers them all to be true.

Socrates' relation to art and music is complex. Nietzsche notes that Socrates, "this despotic logician, had from time to time a sense of void, loss, unfulfilled duty with regard to art... [O]n several occasions, a voice had spoken to him in a dream, saying 'Practice music, Socrates!'" Socrates had always interpreted the words of the dream as meaning that "his philosophy represented the highest art of the muses" (*BT*.14;90).⁴⁵ Only towards the end of his life did Socrates have second thoughts, and decide to take up the lyre and dancing.⁴⁶ Only after he was condemned to death did Socrates compose any poetry, in particular, metrical versions of Aesop's fables and a hymn to Apollo.⁴⁷ Socrates was prompted to do so by his

⁴⁵ For Plato's account of these matters see *Phaedo* (60d-61b).

⁴⁶ See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* II, 32. Diogenes Laertius reports that Xenophon thought that Socrates only danced in order to exercise his body. He did not dance from any sort of Dionysian joy or ecstasy. Also see Athenaeus (1, 20F) and Quintilian's *The Education of the Orator* (1, 10, 13).

⁴⁷ See Plato, *Phaedo* 60d. Diogenes Laertius notes that, "According to some, [Socrates] composed a hymn, of which the beginning was: 'Rejoice in Apollo, lord of Delos! And in Artemis! Oh Illustrious Children!'" Diogenes states that "he also

warning voice, by the instinctual wisdom of his δαιμόνιον which always dissuaded him where his reasoning failed.⁴⁸ By means of his δαιμόνιον, Socrates realized that somehow he was offending a god by a kind of ignorance. This raised doubts in his mind:

Have I been too ready to view what was unintelligible to me as being devoid of meaning? Perhaps there is a realm of wisdom, after all, from which the logician is excluded? Perhaps art must be seen as the necessary complement of rational discourse? (*BT*.14;90)⁴⁹

Nietzsche detects heroism in the final hours of Socrates' life, and he finds reason to praise Socrates. At the end of his pursuit, Socrates discovers the utter worthlessness and impiety of Socratism, and consequently he rejects it. As we have seen, Socratism is a kind of nihilistic optimism whereby this world is negated in favour of the creation of a better world. Underlying Socratic optimism is the monstrous deformation of the psyche referred to above and detailed by Nietzsche as "logical Socratism". When the psyche has grown monstrously lop-sided in this manner, all things are considered Apollonian and rational; anything which cannot be rationalized is denied any relevance. By rendering everything rational, the psychically-deformed individual attempts to "fix" the world. This is the essence of the Socratism which Socrates comes to reject on his death bed.

composed a fable of Aesop, not very skilfully, which began, 'Once upon a time Aesop said, "While judging, men of Corinth, do not judge virtue with the wisdom of the people's justice"'." (II, 42: my translation).

⁴⁸ Here, we recognize a contradiction in Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates. How does a dissuading voice prompt one to do anything? I am at a loss as to how to make sense of this ambiguity in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

⁴⁹ This is Nietzsche's interpretation of *Phaedo* (60d-61b). In *Phaedo*, Socrates admits that he has taken up music and myth-making in his final hours because of his doubts which have arisen from a recurring dream that bids him to practise music. Socrates is unsure that philosophy is the kind of music that the dream commands him to practise, and so he takes up these other forms of music and poetry in order not to disobey any god.

According to Nietzsche, Socrates comes to recognize the error of Socratism -- which is its nihilistic denial of the Apollonian and Dionysian character of existence -- by listening to his δαιμόνιον, or his instinctual wisdom. Quite simply, Socratism is a denial of what is real and true, and Socrates comes to see this because both the Apollonian and Dionysian characteristics of existence were known to him; for he must have first been aware of them in order to deny them. Socrates' instincts attuned him to the Dionysian ground, and his attempts at poetry and music illustrate that he had come to recognize that he did not understand something about Apollo, who is the god of poets and musicians. By rejecting Socratism in his final hours, he saw through his own errors, and thereby overcame them. However, Socrates never became truly musical, according to Nietzsche.

Socrates skilfully escapes being destroyed by Socratism, and he watches with pleasure as it spirals out of control toward its own destruction. Nietzsche explicitly compares Socrates' ability to rise above Socratism unscathed with the great skill of an Achilles who, making sport of driving his chariot into the abyss, is able boldly to leap clear of destruction (*BT.15;92*). Socratism too is driven into the abyss by Socrates, the brilliant hero who stands over all of us as his conquered and his vanquished, yet not himself destroyed by his own devices.

Nietzsche describes Socrates as the prototype for a new mode of existence which he calls the "*theoretical man*".⁵⁰ The theoretical man is like the artist in that he "takes infinite pleasure in all that exists and is thus saved from the practical ethics of pessimism" (*BT.15;92*). However, the theoretical man is also unlike the artist in that the artist, "having unveiled the

⁵⁰ Nietzsche inherits the view that Socrates is a "hair-splitter", or a theoretical man who gets carried away with his "dialectical skills" from Christian sources. For example, see Eusebius, *Oration of Constantine* (9).

truth garment by garment, remains with his gaze fixed on what is still hidden", whereas the "theoretical man takes delight in the cast garments and finds his highest satisfaction in the unveiling process itself" (BT.15;92). The theoretical man's specific talent is to disrobe everything, and yet with his Cyclops' eye he lacks the depth perception to see what lies beneath properly; instead, he is fascinated strictly with appearances and with showing how they are appearances lacking any substance. Substance itself escapes the theoretical man; and he will even deny its existence because he cannot perceive it.

Nietzsche writes that "we find a type of deep-seated illusion, first manifested in Socrates: the illusion that thought, guided by the thread of causation, might plumb the farthest abysses of being and even *correct* it". Socrates represents for Nietzsche "mortal man freed by knowledge and argument from fear of death" (BT.15;93). He locates the origins of science and the insatiable modern-day drive to knowledge in Socrates. As has been shown, Socrates even harnesses poetry and myth for his purposes whenever reason and science break down; he makes poetry subservient to the knowledge drive which is, as we have seen, the monstrous reversal of the strong Greek character.

What is one to make of the apparent contradiction in Nietzsche's appraisal of Socrates as both the prototypical theoretical man and as the most brilliant exponent of Socratic optimism? On the one hand, Nietzsche suggests that Socrates, as a theoretical man, is not interested in the truth, the "one naked goddess", stripped of all of her garments (BT.15;92). On the other hand, as an optimist, as the father of science, and as the cradle for the modern drive to knowledge, Nietzsche suggests that Socrates is indeed interested in the truth, and that he optimistically believes that the truth can be discovered by means of rational inquiry. In 1886, when he writes "A Critical Backward Glance" as the prologue for *The Birth of Tragedy*,

Nietzsche lets his readers know that he is aware of this difficulty. However, he refuses to be held accountable for it. He speaks of it, rather, as a feature or perhaps a consequence of Socrates' deep irony:

Might it be that the "inquiring mind" was simply the human mind horrified by pessimism and trying to escape from it, a clever bulwark erected against truth? Something craven and false, if one wanted to be moral about it? Or, if one preferred to put it amorally, a dodge? Had this perhaps been your secret, great Socrates? Most secretive of ironists, had *this* been your deepest irony? (BT.p2;5)

This is not the only difficulty in Nietzsche's account. At one point, Nietzsche describes Socrates as "the vortex and turning point of Western civilization" (BT.15;94). This is ambiguous praise and disdain for Socrates.⁵¹ On the one hand, Nietzsche sees that, when the Apollonian and Dionysian drives are not properly balanced, a kind of barbarism or lack of culture results. These two drives, when not well-matched against each other, do not engage one another in a formidable *agon*; hence, their excessive energy is not used up or harnessed by a challenge to be overcome; consequently the result is that the overflowing surplus and the super-abundance of the ground cannot work towards its own redemption, and instead becomes destructive. Where there is no *agon* or resistance, the ground is not transfigured, but rather weakened by decay and self-destruction. Nietzsche understands Socrates to have taken the Dionysian excess of the ground and put it to work for the knowledge drive, which, in turn, has saved human beings from destruction and barbarism:

If we imagine that immense store of energy used, not for the purposes of knowledge, but for the practical egotistical ends of individuals and nations, we may readily see the consequence: universal wars of extermination and

⁵¹ Harrison does not recognize the ambiguity of this statement. He argues that, for Nietzsche, Socrates "becomes the negative turning point in world history." This is only partly true for Nietzsche, as we shall see. See Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 139.

constant migrations of people would have weakened man's instinctive zest for life to such an extent that, suicide having become a matter of course, duty might have commanded the son to kill his parents, the friend his friend, as among the Fiji islanders. We know that such wholesale slaughter prevails wherever art in some form or other -- especially as religion or science -- has not served as antidote to barbarism. (BT.15;94)

In this respect, Nietzsche praises Socrates in describing him as "the vortex and turning point of Western civilization". On the other hand, although both art and science serve as antidotes for barbarism, and Socrates' new art of dialectics and his scientific drive to knowledge are able to subdue barbarism, the overall effect of Socratic art and science is decadent, because it weakens human beings to the point where none of the healthy or vital can flourish. In this respect, Socrates, as "the vortex and turning point of Western civilization", has also separated human beings from what is noble and strong simply because it is dangerous and has the potential to destroy them. Socrates truly is a vortex for Nietzsche. He leaves Nietzsche's thoughts spinning.

According to Nietzsche, Socrates offers the possibility for a decadent theoretical life. The desires and the motives of this sort of life are clear to Nietzsche: "Whoever has tasted the delight of a Socratic perception, experienced how it moves to encompass the whole world of phenomena in ever widening circles, knows no sharper incentive to life than his desire to complete the conquest, to weave the net absolutely tight". A form of life with such desires seeks out and destroys every sort of life that is not like its own. Totally self-absorbed, it seeks to "fix" the world and to remove from it every aspect of existence which does not conform with its own limited and low aspirations. The art and science of Socrates serve to subdue and conquer all of existence in this manner. However, Nietzsche points out that the Socratic drive to conquer is self-defeating; for "science, spurred on by its energetic notions, approaches irresistibly those outer limits

where the optimism implicit in logic must collapse" (*BT.15;95*). With a certain glee, Nietzsche announces that Socratic inquiry eventually leads back to the experience of tragedy and hence to the need for art:

When the inquirer, having pushed to the circumference, realizes how logic in that place curls about itself and bites its own tail, he is struck with a new kind perception: a tragic perception, which requires, to make it tolerable, the remedy of art. (*BT.15;95*)

At this point, Nietzsche uncovers a paradox. On the one hand, he has shown that Socratic inquiry eventually undoes itself and leads to the experience of tragedy, which calls forth the need for art. On the other hand, Socratic inquiry is itself hostile to art and the Dionysian. The question then becomes, what are we to make of Nietzsche's hope for a "musical Socrates", who, having pursued his inquiry to the end, has rediscovered Dionysian art through the experience of tragedy? Can there be such a contradictory nature, which simultaneously possesses all of Socrates' abilities at disrobing the truth, yet also lacks his monstrous Cyclops' eye, and can see with the binocular tragic vision of the Dionysian artist?

Nietzsche states this problem in a paradoxical and contradictory manner, but I think that it may be rendered much more clearly, and not as a paradox at all. Nietzsche's fundamental insight here is that even errors may lead us to the truth. If we rigorously pursue an error, it eventually undoes itself; it proves its own falsity. Once its falsity has been proven, a truth is revealed, and its insights may be embraced. It is the same with Socratism: having followed its own logic towards its conclusion, Socratism undoes itself as a lie. Having grasped this fundamental insight, human beings can overcome its errors. Like Nietzsche's Socrates, all human beings are capable of learning from their mistakes. All are capable of jumping off the chariot before it plummets into the abyss. The difficulty, contradiction, and paradox arises when human beings are considered no longer able to jump off and save

themselves, or when they jump away too late. This is Nietzsche's view: we are coming to see the error of our ways, but all around us there is only an abyss.⁵²

Nietzsche's conception of a "musical Socrates" is not fulfilled in Socrates himself. Even in his final hours, when he realizes the error of his Socratism and heroically jumps to safety, Socrates does not rise to the height of Nietzsche's "musical Socrates". Socrates' relation to this "musical Socrates" can be viewed from three different angles. First, Socrates, as the primary exponent of Socratism, as an inartistic man, or, at most, as a very bad artist, is not akin to this "musical Socrates", but a rival of such a figure. Second, the heroic Socrates who leaps to safety from the chariot of Socratism is more akin to the musical Socrates insofar as he does not represent a denial of the "musical Socrates", but is open to him and once again feels the need for tragedy. However, even this heroic Socrates falls short of the "musical Socrates", because jumping to safety from Socratism does not make him musical. His openness to music must be followed by the cultivation and practice of music -- by the heightening of Apollonian and Dionysian tensions. Simple recognition of the Apollonian and the Dionysian is a necessary first step towards the "musical Socrates", but it is not sufficient. Third, the "musical Socrates" is a future possibility for Nietzsche, and in this respect, Socrates only serves to prefigure him. This is why, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche looks forward to a rebirth of tragedy, as we shall see.⁵³

⁵² Once again, we find the problems of historicism in Nietzsche's view of Socrates. As we have seen previously in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche offers the historicist argument that modern human beings are now capable of heights that were not possible for people who lived before Socrates. In the present passage, Nietzsche makes an equally historicist, albeit contradictory, claim. He suggests that modern human beings, unlike Socrates, are no longer capable of recovering from their own errors.

⁵³ Again, Nietzsche betrays his own historicism by his hopes in a new man: a post-modern "musical Socrates" of the future who was never before possible in history.

Nietzsche has four further criticisms of Socrates. First, he notes that the Socratism which Socrates eventually launched into the abyss destroys the redemptive quality of myth and displaces poetry (*BT.17;105*).⁵⁴ Both myth and poetry are vehicles for illusion.⁵⁵ Illusions can

⁵⁴ Socrates has not only destroyed myth and left human beings hungry for the deeper meaning of existence. According to Nietzsche, modern human beings can no longer even stomach the food that myth offers. The problem of this modern impasse is best described by Werner J. Dannhauser. See Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 145-146. Dannhauser notes that, for Nietzsche, reality is fundamentally chaos. Illusions of order and harmony are needed in order to bear this chaos, to survive it, to rejoice in it, and to avoid its barbarism. Life must be valued above the truth. However, illusions only work effectively if they are not held to be illusions. For Nietzsche, myths are like this too. The problem that arises with Socratism is that it "disrobes" everything, and that the truth is valued over life. Socratic man works to destroy all illusions for the joy of conquest. As a consequence, there are no illusions which modern human beings may adopt as truth because such "horizons" fail to function when they are seen as horizons. Human beings have lost the naivety that is necessary for myth because Socrates has taught them to deny their Dionysian origins in order to preserve themselves. By subverting all Dionysian wisdom and replacing it with scientific knowledge and dialectics, Socrates has cut human beings off from any awareness of their mythic womb and landed them in an impasse in which all myths are found unacceptable. Modern human beings are discovering that the preference for life over wisdom is not enough to preserve life. Wisdom is needed in order to live well.

By uncovering this impasse, I think that Dannhauser has correctly articulated one difficulty in Nietzsche's thought. However, I do not find the impasse that Dannhauser describes entirely persuasive as a complete representation of Nietzsche's thoughts concerning these matters. Although the impasse accurately depicts the historicist pole in Nietzsche's thinking, I do not think that it represents the whole of Nietzsche's understanding. On Nietzsche's own terms, all the constituent parts of reality are always present during every age, and they are always accessible to human beings. Depending upon the mixture of these constituent parts (the Apollonian, the Dionysian, and the Socratic), human beings will be more or less aware and open to the contradictory reality in which they are enfolded. According to Nietzsche, in a Socratic or anti-Dionysian culture, human beings are least open to the ground of being. However, once this Socratic tendency is overcome, it must either be subverted by Apollo or Dionysus, or both. There is no impasse. There are only shifting tendencies which are always present to greater or lesser degrees. The only way there could be an impasse would be if the nature of reality were to change -- if the Socratic were able to destroy the Apollonian and the Dionysian, or if the nature of reality as a flux of chaotic elements were to become rigid and resistant to all change. Neither of these alternatives is possible, according to Nietzsche.

⁵⁵ This does not mean that metaphor is therefore to be rejected. There are better and worse illusions, according to Nietzsche. Some (for instance, tragedy) reveal what is

be artistic (in the case of Homer's Apollonian writings), tragic (in the cases of Aeschylus, and to a lesser extent, Sophocles), or Socratic, for even Socrates tells myths. All three sorts of illusions -- the Apollonian, the Dionysian, and the Socratic -- can exist to differing degrees in all ages, and all serve to perpetuate different kinds of life. According to Nietzsche, our own age is unique because it is primarily Socratic, and the myths it tells are primarily Socratic myths. Modern culture has very weak artistic and tragic tendencies because our awareness of these components of our existence has faded due to the optimistic stories we have come to prefer. As previously mentioned, Socratic culture is rooted in optimism: the deluded desire to "fix" the world so that it is the best of all possible worlds. At the root of such optimism is the false belief that one is "omnipotent" (*BT*.18;110). Modern culture, according to Nietzsche, suffers from the same arrogance from which Socrates suffered, the arrogance of one who believes that he can pass judgement on life, that he can call one thing good and another bad, and then work to change or correct existence by means of knowledge and mastery through knowledge.

Second, Nietzsche further points out that Socratic culture is fundamentally resentful. The best example Nietzsche provides in *The Birth of Tragedy* of the stirring up of moral ire and resentment is Alexandrian culture. According to Nietzsche, "Alexandrian culture requires a slave class for its continued existence, but in its optimism it denies the necessity for such a class". In its arrogant optimism, it passes impossible judgements upon existence, and when

true about existence. Other illusions (for instance, Socratic dialectic) serve to cloud our awareness of this truth. In his commentary on *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche paraphrases from "The Return Home": "Here all things come caressingly to your discourse and flatter you; for they want to ride on you back. On every metaphor you ride to every truth....Here the words and word-shrines of all being open up before you; here all being wishes to become word, all becoming wishes to learn from you how to speak" (*EH.Z.3*).

it acts in the world (against the world) according to its delusions, it becomes unable to act well, and brings about its own destruction. The judgements of Alexandrian culture are that: (1) slavery is wrong, and (2) what is wrong can be fixed; thus (3) slavery can be fixed, and (4) is therefore not necessary. This line of reasoning courts disaster, in Nietzsche's opinion, because soon "the effect of its nice slogans concerning the dignity of man and the dignity of labour have worn thin," and the slave class, which "has learned to view its existence as an injustice", will prepare "to avenge not only its own wrongs but those of all past generations" (BT.18;110). To follow an idea or a slogan about the dignity of labour and life as though it were more real than life itself leads to resentment, and ultimately to barbarism and destruction. Nietzsche attributes this idealism and the resentment that idealism stirs up to Socrates.⁵⁶

Third, Nietzsche argues that Socrates encourages us to consider scientific knowledge to be the same as wisdom.⁵⁷ Consequently, true wisdom, or the knowledge of Dionysian reality through Apollonian forms, is ignored for the pursuit of scientific knowledge. However, as illustrated previously, Nietzsche thinks that the positivistic claims of science to explain everything will be shattered when "certain men of genius... have used the arsenal of science to demonstrate the limitations of science and of the cognitive faculty itself. They have authoritatively rejected science's claim to universal validity and to the attainment of universal goals and exploded for the first time the belief that man may plumb the universe by means of the law of causation" (BT.18;111). When the scientific drive to knowledge is turned back

⁵⁶ Nietzsche's discussions of the reliance of culture upon slavery, the problems of idealism, and the destructive force of what he later refers to in *On The Genealogy of Morals* (1887) as *ressentiment* are borrowed from an earlier unpublished work entitled "The Greek State" (1871). In *The Birth of Tragedy*, however, a direct link between these issues is made with Socrates.

⁵⁷ See Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 61.

upon itself, tragedy is soon perceived, and the need for art is felt once more. The tragic individual rises again, this time as a "music-practising Socrates" (BT.17;105) with a new kind of art. A question we might ask Nietzsche is what will this new art be?

Nietzsche remarks that the new art of the "musical Socrates" will not be the art of the Socratic or anti-Dionysian man. "Inartistic man produces his own brand of art, precisely by virtue of his artistic impotence" (BT.19;116). Socrates is inartistic, and yet he too produces a kind of art; he transforms music into a rationalistic rhetoric of passion and ideas without any Dionysian profundity. The new art of the musical Socrates will not be of this sort, for Nietzsche feels that "Socratic man has run his course". He sees modern society moving once more towards Dionysus as it struggles against Socrates to overcome him. In this vein, Nietzsche addresses *The Birth of Tragedy* to his friends and to "musical men", bidding them to "believe with me in this Dionysiac life and in the rebirth of tragedy!" (BT.20;124).⁵⁸ Although he does not know who this musical Socrates will be, or what will be this new art that he practises, Nietzsche feels quite certain that both are very close to him and waiting to be born.

Fourth, Nietzsche blames Socrates not only for the loss of myth, but for the modern impasse which has rendered us somehow unfit for myth, unable to swallow it as our food, and hence insatiably hungry:

Here we have our present age, the result of a Socratism bent on the

⁵⁸ In 1872, Nietzsche looks to the music of his friend Richard Wagner as a sign of the oncoming rebirth of tragedy. Not much later -- even before the publication of *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* -- Nietzsche begins to have doubts about his hopes in Wagner. With the publication of *Human, All Too Human* in 1878, his friendship with Wagner is officially broken, and with it ends his own romantic expectations that any such immanent rebirth of tragedy might occur. However, Nietzsche never gives up his "Dionysian faith", or his hope in the Dionysian ground of being.

extermination of myth. Man today, stripped of myth, stands famished among all his pasts and must dig frantically for roots, be it among the most remote antiquities. What does our great historical hunger signify, our clutching about us of countless other cultures, our consuming desire for knowledge, if not the loss of myth, of a mythic home, the mythic womb? (*BT.23;137*)

Nietzsche writes that "the disappearance of tragedy also spelled the disappearance of myth". Through the influence of the Socratic daemon, tragedy was destroyed, and without its protector, myth was soon to follow. Myth, as story that grounds itself in a music which mirrors the Dionysian ground, was vanquished by the sorts of myths which Socrates tells when his reasoning fails him. But these are not so much myths as they are ideas or abstractions. Due to the influence of Socratic idealism, modern man is now "abstract man stripped of myth" and given "abstract education, abstract mores, abstract law, abstract government" in its place. By replacing Apollonian illusion grounded in the original Oneness (myth) with illusions that serve to vilify the ground (abstractions), existence in the immediate loses its timeless or eternal sense. Nietzsche writes that "a nation, like an individual, is valuable only insofar as it is able to give the quotidian experience the stamp of the eternal" (*BT.23;138-139*).

2. *The Early Notebooks (1872-3)*

A discussion of Nietzsche's notebooks is essential in order to understand his view of Socrates in the early years of his philosophical writing. However, it should be noted that none of the notebooks hold the authority and significance of the writings which Nietzsche himself chose for publication. The notebooks are only important insofar as they add to our understanding of his published works. Consequently, those notebooks that do not correspond with his published writings should not be given as much consideration as the notebooks from which Nietzsche either takes passages *verbatim* for use in his published writings, or those which re-inforce our understanding of ideas which Nietzsche himself deemed fit for publication.

In the early notebooks, no coherent argument concerning the status of Socrates is presented. Rather, Nietzsche views Socrates from different perspectives; he begins to note certain ambiguities in Socrates' character, and he becomes less certain that Socrates is the cause of our modern sickness. Due to this increasing uncertainty, his view of Socrates moves from the strongly negative picture that is presented in *The Birth of Tragedy* towards a more positive depiction. Nietzsche uses the random observations of these notebooks as probes for his later, published writings. In particular, the positive portrayal of Socrates in these notebooks pre-figures the positive view of him presented in the *Untimely Meditations*.

For reasons of clarity and organization, I refer to these notebooks by the titles and divisions suggested in Daniel Breazeale's translation and edition of Nietzsche's notebooks

entitled, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*.⁵⁹ All of these selections are fruitfully organized by Breazeale from the *Nachlass*: a chaotic set of Nietzsche's rough notes and handwritten drafts. None of these works were published by Nietzsche himself, nor were they intended for publication in the form in which Breazeale presents them. Breazeale organizes the notebooks chronologically, and according to themes, plans, and outlines given by Nietzsche himself. Breazeale also divides the notebooks by means of section numbers. These numbers are not found in Nietzsche's manuscripts themselves. They do not designate "aphorisms", nor do they necessarily indicate sequences or natural divisions in Nietzsche's thoughts and arguments. Breazeale offers them simply as "convenient indexing devices" for his readers.

i. *The Philosopher:*

Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge (Notebooks 1872)

The notebooks for *The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge* were written during the fall and winter of 1872, and after the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy*. In these notebooks, Nietzsche continues to portray Socrates as the first modern human being. Socrates remains a "lop-sided" Apollonian, wholly deficient in Dionysian capacities, and he marks the end of noble philosophy; for with Socrates, the ability to master the knowledge drive begins to fade. Concern for what is masterful and noble decreases, and it is replaced with weaker, more desperate concerns for personal survival.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (Ed. and Trans. Daniel Breazeale, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979).

In his notebooks for this projected work, Nietzsche's special concern is with the knowledge drive and the need to restrain it. Nietzsche remarks that "the *unselective* knowledge drive resembles the indiscriminate sexual drive" (P.20). Both are signs of vulgarity and an impoverished life. "There is great danger that individuals are becoming inferior; therefore, their interests are powerfully captivated by objects of knowledge, no matter which" (P.25). As Nietzsche argued in *The Birth of Tragedy*, there needs to be resistance and *agon* if life is not to decay, and if it is to be challenged to reach new heights. Nietzsche therefore sees a need "to regain mastery over that which has been totally released" (P.36). This is precisely the task of philosophy. Nietzsche states that "*philosophy reveals its highest worth when it concentrates the unlimited knowledge drive and subdues it to unity*" (P.30). Philosophy is needed to control science and to determine its value (P.28).

Before Socrates, the early Greek philosophers mastered the knowledge drive as a matter of nobility. After Socrates, Nietzsche can no longer find a "noble popular philosophy, because we have no noble concept of *peuple (publicum)*" (P.29). After Socrates, all focus is shifted away from what is noble and unifying towards individual suffering, weakness and division. "After Socrates it is no longer possible to preserve the common weal: hence that individualizing ethics which seeks to preserve the individual" (P.25).

The new philosophy of Socrates still served to restrain the knowledge drive. However, "*Socrates and his school* showed the same tendency: the knowledge drive should be restrained out of individual concern for *living happily*". Nietzsche views this as a sign of declining life. Prior to Socrates, "it was not a question of *individuals*, but of the *Hellenes*" (P.31). The great pre-Socratic philosophers were part of "*general Hellenic life*"; after

Socrates, "philosophers formed sects".⁶⁰ No longer immersed in a noble popular philosophy, they became immersed in themselves, and they "let the reins of science" drop from their hands (P.32). Gradually after Socrates, the knowledge drive came to be restrained less and less.

Nietzsche voices two main criticisms of Socrates in his 1872 notebooks. First, he attributes to Socrates the shift of philosophy to a brooding self-concern. All action and attention becomes focused upon the self due to the individual's incapacity to act in the world. The turning inward upon the self is a sign of weakness because it suggests that an inordinate amount of struggle is required even for the survival and happiness of the individual. Socrates lacks the abundance from which the pre-Socratics were strong enough to act and to take up "the reins of science". The pre-Socratics did not have to struggle inwardly as did Socrates; they did not need to justify their existence to themselves or work for mere survival. This criticism is similar to Nietzsche's concern in *The Birth of Tragedy* that the tragic experience of the greatest tension between the Apollonian and Dionysian drives has faded for human beings, and without this experience of *agon* there is a depletion of life. In its stead, Nietzsche sees a new fixation with the individual, who is dazzled with "cool ideas" and "fiery emotions" to distract him from experiencing the ground of being by centering his attention on illusions and appearance.

Second, Nietzsche claims that the fading control over the knowledge drive results from human weakness, and particularly from an impoverished life that cannot sustain itself. In the impoverished life of Socratic man, the knowledge drive is slowly allowed to release itself without resistance. This second criticism of Socrates helps to illustrate Nietzsche's developing concerns. In the 1872 notebooks, as in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the knowledge drive is shown

⁶⁰ See Origen, *Against Celsus* (3, 13).

to be an ever-present aspect of reality. And in both the notebooks and *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is seen as responsible for the eventual free reign of this drive. However, Nietzsche's careful stress upon Socrates as the "most brilliant exponent" of the anti-Dionysian tendency is absent in the notebooks. The notebooks describe a kind of pristine nobility in the pre-Socratics from which that eternal Socratic tendency towards weakness is absent. In *The Birth of Tragedy* there are two orienting principles, the Apollonian and the Dionysian tendencies. The negation of these two principles is the Socratic tendency. And the two principles as well as the possibility of negation are always present. In other words, the ability to affirm or deny reality is always present. In the notebooks, this constancy is not evident and Nietzsche leans towards a kind of historicism, in which the structure of reality is changed with the coming of Socrates. The opportunity and the ability to turn away from reality is first given by Socrates and further cultivated by Socratism.

ii. *The Philosopher as Cultural Physician* (Notebooks 1872-1873)

In the notebooks of winter 1872 to early 1873 for this projected work, Nietzsche's view of Socrates becomes less negative. He shifts some of his emphasis away from Socrates as the "most brilliant exponent" of anti-Dionysian tendencies and turns instead to Plato. Nietzsche is still concerned with the mastery of the knowledge drive; he sees in this mastery "the strengthening of that which is mythical, musical, and artistic" (PC.175). As in the works already discussed, Nietzsche still views Socrates' form of mastery as somehow "inflexible" and therefore unable to account for the full breadth and depth of human experience. However, Nietzsche for the first time here suggests that Plato, and not Socrates, is the real enemy of

Dionysian culture: "I will speak of the pre-Platonic philosophers, because overt hostility against culture -- negation -- begins with Plato" (PC.175).

iii. *Philosophy During The Tragic Age of The Greeks* (Notebooks 1873)⁶¹

In this unpublished and incomplete work, Nietzsche has high praise for Socrates. In this work, Socrates is depicted as a figure not bound by convention, as energetic and full of life, as an original, untimely, and therefore eternally great individual. Socrates is described not as a hinderance to Dionysian redemption, but as one who cultivates such a redemption, or "purification on a large scale". Socrates is not viewed as the destroyer of culture, but as one of its protectors. Not Socrates, but Plato, is viewed as the destroyer of culture in the notebooks for this projected work.

As in *The Philosopher as Cultural Physician*, Nietzsche examines the possibility that Plato, and not Socrates, began the hostility towards culture, myth and the artistic. In the 1874 preface to *Philosophy During The Tragic Age of The Greeks*, Nietzsche states that he is only concerned with philosophy insofar as it illuminates personality: "I narrate the history of those philosophers simplified: I shall bring into relief only *that* point in every system which is a little bit of *personality*, and belongs to that which is irrefutable, and indiscussable".⁶² Nietzsche's task in this document is "to bring to light that which we must *always love and revere* and of which no later knowledge can rob us: the great man" (PTA.p;74). The

⁶¹ Breazeale's book does not contain a translation of this work. I have relied upon Maximilian A. Mugge's translation in *Early Greek Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964).

⁶² Taken from a preface written in 1874.

irrefutable thing that one finds pleasurable in the systems of great men is precisely their "personal touch, and colour". Except for this, the systems of philosophers are "usually *one* big mistake, and to feebler minds a sum of mistakes and truths; at any rate, if regarded as highest they are an error, and in so far reprehensible" (PTA.p;73). So Nietzsche looks to the early Greek philosophers not simply to examine their ideas, but in order to uncover the greatness of their characters.

Nietzsche argues that if one is to justify philosophy, then one "must show to what purposes healthy nations have used philosophy". He points out, first, that not all healthy nations have needed philosophy. "There are indeed good instances of a health which can exist without any philosophy or with quite a moderate, almost toying use or it; thus the Romans at their best period lived without philosophy". Having established this, he asks, "Where is to be found the instance of a nation becoming diseased whom philosophy had restored to health?". Obviously, philosophy can not act as physician to cure a civilization of its ailments. "Whenever philosophy showed itself help, saving, prophylactic, it was with healthy people; it made sick people more ill" (PTA.1;75). Nietzsche views Greece of the tragic age as "*the* truly healthy nation" (PTA.1;76). According to Nietzsche, the Greeks knew how to begin philosophizing at the right time:

For it [philosophizing] should not be begun when trouble comes as perhaps some presume who derive philosophy from moroseness; no, but in good fortune, in mature manhood, out of the midst of the fervent serenity of a brave and victorious man's estate. (PTA.1;76)

The Greeks began philosophizing out of good fortune, maturity, strength, bravery, and victory. However, the problem the Greeks faced was that they did not know when to stop philosophizing. When the Greeks became weak and morose in spirit, they still continued to philosophize, and this only made them "still more ill."

According to Nietzsche, the Greeks were good at learning. They absorbed all the culture flourishing among other nations, "and they advanced so far, just because they understood how to hurl the spear further from the very spot where another nation had let it rest" (PTA.1;77). In other words, the Greeks knew "the art of learning productively"; they were able to learn from their neighbours and outreach them. Further, Nietzsche sees the Greeks as able to subdue "their inherently insatiable thirst for knowledge" by their regard for life (PTA.1;78).

In this essay, Nietzsche considers Socrates as one of the great "pre-Platonic" ancient philosophers (PTA.2;81). The pre-Platonic philosophers were "self-contained" men, and "hewn out of stone". Nietzsche is attracted not so much by the philosophies of these men -- which he goes on largely to discredit -- as he is by their personalities. Such men "are not bound by any convention, because at that time no professional class of philosophers and scholars existed". All the pre-Platonics possess "the virtuous energy of the Ancients" by which they excel the later philosophers; it enables them in "finding their own form". There is a kind of timelessness about the pre-Platonics, whereby "one giant calls to another across the arid intervals of ages" (PTA.1;79). And Socrates is such a giant, and one of "those old sages" (PTA.2;80). He stands among the pre-Platonics as part of a "homogeneous company" of "pure types" (PTA.2;81-82). In contrast, Nietzsche sees something new beginning with Plato: "Philosophers since Plato lack something essential" (PTA.2;82). Plato and later philosophers are described by Nietzsche as "hybrids". Unlike the pre-Platonic philosophers who are "pure types", hybrids take from everyone living before them without "finding their own form". Nietzsche judges Plato simply as a mash of Socratism, Pythagoreanism, and Heraclitean elements that overcomes none of the older forms.

Another, more important criticism of Plato and later philosophers is that, unlike Socrates and the pre-Platonics, they are founders of sects. For Nietzsche, the philosophical sects were "all institutions in direct opposition to the Hellenic culture and the unity of its style prevailing up to that time". As in his notes for *The Philosopher as Cultural Physician*, Nietzsche implies that Plato and post-Platonic philosophers destroy culture. Culture thrives in the *agon* between the drives that results in a *Dionysian transfiguration* or redemption by way of mastering the knowledge drive. Plato and later philosophers also attempt to master the drives, according to Nietzsche: "In their way they seek a redemption". However, this is not the Dionysian redemption of the ground of being, but only redemption "for the individuals or at the best for groups and disciples closely connected with them". The activity of Socrates and the pre-Platonic philosophers tends "unconsciously" towards "a cure and purification on a large scale" (PTA.2;82). The pre-Platonic philosopher "protects and defends his native country"; however, since Plato, the philosopher "is in exile and conspires against his fatherland" (PTA.2;83).

In conclusion, Nietzsche's 1872 criticisms of Socrates are moderated in his 1873 notebooks. He no longer wishes to blame Socrates as the root cause of modernity. His gaze first lands upon Plato in 1873, and he condemns Plato for destroying culture, myth, and art. Furthermore, he blames Plato for exiling the philosopher from public life and turning him into a wanderer.

iv. *Philosophy in Hard Times* (Notebooks 1873-1874)

Nietzsche continues his praise for Socrates in the selection of notes from the summer

of 1873 to the summer of 1874 which later editors have entitled *Philosophy in Hard Times*. In these notes, Nietzsche is not lamenting that it is hard to be a philosopher in modern times; rather, he is suggesting that the times are not hard enough, and that, as a result, human beings, and philosophers especially, have become soft and weak.

In *Philosophy in Hard Times*, Socrates is depicted as a masterful character who is able to control himself, and who maintains the proper tensions in his own psyche between what is noble and what is base. Socrates distinguishes himself as a good philosopher insofar as he does not interpret his experiences abstractly, but concretely by paying attention to what is "close up" and real. He is first referred to in these notebooks as a gadfly, and therefore as one who makes others uncomfortable in order to teach them, and to treat their modern infirmities. In this respect, Nietzsche no longer views Socrates as the cause of our modern sickness; rather, he begins to identify with Socrates as a gadfly who, by making others uncomfortable, draws attention to the fact that they are sick.

In *Philosophy in Hard Times*, Nietzsche praises "the lower classes of unlearned men" as "our only hope". He writes that "the learned and cultivated classes must be abandoned, and along with them, the priests, who understand only those classes and who are themselves members of them". Nietzsche looks to the lower classes because he seeks "men who still know what need is", and who therefore "will also be aware of what wisdom can do for them". The greatest danger, he claims, "is the contamination of the unlearned classes by the yeast of modern education" (HT.39).

As in all his previous writings, Nietzsche argues that when life is continually filled with challenges, hardships and difficulties, "one knows how to esteem and to crave art, festivity, and education in general: i.e., one craves them in order to be cheered by them"

(HT.42). For this reason, Nietzsche praises the moderation of the ancients. He admires them because "they knew how to abstain from and to deny themselves many things in order not to lose control over themselves. In every case, their moral sayings were based on the living example of those who had lived according to their sayings" (HT.44).

In contrast to the ancients, Nietzsche finds the moral teachings of modern philosophers wholly insensible: "I do not know what sort of distant and rare things modern moral philosophers are talking about" (HT.44). They take human beings to be "marvellous" and "spiritualistic beings"; and they consider it indecent to deal with human beings nakedly, in a "Greek manner", speaking realistically about basic human needs and necessities. Nietzsche criticizes modern philosophers for having become "bashful."

In contrast to *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche moves away from contemplation of broad, over-arching realities such as the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of existence. He begins to give his attention to the small, the simple, and the mundane things of daily life. He becomes less keen to look for lofty things as the sources of modern problems; instead -- and "a little exaggeration here is of no importance" -- he "hopes to make modern men healthy by means of air, sun, habitation, travel, etc." (HT.44). Indeed, the search for lofty answers is now considered to be something of a dodge from looking at real human problems, and from engaging in the hard work and discipline that are necessary to make human beings healthy again. For this reason, he re-evaluates his call to mysticism in *The Birth of Tragedy*, as well as his scorn for science. Concerning mysticism, he writes: "The inclination toward mysticism among our philosophers is at the same time a flight from tangible ethics". It begins to look like sloth to Nietzsche; but science, on the contrary, begins to look like an opportunity to develop discipline. Lazy modern philosophers, he claims, "wish to flee from science, but it

pursues them" (HT.58).

Philosophy, or the love of wisdom, is Nietzsche's concern throughout this document. He claims that "the aim of wisdom is to enable man to face all the blows of fate with equal firmness, to arm him for all times" (HT.49). Philosophy ought to make human beings courageous. Instead, it makes them comfortable. "Every philosophy must be able... to concentrate a man. But no philosophy can do this now" (HT.50). It has become especially comfortable to be a philosopher. The modern philosopher occupies himself with lofty things and with nothing basic or real; instead of knowing the low and base, he now seeks crowns and honours (HT.53).

According to Nietzsche, "Socrates would insist that one haul philosophy back down to man's level". Socrates himself conversed with slaves;⁶³ he spoke in the *agora* and in the gymnasium.⁶⁴ He deliberately lived more moderately; and his great stamina made him a wonder to behold, as well as readied him for war.⁶⁵ Unlike Socrates, "today's philosophers manifest all the vices of the age" (HT.53). They are lax in discipline; they are hasty; they rush to write, and they are not ashamed to teach, according to Nietzsche.

This harsh criticism of philosophy as a profession does not fall upon Socrates, but upon Plato and the philosophers who follow him. Nietzsche writes that even the word "philosophy" has been ruined so that it attracts the wrong sorts of people. In half jest, he advises that the word "philosopher" be replaced with "lover of wisdom" or "wise man" in order to scare off

⁶³ See Plato's *Meno*.

⁶⁴ See Plato's *Charmides*, for instance.

⁶⁵ See Plato's *Symposium*, 219e-220a, and *Charmides*, 153b for his presence at Potidaea; also see Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* for claims that Socrates served on the expedition to Amphipolis and in the battle of Delium (II.22-23).

the bashful who are not ashamed to call themselves philosophers: "Who would not be ashamed to call himself a 'wise man' or even merely 'one who is becoming wise'!". Because of the professional nature of philosophy, Nietzsche doubts that wisdom has "any true friends at all today" (HT.47).

One final criticism is offered: unlike Socrates, the gadfly of Athens,⁶⁶ modern philosophy "no longer pesters people" (HT.54). Hence, philosophy becomes highly esteemed by those who seek comfort. Nietzsche agrees with Socrates in this respect. Philosophy does indeed need to be brought "back down to man's level".⁶⁷

⁶⁶ See Plato's *Apology*, 30e-31a.

⁶⁷ Nietzsche borrows this phrase from Cicero, *Aeschines*: "Socrates was the first to call philosophy down from the sky and establish her in the towns and introduce her into homes and force her to investigate life, ethics, good and evil" (5, 4, 10).

3. *Untimely Meditations* (1873-1876)

Socrates is mentioned only in the second and third of the *Untimely Meditations*, each of which appears in February and October of 1874 respectively. In each of these meditations, Socrates appears as a peripheral figure. In *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, Nietzsche is primarily concerned with diagnosing and treating our modern sickness, which he judges to be our unique orientation towards history. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche is concerned with the cultivation of what he refers to as "the higher man". He sees culture and education as having their highest end in this "higher man", and yet he believes that the possibility for his genesis is stifled by the culture and the education of his time. In this essay, Schopenhauer is, of course, Nietzsche's primary example of a good educator, whereas Socrates remains a peripheral, although equally effective, educator.

In both essays, Socrates is a very important peripheral figure. In *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, Nietzsche attributes his main insight into our modern sickness to Socrates, namely, that human beings become mad when they claim to possess a virtue (in this case, "objectivity") that they do not possess. He views Socrates in contradistinction to Plato, not as one who contaminates the youth with an improper understanding of history, but rather, as one who is able to diagnose the impropriety of Plato's orientation towards history. In this respect, Nietzsche begins to understand his own task as a physician of the soul to be a Socratic task. He continues to look to what is ancient for insights and solutions concerning what is sick about modernity. Socrates no longer appears as the first

modern figure, as he did in *The Birth of Tragedy*; rather, Socrates is viewed as a wise, ancient figure who offers an accurate diagnosis of our modern ills.

However, Nietzsche's concern to look to what is ancient for insights and solutions for our modern problems is less pronounced in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. In this meditation, he no longer looks to what is ancient in order to understand what is wrong with modern human beings. Rather, he concerns himself with "untimely" figures, most notably, the modern figure Schopenhauer. Similarly, although Socrates continues to be a peripheral figure in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, he is accounted, along with Schopenhauer and Plato, as an "untimely" individual, and a "true philosopher". He is therefore described as a positive force assisting in the genesis of the higher man. Unlike in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is no longer depicted as the father of science and the undoing of culture. He is no longer the "man of learning" who is worse than his time; now described as the "gadfly" of Athens, Socrates is viewed as one who is better than his time. He stands in distinct contrast to the "man of learning", as the "great man" and the philosopher.

i. *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* (1874)

In 1874, Nietzsche concerns himself with the problem of our modern misunderstanding of history. He views Plato as a corrupter of the youth who taught an understanding of history that divorces human beings from their instincts, and that encourages them to rely upon abstractions and concepts drawn from history as a guide for action rather than relying upon their own instincts and experiences. In contra-distinction to his view of Plato, Nietzsche begins to view Socrates as a diagnostician for modern problems which he has come to

understand as sickness. In *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, Nietzsche first identifies himself with Socrates, admitting his affinity with him as a physician and a psychologist.

In this untimely meditation, Nietzsche diagnoses our modern sickness as the misunderstanding of history. He thinks that the spiritual sickness of modernity stems from an excess of historical knowledge, and the inability to forget things that do not correspond to one's own experience. Nietzsche begins his diagnosis of the modern soul by first examining it in order to understand the effects our historical sickness has had upon it. According to Nietzsche, "historical knowledge streams in unceasingly" upon human beings, flooding them with contradictions which they cannot order and subsume to themselves. Because of this incapacity, modern human beings are depicted as weak. They become "habituated" to this inner chaos, and it becomes their "second nature" which is "beyond question much weaker, much more restless, and thoroughly less sound than the first". In this chaotic state, human beings become heavy with a "huge quantity of indigestible stones of knowledge" (*UM:H.4;78*) that do not correspond to anything real in their experience. This heaviness and inner chaos is the marked distinction of modern human beings, who Nietzsche describes as suffering from an inner-outer disparity, as these heavy stones rumble and crash against each other:

In this rumbling there is betrayed the most characteristic quality of modern man: the remarkable antithesis between an interior which fails to correspond to any exterior and an exterior which fails to correspond to any interior -- an antithesis unknown to the people of earlier times. (*UM:H.4;78*)

Such indigestible knowledge is consumed "for the greater part without hunger for it and even counter to one's needs", such that the knowledge of modern men, corresponding to nothing external, cannot serve to transform their outer world, but remains concealed as an inner chaotic

world which modern men now refer to as their "subjectivity" (*UM:H.4;78*).

According to Nietzsche, modern men are crammed full with history and ideas from ancient times. We possess nothing that is our own and nothing that addresses our own experience. As a result, we are hard pressed to take real things seriously. Due to our "weak personality" or our new "second nature", real and existent things only make a slight impression on us. Nietzsche seeks to alleviate this modern numbness for reality and to restore our health by rediscovering our "instincts", and with our instinct our "honesty" (*UM:H.4;80*).

Nietzsche diagnoses our modern sickness: "modern man suffers from a weakened personality". He is "no longer capable of holding on to the sublime". Hence, everything passes away; all acts are short-lived; there is no eternal or timeless aspect to them. Modern man stops seeing what "even a child sees" (*UM:H.5;83*), and he cannot see even the most child-like things because he has lost and destroyed his instincts with the excessive study of history. He has "lost his trust in the 'divine animal'." Consequently, "he can no longer let go the reins when his reason falters and his path leads him through deserts" (*UM:H.5;84*). When his reason is not sufficient, and when the validity of his instincts is denied, modern man grows "faint-hearted and unsure" because he lacks any guide. Without a true guide, he sinks into his own "subjectivity", and relies upon learned concepts that do not correspond to any of his experiences. In this way, modern man becomes abstract when his fascination with history expels his instincts. He looks to ideas, concepts, and history to tell him what to do when he gets lost, and this turns him into an "actor" -- one who is superficial and does not act from his own personality. Such a person, emptied of instincts, becomes "subjectless", or "as it is usually put, objective" (*UM:H.5;87*). It is in this new state of "objectivity" that modern man is particularly deluded, because as an objective actor without instincts, modern man is numb

to reality; nothing affects him any longer. Moreover, modern man considers his own "objectivity to make him more just than people of any other age." This, argues Nietzsche, is the "celebrated strength of modern man"; and yet it is actually his greatest weakness.

Nietzsche appeals to Socrates to diagnose this most dangerous of modern man's delusions concerning the justice of his own objectivity:

Socrates considered that to delude oneself that one possesses a virtue one does not possess is an illness bordering on madness: and such a delusion is certainly more dangerous than the opposite illusion of being the victim of a fault or a vice. For in the latter case it is at any rate possible one will become better; the former delusion, however, makes a man or an age daily worse -- which in the present instance means more unjust. (UM:H.6;88)

For both Nietzsche and Socrates, "no one has a greater claim to our veneration than he who possesses the drive to and strength for justice" (UM:H.6;88). Modern man believes that he is most just of all due to his "objectivity". However, Nietzsche illustrates that to serve justice and truth, you need not only "the pure will to justice", but also "the strength actually to be just". On Nietzsche's account, the objective modern man -- "the historian" -- fails to meet these criterion. For though modern man may possess the will to be just, all of his verdicts are false; he lacks the strength for good judgements because of his weak and chaotic character. "To possess only the will is absolutely not enough: and the most terrible sufferings sustained by mankind have proceeded precisely from those possessing the drive to justice but lacking the power of judgement" (UM:H.6;89). Socrates' diagnosis concerning the self-delusions of human beings perfectly diagnoses our modern illness, in Nietzsche's judgement.

Nietzsche uses this Socratic insight concerning the dangers of supposing one possesses a virtue that one does not in fact possess in order to draw attention to a further problem in our misunderstanding of history, namely, the error of treating the study of history as a science akin

to mathematics or physics. The objectivity of modern human beings attempts to bring to light the "all-embracing necessity prevailing throughout all events" (*UM:H.6;92*). This "objectivity" operates by misunderstanding history as though it were the "science of universal becoming" (*UM:H.4;77*). The "objective" modern man takes this "all-embracing necessity" in events as an "article of faith". Instead of viewing history as simply one thing after another, the "historian", in his faith, misinterprets each event as having its meaning and its place in the whole of history as part of a causal chain and a "harmonious whole". Further, the historian's objectivity dictates that this harmonious whole -- "*which... is, of course, present only in his imagination*" (*UM:H.6;92*) -- is scrutable, and that it may be disclosed by the science of history. In his "objectivity" the modern historian treats history as though it were like the "pure sciences" which discover laws. However, Nietzsche notes that the notion that history may be likened to the other sciences is preposterous. History, as the study of the actions of human beings through the ages, is different from the studies of mathematics and physics. No great, generalizable laws may be derived from a study of history as they may be derived from the studies of math and science. This is due to the element of "individual necessity" in human activity which is not present in either math or science:

All human beings have at the same time their own individual necessity, so that millions of courses run parallel beside one another in straight or crooked lines, frustrate or advance on another, strive forwards or backwards, and thus assume for one another the character of chance, and so quite apart from the influence of the occurrences of nature, make it impossible to establish any all-embracing necessity that is supposed to be brought to light as the result of that 'objective' view of things!
(*UM:H.6;92*)

In other sciences "the generalizations are the most important thing, inasmuch as they contain the laws". However, insofar as certain "laws" or natural tendencies may be regarded in history, Nietzsche argues that these propositions would have to be "something completely

familiar and even trivial" (*UM:H.6;92*). The power and significance of history should therefore not be thought to reside "in its general propositions", but in its use as an artful and beautiful symbol: insofar as history can be used to serve life.

Nietzsche further uses Socrates' insight in order to demonstrate how, by the assumption that our "objectivity" bestows upon us a unique virtue, we have become less virtuous and, in fact, mad. He introduces this criticism by referring to modern, "historical culture" as "grey-haired". It is senile because, like an old man, it is always lingering upon the past and it seeks its consolation in what was (*UM:H.8;101*). As "grey-hairs", modern men reflect upon the worthlessness of this world and all that has occurred, as well as upon "the ripeness of the world for judgement". These reflections stem from the attitude that it is too late to do anything better. "The historical sense makes its servants passive and retrospective" (*UM:H.8;102*). The belief that one is "a late-comer of the ages" is paralysing and depressing; however, Nietzsche notes that it also tends to raise the late-comer to "godhood as the true meaning and goal of all previous events" (*UM:H.8;104*). The miserable condition of the old man becomes the "completion of world-history" when history is viewed as a process unravelling itself.

Nietzsche criticizes this "grey-haired" attitude for inspiring a delusional "admiration for the power of history" in people. Every moment is thereby transformed into "a naked admiration for success and leads to an idolatry of the factual" (*UM:H.8;105*). As one who believes that it is too late to do anything better, and as one who therefore renounces his will in admiration for the divine will of history, the grey-haired modern man becomes an automaton, assenting to anything, struggling against nothing, sliding into mediocrity, and cultivating no virtue, because as Nietzsche points out, virtue only exists in opposition to

history (*UM:H.8;106*). Once again, the words of Socrates ring true for Nietzsche. By deluding themselves that they possess the virtue of justice through their "objectivity", modern human beings become ill; they no longer maintain their virtues, and from their own madness they suffer more than the merely vicious man; for whereas vicious human beings can become better, deluded ones only become worse through holding on to delusions of virtue.

As a further result of this modern delusion which Nietzsche has diagnosed by means of Socrates, modern man has become cynical, raving, and too proud. Nietzsche shows that modern cynicism stems from modern man's fear of losing his youth because he is always behaving like an old man in his historicizing. The "grey-haired" modern man surrenders his personality to the "world process". However, he has no real personality to surrender; his instincts, his desires, his virtue, and his youth have all left him and now, cynical from what he has lost, he stands in his "ecstatic feeling of pride" as the "summit and target of the world-process" (*UM:H.9;107*). However, Nietzsche shows that such a man is clearly "raving" and "over-proud". Modern historical knowledge "does not perfect nature, it only destroys your own nature" (*UM:H.9;108*). As modern man's capacity for historical knowledge increases, his capacity for action decreases. He becomes unable to act well in the world because his knowledge is abstract and unreal.

The fundamental danger of our preoccupation with history is that "it can cut off the strongest instincts of youth" and prevent human beings "from feeling and acting *unhistorically*" (*UM:H.9;115*). Without their instincts, human beings may perhaps attain to cleverness but never to wisdom. Human beings may listen to reason, calculate, and accommodate themselves to the facts, but where reason fails, the instincts are denied and modern human beings deal in abstractions. Nietzsche diagnoses himself as being afflicted

with the ailments of abstraction, but he trusts his "youth" to lead him rightly and back to health. Nietzsche's youth tells him only to use history to serve life:

We ourselves bear visibly the traces of those sufferings which afflict contemporary mankind as a result of an excess of history... And yet I trust in the inspirational force which, in the absence of genius, powers my vessel, I trust that *youth* has led me aright when it now *compels me to protest at the historical education of modern man* and when I demand that man should above all learn to live and should employ history only *in the service of the life he has learned to live*. (UM:H.10;116)

Nietzsche trusts in his own youth because "youth still possesses that instinct of nature" (UM:H.10;117). In his youthful instinct, he finds resistance to the modern disease of abstraction. However, Nietzsche argues that youth's resistance is unconscious; it needs to be illuminated, articulated, made conscious and real in order to be transforming and healing.

Nietzsche laments that the youthfulness of human beings is so viciously stifled by historical education. The youth's "head is crammed with a tremendous number of ideas derived from a highly indirect knowledge of past ages and peoples, not from direct observation of life". As in *Philosophy During The Tragic Age of The Greeks* and *Philosophy in Hard Times*, Nietzsche blames Plato, and not Socrates for this contamination of youth, education, and culture. In Plato, he sees the master-mind who stifles the growth of the young with a noble lie that "they had all formerly dwelt asleep under the earth, where they had been kneaded into shape by nature's workman. Impossible to rebel against a past of this sort!" (UM:H.10;118-119).⁶⁸ According to Nietzsche's interpretation, Plato constricts the options of the young for spiritual growth. There are four metals of which their souls may be composed: gold, silver, iron and bronze. Everyone is born with a character akin to only one of these metals, and it is impossible to blend the metals together. Consequently, each is born either

⁶⁸ See Plato's *Republic*, 414d-415d.

a philosopher, a soldier, or a worker, according to Nietzsche's interpretation⁶⁹. Any instincts or aspirations which draw the youth elsewhere or betray a mixing of the metals are invalid. Due to historical education, which attempts to make such judgements according to birthplace in time, human beings are "ruined for living": "for right and simple seeing and hearing, for happily seizing what is nearest and most natural to us" (*UM:H.10;119*). Human beings are "fragmented and in pieces" as an "inner" that does not correspond to an "outer"; we are "sown with concepts" and we mistrust any feelings of our own not "stamped with words". Modern human beings are starved for life, according to Nietzsche.

Nietzsche writes that the only way to unchain life is by setting free the youth within each human being: "For life was only lying hidden, in prison, it has not yet withered away and died". Only by releasing the youthfulness of human beings and by exposing it to the unhistorical (i.e., art and forgetting, and the setting of horizons) and the suprahistorical (i.e., art and religion, or that which leads the eye away from becoming towards what is stable and eternal) may this youthfulness once again organize the inner chaos which has disrupted human existence and made it unhappy. The youthfulness of human beings will tear down concepts and slogans which do not address lived experience; it will gradually recall the "real needs" of human beings and let their "pseudo-needs" slowly die out (*UM:H.10;122*). This diagnosis of historicism and its cure is the way in which Nietzsche has begun to identify himself with Socrates as a physician.

⁶⁹ It is unclear how Nietzsche understands there to be four types of souls in Plato's account, but only three classes.

ii. *Schopenhauer as Educator* (1874)

There is a definite tension between Nietzsche's earlier appraisal of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* and his view of Socrates as it is expressed in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. In the former, Socrates is depicted as the father of science and very much the undoing of culture. Socrates is the dialectician and logician *extraordinaire*; he is the man of learning who is worse than his time. In the latter, however, Socrates is depicted as one who is better than his time. He stands in distinct contrast to the man of learning and the scholar. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Socrates is the "great man" and the philosopher.

Nietzsche looks to the "true philosopher as an educator who could raise me above my insufficiencies insofar as these originated in the age and teach me again to be *simple* and *honest* in thought and life, that is to say to be untimely" (*UM*:S.2;133). The "true philosopher" is a "great man" who is "the genuine child of his age"; he suffers its deficiencies more than others because he struggles against the things of his age -- and therefore those things in himself -- which prevent him from being great: from "being free and entirely himself" (*UM*:S.3;145). The great man is therefore hostile to that which is foreign to himself and when he longs for greatness and opposes his age he is actually the philosopher longing for himself -- for his own greatness to be born.

Nietzsche locates this longing for something higher not only in the philosophical nature of human beings; he sees it permeating all of nature. All of nature presses towards what is highest and seeks to be redeemed. In 1874, Nietzsche articulates this universal drive as the erotic desire of all of nature for the philosopher and "the higher man". Nietzsche too longs for the philosopher:

Alas, your dear ears, your dull head, your flickering understanding, your shrivelled heart, all that I call mine, how I despise you! Not to be able to fly, only to flutter! To see what is above you but not to be able to reach it! To know the way that leads to the immeasurable open prospect of the philosopher, and almost to set foot on it, but after a few steps to stagger back! And if that greatest of all wishes were fulfilled for only a day, how gladly one would exchange for it all the rest of life! (*UM*:S.5;159)

Nietzsche sees culture as existing to promote the production of the philosopher, and as the vehicle for the perfection of nature. He envisions the cultured human being as one who says, "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" (*UM*:S.6;162). The cultured person is ready to sacrifice himself to the production of a higher man out of love, "for it is love alone that can bestow on the soul, not only a clear, discriminating and self-contemptuous view of itself, but also the desire to look beyond itself and to seek with all its might for a higher self as yet still concealed from it" (*UM*:S.6;163). Nietzsche too longs for the higher man in himself and for the philosopher. Consequently, he judges that the task of all who share his desire is to "unwearyingly combat that which would deprive *us* of the supreme fulfilment of our existence" (*UM*:S.5;161). Nietzsche's project in *Schopenhauer as Educator* is largely to determine what are the impediments in modern society to the rise of the philosopher, and how these impediments might be feasibly removed.

Among the forces working against the universal, natural desire for what is higher and the demands of culture Nietzsche finds "*the greed of the sciences*" and "*men of learning*". According to Nietzsche, by becoming accustomed to "translating every experience into a dialectical question-and-answer game and into an affair purely of the head", modern human beings have become "withered". The "servants of science" and the "men of learning" have caused man to wither. Nietzsche closely examines their type: the man of learning is

motivated by "curiosity", the desire to "vivisect", and the "search for adventure". Such a man "consists of a confused network of various impulses and stimuli, he is altogether an impure metal" (*UM*:S.6;169). For example, he is also motivated by the desire for novelty, and "the huntsman's joy" in the hunt. When he seeks out knowledge, "it is not really truth that is sought but the seeking itself, and the main pleasure consists in the cunning tracking, encircling, and correct killing". Further, the man of learning is motivated by "the impulse to contradiction" and the desire to be aware of himself in distinction from all others. For the man of learning, "the struggle becomes a pleasure and the goal is personal victory" (*UM*:S.6;170). What is more, the man of learning's "search for truth" is only a false pretext which hides this manifold confusion of drives.

It is worth noting that Nietzsche's depiction of "the man of learning" in 1874 is very much similar to his depiction of Socrates in 1872. However, there is one important difference. The Socrates of *The Birth of Tragedy* was the embodiment of a single drive: the unleashed "knowledge drive" become monstrous. The Socrates of *The Birth of Tragedy* was not a many-eyed monster with many drives hidden under a single name, "the drive to truth"; rather, the Socrates of 1872 had but one Cyclops' eye. The "man of learning" depicted in *Schopenhauer as Educator* too appears monstrous, but many-eyed; he is a monstrous bundle of many drives, not one. In the "man of learning", the "scholar", or the "so-called philosopher", these many drives are given free reign under the banner of "the drive to truth". But in actuality, Nietzsche argues that this sort of the drive to truth is a sham. It is a conglomeration of many other drives which have little or nothing to do with any concern for

the truth at all, and they are certainly not noble or praiseworthy.⁷⁰

The tension in Nietzsche's account of Socrates can be seen very well when we compare *Schopenhauer as Educator* with *The Birth of Tragedy*. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Socrates is not considered to be a scholarly "man of learning" but a great man and a philosopher. Unlike his portrayal in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is not described as worse than those of his time, but better -- in fact, too good for our own time. Nietzsche laments that "the conditions for the production of the genius have *not improved* in modern times", and that our "antipathy for original men has increased to such an extent that Socrates could not have lived among us and would in any event not have attained seventy" (*UM*:S.6;174). Modern times could not produce such a great man as Socrates, according to Nietzsche.

It is tempting to say that Socrates fits both descriptions for Nietzsche -- that he is simultaneously the man of learning and the philosopher, the sickness and the cure. Indeed, Nietzsche could be made to say as much if we hold that he considered both his claims of 1872 and 1874 about Socrates to be true. However, we do not hold this opinion; for Nietzsche himself writes that this is not possible: "A scholar can never become a philosopher". The philosopher is "not merely a great thinker but also a great human being" (*UM*:S.7;181). The "true philosopher" is not simply a "system-builder" or a breeding ground for abstractions, concepts, and ideas.⁷¹ Philosophy is a way of life for Nietzsche. In distinction from the scholar, "the philosopher in Germany has more and more to unlearn how to be 'pure

⁷⁰ Nietzsche provides an interesting list of 13 base drives which make up what is often given the noble title of "the drive for truth" (*UM*:S.170-173).

⁷¹ Albert Camus accuses Nietzsche of being a system-builder in *The Rebel*. See Albert Camus, *The Rebel* (Trans. Anthony Bower, New York: Vintage, 1956) 66, 77, 79.

knowledge" (*UM:S.3;137*). One profits "from a philosopher only insofar as he can be an example" (*UM:S.3;136*). Nietzsche understands the philosophers of ancient Greece to have been true educators, for unlike scholars they taught "through their bearing, what they wore and ate, and their morals rather than by what they said, let alone by what they wrote" (*UM:S.3;137*).

The tension between Nietzsche's two different accounts of Socrates is here made evident. In 1872, Socrates appears most like the scholarly man of learning to Nietzsche. In 1874, Socrates appears as the philosopher, and since he is a philosopher he does not partake of the scholar's many-eyed monstrosity. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche is not concerned to hold both of his accounts together. He sees the scholar and the philosopher as antithetical types. Rather, he seems to reject his previous formulations concerning Socrates, and instead he sees them applying to Kant, who he refuses to acknowledge as a "true philosopher". He is willing, however, to refer to Socrates, Plato and Schopenhauer as philosophers in *Schopenhauer as Educator* (*UM:S.8;184*). Nietzsche appears to be constantly struggling with Socrates; he is always in an *agon* with him, forever trying to get a hold of him, while Socrates is always breaking free from his grip.

As a philosopher, Socrates is now recognized by Nietzsche as a true educator of the youth. Socrates as educator admonishes the youth to love the higher man and to aspire to greatness. Socrates is no longer viewed as one who derails the redemption of nature, but as one who rages⁷² against his time in order to promote the rebirth of the philosopher. This indeed is the reason why "Socrates fell victim to the wrath of the fathers over his 'seduction

⁷² "To speak frankly: it is necessary for us to get really angry for once in order that things shall get better" (*UM:S.152*).

of the youth" (*UM:S.8;183*). Fathers do not want philosophers for sons. According to Nietzsche, fathers have turned against philosophy because of "bad philosophers", whom I shall refer to as sophists. Nietzsche writes that "nothing stands so much in the way of the production and propagation of the great philosopher by nature as does the bad philosopher who works for the state" (*UM:S.8;184*). "Bad philosophers" of the state are the most harmful to the production of the "true philosopher" because "*they make philosophy itself ludicrous*" (*UM:S.8;190*). As a result, all philosophy is considered to be sophistry. According to Nietzsche, this is the result of the states's attempts to legitimize itself with sophistry. Modern society is very much the result of disgust with sophistry, the consequent rejection of philosophy, and the substitution of philosophy with science as closest and most philosophic of all the modern aspirations; for "it is indisputable that the individual sciences are now pursued more logically, cautiously, modestly, inventively, in short more philosophically, than is the case with so-called philosophers" (*UM:S.8;189*). People recognize this excellence in science, as does the state. As a result, both philosophy and sophistry have "become superfluous to the state" because the state no longer needs their sanction (*UM:S.8;191*). Sophistry has been disclosed as a "semi-science" (*UM:S.8;192*) and philosophy has been implicated along with it.

Far from lamenting this fact, Nietzsche is pleased with the condemnation of philosophy; he sees some insight in it because he agrees that it is best to get rid of these state-sanctioned "so-called philosophers" and sophists:

I believe in all seriousness that it is more useful to the state to have nothing at all to do with philosophy, to desire nothing from it and for as long as possible to regard it as something to which it is completely indifferent. If this condition of indifference does not endure, if it becomes dangerous and hostile to the state, then let the state persecute it. (*UM:S.8;191*)

Nietzsche encourages the state to stop supporting professional philosophers, and even to persecute them; for only in this way does Nietzsche think that the sophists will be weeded out and will philosophy once again become a fearsome thing. For Nietzsche, philosophy needs to be "dangerous". Like Socrates, the philosopher must be feared. And "how can he be considered great, since he has been a philosopher for so long and has never yet *disturbed* anybody?" (*UM:S.8;193*). Like Socrates the gad-fly, philosophy must once again be disturbing. And unlike the sophist who serves only to legitimize his time, philosophy must, like Socrates the gad-fly, be "untimely"; it must awaken the timely from their lazy sleep:

How right it is for those who do not feel themselves to be citizens of this time to harbour great hopes; for if they were citizens of this time they too would be helping to kill their time and so perish with it -- while their desire is rather to awaken their time to life and so live on themselves in this awakened life. (*UM:S.1;128*)

4. *Later Notebooks* (1874-1875)

The titles given to the 1874-1875 notebooks are suggested by later editors. None of these writings were intended by Nietzsche for publication. Like the 1872-1873 notebooks, these later notebooks offer no coherent argument concerning the status of Socrates. They simply record Nietzsche's observations of Socrates taken from various perspectives, and they provide material for his later published works. However, Nietzsche's increasing uncertainty concerning Socrates' status is expressed in these notebooks, as is his general disillusionment with his original project of looking to the ancients for a cure for modernity. In addition, Nietzsche identifies the character of his own attitude towards Socrates during this period as one of struggle: "Simply to acknowledge the fact: *Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting with him" (SSW.188). In this struggle, the notebooks detail Nietzsche's attacks upon Socrates, as well as his retreats. Nietzsche examines Socrates as one who is sizing-up his opponent; he attempts to uncover Socrates' weaknesses, yet also to become aware of his strengths. In these notebooks, Nietzsche begins by acknowledging Socrates' strengths; however, the notebooks end with his assessment of Socrates' weaknesses.

i. *We Philologists* (notebooks 1874-1875)⁷³

Nietzsche's initial portrayal of Socrates in this notebook is positive. Socrates is viewed as an ancient figure who offers some insight concerning our modern problems. However, by the end of this notebook, Nietzsche begins to doubt the validity of looking to antiquity for solutions to modern difficulties. Nietzsche begins to question not only the health of Socrates as an alternative to our modern sickness; he begins to question the health of the entirety of Greek culture. He shows his mistrust for Christianity, suggesting that not Socrates but Christianity may be the root cause of modernity. However, Nietzsche recognizes that Christianity is itself a part of antiquity. Consequently, he questions whether it might ever be separated out from the rest of antiquity, which he considers to be more healthy. He ends this notebook by suggesting that there is no possibility of separating out what is healthy about antiquity from what is sick. This marks the end of Nietzsche's hopes in finding any ancient solutions to our modern problems. He judges all of antiquity to be equally sick, deeming what is Greek to be equally as unhealthy as what is Christian, and both as irretrievable from their sickness.

Schopenhauer as Educator appeared in complete form in October 1874. That same autumn, Nietzsche begins to write notes for a work, never to be completed, known as *We Philologists*. These notes are important to the study of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates for two reasons. First, they provide more details concerning why Nietzsche praised Socrates, and why he was so fond of Socrates as an opponent. Secondly, they demonstrate that, by the

⁷³ Breazeale offers no translation of these notebooks. Consequently, I have relied upon Anthony M. Ludovici's translation in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964).

time Nietzsche had abandoned this projected work in 1875, he had found new grounds for attacking Socrates, as we shall see.

In 1874, Nietzsche continues to praise Socrates. He notes that, in the modern world, "we are called upon to serve and to be of advantage to our equals -- the same remark applies to our neighbour and to his neighbour; so everyone serves somebody else". No one lives for what is highest in themselves "but always for the sake of others". Nietzsche condemns this "philanthropic" way of living as "the most comical of comedies"; for "*when the aim of each one of us is centred in another, then we have all no object in existing*" (W.12). Nietzsche admonishes human beings to begin living for themselves again: "'Your own salvation above everything' -- that is what you should say". Each person ought to live for what is highest in himself, and there is nothing "which you should prize more highly than your own soul" (W.21).

Nietzsche thinks that we no longer prize our own souls in modern times: "Now... man learns to know himself: he finds himself miserable, despises himself, and is pleased to find something worthy of respect outside himself". Consequently, he "gets rid of himself" by making himself subservient to a cause. In disgust at himself and his existence, modern man has become like a "sheep"; he is follower in a herd, according to Nietzsche. This is a weakness that Nietzsche does not find in Socrates, who he describes as being "daring enough to exist" on account of himself (W.21). Socrates lived for the highest part of himself. Nietzsche does not wish to be a follower of Socrates, but like Socrates, Nietzsche wishes to live as an individual in search of his higher man.

In 1875, Nietzsche continues to examine what is praiseworthy about Socrates. He contrasts the sheep-like "philanthropic" tendency noted in 1874 with the Hellenic drive

αἰεὶν ἀριστεύειν (*aiein aristeuein*, "always to be the best"), calling these "contrary adjectives". The philanthropic tendency bids human beings to assist others, whereas the Hellenic αἰεὶν ἀριστεύειν bids them to outdo one another. Nietzsche praises the agonistic tendency of the Greeks as the way to excellence, and he finds the Greek *agon* "manifested in the *Symposium* in the shape of witty conversation" (W.119). In this dialogue, Socrates is to be praised as an embodiment of the Greek αἰεὶν ἀριστεύειν. Nietzsche admires the strength of Socrates and his capacity for *agon*. Socrates did not merely contend against others; he was his own battleground, and this is evident in his "tremendous power of self-control", for Socrates was, in Nietzsche's estimation, a man "who was capable of everything evil" (W.120).⁷⁴

In his notes from 1875, Nietzsche records another important re-evaluation of his views of Socrates as they are expressed in *The Birth of Tragedy*. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche condemns Socrates as the prototypical "theoretical man". However, in 1875, Nietzsche praises both Socrates and the theoretical man:

In Socrates we have as it were lying open before us a specimen of the consciousness out of which, later on, the instincts of the theoretical man originated: that one would rather die than grow old and weak in mind. (W.149)

Here Nietzsche is able to find a strength where he once only saw a debilitating weakness in Socrates.

The incomplete work, *We Philologists*, culminates in a final re-evaluation of the Greek

⁷⁴ Nietzsche finds evidence for this claim in the judgements of the physiognomist Zopyrus, which are recorded and discredited by Cicero in *De Fato* (v. 10-11). See Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* (IV xxxvii 80). It is worth noting here that these same passages are explicitly referred to later by Nietzsche in *Twilight of The Idols*, but in order to criticize Socrates, not to praise him.

world and consequently of Socrates. In Nietzsche's own words: "I will set down in writing what I no longer believe -- and also what I do believe" (W.181). Nietzsche is concerned to examine antiquity more closely. He has come to see Christianity as the real problem of modernity, and as a far more difficult enemy than Socrates: "Yes; it is so plausible to say that we find Christian ethics 'deeper' than Socrates! Plato was easier to compete with!". By examining antiquity, Nietzsche has come to think that all the deepest problems of modernity are rooted in Christianity. He now sees as the task of all "philosophic heads" to occupy themselves "with the collective account of antiquity" and to "make up its balance sheet". He earnestly desires to separate antiquity's "pros" from its "cons" and thereby to sort out what is rotten and to save what is good. Nietzsche approaches this task with all of his seriousness and rigour, remarking that "we cannot continue to treat this account with the mildness which has been customary up to the present". However, with sadness, Nietzsche writes that "antiquity has been conquered by Christianity", and that, "with Christianity antiquity will also be cleared away" (W.159). In this way, Nietzsche believes that all of antiquity has been spoiled by Christianity, and that perhaps no balance sheet is possible. Perhaps, in order to avoid being too mild, one must be too harsh and reject all of antiquity? These notes mark the end of Nietzsche's attempts to evaluate modernity in light of antiquity, for he has come to believe that the two are ineluctably mixed together, such that it is impossible to separate out what is good about antiquity from what is bad. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche relates how, in a similar way, what is desirable and good for human beings has become, by its poisons and errors, impossible for human beings to accept: "It is dreadful to die of thirst in the sea. Do you have to salt your truth so much that it can no longer even -- quench thirst?" (BGE.81).

Nietzsche feels that we have become severed from the "pros" of antiquity because the

foundations of antiquity "have become too shaky for us". In this way, "a criticism of the Greeks is at the same time a criticism of Christianity" (W.160). Nietzsche conflates the Greeks with the Christians, such that it is impossible to criticize the one without criticizing the other. If Christianity is unacceptable, then so too are the Greeks. And so too is Socrates.

ii. *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom* (notebooks 1875)

In this collection of notebooks, Nietzsche returns without a trace of his former "mildness" to criticize Socrates. Nietzsche's criticisms seem to be a rejection of his praise for Socrates in *Philosophy During the Tragic Age of The Greeks*, and they build upon points already made in *The Birth of Tragedy*, with some minor changes. In *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom*, Nietzsche writes of Socrates, and not Plato, as the downfall of the Hellenes: "At a moment when truth was *closest*, Socrates *upset everything*: that is especially ironic" (SSW.189). Unlike in *Philosophy During the Tragic Age of The Greeks*, "sectarian philosophers" are said to follow Socrates, and not Plato (SSW.190).⁷⁵ The Greek age is said to have perished an "unnatural" death, and Nietzsche finds "the seeds" of its corruption in Socrates (SSW.192). In contrast to *Philosophy in The Tragic Age of The Greeks*, Nietzsche no longer refers to philosophers as either "pre-Platonic" or "post-Platonic". The dividing line

⁷⁵ This is in keeping with his views of 1872. See (P.32). In *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom*, Socrates is viewed as the corrupter of Plato who, had he not been spoiled by Socrates, might have developed an even higher form of philosophy among the Greeks (SSW.194). Walter Kaufmann downplays this view, stressing the view of Socrates expressed in *Philosophy During The Tragic Age of The Greeks*. See Kaufmann, "Nietzsche's Attitude Toward Socrates" 391-411.

is now between the "pre-Socratics" and "post-Socratics".⁷⁶ Early Greek philosophy was, for Nietzsche, the philosophy of "statesmen".⁷⁷ With Socrates, however, philosophy becomes anti-political; it makes statesmen "pitiful". "This is what best distinguishes the Pre-Socratics from the Post-Socratics" (SSW.193).⁷⁸

The reason that the statesman becomes pitiful due to the influence of Socrates is that Socrates wrenches "the individual from his historical bonds" (SSW.196). Socrates destroys Greek tradition and culture.⁷⁹ "One single powerful crank like Socrates, and the break was irreparable" (SSW.195). Early Hellenism is thought by Nietzsche to have revealed its

⁷⁶ This corresponds with Nietzsche's views of 1872. See (P.32).

⁷⁷ I think that Nietzsche is probably referring here to Thales and the seven sages. Nietzsche praises Thales as a statesman (SSW. 198, 200). He notes that Thales proposed a general league of Ionian cities, including a central government with its capital at Teos (see Herodotus, *Histories* I, 170). Similarly, he praises some of the seven sages (namely, Periander and Solon) as well as great rulers such as Cleisthenes and Pisistratus who, as lawgivers and tyrants, were also promoters of the arts and tragedy (SSW.198). It is worth noting that previously, in 1873, Nietzsche writes that "none of the great Greek philosophers were leaders of the people". Attempts were made by Empedocles, but he led by using myth, not philosophy. Anaxagoras is said to have had as his "public a quite distinguished circle of educated persons", but by no means was he a leader amongst the general populace. By contrast, Socrates is said by Nietzsche to have "the most democratic and demagogic tendency", and the result of this tendency is "the foundation of sects" (PC.175). Socrates is taken as "counter-evidence" by Nietzsche to his own claim that the great Greek philosophers were not "leaders of the people".

⁷⁸ Irving Zeitlin criticizes Nietzsche for over-looking the fact that Socrates' skills were viewed as politically valuable to the youth of Athens, and that dialectic is not simply a form of amusement, but a means to assert one's will to power in politics. See Irving M. Zeitlin, *Nietzsche: A Re-examination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994) 137-138.

⁷⁹ This traditional view is also recorded by Plutarch in *Marcus Cato* (23, 1, 350), where Socrates is depicted as a windbag who subverts tradition.

strengths in its succession of philosophers, but "this revelation *comes to an end* with Socrates, who sought to *engender himself* and reject all tradition" (SSW.193). Socrates is considered by Nietzsche to be the most pitiful statesman. The great drive of Socrates, as we have already seen in *The Birth of Tragedy*, is to make everything like himself -- to "engender" himself in everything and to sculpt all of Greek civilization in his own ugly image. Nietzsche writes: "I consider it significant that he [Socrates] was the son of a sculptor".⁸⁰ The "self-destruction of the Greeks is accomplished in Socrates" (SSW.195), the sculptor who fashions all of Greece in his own pitiful and ugly self image.

Nietzsche considers Socrates to be pitiful for two reasons. First, he is pitiful because of his "anxiety" and consequent loss of naivety. Nietzsche views Socrates as having taught that "there remains nothing for me but me myself; anxiety concerning oneself becomes the soul of philosophy" (SSW.195). Socrates is the first existential philosopher, for "beginning with Socrates, the individual all at once began to take himself too seriously" (SSW.192). Certainly, Nietzsche admits that there is "wisdom in taking the soul seriously" (SSW.188), but not too seriously.⁸¹ When the soul is taken too seriously, then philosophy becomes "individualistic" and "eudaemonistic" (SSW.193). As we have seen in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche agrees with Meister Eckhart that "the beast that bears you fastest to

⁸⁰ Socrates is said to have worked stone by Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* II, 19. Also see The Elder Pliny, or Gaius Plinius Secundus (C.E. 23-79) 36, 4, 32. This view is passed on by Christian writers, such as Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Julian* (6, 207) and Theodoretus, *Cure for The Greeks* (1, 26-31).

⁸¹ "The person who lives life most beautifully is the person who does not esteem it. Whereas the common man takes this span of being with such gloomy seriousness, those on their journey to immortality knew how to treat it with Olympian laughter, or at least with lofty disdain. Often they went to their graves ironically -- for what was there in them to bury?" (From *On The Pathos of Truth*, 1872). Also see (UM:H.69) for a similar passage.

perfection is suffering". One who is properly concerned with his own soul will "to be sure, destroy his earthly happiness through his courage". He will find that "a happy life is impossible: the highest that man can attain to is a *heroic one*" (UM:S.153). When human beings become too self-absorbed, they become "individualistic" and "eudaemonistic"; consequently, they are less heroic and, in a word, "pitiful". The pre-Socratics "did not share the Post-Socratics' 'detestable pretension to happiness'. Everything does not yet revolve around the condition of their souls, for this is something that one does not think about without danger. Later Apollo's *gnothi sauton* [Know thyself!] was misunderstood" (SSW.193).

This fundamental misunderstanding of the Delphic god's command makes statesmen after Socrates "pitiful." It causes them to lose their naivety; for in their anxiety they no longer live as innocents. Always over-concerned with the salvation of his soul, "man learns to know himself," but improperly; "he finds himself miserable, despises himself, and is pleased to find something worthy of respect outside himself" (W.21). Human beings now condemn themselves as guilty, and because of this loss of naivety, "the best people" -- namely, the Greeks -- took "flight from the world" (SSW.192). According to Nietzsche, this loss of naivety destroyed not only the ethical judgements of the Greeks -- for without their "naive impartiality" the Greeks could no longer act well in the world, and especially not as statesmen -- but it also generated difficulties for science as well (SSW.188).

One clearly new accusation that Nietzsche launches against Socrates is that Socrates' influence "annihilated science" (SSW.196). He follows Diogenes Laertius' account of Socrates' youthful scientific investigations,⁸² and he sees Socrates as turning from these later in life towards philosophy. Socrates destroyed the sciences by destroying their naivety with his own

⁸² Diogenes Laertius, *Lives II*, 45.

cleverness, and by sculpting all of Greek civilization after his own cleverness. As we have seen, Nietzsche considers cleverness to obstruct wisdom when all things are approached with cleverness, and when all things are dealt with as calculable. Wisdom for Nietzsche resides not in calculation but in the instincts. In this respect, wisdom is always naive like instinct. Ancient science which predated Socrates was naive because it was employed by human beings who were naive in the sense of being attuned to their instincts, and therefore wise, as they knew themselves in the best and fullest sense. Nietzsche accuses Socrates of "annihilating" science by making human beings cold, clever, and unreceptive to their own instincts. Nietzsche considers this denial of the instinctual, the irrational, or the unconscious, to be "something unique" to Socratism "because of its demand for conscious and logically correct conduct. This generates difficulties for science and for ethical life" (SSW.188).

The second reason that Nietzsche considers both Socrates and all statesmen after Socrates to be pitiful, is that Socrates has sculpted them in his own ugly likeness:

Socrates is the revenge for Thersites: the splendid Achilles slew the ugly man of the people, Thersites, out of anger over the latter's words concerning the death of Penthesilia. The ugly man of the people, Socrates, slew the authority of splendid myth in Greece. (SSW.192)⁸³

As we have seen previously in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche detects a deep desire for revenge in the character of Socrates. He already considers revenge to be the undoing of the state because it is based upon an unrealistic appraisal of oneself as "better" than the world. Revenge, for Nietzsche, has its roots in an optimism which, having made impossible judgements as to the worth of the world, seeks to "correct" the world in order to make it the

⁸³ Thersites is one of the Greeks who sacks Troy with Achilles. He is described by Homer as deformed in both mind and body. Thersites chastises Achilles for his grief over the death of Penthesilia. This angers Achilles, who kills Thersites in his rage. See *Iliad* II, 212ff.

best of all possible worlds. Socratic optimism is once again shown to be the downfall of the statesman because it makes him unable to judge and to act well. At the heart of this optimism, Nietzsche detects the ugliness of Socrates, which is his spiteful desire for revenge dressed up as the desire for justice.

This comparison of Thersites to Socrates also points to Socrates as the destroyer of myth, and with myth, human wisdom. Proper statesmanship requires myth. Nietzsche's example in 1873 is the philosopher Empedocles, who "did not attempt to lead the people with pure philosophy", but with myth as a vehicle for his statesmanship (PC.175). Without myth, there is no way to address the instincts of human beings, nor is there any wisdom to command them, whereby they are enabled to act well. In 1875, Nietzsche returns to his 1872 criticisms of Socrates in an attempt to rework them. In his own words: "Simply to acknowledge the fact: *Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting with him" (SSW.188).

5. *Human, All Too Human: Volume One* (1878)

Human, All Too Human was written in two volumes over a period of three years. The first volume was published in 1878. However, the second volume is composed of two parts. The first part, entitled, "Assorted Opinions and Maxims", was published in 1879, and the second part, "The Wanderer and His Shadow", was published in 1880. Nietzsche's primary concern in this book is to understand properly what is "*close at hand*". He desires to cultivate a "sense for the factual and typical", the simple and the common. Nietzsche wants to understand what is given and necessary about ordinary existence, and this means coming to see properly all that is bad, fallible, imperfect, in short, "human, all too human". He wants to rediscover the innocence of such things, and therefore he strives to uncover the error of judging what is "human, all too human" as unacceptably evil, as worthy of condemnation and annihilation.

Throughout this work, Nietzsche makes reference to Socrates. As I will show, Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates in *Human, All Too Human* moves from a very complex and contradictory portrayal full of tensions in 1878 through 1879 towards a temporary resolution of these tensions in 1880.

In the first volume of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche's references to Socrates are inconsistent. On the one hand, Socrates appears as a good physician who offers good medicine to treat our modern afflictions; he is a good, strong enemy; as a free spirit, he is liberated from morality, and he is Nietzsche's own companion in the absence of friends;

Socrates is not restricted by a faith in any single perspective, rather, he can see and interpret experience from a variety of perspectives; Socrates is also viewed as a "moderating force" that weakens covetousness; he is a wanderer, and a true philosopher who lives dangerously; Socrates is an heroic figure; he is a gadfly who awakens people from their lazy comforts; he is a "saint" and a "genius", as well as a good ironist.

On the other hand, Socrates is also viewed as a fettered spirit who is dominated by his own moral valuations; he is the destroyer of Greek culture; by ruining Plato, Socrates destroys any possibility in ancient Greece for the development of a "higher man"; he is an anti-Greek; he is afflicted with a weakness of the heart, and his character designates a general depletion in power; he is not strong enough for tyranny; finally, Socrates is depicted as a bad ironist.

In Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates is entirely ambiguous, partly because it summarizes or re-states many of his contradictory observations of Socrates from his previous books, and partly because, in his new observations, Nietzsche no longer possesses the clarity he had in *The Birth of Tragedy* concerning the status of Socrates as a negative figure. Is Socrates a free spirit, or is he a fettered spirit? Is he a tyrant, or is he an anti-tyrant? Socrates is depicted in Volume One as a character full of contradictions and tensions. He is both noble and ignoble, strong and weak; hence, the figure of Socrates expresses a great breadth of soul, in Nietzsche's estimation.

In 1878, Nietzsche returns to his previous assessment of Socratic philosophy as a kind of restraint upon the scientific knowledge drive for the purpose of human happiness. This view can be traced as far back in Nietzsche's writings as 1872 when Nietzsche writes:

This is the way in which the earlier Greek philosophers are to be understood: they master the knowledge drive. How did it happen that

they gradually lost this mastery after Socrates? To begin with, *Socrates and his school* showed the same tendency: the knowledge drive should be restrained out of *individual concern for living happily*. (P.31)

In volume one of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche elaborates upon this conception by describing Socratic philosophy as the application of "a ligature to the arteries of scientific research". He notes that we have inherited this method of treatment from Socrates, just as we have inherited Socrates' own answer to the question, "What kind of knowledge of the world and life is it through which man can live happiest?" (*HH:I.7*). We have already seen Nietzsche's own criticisms of what he considers to be Socrates' concern for happiness; however, Nietzsche does not make mention of these criticisms in this aphorism. Instead, he leaves his readers to wonder about the soundness of the physician Socrates' diagnosis, and therefore about those treatments as they are still applied today. The open-endedness of this aphorism suggests that, in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche is planning to re-assess his own view of Socrates' prescriptions for health as a physician. In Nietzsche's own words, "He who lives for the sake of combatting an enemy has an interest in seeing that his enemy stays alive" (*HH:I.531*). In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche struggles with Socrates as an opponent who is always alive to him. Now assaulting, now giving ground, Nietzsche always remains in a lively, heated battle with Socrates.

Nietzsche begins his reassessment of Socrates' prescriptions for health by examining what Nietzsche himself considers to be perhaps the greatest incubator for sickness: the desire to blame and to condemn. As far back as *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche locates this desire in "Socratic optimism". In 1873, Nietzsche finds it present in both art and religion: "I hate that overleaping of this world which occurs when one condemns this world wholesale. Art and religion grow out of this. Oh, I understand this flight up and away into the repose of the

One" (HT.60). In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche first begins to understand this desire to escape and to condemn the world as being propagated by the belief in free will. This belief in free will enables human beings to hold one another responsible for "the evil acts at which we are now most indignant"; for it allows us to believe that an evil-doer "could have *chosen* not to cause us this harm". This belief in choice is an error, according to Nietzsche; it "engenders hatred, revengefulness, deceitfulness", and "all the degrading our imagination undergoes". The "evil" acts of human beings are unworthy of the indignation that is propagated by the belief in free will because all "evil" acts are motivated by "the drive to preservation or, more exactly, the individual's intention of procuring pleasure and avoiding displeasure; so motivated, however, they are not evil" (HH:I.99). Not only is the resentment that is stirred up by the belief in choice unwarranted, but the belief in choice itself is false because "everything here is necessary" and "every motion mathematically calculable" to one who is "all-knowing" (HH:I.106).⁸⁴ Such a "theory of total unaccountability" (HH:I.105) appeals to Nietzsche as a kind of medicine. It 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 his humanity". All his evaluations, his profoundest sentiments and morality are shown to be

⁸⁴ "At the sight of a waterfall we think we see in the countless curvings, twistings and breakings of the waves capriciousness and freedom of the will; but everything here is necessary, every motion mathematically calculable. So it is too in the case of human actions; if one were all-knowing, one would be able to calculate every individual action, likewise every advance in knowledge, every error, every piece of wickedness" (HH:I.106). This description of human action and its unfreedom serves to augment Nietzsche's previous formulations in *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, where, as we have seen, Nietzsche denies any possibility for a science of history due to the complex nature of human interactions. In keeping with his earlier views of 1874, Nietzsche has not yet given up on the notion of causality in 1878. Later, his critique of the desire to blame will deepen; his views on the total innocence of everything would turn away from this kind of mathematical determinism towards a radical vision of a chaotic world not bound by cause and effect.

false. He may no longer praise or find blame with anything or anyone, "for it is absurd to praise and censure nature and necessity". He may still admire "strength, beauty, fullness", but he may not find any special merit in them. All of us are very much like bundles of conflicting motives and drives in which the most powerful drives win out against the others. All of these motives "have grown up out of the same roots as those we believe evilly poisoned" (*HH:I.107*). No act is evil or good in any sense that deserves merit or scorn; rather, it is the individual's "sole desire for self-enjoyment" together with "the fear of losing it" which gratifies itself in every instance.

In Volume One, Nietzsche discovers in Socrates someone who understands the error of free will. As we have seen, Nietzsche argues that the assumption of a "voluntarily commanding free will" is an "error", and he cites both Socrates and Plato in his own defense: "Socrates and Plato are right: whatever man does he always does the good, that is to say: that which seems to him good (useful) according to the relative degree of his intellect, the measure of his rationality" (*HH:I.102*). This is, of course, Nietzsche's own interpretation of Socrates' suggestions that love is always of the beautiful, and never of ugliness (*Symposium*, 201a), and that no man voluntarily does wrong (*Gorgias* 509e). Nietzsche upholds, along with Socrates, that ignorance, and not sin, is the source of all injustice. He wants to remove from human beings their gloomy aspect as sinners and to restore them to their innocence even in doing evil, for no man knowingly does what is evil or harmful to himself.

At times, Nietzsche views Socrates as an unfettered and free spirit, as one who is liberated from guilt and the chains of morality, and who might grant to those who oppose him a glimpse of his strength as a free spirit. This is precisely why Nietzsche opposes Socrates with such tenacity: "One attacks someone not only so as to harm him or to overpower him

but perhaps only so as to learn how strong he is" (*HH*:I.317). The best medicine Socrates offers is his own strength as an enemy and a free spirit from whom others can learn by his example and by his opposition.

Human, All Too Human is "a book for free spirits"; so in a sense, in 1878, Nietzsche dedicated this work to Socrates who he considered to be a free spirit.⁸⁵ At the time that Nietzsche was writing *Human, All Too Human*, he felt the need for free spirits "as brave companions and familiars with whom one can laugh and chatter when one feels like laughing and chattering, and whom one can send to the Devil when they become tedious" (*HH*:I.p2). Nietzsche sought out free spirits as compensation for his own admitted lack of friends. In the absence of friends, Nietzsche kept in "good spirits" with the company of Socrates.

Nietzsche describes the free spirit as one "who thinks differently from what, on the basis of his origin, environment, his class and profession, or on the basis of the dominant views of the age, would have been expected of him".⁸⁶ The free spirit "is the exception, the fettered spirits are the rule" (*HH*:I.225). Fettered spirits are those who are bound by "duties" to honour all that is "revered of old" and that is traditionally held highest or worshipped (*HH*:I.p3). Fettered spirits are bound to think according to only one "mode" of thought and

⁸⁵ For explicit references to Socrates as a free spirit in 1878, see (*HH*:I.433, 437). Later, in the spring of 1886, Nietzsche admits that he has changed his mind about Socrates' status as a free spirit: "When I needed to I once also *invented* for myself the 'free spirits' to whom this melancholy-valiant book with the title *Human, All Too Human* is dedicated: 'free spirits' of this kind do not exist, did not exist -- but, as I have said, I had need of them at that time" (*HH*:I.p2). However, Nietzsche never gave up hope that one day such free spirits would in fact exist.

⁸⁶ This description of the free spirit as one who opposes his age is reminiscent of Nietzsche's interpretation of Socrates as the untimely gadfly of Athens (*UM*:S.128). It is also worth noting that Socrates was indicted on a charge of impiety against the traditional gods of Athens and for corrupting the youth (see *Apology*, 24b).

to judge all things according to this one mode. As a consequence, the fettered spirits tend to persecute whatever does not correspond to their own valuations. Such are the free spirits, according to Nietzsche.

The free spirit is reproached by the fettered spirit that "his free principles either originate in a desire to shock and offend or eventuate in free actions, that is to say in actions incompatible with sound morals". However, Nietzsche remarks that such criticisms are irrelevant, because the "free principle" arrived at along these immoral paths "could nonetheless be true and more reliable than those favoured by the fettered spirits". Nietzsche writes: "In the case of the knowledge of the truth the point is whether or not one *possesses* it, not from what motives one sought it or along what paths one found it". If the free spirits are right, then they are correct regardless of their immorality, according to Nietzsche. Furthermore, "if the free spirits are right, the fettered spirits are wrong", regardless of having "hitherto cleaved to untruth out of morality". According to Nietzsche, what characterizes the free spirit "is not that his opinions are the more correct but that he has liberated himself from tradition, whether the outcome has been successful or a failure". Nietzsche seems much less concerned that the free spirit have "the truth" than that he have "the spirit of inquiry after truth": that he "demands reasons" where the fettered spirits "demand faith" (*HH:I.225*).

Nietzsche presents a detailed study of the history and genesis of the free spirit. There appear to be three stages to the genesis of the free spirit. During the first stage, every free spirit starts out in fetters, but then it begins to break away because "a will and desire awakens to go off, anywhere, at any cost". This drive and impulse "rules and masters it like a command", urging it to get away from everything that binds it and "everything it had hitherto loved". Such a spirit first becomes contemptuous of what had formerly been its duties, and

it is shaken with a "volcanically erupting desire for travel, strange places, estrangements, coldness, soberness, frost, a hatred of love, perhaps a desecrating blow and glance *backwards* to where it formerly loved and worshipped". This turning away from its "home" or "everything it had hitherto loved" is the "*first* victory" of the free spirit in the history of its own "*great liberation*". Nietzsche refers to this victory as the "first outbreak of strength and will to self-determination" (HH:I.p3).

During the second stage, this will to evaluate on one's own account next turns itself towards "wild experiments" out of the desire to tear apart what excites. Such a spirit "puts to the test"⁸⁷ all things that interest it by reversing them. In its "desire to tempt and experiment", the spirit "full of inquisitiveness" and seeking liberation inquires to see if all values cannot be turned around, and if good is perhaps evil. According to Nietzsche, such a spirit begins to see that everything is "perhaps in the last resort false", and that human beings who believe in their valuations are deceived, and are "for that very reason also deceivers". This realization isolates the inquisitive spirit, because it can no longer look at the valuations of human beings and what is considered to be good and evil in the same way. Hence, "solitude encircles and embraces him" (HH:I.p3).

The fettered spirit that seeks to be liberated must endure this "morbid isolation" or the second stage. It must suffer "from the desert of these years of temptation and experiment", and yet this still does not make it a free spirit. The initial will to freedom of the first stage is not enough, nor is the insight into the deceptive nature of all valuations during the second stage sufficient to transform the fettered spirit into a free spirit: "it is still a long road to that

⁸⁷ As we shall see, in 1880, Nietzsche describes Socrates precisely in this way: as one "*putting the god to the test in a hundred ways to see whether he has told the truth*" (HH:II.ii.72).

tremendous overflowing certainty and health". The fettered spirit must yet become healthier through "self-mastery and discipline of the heart" which "permits access to many and contradictory modes of thought". The fettered spirit must not be constricted by any single mode of thought or "perspective" if it is to be transformed. It must not "lose itself and become infatuated and remain seated intoxicated in some corner or other" (*HH:I.p4*). The spirit who has the initial will to freedom, and who is strong enough to bear suffering through the solitude thrust upon one who refuses the comfort of faith in any particular perspective may then pass to the third and final stage in the genesis of the free spirit. In this third stage, the spirit is finally freed when it "lives no longer in the fetters of love and hatred" -- when it stands aloof from all of its own valuations as their master. Only by self-mastery and discipline can the isolated and fettered spirit be transformed into a free spirit and "again draw near to life" (*HH:I.p5*).

Nietzsche remarks that the newly-transformed free spirit still remains sick. Consequently, the free spirit must never relinquish its own "*will to health*", even though it "often ventures to clothe and disguise itself as health already achieved" (*HH:I.p4*).⁸⁸ It is during this third stage, as "a step further in convalescence", that the free spirit again draws near to life. As its own master, the free spirit is able to see the world with a new-found vision: "It seems to him as if his eyes are only now open to what is *close at hand*."⁸⁹ He is

⁸⁸ Nietzsche himself is an example of the free spirit convalescent who masquerades occasionally as the picture of health. For instance, in 1886 Nietzsche writes: "Shall my experience -- the history of an illness and recovery, for a recovery was what eventuated -- have been my personal experience alone?" (*HH:II.p6*). Nietzsche admits that he always remains to a certain degree a convalescent.

⁸⁹ As we shall see, in 1880 Nietzsche will argue that Socrates had precisely this open-eyed vision of what is "close at hand" in mind when he was "defending himself with all his might against this arrogant neglect of the human" (*HH:II.ii.6*). With this ability

astonished and sits silent: where *had* he been? These close and closest things: how changed they seem!". With his new vision for the closest things the free spirit "looks back gratefully" (*HH:I.p5*); his "glance *backwards*" is no longer contemptuous or accompanied with "a hot blush of shame" as it was during his first victory when he initially erupted with the will to freedom (*HH:I.p3*). Nor is he morbid in his isolation, as he was when he suffered from his own insight into the deceptive nature of all valuations (*HH:I.p4*). Rather, the free spirit is "grateful to his wandering, to his hardness and self-alienation", for "only now does he see himself". Now the free spirit finds happiness "even in the weariness, the old sickness, the relapses of the convalescent" (*HH:I.p5*). Now the free spirit comes out of isolation and again draws near to life, for he has finally learned to see in the "light of freedom", and having seen he takes joy in all that exists.

Nietzsche remarks that free-spiritedness becomes a quality of character in human beings only "when thought and inquiry have become decisive". Moreover, with the decisiveness of the free spirit, human action tends towards moderation; "for thought and inquiry weaken covetousness", and they "draw much of the available energy to themselves for the promotion of spiritual objectives" (*HH:I.464*). Nietzsche has said all of this previously of Socrates. Not only is Socrates known and respected by Nietzsche for his skills in thought and inquiry; as early as 1872, Nietzsche has described Socrates -- "the vortex and turning point of Western civilization" -- as the greatest moderating force of western civilization. In *The Birth of Tragedy* it is stated that Socrates harnessed "that immense store of energy" of human beings for "the purposes of knowledge", thus saving humanity from "universal wars

to see what is close at hand, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as a mature free spirit; for he has traversed all three stages in the history of the spirit's "great liberation" in order to attain this vision.

of extermination and constant migration of peoples" which would have weakened "man's instinctive zest for life" (BT.15;94). Nietzsche appears to uphold this earlier judgement by referring to Socrates as a free spirit in *Human, All Too Human*.

Fundamentally, all free spirits are wanderers. The wanderer image becomes central to Nietzsche's understanding beginning with *Human, All Too Human*: "He who has attained to only some degree of freedom of mind cannot feel other than a wanderer on the earth". It is important to note that his conception of the wanderer is not like the Christian pilgrim; he is not a traveller to a final destination, "for this destination does not exist". Rather, the wanderer travels in order "to see what is really going on in the world". Because he must wander to see the world, "he may not let his heart adhere too firmly to any individual thing". For this reason, he must be able to take pleasure in his wanderings: "Within him too there must be something wandering that takes pleasure in change and transience" (HH:I.638). Yet even the wanderer, according to Nietzsche, experiences "bad nights", or times when he would seek rest from his transience and loneliness. However, as a wanderer, such a man can find no rest and has no home to which he might retire.

In 1878, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as such a wanderer; for where the wanderer "finds the gate of the town that should offer him rest closed against him" (HH:I.638), so too does Socrates find the door to his own house closed against him. Adopting an account of Socrates' wife given by Diogenes Laertius to his own needs, Nietzsche playfully depicts Xanthippe as the cause of Socrates' wandering. Xanthippe was "a shrew"⁹⁰ who "made his house and home

⁹⁰ According to Diogenes Laertius, Xanthippe was known for her intolerable scolding of Socrates. Socrates himself is said to have called Xanthippe a shrew. In Laertius' account, Socrates states that by his society with Xanthippe, he learned to adapt himself to the rest of the world (see II, 36-37). This account coincides very well with Nietzsche's own position on Socrates. Similar accounts of Xanthippe are recorded throughout ancient

uncomfortable and unhomely to him" (*HH*:I.433). By making it unbearable for him to live at home, she taught Socrates to wander the streets. Xanthippe makes the home life of a "delicate apathetic loafer" (*HH*:I.p5) unbearable, and she leaves the hardship of wandering as the only alternative. However, even with its hardships, Nietzsche judges the life of the wanderer to be most rewarding. In such a life, he finds "joyful mornings", and "the Muses come dancing by him". There is relaxation and equanimity of soul to soothe the weariness of the wanderer, but only in the highest places and their solitude. There is society as well for the wanderer, but in "the gifts of all those free spirits who are at home in mountain, wood and solitude and who, like him, are, in their now joyful, now thoughtful way, wanderers and philosophers" (*HH*:I.638).

Nietzsche describes free-spiritedness as "highly perilous wandering on glaciers and polar seas". Because wandering is so dangerous, not everyone is willing to wander, and "those who do not wish to make this journey are offended, as though they had been reproached with timorousness and weak knees" (*HH*:II.i.21). Hence, fettered spirits persecute wandering, free spirits; they are not concerned to wander and thereby to take note of all of existence, unlike the free spirits, but only afford a small portion of the whole any credence. They judge all the rest according to their own limited vision as homebodies and "apathetic loafers" (*HH*:I.p5). Fettered spirits are said by Nietzsche to only account four species of things as being "in the right": "firstly: all things that possess duration are in the right; secondly : all things that do not inconvenience us are in the right, thirdly: all things that bring us advantage are in the right; fourthly: all things for which we have made a sacrifice

literature. For example, see Xenophon's *Banquet* (8), Seneca's *On Firmness* (18,5), Epictetus' *Discourses* (4, 5, 33), and Plutarch's *Control of Temper* (461D).

are in the right". In turn, free spirits have to "urge their cause before the forum of the fettered spirits" (*HH:I.229*). They must show how they themselves fulfil each of these four criterion in order simply to be allowed to exist and to perform their "task" as free spirits.

The "task" of the free spirit is to become its fully actual self, according to Nietzsche. It is not to condemn or attempt to annihilate any part of the self. Inasmuch as one avoids one's task one becomes more ill, for "illness is the answer every time we begin to doubt our right to *our* task -- every time we begin to make things easier for ourselves" (*HH:II.p4*). It is precisely because this task is so difficult that only a few ever become free spirits.

Nietzsche considers ancient Greek society to be the most congenial to the task of the free spirit, and he places the Greeks in stark contrast to the Christians in *Human, All Too Human*. Nietzsche relates that "from time to time the Greeks made as it were a festival of all their passions and evil natural inclinations and even instituted a kind of official order of proceedings in the celebration of what was all-too-human in them". Nietzsche writes that "this constitutes the real paganism of their world, uncomprehended by and incomprehensible to Christianity, which has always despised and combatted it with the greatest severity". The Greeks are here described as the prototypical free spirits, and the Christians as prototypical fettered spirits. The Greeks "took this all-too-human to be inescapable and, instead of reviling it, preferred to accord it a kind of right of the second rank through regulating it within the usages of society and religion". Quite unlike the Christians, Nietzsche understands the Greeks to have called divine "everything in man possessing *power*", including man's natural evil inclinations. Nietzsche judges this Greek manner of accepting the totality of human existence to be far superior to the Christian way, which reviles what is considered sinful. According to Nietzsche, unlike the Christians, the Greeks "do not repudiate the natural drive that finds

expression in the evil qualities but regulate it and, as soon as they have discovered sufficient prescriptive measures to provide these wild waters with the least harmful means of channelling and outflow, confine them to cults and days" (*HH:II.i.220*). To grant the "evil" and the "suspicious", the "animal", the "backward", and the "barbarian" a moderate discharge rather than to strive after their total annihilation is "the root of all the moral free-mindedness of antiquity", in Nietzsche's view.

In their free-mindedness, Nietzsche considers the Greeks to have demonstrated a "wonderful sense for the factual and typical" that made them good philosophers; for the Greeks had "the most comprehensive regard for *all human actuality*". The freedom of the Greek spirit was precisely the "sense for the actual", and Nietzsche views this sense as being cultivated and acquired "perhaps from Homer and the poets before him". The early Greek poets are said by Nietzsche to be unjudicious, and therefore able to rejoice "in the actual and active *of every kind* and have no desire to deny even evil altogether". Rather, "they are satisfied if it keeps itself within bounds and refrains from wholesale slaughter or inner subversion" (*HH:II.i.220*). As we shall see, at times in *Human, All Too Human*, Socrates is considered to be a typical Greek in this regard.

There are two instances in 1878 in which Socrates is explicitly referred to as a free spirit. Nietzsche writes of Socrates as a free spirit who is punished by the world of fettered spirits, and who is constantly being disturbed by them from the repose of his thoughts in his own "sunset hours" (*HH:I.437*). As we have seen, the fettered spirits of Athens would punish Socrates according to their own moral valuations and their own justice; whereas Socrates, the quintessential free spirit, stands above such categories, able to ask with all seriousness, "What is justice?"

Nietzsche also describes Socrates as an heroic⁹¹ free spirit driven "deeper into his own profession" by Xanthippe. In jest, Nietzsche writes that Xanthippe was the kind of wife Socrates needed; for "she taught him to live in the street and everywhere where one could chatter and be idle, and thus fashioned him into the greatest Athenian street-dialectician". By means of this clever aphorism, Nietzsche exposes what he considers to be the cleverness of Socrates. Socrates is said to have considered himself as "an importunate gadfly which a god had placed on the neck of the beautiful steed Athens that it might never be allowed any rest" (*HH:I.433*).⁹² However, Nietzsche shows that Socrates became the gadfly of Athens for no pious or noble reasons, but in fact, for very low and common, if not ridiculous reasons. Nietzsche uses mockery in this manner to exhibit his own free-spiritedness;⁹³ he illustrates to his readers that he is not bound to conventional interpretations or to revere as truth the clever excuse Socrates himself gave to his judges as substantiation for his own profession. Again, Socrates appears as the free spirit who, like Nietzsche, often uses the mask "to clothe and disguise itself as health already achieved" (*HH:I.p4*). In this case, Socrates puts on noble airs as a divine messenger; however, Nietzsche shows that there are less lofty reasons for Socrates' profession and his great abilities. Both the hero and the free spirit are, in this aphorism, exposed as rising out of the most simple and common things.

⁹¹ It is worth noting how this view of Socrates' "heroism" may be contrasted with Nietzsche's view of Socrates in 1875, which finds Socrates' concern for personal happiness fundamentally unheroic. For a discussion of the animosity between "eudaemonism" and the heroic, consult (*UM:S.4;153*).

⁹² See Plato, *Apology*, 30e-31a.

⁹³ Irving Zeitlin is unable to appreciate Nietzsche's free-spiritedness. He detects in Nietzsche's tone only bad aesthetic taste. He paints Nietzsche as a "contemptuous snob" and an "elitist" full of "anti-human prejudices", not very far off from being a Nazi. See Zeitlin, *Nietzsche: A Re-examination* 144, 172.

Nietzsche has already noted that attention to what is simple and common is most important, and he has shown his own mistrust of lofty accounts.⁹⁴ In 1878, he begins to stress this point by returning once again to the subject of Socrates' daemon. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche depicts Socrates' daemon as his "instinctual wisdom". However, Nietzsche's interpretation of his daemon in *Human, All Too Human* betrays a new direction in his thought. In 1878, Nietzsche likens Socrates' daemon to "an ear infection".⁹⁵ The daemon of Socrates is no longer referred to by Nietzsche as Socrates' own instinctual attunement to some mystical Dionysian ground; it is simply diagnosed as an hallucination derived from an illness that Socrates has interpreted according to "the moralizing manner of thinking that dominated him" (*HH:I.126*).

Although there is implicit criticism of Socrates in this mocking account of his daemon, Nietzsche admits that there is also power in Socrates' interpretation; for if Socrates had interpreted his daemon as an ear infection -- which is "how it would be interpreted now" -- he would have had little effect on posterity. Instead, Socrates' "genius" can be seen in "the degree of knowledge, imagination, exertion, morality in the head and heart" needed for such an interpretation. Moreover, Nietzsche recognizes a greatness in Socrates' ability to constrain to himself imaginative interpreters who, "for the good of mankind" misunderstand him (*HH:I.126*).

There seems to be an internal discrepancy in Nietzsche's account of Socrates in 1878.

⁹⁴ For examples in 1873, consult Nietzsche's criticisms of "bashfulness" (*HT.44*), as well as his rising mistrust of "mysticism" and his new-found interest in science (*HT.58*).

⁹⁵ It was quite common for ancient writers to view Socrates' δαιμόνιον as dubious. See Plutarch, *On the Genius of Socrates* (579F-582C). Socrates' δαιμόνιον was a favorite target of scorn for Tertullian. See *Apology* (22, 1); *On The Soul* (1, 2-6).

As has been illustrated above, aphorisms 126 and 433 suggest that Socrates gives false accounts of what is small and closest to him; in the former, Socrates is shown to depict his own ailments as a sign of his divine mission and superb health; in the latter, Socrates is shown to conceal the true reason for his practising philosophy (namely, his intolerable home life) in favour of an interpretation which portrays him as a divine gift to Athens. In the smallest and closest matters, Socrates is said to be dominated by his own "moralizing manner of thinking" (*HH*:I.126). Hence, there is the suggestion that Socrates is not a free spirit. And yet, Nietzsche is also willing to call Socrates a free spirit.

We can understand this discrepancy in three ways. First, it is possible that Nietzsche sees no discrepancy here -- that he considers Socrates to have misinterpreted the small on purpose in order to enjoy its "greatest effect". This interpretation of the discrepancy preserves Socrates' status as a free spirit. And it is precisely this line of reasoning that is chosen by Nietzsche in 1880 when he completes the second volume of *Human, All Too Human*. The second alternative is that Nietzsche is constantly struggling with this discrepancy. Nietzsche is confused by Socrates. He is undecided as to whether Socrates is a fettered spirit or a free spirit. The third alternative is that Nietzsche recognizes the discrepancy, but is not troubled by it. Rather, he may wish to hold two contradictory accounts of Socrates as an expression of his own free-spiritedness, not wishing to restrict his thoughts, or to serve any one particular view, but to allow for many interpretations simultaneously. I cannot see a definite solution to this discrepancy in *Human, All Too Human*. The temptation to resolve this tension in Nietzsche's thought may well be one of the "snares and nets for unwary birds" that Nietzsche

warns his readers about in the preface to Volume One (*HH:I.p1*).⁹⁶

In 1878, Nietzsche writes of Socrates with a praise that is in many ways consistent with his earlier writings. As has been shown, Nietzsche has previously pointed to Socrates as the gadfly who disturbs others from the sloth of ignorance (*UM:S.1;128*), and as one who uncovers ignorance as an illness bordering on madness (*UM:H.6;88*). Similarly in 1878, Nietzsche acknowledges Socrates as one who, by his experiences with artists, craftsmen, politicians, and other so-called "masters", discovered that to be a master in one thing usually renders one "a complete bungler in most other things" (*HH:I.361*). Socrates uncovered the vanity and the error of those who suppose that they are experts in all things by being an expert in one thing. Here again, Socrates' insight offers a good example of Nietzsche's own teaching that no single perspective ought to be treated as though it were the standard and measure by which to judge all other perspectives. Nietzsche identifies with Socrates in this regard as one who sees deeply into things and who uncovers ignorance.⁹⁷

Nietzsche maintains a definite tension between the multiple "modes of thought " or "perspectives" in his appraisal of Socrates in 1878. Although he describes Socrates in *Human, All Too Human* as a free spirit, he also conceives of Socrates as the destruction of the

⁹⁶ Harrison avoids dealing with these tensions in order to tidy-up Nietzsche's view of Socrates. Harrison only recognizes two "intense periods" of Nietzsche's concern with Socrates, these being 1869-1873 and 1884-1888. Harrison wishes to stress the similarity between Nietzsche's early and late depictions of Socrates, dismissing everything else as "uninteresting". See Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 136-138.

⁹⁷ This aphorism would seem to be in tension with the notion that Socrates himself was dominated by psychological errors. Either Socrates is one among the ignorant masters who profess to know what they do not know, or he is a cut above them as one who does not suppose he has a virtue that he does not possess (see *UM:H.6;88*).

possibility in ancient Greece for "an even higher type of philosophical man" (*HH:I.261*).⁹⁸ Nietzsche develops this criticism of Socrates by discussing the relation between philosophers and myth.

In Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche states that "only where the radiance of the myth falls is the life of the Greeks bright; elsewhere it is gloomy. Now, the Greek philosophers deprived themselves of precisely this myth".⁹⁹ However, Nietzsche is careful to explain that this does not mean that philosophy is therefore a gloomy business; for "no plant avoids the light", and "fundamentally these philosophers were only seeking a *brighter* sun". The Greek philosophers were unhappy with myth because they did not think that it told the truth. Consequently, each sought to overthrow myth in preference for that light which "each of them called his 'truth'" (*HH:I.261*). In this way, non-philosophers and philosophers are described like plants, and philosophers distinguish themselves as plants which need more light, or truth. Hence, in 1878, philosophers are described as destroyers of myth.

Nietzsche describes pre-Socratic philosophers as "tyrants of the spirit". According to Nietzsche, "these philosophers possessed a firm belief in themselves and their 'truth' and with it they overthrew all their contemporaries and predecessors; each of them was a warlike brutal tyrant". These early philosophers fought to overthrow myths, gods, and each other. The important distinction between these men and the rest of the Greeks is that they had the capability to be tyrants; they were able to be "that which every Greek wanted to be and what

⁹⁸ The failure of this "highest type" to arise in ancient Greece is lamented by Nietzsche as early as 1875: "The greatest loss that mankind can sustain is when the highest types of life fail to occur. Such a thing happened *in those days*" (*SSW.198*).

⁹⁹ This passage is almost identical to a passage in the notebooks of 1875 (see *SSW.189*).

everyone was when he *could* be". Even Solon, who "says in his poems how he disdained personal tyranny", is discovered by Nietzsche to be a tyrant because he was a lawgiver, and "to be a lawgiver is a more sublimated form of tyranny" (*HH:I.261*).

Nietzsche points out that tyranny tends towards quick decay and that "the more the power of the Greek philosophers declined, the more they inwardly suffered" from "the blackest gall". With this decrease in their power to be tyrants, they became quickly bitter, and "totally choked with jealousy and spleen, the tyrannical element now raged as poison through their own bodies". These philosophers became mad with hatred, such that "not a spark of love was left in them, and all too little joy in their in their own knowledge". Just as political tyrants are usually murdered, and their posterity has only a brief existence, so too is the history of the tyrants of the spirit brief and violent, and "their posthumous influence ceases abruptly". Nietzsche believes that Greek culture lacked longevity precisely because of this spiritual tyranny. This is why "with the Greeks everything goes quickly forwards, but it likewise goes quickly downwards" (*HH:I.261*).

Nietzsche envisions Greek civilization as a great chariot driven ever faster by these tyrants of the spirit, and Socrates as a "single stone thrown into its wheels" which "makes it fly to pieces". Nietzsche laments the destruction of this wonderful "machine". He sees it as the ruination of "the evolution of philosophical science" on account of its coming under "the spell of Socrates". Furthermore, he views Plato as having been destroyed by Socrates, and with Plato, the possibility for "an even higher type of philosophical man" (*HH:I.261*).¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ This is in keeping with his stated views of 1875 when he writes of the Greeks: "They did not find their philosopher and reformer. Compare Plato, who was diverted by Socrates. Attempted characterization of Plato *apart from* Socrates: tragedy -- profound view of love -- pure nature -- no fanatical renunciation. The Greeks were evidently *on the point* of discovering a *type of man still higher* than any previous type when they were

There are changes and tensions between this account of Socrates and Nietzsche's previous accounts. In *Philosophy During The Tragic Age of The Greeks*, Socrates is held together with the pre-Platonic philosophers. In *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom* and in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is depicted very much like a tyrant of the spirit; for as a sculptor he seeks to fashion all else in his own likeness (SSW.194,195), thus desiring to become "pan-Hellenic", as do all Greek tyrants of the spirit; furthermore, what he cannot identify with "his truth" -- in *The Birth of Tragedy*, all that is Dionysian -- he seeks to destroy. In Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, however, Socrates is depicted as a foreign element to the chariot; he is not portrayed as part of Greek civilization, nor is he described as one of its drivers, who are the tyrants of the spirit. Rather, Socrates is likened to a paltry yet destructive stone thrown into the wheels of the chariot. Just as in *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom*, where Nietzsche remarks that "one single powerful crank like Socrates, and the break was irreparable" (SSW.195), so too in 1878 does Nietzsche view Socrates as the destructive force which makes the chariot of Greek culture fly to pieces. In his different accounts of Socrates, Nietzsche reveals that he is uncertain as to who Socrates is: Is he truly Greek or is he something different? Is Socrates a tyrant of the spirit or is he not? Nietzsche seems to be struggling with each of these possibilities.

With the destruction of the Greek chariot brought about by Socrates, Nietzsche explains that "the period of the tyrants of the spirit is past". Its quickness and exuberance is gone, and these tyrants of the spirit are replaced with "oligarchs of the spirit". According to Nietzsche,

interrupted by the snip of the shears" (SSW.194). Nietzsche also writes: "With Empedocles and Democritus the Greeks were well on the way toward *assessing correctly* the irrationality and suffering of human existence; but, thanks to Socrates, *they never reached the goal*" (SSW.196). Further back, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche suggests that Plato needed fanatically to burn all of his tragedies "in order to qualify as a student of Socrates" (BT.14;87).

these oligarchs are like the tyrants in that they are free; they still conquer and "would rather perish than submit". However, unlike the tyrants of the spirit, the oligarchs "have need of one another, they have joy in one another, they understand the signs of one another" (*HH:I.261*).

Using Nietzsche's own terms, tyrants rule by the "heart", whereas oligarchs rule by the "head":

Does that which unites men -- their understanding of what constitutes their common advantage and disadvantage -- not lie in the head, and that which divides them -- their blind groping and selectivity in love and hatred, their preference for one at the expense of all others and the contempt for the general well-being that arises from it -- not lie in the heart? (*HH:II.i.197*)

This may be one of the crucial differences between Socrates and the earlier philosophers of Greece for Nietzsche: Socrates' strength is his head, his "genius", his understanding of what constitutes common advantage.¹⁰¹ However, this strength of the head also seems to designate a decrease in strength of the heart, and in overall power. Whereas the tyrants of the spirit could assert themselves as tyrants, the oligarchs have this same urge but they are plagued by a certain incapacity to fulfil it. Hence, they must become crafty and use their heads; they must plot and band together as "a close-knit society whose members *know* and *recognize* one another" (*HH:I.261*). The oligarchs of the spirit must band together against the tyranny of the mediocre because they lack the superfluity of power which the tyrants of the spirit formerly had. This depletion of power is the result of Socrates. In this way, Nietzsche depicts Socrates in 1878 as a free spirit: Socrates is shown to be full of tensions, contradictions, and multiple perspectives. He is the free spirit who ironically destroys any possibility for a higher man among the Greeks.

¹⁰¹ In *The Birth of Tragedy*, for example, Socrates is depicted as saving Western civilization from impending self-destruction according to its "egotistical ends" (*BT.15;94*).

PART TWO: SOCRATES VERSUS JESUS AND MODERNITY

Beginning with Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche re-articulates his Dionysian concerns. He no longer attempts to address these concerns by opposing the ancients to the moderns. Rather, he begins to think that the real source of our Dionysian limitations is Christianity. This change of perspective on his Dionysian concerns is illustrated in 1879, when Nietzsche offers his first explicit comparison of Socrates and Jesus. By 1880, Nietzsche becomes clear in his mind that Jesus and Christianity are the cause of modernity, and he separates Socrates out as their antithesis. Socrates becomes a representative of "the finest state of the human soul". Nietzsche's own Dionysian concerns are demonstrated to be Socratic concerns at the beginning of this period of his writing. However, Nietzsche becomes less certain about his affinity with Socrates as he continues to write, and with the completion of *Gay Science*, which marks the end of this period in his writing career, Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates once again lapses into ambiguity.

6. *Human, All Too Human: Volume Two* (1879-1880)

In Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche expresses his confusion about whether Socrates is a positive or a negative figure. Two main, contradictory views of Socrates arise in *Human, All Too Human*. First, Socrates is seen as a free spirit. He is a true Greek philosopher who possesses a heightened sense for all that is actual. In this view, Socrates has no desire to condemn or to annihilate any part of existence. He is free of resentment.¹⁰² The innocence of all things is maintained, and there is only a rank ordering of good and evil rather than an attempt to destroy what is evil. Seen from this point of view, Socrates stands in contrast to Christianity as a good enemy and a free spirit; for "to test whether someone is one of us or not -- I mean whether he is a free spirit or not -- one should test his feelings towards Christianity. If he stands towards it in any way other than *critically* then we turn our back on him: he is going to bring us impure air and bad weather" (*HH*:I.182).

Second, Socrates appears as a stone set against the wheel of the Greek chariot. According to this view, Socrates is a non-Greek figure; but he is not simply a barbarian,

¹⁰² This aspect of Nietzsche's account is overlooked by some scholars, such as Joseph Vincenzo, who suggests that Nietzsche never portrayed Socrates as being free from *ressentiment* or "the spirit of revenge". See Joseph Vincenzo, "Socrates and Rhetoric: The Problem of Nietzsche's Socrates." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* (Vol. 25, No.2 1992) 163. Similarly, Rudolf Steiner never mentions this nobler view of Socrates. See Rudolf Steiner, *Friedrich Nietzsche: Fighter for Freedom* (Trans. Margaret Ingram deRis, New Jersey: Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1960). Paul R. Harrison dismisses this perspective on Socrates as "the least interesting", and suggests that "the hostility of the early and late Nietzsche toward Socrates contains truth only because of its exaggerations." See Harrison, *The Disenchantment of Reason* 136.

because even barbarians can revel in Dionysus, as we have seen in our study of *The Birth of Tragedy*. Rather, Socrates is depicted as a Christian before Christ for whom life was a "vale of tears" (*HH:II.ii.6*). In this portrayal, Socrates the Christian struggles inordinately against necessity; he is resentful, and he seeks to annihilate what has to be rather than to order it. This Socrates experiences a loss of innocence and power; he needs to struggle terribly simply to be happy. A new anxiety is created by this Socrates, which becomes the Christian problem of sin.

Given these two different portrayals of Socrates in *Human, All Too Human*, we illustrate the following changes in Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates. In 1878, he is confused about whether Socrates is a positive or a negative figure. In 1879, with his first explicit comparison of Socrates to Jesus, Nietzsche equates them, judging both of their deaths to be expressions of the highest form of resentment. However, in 1880, Nietzsche changes his mind. He clearly portrays Socrates as separate from and superior to Jesus. Socrates becomes the best mediator or "intercessor" between human beings and the Dionysian, whereas Jesus is depicted as fundamentally anti-Dionysian, and as a corrupting force among them.

In this chapter, I will examine Nietzsche's new orientation towards the problem of Socrates. First, I will demonstrate the changing direction of Nietzsche's thoughts in Volume Two on Socrates and the ancient world, and their relation to Jesus, Christianity, and modernity. Second, I will demonstrate how this change of direction is illustrated in Nietzsche's comparisons and contrasts of Socrates and Jesus. Third, I will demonstrate that Nietzsche comes to view Socrates as a free spirit in 1880, but that he denies Jesus this status.

i. *"Assorted Opinions and Maxims"* (1879)

As we have seen previously, Nietzsche has a desire to make up a "balance sheet" for antiquity (W.159). He desires to separate out what is bad from what is good. In particular, he desires to separate out Christianity from what is Greek. In 1875, he expresses his doubts that such a "balance sheet" is possible, or that what is Christian might be separated out, because Christianity and its influence have become an integral part of the whole of modern existence. Therefore, he concludes in 1875 that he must condemn Socrates along with Jesus. Nietzsche follows this judgement in 1879, when he offers his first explicit comparison of Socrates and Jesus.

Only one reference is made to Socrates in 1879. Nietzsche compares the deaths of Socrates and Jesus. According to Nietzsche, these "two greatest judicial murders in world history are, not to mince words, disguised and well disguised suicides" (*HH:II.i.94*). Both Socrates and Jesus wanted to die, and they used the injustice of others to achieve their ends. In this aphorism, Nietzsche is suggesting that both characters are judgemental of life. Both Socrates and Jesus are described as refusing to live, as judging life not worth living, and unbearable. Existence for both Socrates and Jesus, in this instance, seems to be a "vale of tears". This appraisal of Socrates indicates Nietzsche's rejection of his appraisal of Socrates as a free spirit in Volume One. As a free spirit, Socrates is shown to pay attention to the little and close-up things.¹⁰³ However, Socrates is also viewed in Volume One as misinterpreting the small, and as being dominated by his own "moralizing manner of thinking". Because of

¹⁰³ Nietzsche's own concern for what is close up can be seen as far back as 1873 (*HT.44*).

this failure to attend to the small things, life becomes a "vale of tears" for Socrates which impels him towards suicide. This is precisely the view that Nietzsche adopts in 1879.

In 1879, both Socrates and Jesus are depicted as great self-lovers, because "every great love brings with it the cruel idea of killing the object of that love, so that he may be removed once and for all from the wicked game of change: for love dreads change more than it does destruction" (*HH*:I.280). In 1879, Nietzsche portrays both Jesus and Socrates as being unwilling to suffer the changes that are given to the nature of things. Therefore, in their great self-love, they seek their own deaths; for to seek stability is to deny life and to seek death. To desire stability is to be at odds with life. In this way, the "great love" of Jesus and Socrates leads to a judgement against life. The love of both Jesus and Socrates is fundamentally resentful.

By portraying the death of Socrates as one of the highest expressions of resentment in world history, Nietzsche has re-evaluated his previous judgement in *The Birth of Tragedy*. In 1872, Nietzsche judges the living Socrates as a menace and an enemy to Dionysus. Only in his final hours and his death does Socrates' heroic bent shine through. However, in 1879, and until the final year of his writing career in 1888, Nietzsche holds higher praise for the living than the dying Socrates; for he judges Socrates to have died from spite, and to have viewed life as a disease, as we shall see.

ii. *"The Wanderer and His Shadow"* (1880)

In 1879, Nietzsche condemns both Jesus and Socrates following his own earlier judgement that a "balance sheet" of antiquity, or the separation of what is Christian from what is Greek, is impossible. However, in 1880, Nietzsche changes his mind, and he attempts such a separation.

In 1880, Nietzsche begins to pit Socrates against Jesus by noting that "most people see the *closest things of all* very badly and very rarely pay heed to them". Being unknowledgable in the smallest and most everyday things due to the "lack of the power of observation" makes such people physically and psychologically frail; they become unable to live well, and it is precisely this failure "to keep an eye on" what is closest that "transforms the earth for so many into a 'vale of tears'". This great excess of suffering which makes life unbearable for many -- which is beyond the amount of suffering that is simply given to existence -- is not the result of human "*lack of understanding*". Rather, Nietzsche discovers the problem in the fact that our understanding is "*employed in the wrong direction and artificially diverted away from these smallest and closest things*". As noted in *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, the problem is that human beings have come to think about their experiences abstractly; they have become indoctrinated by "priests and teachers, and the sublime lust for power of idealists of every description" to think about their experiences only in lofty terms. As we have seen in *Philosophy in Hard Times*, human beings thus become "bashful" towards all that is base in their existence (HT.44). Consequently, "the requirements of the individual, his great and small needs within the twenty-four hours of the day, are to be regarded as

something contemptible or a matter of indifference" (*HH:II.ii.6*).¹⁰⁴ It is in this way that human beings lose their passion for existence, and that they come to understand life in this world as a contemptible, sorrowful, vale of tears.

In 1880, Nietzsche begins to view Socrates as defending himself against precisely this form of "arrogant neglect":

Already in ancient Greece Socrates was defending himself with all his might against this arrogant neglect of the human for the benefit of the human race, and loved to indicate the true compass and content of all reflection and concern with an expression of Homer's: it comprises, he said, nothing other than 'that which I encounter of good and ill in my own house'. (*HH:II.ii.6*)¹⁰⁵

Socrates is no longer grouped with Jesus as one who feels life to be a vale of tears. Rather, Socrates is opposed to the "arrogant neglect of the human" which leads to such a view. Everywhere, Socrates is seen to uncover ignorance and sophistry as the "true content" of all lofty reflection and concern. In this regard, the cleverness of Socrates is no longer shown to be sophisticated and abstract, as it has been represented previously by Nietzsche.¹⁰⁶ Rather, the cleverness of Socrates is now compared to the wiliness of the hero Odysseus who, upon finally returning home from the Trojan War, very effectively concerns himself with the state of neglect which his own household has fallen into during his absence. Socrates' household is the soul, and like Odysseus, he too tends to his household. Just as Odysseus must recognize

¹⁰⁴ This passage marks a change in Nietzsche's thought since *The Birth of Tragedy*. Nietzsche is no longer concerned with rare mystical experiences which bring the Dionysiac reveller to his knees, but with the common and the everyday. In 1879, he writes that "life is too short for the rare and extraordinary" (*HH:II.i.399*).

¹⁰⁵ Nietzsche draws from *Attic Nights* (14,6) by the Roman lawyer Aulus Gellius (C.E. 125-165), who records that this was Socrates' favourite verse of Homer. The reference is to Homer's *Odyssey* 4, 392.

¹⁰⁶ Consider, for instance, *The Birth of Tragedy* in which the Socratic attitude is viewed as a denial of all that is real: namely, both the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

both the good and the evil present in his own household in order to become its master once again, so too must Socrates look to his own soul in order to begin to deal with it properly and become his own master.

Nietzsche stresses the danger lest this inattention to what is closest should become habitual in human beings, for as habit it easily carries off "the victory over the unthinking" (*HH:II.ii.5*). Because of habitual inattention to the closest things, the mass of human beings have become "gloomy" in temperament. Nietzsche likens our habitual inability to see what is closest to living without sunlight: "as soon as night falls our perception of the most immediate things changes" (*HH:II.ii.8*). Hence, when this neglect of all things human becomes habit, the entire world is transformed in the eyes of human beings. Our eyes have simply become accustomed to the darkness, according to Nietzsche.

Much of our modern gloominess or poor vision for what is closest is demonstrated to have arisen from our desire for "nothing but certainties". Nietzsche finds this desire at the heart of modern science, disclosing it as a "*religious after-shoot*" and a "metaphysical need". The desire to see what "science will one day determine once and for all concerning the first and last things" is simply "wrong-headed". This religious or metaphysical concern for the "furthest horizon" which he finds at the heart of science is deemed unnecessary and debilitating: "We have absolutely *no need* of these certainties regarding the furthest horizon to live a full and excellent human life".¹⁰⁷ Rather, Nietzsche argues that we need to "become clear in our minds as to the origin of that calamitous weightiness we have for so long

¹⁰⁷This insight of Nietzsche's works against some of his own assertions. For instance, it can be used as a criticism of Nietzsche's own hopes in the birth of an age of free spirits, as well as the inevitability of such an age. In addition, Nietzsche's later accounts of the overman may also be criticized by means of this insight.

accorded these things" (*HH:II.ii.16*). For this reason, he becomes interested in giving histories and genealogical accounts of "ethical and religious sensations".

In his historical account of this struggle for certainty, Nietzsche reveals that where human beings "could establish nothing for a certainty it has been our practice from of old boldly to fantasize, and we have persuaded our posterity to take these fantasies seriously and for truth, when all else has failed by resorting to the detestable assertion that faith is worth more than knowledge" (*HH:II.ii.16*). According to Nietzsche, faith is a dangerous error which draws our attention away from what is closest. Because faith is pitted against knowledge, it is viewed as contrary to our nature as "disciples of light" and "indefatigable knowers."

Nietzsche counsels his readers to have "*indifference*" towards faith, which claims to know the furthest things: "*Everything* else must be of more concern to us than that which has hitherto been preached to us as the most important of all things". Nietzsche bids us to forget all our lofty questions such as "What is the purpose of man? What is his fate after death? How can he be reconciled with God?". All of these "*curiosa*" arise from the error of faith which misdirects human understanding away from what is closest, thus rendering it abstract. The object of these questions, "one and all, is to compel us to a decision in domains where neither faith nor knowledge is needed". This "realm of darkness" is best left dark, according to Nietzsche; for "it is precisely through the contrast it presents to the realm of darkness at the edge of the world of knowledge that the bright world of knowledge close to us is continually enhanced in value".¹⁰⁸ In other words, the desire always to look upon what is

¹⁰⁸ This is an important aspect of Nietzsche's own thought which needs to be stressed. In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche does not deny that there is something beyond "the edge of the world of knowledge". However, he cannot speak about it, and he finds any discussion of it that tends toward a kind of faith, or that professes to know anything about its specifics to be wholly erroneous.

unknowable as somehow knowable through faith and as though it were higher than all we can know otherwise devalues what is closest to us. This gazing past what is closest "at clouds and monsters of the night" (*HH:II.ii.16*) betrays our contempt for the things of this world. Once again, Nietzsche would have us relinquish our contempt and "become *good neighbours to the closest things*", in this instance, by avoiding the errors of faith.

In 1880, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as, quite unlike Jesus, having avoided the errors of faith.¹⁰⁹ Socrates spoke of himself as a divine missionary.¹¹⁰ However, he is described by Nietzsche as speaking this way out of his own sense of irony and humour: "Socrates too feels himself to be a divine missionary: but even here there is perceptible I know not what touch of Attic irony and sense of humour through which that unfortunate and presumptuous concept is ameliorated" (*HH:II.ii.72*). Socrates is no longer considered by Nietzsche to have taken his own moralizing interpretations too seriously; in 1880, he is described as only having used them as an ironic tool in order to teach.

This description of Socrates' use of irony clears up Nietzsche's ambiguous appraisal of Socratic irony in 1878. In the first volume of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche describes two sorts of irony which correspond with his two portrayals of Socrates. The best sort of irony, corresponding to his positive view of Socrates

is in place only as a pedagogic tool, employed by a teacher in dealing with any kind of pupil: its objective is humiliation, making ashamed, but of that salutary sort which awakens good resolutions and inspires respect and gratitude towards him who treats us thus of the kind we feel for a physician. The ironist poses as unknowing, and does so so well that the pupils in discussion with him are deceived, grow bold in their belief they

¹⁰⁹ This contradicts his previous assertion that Socrates was dominated by his moralizing manner of thinking.

¹¹⁰ See Plato's *Apology*, 30e-31a.

know better and expose themselves as they are. (HH:I.372)

In this first sense, irony is a skilful means to teach students because it is directed towards exposing their ignorance, and making them ashamed of it. This is the form of irony which Nietzsche finds apparent in the character of Socrates in 1880.

The second sense of irony, however, is modelled upon Nietzsche's negative view of Socrates:

Where such a relationship as that between teacher and pupil does not obtain, irony is ill-breeding, a vulgar affectation. All ironical writers depend on the foolish species of men who together with the author would like to feel themselves superior to others and who regard the author as the mouthpiece of their presumption. -- Habituation to irony, moreover, like habituation to sarcasm, spoils the character, to which it gradually lends the quality of a malicious and jeering superiority: in the end one comes to resemble a snapping dog which has learned how to laugh but forgotten how to bite. (HH:I.372)

This sort of irony betrays the resentful attitude of one who is too weak to attack, and who consequently can only hate continually, for whom such spite becomes a habit of soul. This is also the irony of Nietzsche's Socrates as depicted in 1879, who slanders the world, and for whom the world is an unbearable vale of tears. However, this view of Socrates is rejected in 1880. Instead, Socrates is portrayed in a wholly positive light, as a free spirit.

As evidence that Socrates was a free-spirited, non-dogmatic interpreter of his own experiences, Nietzsche discusses Socrates' images of "the brake and the horse", arguing that these images are "simple and unpriestly". Furthermore, he views the religious task of Socrates as "*putting the god to the test in a hundred ways to see whether he has told the truth*" (HH:II.ii.72). This is very similar to his description of the free spirit as one who "puts to the test" whatever excites him (HH:I.p3). Even in his speech about the gods, Socrates is shown to be non-dogmatic, and in this regard, Nietzsche imagines Socrates as stepping "up to his god

with a bold and candid department" (*HH:II.ii.72*).

In this compromise "between piety and freedom of spirit" Nietzsche finds Socrates especially admirable, for "nowadays we no longer have need even of this compromise" (*HH:II.ii.72*). He recognizes a greater breadth of spirit in Socrates than is possible today. Socrates' greater freedom of spirit allows him a broader range of interpretations of his own experiences than are possible for modern human beings. Unlike modern human beings, Socrates -- as portrayed in 1880 -- is not encumbered and restricted by any sort of faith. For this reason, Nietzsche views Socrates as being able to speak about the god while at the same time affirming the closest things. Modern human beings no longer even feel the need for Socrates' breadth of interpretations because they lack his breadth of spirit; therefore they feel no need for such a compromise. Nietzsche himself seeks this freedom of spirit. Like Socrates, he too wishes to test and experiment, and to speak as shockingly and ironically as did Socrates.¹¹¹ In this sense, he can be said to have learned about his own task by the example of Socrates, his best enemy.¹¹²

In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche does not portray Jesus as a free spirit. Although Jesus was aware of his own sinlessness, unlike Socrates, Jesus lacked joy. For Jesus, this world was a world of sin and a vale of tears. Unlike Socrates, Jesus was only able to reach the second stage in the history of the "great liberation" of the free spirit; he did not rise to the

¹¹¹ Alexander Nehamas stresses the gadfly aspect of both Socrates' and Nietzsche's philosophy. He compares their use of hyperbole and their ability to shock, and the similar reactions that each produce in their audience. Socrates is said by Nehamas to attract an audience by means of his false humility. Nietzsche attracts his audience by shocking them with distasteful remarks. In both cases, shocking means are used to eliminate indifference. See Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (London: Harvard UP, 1985) 24-28.

¹¹² "To learn from one's enemy is the best path to loving them: for it puts us in a grateful mood towards them" (*HH:II.i.248*).

third. In brief review, the three stages in the genesis of the free spirit, as I have outlined them above,¹¹³ are: (1) the eruption of the will to freedom, or the desire to be freed from all fetters that constricts the spirit; (2) renunciation of faith in any particular valuations in order to be freed from them, resulting in suffering, isolation, and homeless wandering; the awareness of innocence through the realization that all valuations and standards of judgement which are used to condemn are false; and (3) the joy in one's new-found vision for all that is closest. Socrates traversed all three of these stages, according to Nietzsche. However, unlike Socrates, Jesus remained fettered by his beliefs in his own divinity and in the sinfulness of the world around him.

Socrates is viewed as superior to Jesus just as true philosophy is judged to be superior to science by Nietzsche. Science enables human beings to undermine the false valuations of morality; it thereby grants them a knowledge of their own innocence. However, this science or knowledge of innocence is not sufficient to render them joyful; for although they recognize their innocence, they cannot escape the fact that all things suffer. The only gay science that allows for the affirmation of life in the midst of suffering is true philosophy. Only the true philosopher, represented by Socrates, is joyful. Neither the unphilosophic scientist, nor Jesus, is joyful in his awareness of innocence. Jesus attained to "the feeling of complete sinlessness, complete unaccountability, which nowadays everyone can acquire through scientific study" (*HH:II.ii.144*). However, it must be noted first, that although both Jesus and the conscientious practitioner of science can attain to the feeling of sinlessness, neither is thereby able to attain to the joy of the free spirit, which is described in 1878 by Nietzsche as transcending mere sinlessness, or awareness of innocence. The unphilosophic spirit who is aware of his innocence

¹¹³ Consult pages 110-113 of my thesis for a thorough discussion of these three stages.

is still unable to affirm his own existence as one who suffers. Second, it must be noted that whereas "everyone" can acquire a feeling of innocence through scientific rigour which is thought to reveal a knowledge that is akin to the insight of Jesus, only a few are said by Nietzsche to be capable of becoming free spirits (*HH:I.107*). There is a kind of knowing or science in Jesus' self-understanding; however, neither Jesus' self-knowledge nor the discipline of science are held to be gay or joyful science by Nietzsche. The gay science is the sole pursuit of the true philosopher who, like Socrates, is full of "roguish wisdom" and a sense of humour.

In the final reference to Socrates in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche opposes what is pagan to what is Christian: "If all goes well, the time will come when one will take up the memorabilia of Socrates rather than the Bible as a guide to morals and reason, and when Montaigne¹¹⁴ and Horace will be employed as forerunners and signposts to an understanding of this simplest and most imperishable of intercessors" (*HH:II.ii.86*). According to Nietzsche's view of 1880, all education ought to lead back to Socrates, who is the best mediator for human beings. This remark of praise for Socrates is also meant as explicit criticism of Jesus.

According to Nietzsche, Socrates is the best mediator for human beings because "the pathways of the most various philosophical modes of life lead back to him". These modes of life are each suitable to different temperments "confirmed and established by reason and habit". In other words, Socrates is the best mediator because the greatest variety of temperments may be "directed towards joy in living" through his example. Because of Socrates' own great freedom and breadth of spirit, because he was able to hold many interpretations of his own experience without dogmatically restricting himself to any single perspective which would weaken his vision for all others and cause him to slander all of existence, the most various

¹¹⁴ Montaigne, a renaissance essayist, is not specifically pagan, but Nietzsche consistently rates him highly throughout his works.

temperments possessing the most various perspectives can find their own existence affirmed in the person of Socrates: "Socrates' most personal characteristic was a participation in every temperament" (*HH:II.ii.86*)¹¹⁵.

This is precisely the reason why Nietzsche thinks that Jesus fails as a mediator when compared with Socrates: "Socrates excels the founder of Christianity in being able to be serious cheerfully and in possessing that *wisdom full of roguishness* that constitutes the finest state of the human soul. And he also possessed the finer intellect" (*HH:II.ii.86*). Nietzsche understands the cheerfulness of Socrates to be a sign of his superiority to Jesus. He sees Socrates' joy in living arising from his wisdom, which is his roguish ability to affirm the perspectival character of every account that can be given of existence. Socrates' wisdom is "roguish" because its free-spiritedness offends those who are bound by their faith to any specific perspective, as has been demonstrated above. The great breadth of Socrates' free-spiritedness, which is the source of his cheerfulness, is deemed by Nietzsche to be the finest state of soul for human beings. Above and beyond this, Socrates is considered superior to Jesus because of his "finer intellect". On Nietzsche's account, Socrates is wily like Odysseus; he is skilful at uncovering ignorance and sophistry as the true content of all lofty reflection; but likewise, he is better enabled to test the god in a hundred ways, to tear apart what excites him, and to experiment than is Jesus.

Unlike Socrates, towards whom there are many ways, towards Christ there is only one. According to Nietzsche, Socrates participates in every temperament; for instance, he is both

¹¹⁵ This view of Socrates as participating in every temperament stands in stark contrast to the view presented in *The Birth of Tragedy*, in which Socrates is portrayed as the prototypical "theoretical man" -- an individual possessing only a single temperament and lacking any depth of soul.

a saint and a genius (*HH:I.126*), as well as a sage;¹¹⁶ he is a Greek, a non-Greek (*HH:I.261*), and also a Christian, as we have seen. However, Jesus is considered to have participated only in the temperament of the saint (*HH:I.144*). Jesus' character is entirely more flat than Socrates' character. He lacks Socrates' breadth of spirit, and he is further restricted by his faith in his own divinity.

Nietzsche explains that Jesus was not unique in his claim to divine status; he was only one among many who felt themselves to be divine: "the whole of antiquity swarmed with sons of gods" who felt completely sinless (*HH:I.144*). Socrates too spoke of his own divinity. However, Jesus is not merely unlike Socrates, who proclaimed his own divine mission ironically; Jesus is also unlike all those of Greek temperament, for whom it was quite common to address one another as divine men and women. Jesus had not their freedom to address his own fellows as gods due to his belief that only he himself was the son of god.

In closing, Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates as a representative of "the finest state of the human soul", and as the "most imperishable of intercessors" between human beings and the Dionysian suggests that Nietzsche identifies his own Dionysian concerns with the Socratic during this period. Moreover, the harsh contrast that he draws between Socrates and Jesus in Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human* suggests a new direction and a new sense of clarity in Nietzsche's thought. He no longer looks to what is ancient in order to criticize what is modern. Rather, he views Jesus and Christianity as the root cause of modernity, and therefore as the source of our Dionysian incapacities.

¹¹⁶ Very close comparisons can be drawn between the sage and Socrates. Both are praised for possessing "the highest intelligence". Both are depicted as affirmers of life, and both are counterposed forcefully against Jesus as his "antithesis" (see *HH:I.235*).

7. *Daybreak* (1881)

After the initial clarity exhibited in Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche begins to question his extreme separation of Socrates from Jesus, Christianity, and modernity. On the one hand, he still views Socrates largely as a Dionysian figure. Most notably, Socrates is demonstrated to encourage free thought by undermining morality, rigid custom, and all stringent adherence to form. In this respect, Socrates becomes a very un-Apollonian character, and his use of dialectics is viewed as a means to cultivate an awareness of the Dionysian aspect of existence. However, on the other hand, Nietzsche begins to note similarities between Socrates and Christianity; he finds anti-Dionysian tendencies in Socrates insofar as Socrates is a man of faith. Faith, for Nietzsche, becomes a central problem and impediment to human awareness of the Dionysian; for faith in any particular perspective indicates to Nietzsche a closing-off to and a condemnation of all other perspectives; moreover, faith is considered to close human beings off from any awareness of what lies beyond all perspectives, namely, the Dionysian. Nietzsche finds such a faith at the heart of Christianity, and he views Socrates, in some respects, as a faithful, and therefore moralizing, judgemental, and un-Dionysian individual.

Because of Nietzsche's growing uncertainty about Socrates in *Daybreak*, his depiction of Socrates becomes ambiguous. On the one hand, Socrates is portrayed as a good physician of the soul who effectively undermines morality and custom. In his opposition to morality, Socrates is still considered by Nietzsche to be a free spirit; he is also an opponent of the herd,

which observes strict obedience to custom, and which sacrifices all that is "original" and "individual" to its own survival. Socrates is viewed as an "original", as the father of science, and as the discoverer of causality as a means to undermine the "pseudo-science" of morality and the false judgements of tradition. Socrates is an untimely individual and a gadfly. In *Daybreak*, he is an opponent of excessive Apollonian or "Socratic" rationalism; he is a free-thinker who encourages others to cultivate their own Dionysian tendencies by introducing dialectics as a means to oppose the rigidity of custom.

On the other hand, Socrates is also viewed as a quack doctor. He is a fettered spirit who, although he has effectively opposed moralities of custom, succumbs to a faith in his own "individual", moral valuations. Socrates is likened to Luther, and becomes almost the father of Christian faith. He is considered to be deluded about causality; for he desires to condemn and to revile by means of manipulating causes so that they may be used to blame and to hold accountable. Socrates is also portrayed as a moralizer and a tyrant. He is shown to be dishonest insofar as he teaches others to believe what is not true, but merely pleasant and comforting, and he is anti-Dionysian insofar as he resembles what Nietzsche considers to be Christianity.

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche's task as a physician of the soul is to uncover and to treat the sicknesses which have arisen from moral prejudices. His fundamental criticism of morality in *Daybreak* is that it prevents people from thinking: "In the presence of morality... one is not *allowed* to think... here one has to -- obey!" (D.p3). He writes that the authority of morality "paralyzes thinking in the case of things about which it might be dangerous to think *falsely*" (D.107). He refers to morality as one of "the *most dangerous pseudo-sciences*" (D.11) because it gives us false knowledge of the world. It clouds our thinking about causality by

creating "*imaginary causalities*" (D.10) which we use in turn as means to pass unfair judgements against existence. Nietzsche is particularly critical of "faith" in this regard, because having faith in any particular morality as though it were the true standard by which to judge all other perspectives and interpretations of existence makes human beings both sick and gloomy. The faith which underlies all moral judgements puts human beings at odds both with themselves and with all other things.

Nietzsche seeks a means to cure human beings of their gloominess in *Daybreak*. He seeks a medicine by which the authority of morality can be undermined, and by which our judgements against life can be shown to be false. By uncovering the errors which we have come to view as truths and which have made us gloomy, Nietzsche hopes to restore to us our innocence, our health, as well as our freedom to see things from many perspectives.

Nietzsche has depicted Socrates previously in *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* as one who, like himself, seeks to uncover ignorance above all. Like Socrates, he judges ignorance to be more dangerous to human beings than evil, because where one who is evil can become better, the one who is deluded by ignorance will become daily worse and more unjust (UM:H.6;88). Nietzsche continues to depict Socrates as a diagnostician like himself in *Daybreak*. However, he becomes critical of Socrates' diagnosis of sickness; although he finds Socrates' untimely opposition and his criticism of his own times commendable, he rejects Socrates' treatments as quackery which only serves to complicate our modern illness. Consequently, Nietzsche turns from Socrates' moral philosophy and begins to examine to what extent art, science, and philosophy might offer effective treatment against morality.

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche begins to focus more of his attention upon science as a means

to undermine faith in morality, having begun to mistrust art and philosophy due to their moral foundations. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche writes that "from Plato onwards every philosophical architect in Europe has built in vain "because no philosopher since Plato has seriously questioned the moral underpinnings of their own philosophies. All have been seduced by morality, "the actual *Circe of the philosophers*" (D.p3). Socrates is not counted among their number because, as we have already seen, Nietzsche recognizes great tensions in Socrates' character; although he proceeds to argue in *Daybreak* that Socrates too is enchanted by the errors of morality, he also entertains the possibility that Socrates is a free-spirited moralist, and therefore someone who, like himself, offers some opposition to morality. However, Nietzsche remains critical of Socrates for having succumb to the moral errors which Socrates himself is viewed by Nietzsche to have been battling against.

There are three references to Socrates in the first book of *Daybreak*. In the first reference, Nietzsche contrasts what he calls "morality of custom" with "individual" moralities. A morality of custom "is nothing other... than obedience to customs", and customs are "the *traditional* way of behaving and evaluating". According to Nietzsche, where there is no tradition there is no morality of custom, "and the less life is determined by tradition, the smaller the circle of morality". Within a tradition, however, anyone who does not adhere to its customs -- "the free human being" -- is considered to be "immoral because he is *determined* to depend upon himself" (D.9). The free human being is deemed "evil" because he acts for other motives than tradition commands.

In this way, certain judgements about who and what is good and evil arise from traditional evaluations. The "most moral man" is considered the best sort of person from the standpoint of tradition. The most moral man is, first, "he who obeys the law most frequently,"

and second, "he who obeys it even in the most difficult cases"; therefore, he is the one who "sacrifices the most to custom". Nietzsche emphasizes that the hardships endured by the moral man are not imposed in order to strengthen his character: "self-overcoming is demanded, *not* on account of the useful consequences it may have for the individual"; rather, the individual is required to sacrifice himself to the tradition itself and to the society which upholds it: "that is the commandment of morality of custom" (D.9).

In opposition to the morality of custom, Nietzsche describes "those moralists... who, following in the footsteps of Socrates, offer the *individual* a morality of self-control and temperance as a means to his own *advantage*, as his personal key to happiness". These followers of Socrates are described as "*the exceptions*".¹¹⁷ Possessing individual moralities, "they cut themselves off from the community, as immoral men, and are in the profoundest sense evil". They are considered by Nietzsche to be "the rarer, choicer, more original spirits. However, because they stand apart from tradition, they are persecuted throughout "the whole course of history". They have "to suffer through being felt as evil and dangerous" by the community and its authorities. Moreover, they themselves are made to feel evil and dangerous

¹¹⁷ Elsewhere in *Daybreak*, Nietzsche compares these two kinds of moralities. The morality of custom is adopted by those who would live by "the most rigorous *theory of morality*", whereas "free-spirited moralists" adopt their own individual moralities according to their own needs and desires (D.209). From a certain perspective, Nietzsche still maintains Socrates' status as a free spirit. Nietzsche also contrasts these two types of morality in Book four, where he describes the former as the "morality that goes with a decrease in nervous energy", and as being of use only to "invalids and old people"; the latter he describes as "the morality that goes with an increase in nervous energy" and of use therefore to the "joyful and restless". In this regard, Socrates is viewed from one perspective as not only a free spirit, but also as an individual who lives an ascending life and who is full of vitality. However, Nietzsche goes on to note that both moralities create misunderstandings; for "according to whether we have the former or the latter we fail to understand the one we do not have, and we often interpret it as immorality and weakness" (D.368).

by the community's valuations. As a consequence, "under the dominion of the morality of custom, originality of every kind has acquired a bad conscience" (D.9).

In this regard, Nietzsche judges Socrates' strength as an individual and an original also to have produced his major weakness; for, on the one hand, Socrates has cut himself off from the morality of custom and its false valuations; he lives according to his own self-imposed moral restrictions as a means to his own advantage and to strengthen his own character. On the other hand, Socrates' originality inadvertently presents opposition to the morality of custom. Although he has cut himself off from the community, he still remains related to it somehow.¹¹⁸ Consequently, he suffers from its valuations; he is made to accept some of its erroneous judgements, and is thereby given a bad conscience. It is precisely this bad conscience which Nietzsche, as a physician who seeks to treat the prejudices of morality, desires to overcome.

In the second reference to Socrates in book one of *Daybreak*, Nietzsche criticizes Socrates for having accepted from morality an erroneous understanding of faith. According to Nietzsche, Socrates is confused by "the fundamental error that all that matters is faith, and that out of faith works must necessarily proceed" (D.22). Here, Socrates is directly associated with Luther. This passage presents a new criticism of Socrates. Nietzsche returns to his critical portrait of Socrates as evinced in the early period. He resumes his exploration of those aspects of Socrates' character which he finds most problematic. However, his criticisms of Socrates in *Daybreak* are new and different from those of his earlier works. Formerly,

¹¹⁸ This coincides with Nietzsche's view of 1873: "Even if a philosopher strictly separates himself from other, even if he is a hermit, he thereby provides others with a lesson and an example and is a philosopher for them. Let him conduct himself however he pleases, as a philosopher he still has a side which faces other men" (HT.48).

Socrates was criticized as the first modern, and as the destroyer of the ancients. In *Daybreak*, however, Socrates is criticized for being a man of faith, a fore-runner to Luther, and therefore, a Christian figure. These new criticisms of Socrates demonstrate Nietzsche's larger Dionysian concerns during this period: namely, that what is Christian is now considered to be the cause of modernity. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche begins to question to what extent Socrates exhibits the same anti-Dionysian tendencies as Christianity.

In this aphorism, Nietzsche views Socrates as a man of faith, likening him to Luther. He is therefore heavily critical of Socrates because faith, in his opinion, is an error simply on the basis that "the evidence of every experience of every day speaks against it". Neither the most confident knowledge nor faith can provide "the strength or the ability needed for a deed". Nietzsche stresses "works, first and foremost!" (D.22). He emphasizes that no matter how much any person knows or claims to know through faith, this knowledge will not enable them for deeds. In fact, the error of faith can only incapacitate human beings for deeds, according to Nietzsche.

In his final reference to Socrates in the first book of *Daybreak*, Nietzsche is concerned to show that moral restrictions are necessary for all forms of life in the animal world, and not only human beings. He argues that all forms of life suppress inclinations, self-adapt, self-depreciate, and submit to orders of rank: "all this is to be found as social morality in a crude form everywhere, even in the depths of the animal world". Just like other living creatures, human beings need to suppress certain aspects of their nature in order that other aspects may be developed and flourish.¹¹⁹ Similarly, he points out the error in supposing that virtue is an

¹¹⁹ In book three, Nietzsche points out that "the chief moral commandments which a people is willing to be taught and have preached at it again and again are related to its chief failings" (D.165). As in book one, Nietzsche stresses the basic animal need

exclusively human characteristic. Nietzsche illustrates that "even the sense for truth, which is really the sense for security, man has in common with the animals". In addition, animals are demonstrated to share a degree of "objectivity" and "self-knowledge" with human beings. "The beginnings of justice, as of prudence, moderation, bravery -- in short, of all we designate as the *Socratic virtues*, are *animal*: a consequence of that drive which teaches us to seek food and elude enemies" (D.26). Nietzsche clearly does not wish to eliminate morality entirely in *Daybreak*. Rather, he wants to understand it and to cleanse it of its errors. He wants morality again to serve individuals and "the rarer, choicer, more original spirits" without bestowing upon them a bad conscience.

In book two of *Daybreak*, Nietzsche views Socrates' understanding of human knowledge and causality as having contributed greatly to the problem of the bad conscience. It is important to note that, in *Daybreak*, he is not totally denying the validity of all notions of causality. He still affirms some connection between causes and their effects. He is only critical of our judgements concerning what counts as a cause, and what counts as an effect. In particular, he criticizes the over-simplicity of our own accounts of causality. Nietzsche mocks their "*pictorialness*", and he argues that it is precisely this tendency to over-simplify "that makes impossible an insight into a more essential connection than that of mere succession" (D.121).¹²⁰ Nietzsche does not desire to discard all cause and effect in *Daybreak*; he only rejects their servitude to moral principles which slander life: "And in *summa*: what

which morality serves. Morality enables human beings to deal with their own weaknesses and failings by suppressing some drives and cultivating others. In this regard, moral prescriptions which cultivated "the four Socratic virtues" among the ancient Greeks are viewed by Nietzsche as the way in which the Greeks dealt with their own chief failings.

¹²⁰ Also see (D.129) for more criticisms of the "pictorialness" of our understanding of causation.

is it you really want changed?' --We want to cease making causes into sinners and consequences into executioners" (D.208).

According to Nietzsche, it is misguided to condemn and execute on the basis of our supposed knowledge of causality, because "however far a man may go in self-knowledge, nothing however can be more incomplete than his image of the totality of *drives* which constitute his being" (D.119). This "primeval delusion" -- namely that "one knows and knows precisely in every case, *how human action is brought about*" -- is precisely what Nietzsche criticizes about Socrates' belief that "right knowledge *must be followed by right action*".¹²¹ In this regard, Socrates is viewed as an heir to the "universal madness and presumption that there exists knowledge as to the essential nature of an action". Socrates' "primeval delusion" contradicts lived experience; his claim opposes "the naked reality demonstrated daily and hourly from time immemorial!". The "terrible truth", as Nietzsche refers to it, is quite to the contrary, namely, that "no amount of knowledge about an act *ever* suffices to ensure its performance... All actions are essentially unknown" (D.116).

Actions do not arise solely as the results of our reasoned and rational deliberations about what ought to be done. In fact, our rationality is shown by Nietzsche to have its origins in irrationality (D.123). Rational considerations never solely determine our activities because "there come into play motives in part unknown to us, in part known very ill, which we can *never* take account of *beforehand*" (D.129). Our "reasons" for acting the way we do are

¹²¹ Leo Strauss points out that "Socrates did not think that he knew what good and evil is. In other words, 'virtue is knowledge' is a riddle rather than a solution". See Leo Strauss, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*" *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 185.

Aristotle appears to be the first to have misrepresented Socrates in this manner. In his *Magna Moralia*, he accuses Socrates of equating reason with virtue (1, 34, 1198 A10), and he suggests that Socrates made virtues pieces of knowledge (1, 1, 1183, B8).

largely irrational and unknown. With this argument, Nietzsche opposes Socrates' notion that human beings can be held responsible for their actions on account of their deliberations prior to activity. Against Socrates, Nietzsche argues that human beings cannot be rightly blamed or praised for their deeds because no deed arises solely or even mainly from any purely rational choice or understanding. Human beings are quite simply unable to be as "evil" as Socrates' false teachings allow them to be. As a consequence, the bad conscience and the gloominess of human beings arises from a misunderstanding of causality and human action.

In book three of *Daybreak*, Nietzsche presents Thucydides in contrast to the Socratic schools as "a model" of one who does not judge human activity unfairly according to any false notions of responsibility. Nietzsche confesses his admiration for Thucydides, because he finds in him "the most comprehensive and impartial delight in all that is typical in men and events". He praises Thucydides for believing that "to each type there pertains a quantum of *good sense*". Thucydides does not "revile or belittle"; rather, he finds "good sense" in each thing. His "*most impartial knowledge of the world*" illustrates his better eye for what is actual; consequently, he also displays "greater practical justice" than Plato. Nietzsche describes the Socratic schools as fighting against this impartiality, just as Socrates himself opposed the Sophists who, in this instance, Nietzsche esteems along with Thucydides as the last glorious flowers of culture (D.168).

Socrates is further demonstrated by Nietzsche to be deluded by moral misunderstandings insofar as he asserts that there is a unity between virtue and happiness. Socrates believes this union to exist, whereas Nietzsche considers it only to be wishful thinking. Nietzsche is particularly critical of Socrates precisely because of his moralistic tendency to rely on feelings and sentiment as though the desirability of the truth of a particular

proposition were sufficient for its verification. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche shows his mistrust for all feelings because they are used as substantiation for false moral judgements, and because they are themselves conditioned by moral judgements: "The inspiration born of a feeling is the grandchild of a judgement -- and often a false judgement!". For this reason, in *Daybreak*, he bids his readers to mistrust their feelings, and to put more of their trust in "the gods which are in us: our reason and our experience" (D.35).

Again, *Daybreak* marks an important development in Nietzsche's attitude toward Socrates. Nietzsche begins to question the status of Socrates because of Socrates' possible alliance with Christian faith, which, in his middle period, Nietzsche has come to view as the cause of modernity. Nietzsche judges Socrates as being allied with Christianity in having advanced propositions "which one very much desires to be true",¹²² but which have absolutely no grounding in reality. Moreover, although he is critical of Socrates for having encouraged the development of the bad conscience by his claim that right action necessarily follows from right knowledge, he is also critical of Socrates for lacking a bad conscience¹²³ with respect to

¹²² Socrates may be seen by Nietzsche as allied with Christianity against philosophy due to his faith in the affects: "the reason of the sages of antiquity had advised men against the affects, Christianity wants to *restore* them". To this end, Christianity posits the theological virtues over top of "virtue as it was conceived by the philosophers -- as the victory of reason over the affects" (D.58). In effect, Nietzsche argues that Christianity has denied the pagan virtues all moral value and has elevated to their "extremest grandeur and strength" love of God, fear of God, and faith in God. All of these are affects.

¹²³ In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche distinguishes between the bad conscience, as a feeling which arises from a false, moral interpretation and from a physiology which has been conditioned to feel its pangs as truth, and the "intellectual conscience" which mistrusts the claims that all the moral feelings lay to truth: "But why do you *listen* to the voice of your conscience? And what gives you the right to consider such a judgement true and infallible? For this *faith*, is there no conscience for that? Have you never heard of an intellectual conscience? A conscience behind your 'conscience'?" (GS.335). In the passage from *Daybreak* discussed above, Nietzsche is using the term "bad conscience" to

his own dishonest well-wishing. "Honesty is among neither the Socratic nor the Christian virtues" (D.456), and Nietzsche considers honesty to be the primary virtue that is necessary in order to treat the sicknesses of morality.

Nietzsche further examines Socrates' claim concerning the unity of virtue and happiness. As we have seen, on the one hand, he certainly rejects this notion as a dishonest moralism. But, on the other hand, he finds this claim at least partially of benefit to the ancient Greeks, whom he now considers to have been less noble than modern human beings. In this way, *Daybreak* provides us with further evidence that Nietzsche no longer views the problem of modernity in terms of the conquest of what is modern, and therefore sick, over what is ancient, healthy, and strong. In his middle period, Nietzsche begins to search for the roots of modernity in Christianity. In *Daybreak*, he criticizes the notion that what is ancient is more healthy and noble than what is modern. He decides that ours is a higher nobility than was possessed by the ancient Greeks, whom Socrates opposed with his slogan, "the virtuous man is the happiest man" (D.199). According to Nietzsche, "we excel the Greeks" insofar as we have inherited their noble drives, but have risen above their dispositions towards the ancient objects of these drives.

As in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche once again claims in *Daybreak* that every noble Greek, when he pictures the happiest man, pictures the tyrant "who sacrifices everyone and everything to his arrogance and pleasure". The "ignoble secret of every good Greek aristocrat" is that he is willing to do anything for power and glory. In this respect, Nietzsche considers modern nobility superior; for somehow he esteems modern human beings to be more honourable: "The Greeks were far from making as light of life and death on account

refer to Socrates' lack of an intellectual conscience.

of an insult as we do under the impress of inherited chivalrous adventurousness and desire for self-sacrifice". In addition, he finds that "we are nobler" because in modern human beings, unlike in the Greeks, he claims that "loyalty, magnanimity", and "care for one's reputation" are all united in a single disposition (*D.199*). Nietzsche considers modern nobility to be less crude than the nobility of the Greeks.

Power and glory are judged by Nietzsche to be the ignoble objects of the noblest drives of the Greeks. For this reason, "when Socrates went so far as to say 'the virtuous man is the happiest man' they did not believe their ears and fancied they had heard something insane" (*D.199*). The ignobility at the heart of Greek nobility led them to reject Socrates' assertions concerning virtue and happiness as "insane". However, this ignobility is precisely the reason why Socrates' "untimely" slogan, along with his prescriptions for the Socratic virtues, served the Greeks so well. The blind lust for power among the Greeks needed to be controlled. Hence, "the Greeks, who all too frequently failed to evidence moderation, cold courage, fair-mindedness or rationality in general, were glad to give ear to the four Socratic virtues -- for they had such need of them and *yet* so little talent for them!" (*D.165*).

However, according to Nietzsche, the lust for power "no longer rages as blindly" in modern human beings as it did in the Greeks. The modern soul appears less tyrannical than does the Greek soul. Consequently, Nietzsche considers Socrates' prescriptions against tyranny, as well as "the idolisation of the concept of the state" less necessary or helpful to us (*D.199*). In order to sustain and to cultivate our higher nobility, he suggests that we require different restrictions than are offered by Socrates because our noblest drives have different objects today than did those of the Greeks. A return to antique nobility is not possible.

Although Socrates' claim concerning the unity of happiness and virtue is considered

by Nietzsche to have been useful to the Greeks in order to manage their own ignoble lust for power and glory, there also seems to be something tyrannical about Socrates' own moral prescriptions. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche returns to examine an aphorism from *Human, All Too Human*, in which Socrates is contrasted with "the tyrants of the spirit". In the original aphorism of 1878 entitled "The Tyrants of the Spirit", Nietzsche praises the pre-Socratic philosophers for their tyranny; he criticizes Socrates because he lacked their strength for tyranny, and because he both opposed and destroyed their tyranny. In *Daybreak*, he writes another aphorism by the same name, except in 1881 he condemns these tyrants of the spirit for having desired "to solve everything at a stroke" (D.547). In *Daybreak*, Socrates' moral prescriptions and over-simplifications appear to qualify him as one among these moral tyrants.

Socrates very much resembles Nietzsche's new description of the tyrants of the spirit; however, Nietzsche also describes Socrates as one who opposed their moral narrowness with his intoxicating discovery of "the antithetical magic" of "cause and effect". Nietzsche explains that Socrates' new "divine art" of dialectics offered resistance to the "more ancient and formerly all-powerful taste" of the Greeks, which was to think "under the spell of custom". Because of their ancient and strict adherence to a morality of custom, thinking was considered by the Greeks to be "*imitation* and all pleasure in speech and language had to lie in the *form*" (D.544). The Greeks therefore did not enjoy "originality", but sameness and uniformity. Only with Socrates' discovery of an "antithetical magic" was this strict adherence to custom challenged, and were originality and free-thinking promoted.

This passage in *Daybreak* is a complete reversal of Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates and the Greeks in *The Birth of Tragedy*. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socratic dialectic is viewed as a force that destroys the instinctual attunement of the Greeks to Dionysian reality. It

impairs their awareness of the ground of being; moreover, it is viewed as a constriction upon thought because it encourages human beings to refuse to contemplate the Dionysian aspect of their existence. In *Daybreak*, however, Socratic dialectics are viewed as a means to cultivate an awareness of that which lies beyond all Greek customs and stringent forms. The Greeks are portrayed as an excessively Apollonian culture that finds beauty only in imitation of traditional forms. Dialectics are employed by Socrates in order to remedy the impairment of the individual Greek's awareness of the Dionysian. This is an important example of the affinity that Nietzsche feels with Socrates with respect to his own Dionysian concerns.

The opposition which Socrates' divine dialectics offers to custom is seen by Nietzsche as "repugnant to the lustful and conceited". The morally-narrow tyrants of the spirit oppose all applications of logic to themselves; they "believe that their souls are exceptions," and that they are "not dialectical or rational beings but -- well, 'intuitive beings'... gifted with an 'inner sense' or with 'intellectual intuition'". In this regard, he contrasts modern times with classical antiquity. In classical Greece, philosophers like Socrates are judged to have offered opposition to morality and tradition; whereas today, Nietzsche argues that "we modern men are so accustomed to and brought up in the necessity of logic that it lies on our palate as the normal taste" (D.544). Socratism is no longer the untimely exception, but the rule. Furthermore, today, the exception which philosophy offers to logical Socratism is a wholly unpalatable mistake, according to Nietzsche. What philosophers seek today is religion.

In closing, Nietzsche still admires Socrates in three respects in *Daybreak*. First, he considers Socrates to be an "untimely" individual and an "original". In this respect, Nietzsche continues to identify with Socrates as one who opposes his times, and who acts as its gadfly. Second, Nietzsche identifies with Socrates as a physician of the soul. Socrates' discovery of cause and effect, his inquiry into the errors of the morality of custom and his sustained status

as the father of science are praised by Nietzsche for their effective opposition against tradition, even though he rejects Socrates' own moral prescriptions. Third, he has great respect for Socrates' ability to influence posterity. As in *The Birth of Tragedy*, he sees in Socrates the vortex and turning point of Western civilization. In Socrates, Nietzsche finds the roots of modern nobility, which he esteems higher than the nobility of the Greeks; for due to Socrates' influence, modern human beings have become more logically-minded and free-thinking than the Greeks, who shirked all the restraints of logic due to their tyrannical spirits. Hence, our modern nobility is higher than the Greeks because it has higher ends than those of power and glory. According to Nietzsche, our modern noble drives seek out knowledge, even at the expense of the happiness of the barbarian (D.429), or the Greek, who considers the happiest man to be the tyrant who would sacrifice everything -- even knowledge -- for power and glory.

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche views Socrates as a free-spirited moralist who lives without the assumptions and presuppositions of his age. Socrates is viewed as opposing custom and as breaking with traditional morality. However, Nietzsche begins to question Socrates' true status as a free spirit in *Daybreak*. He describes Socrates as having succumb to believing in certain aspects of his own individual morality. Socrates is unable to remain aloof from his own moral judgements; he fails to recognize their perspectival character. In *Daybreak*, Socrates is shown to have succumb to the error of faith: Socrates begins to believe in the absolute truth of his own claims, and to use these claims in order to make judgements. On the one hand, Socrates recognizes the falsity of all traditional moral evaluations; and yet, on the other hand, he fails to recognize the falsity of his own claims. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche becomes more critical of Socrates overall.

8. *Gay Science* (1882)

Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates in *Gay Science* is ambiguous, and its ambiguity marks the end of the clarity which began the middle period of his writing. There are some important changes in his portrayal of Socrates from *Daybreak*. Nietzsche no longer criticizes Socrates for being faithful. Rather, Socrates is viewed as an opponent of faith. Socrates is not counted among the faithful because he is considered to be an "actor"; as an actor, he does not believe or have faith in his own lies; rather, he employs the "mask" of joy in order to conceal his own bitter resentment. In this way, the real problem exhibited by Socrates is no longer his perceived relation to Christianity through faith, but his relation to Christianity due to his *ressentiment*, which becomes a new central focus in Nietzsche's writings, and one of his most central Dionysian concerns.

The portrait of "*the dying Socrates*" in *Gay Science* recalls Nietzsche's comparison of Jesus and Socrates in 1879, in which both characters are shown to be fundamentally resentful. With this new emphasis on the problem of *ressentiment* emerging in *Gay Science*, we see clearly the end of Nietzsche's second period. Nietzsche no longer finds the Dionysian expressed in the figure of Socrates. He views Socrates along with Christianity as fundamentally resentful, and therefore as an anti-Dionysian force. As in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is once again depicted in *Gay Science* as the opponent of Dionysus: in particular, Socrates becomes his antithetical "pied-piper" adversary. Because of Socrates' affinity with Christianity in *ressentiment*, Nietzsche will distance himself from both Socrates and

Christianity in the final period of his writing career. In order to distance himself from each, Nietzsche will adopt the pose of a Plato -- of a writer who remains separate from his characters, and who manipulates them for his own purposes -- as we shall see.

As mentioned above, Socrates becomes an ambiguous character in *Gay Science*. On the one hand, Socrates is a good philosopher and the father of science; he employs a rigorous science in order to undermine morality. Socrates is viewed as one who courageously fights "stupidity", who opposes faith, who attacks the "bad conscience", and who is more healthy than modern human beings. Nietzsche identifies himself with Socrates as both a "corrupter" of the youth, and a physician of the soul. Socrates is also praised for his self-control, his strength of character, his wisdom, his ability to be silent, as well as for being "dangerous". On the other hand, Socrates is also viewed as a bad philosopher and a fettered spirit. He is a poor physician who maliciously poisons his patients. He is an actor who appears joyful, but is fundamentally resentful. Moreover, Socrates is a "pied piper" who lures others away from Dionysus in order to feed his own resentful desire to revenge himself upon life. In this chapter of my thesis, I will explain significant changes in Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates, and I will offer analysis of the ambiguities of this portrayal as they are listed above.

Nietzsche's project in *Gay Science* is to find a means for human beings to become joyful about life again. They must begin once again to view good and evil as folly and innocence. However, through moral conditioning, they have come to view life as a gloomy affair. In order that human beings might become joyous again, Nietzsche argues that, through science, they must come to realize that "delusion and error are conditions of human knowledge and sensation" (*GS*.107). And yet, science too is flawed because it is pious. Science operates upon the conviction that "the truth is more important than any other thing". In the will to

truth at the heart of science Nietzsche detects a denial of part of what is necessary and given to existence; he finds beneath science a principle that is hostile to life and destructive: "'Will to truth' -- that might be a concealed will to death" (*GS*.344). For this reason, science is also insufficient to make human beings happy. Whereas science serves to undermine morality, art serves to undermine the will to truth at the heart of science. Art allows human beings to revel in untruth and deception. It gives them a "good conscience" by allowing them, in conjunction with science, to partake in both truth and untruth as necessary aspects of life. However, neither art nor science are sufficient, according to Nietzsche; for neither the artist nor the scientist, nor their combination, are the "appraisers of happiness". They lack the ability "to see something that has no name yet and hence cannot be mentioned although it stares us all in the face" (*GS*.261). Due to the inadequacy of both science and art, Nietzsche turns to the task of discovering a truly "gay science", and he finds such a joyful wisdom only in philosophy. Through philosophy, human beings may once again become playful.

According to Nietzsche, there are two sorts of philosophers: "in some it is their deprivations that philosophize; in others, their riches and strengths. The former *need* their philosophy, whether it be as a prop, a sedative, medicine, redemption, elevation, or self-alienation. For the latter it is merely a beautiful luxury" (*GS*.p2). In the former case, it is the distressed and sick thinker that philosophizes: in the latter, it is the healthy, over-abundant thinker. These two kinds of philosophers correspond to two types of suffering:

first, those who suffer from the *over-fullness of life* -- they want a Dionysian art and likewise a tragic view of life, a tragic insight -- and then those who suffer from the *impoverishment of life* and seek rest, stillness, calm seas, redemption from themselves through art and knowledge, or intoxication, convulsions, anaesthesia, and madness. (*GS*.370)

Here, art is shown to follow and to glorify the sufferings and the happiness of these two

different philosophic appraisals of happiness. One appraisal is made according to what best alleviates the suffering of the impoverished, sickly human being; the other appraisal arises from a person who is overflowing with life and health.

Socrates is shown by Nietzsche to be a philosopher. Socrates, as the father of science, detects the false judgements of morality. He is described as fighting against stupidity, as courageous, as an artist, and as more healthy than modern philosophers. However, Nietzsche is also critical of Socrates as a philosopher. He judges Socrates to be a bad philosopher and a sufferer of the sickly, impoverished type in *The Gay Science*.¹²⁴ Socrates uses art as an anesthetic for his own suffering. As an artist and an actor, Socrates dons a mask whereby he appears joyous and playful throughout life; however, gaiety is only his mask. Beneath his disguise, Socrates is gloomy and thoroughly pessimistic, as we shall see.

In book one of *Gay Science*, Nietzsche appears to identify himself -- "a disgruntled philosopher" -- with Socrates as a corrupter of the youth. He explains that, in this instance, "corruption" is a valuation of the herd for anything that challenges their faith or delights in individuality. On the one hand, the herd calls "corrupt" any sublimation of either the "national energies" or the drive to war into private passions, which the individual may then squander lavishly "as he could not have formerly when he was simply not rich enough". Such peaceful individuals are considered by the herd to be signs of exhaustion. Because these rich individuals appear too gentle and less useful for the protection of the herd, they are consequently accused of corruption by the herd, which fails to see that their cruelty has not

¹²⁴ And yet, Nietzsche has no false illusions of himself as the antithesis of the sick philosopher. Rather, Nietzsche admits, "I am still waiting for a philosophical *physician* in the exceptional sense of that word" (*GS*.p2). However, Nietzsche esteems himself more healthy than Socrates, even though he himself is not completely healthy.

disappeared, but has simply become "more refined", according to Nietzsche. On the other hand, the herd calls corrupt all those who are too warlike and tyrannical, and who compromise the moral integrity of the herd. These are considered by Nietzsche to be "the precocious harbingers of *individuals*" (*GS.23*).¹²⁵ Nietzsche seeks out students who are able to become corrupted in these two ways. However, he is unable to find any students whose souls are sufficiently warlike for his "way of thinking" (*GS.32*).

Nietzsche encounters only two sorts of students: "This one cannot say 'No,' and that one says to everything 'Half and half'". Nietzsche claims that the former would die if he adopted Nietzsche's doctrine, because he would suffer too much from being unable to delight in warlike no-saying, in conquest and domination of what is weak by what is strong. The latter Nietzsche loathes, and he wishes rather to have him as an enemy, because he would always "make some personal compromise with every cause he represents" (*GS.32*). So whereas the former type could never be corrupted because he would perish first, the latter type would resist all corruption; he would avoid the danger and the suffering of the former by means of constant compromise. This is the fundamental difficulty which both Nietzsche and Socrates encounter as philosophical physicians of the soul: either their patients are incapable of withstanding their prescribed treatments, or they are unwilling to suffer the treatment itself.

Nietzsche praises Socrates for his wisdom, his self-control, and his ability to be silent, or not to speak what he really thinks. Socrates' ability to conceal his innermost thoughts

¹²⁵ Here, Nietzsche ranks the peaceful individual who has refined his cruelty and is warlike in other ways above the tyrant, who is only considered to be a precursor to the individual. Elsewhere, Nietzsche stresses this claim: "Certainly the state in which we hurt others is rarely as agreeable... as that in which we benefit others; it is a sign that we are still lacking power, or it shows a sense of frustration in the face of this poverty" (*GS.13*).

behind a marvellous mask is likened to a similar ability in the emperors Augustus and Nero. Each of these men concealed their deepest understandings and judgements about existence behind a mask which enabled them to live nobly, and to play the roles of great leaders and wise men. However, Nietzsche distinguishes Augustus and Nero from Socrates by their different characters, and by the corresponding differences in their need for the art of the mask. Augustus and Nero employ masks in order to rule and to be considered wise. Both men knew of the falsehood underlying their own abilities. Both recognized the folly of existence as its complete purposelessness. However, in order to rule and to appear wise, each revelled in the mask. Each created purposes for himself, and each played at his rule and his wisdom. This, according to Nietzsche, was their strength: they lived meaningfully amidst meaninglessness by employing the mask, and they died rejoicing in such an existence.

Nero and Augustus are described as "truly the opposite of the dying Socrates!". All three are actors employing masks; however, whereas Nero and Augustus conceal their awareness of the meaninglessness of existence out of joy, Socrates wears a mask in order to conceal his own joylessness. Nietzsche likens Socrates' character to that of Tiberius, for whom life was "a long death". However, unlike Socrates, Tiberius never employed the mask; he was "genuine and no actor" (*GS*.36). Tiberius did not hide his disgust with life unlike Socrates, who repressed his judgements against existence until the very last minute of his life. Nietzsche returns to discuss Socrates' death in Book four of *Gay Science*.

In Book four, Nietzsche sees himself, Socrates, and philosophy as fundamentally opposed to faith which, by its condemnations of egoism, has "made selfishness stupid and ugly and poisoned it". In effect, by chastising human beings for being selfish individuals who stand apart from the herd, the preachers of faith have conditioned human beings by custom

to feel bad about their egoism, such that their selfishness has become ugly to them, and when they pursue selfish ends, now they only pursue what is ugly.¹²⁶ Faith serves the herd instinct in human beings by condemning all that is selfish, or what serves the individual over against the herd. The condemnations of faith have given human beings a bad conscience for all that is selfish by bidding them to find in selfishness "the true source of all unhappiness". Against the preachers of faith, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as one, like himself, who sees not selfishness as the source for most unhappiness, but the "stupidity" of faith. Nietzsche counts himself as one among the long line of philosophers since Socrates who have taught that stupid or thoughtless living according to opinion is the cause of most human unhappiness. By this teaching, Socrates and philosophy have removed from faith its good conscience.¹²⁷ "These philosophers *harmed* stupidity" (*GS*.328) by using "the intellectual conscience" to attack the bad conscience which arises from faith and moral conditioning:

But why do you *listen* to the voice of your conscience? And what gives you the right to consider such a judgement true and infallible? For this *faith* -- is there no conscience for that? Have you never heard of an intellectual conscience? A conscience behind your 'conscience'? (*GS*.335)

As one who awakens human beings to question their moral assumptions and the validity of the opinions, Socrates is greatly esteemed by Nietzsche.

The next reference to Socrates returns to a discussion of Socrates' death and his last

¹²⁶ In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche expresses this problem succinctly: "Christianity gave Eros poison to drink -- he did not die or it, to be sure, but degenerated into vice" (*BGE*.168).

¹²⁷ We have already seen Nietzsche's criticisms of faith's good conscience in *Daybreak*. However, in *Daybreak* Nietzsche implicates Socrates as one among the stupid and faithful who believe with a good conscience that the virtuous man is the happiest man. Socrates and the faithful are able to have a good conscience about believing this because it feels unselfish, and it is something that everyone wishes were true. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche opposes Socrates to such sentimental faith in the truth (see *D*.456).

words. For Nietzsche, the last words of Socrates are ominous; they reveal the whole truth about Socrates, and quite possibly, it is the final words of Socrates which lead Nietzsche more than anything else to judge Socrates as a fundamentally sick, wasted, and resentful individual who slandered all of existence. The death of Socrates is judged by Nietzsche to illuminate Socrates' deep-seated resentment towards life as early as 1879, when he compared the deaths of Socrates and Jesus. In Book four of *Gay Science*, Nietzsche interprets his last words as a clear sign of his disgust and his weariness for life:

Whether it was death or the poison or piety or malice -- something loosened his tongue at that moment and he said: "O Crito. I owe Asclepius a rooster." This ridiculous and terrible "last word" for those who have ears: "O Crito, *life is a disease*". Is it possible that a man like him, who had lived cheerfully and like a soldier in the sight of everyone, should have been a pessimist? (*GS*.340)

According to Nietzsche, the judgement underlying all of Socrates' treatments as a physician of the soul is that "*life is a disease*". This diagnosis is set up by Nietzsche to express the fundamental difference between Socrates and himself. Whereas Socrates is demonstrated to treat life itself as a horrible disease, Nietzsche looks upon life as what is most precious of all; even in its varying degrees of sickness and health, Nietzsche thinks that life ought to be treasured as the opportunity for great health and strength. Unlike "*the dying Socrates*", Nietzsche does not look to death as a cure for life; rather, he seeks a way of living and dying that is most healthy.

Nietzsche praises Socrates for his courage and wisdom "in everything he did, said -- and did not say". Nietzsche is amazed at the incredible strength and self-mastery that Socrates must have had in order to employ his mask of cheerfulness; for this mask conceals such bitter resentment for life, and the fact that "Socrates suffered life!". Socrates suffered not from an over-fullness of life, but from the impoverishment of life. It is because of his impoverished

state and his "lack of an ounce of magnanimity" that Socrates sought with this "blasphemous saying" to revenge himself on life, according to Nietzsche (*GS*.340).

Nietzsche describes Socrates as the "mocking and enamoured monster and pied piper of Athens". As in *The Birth of Tragedy* (*BT*.13;85), so too in *Gay Science* is Socrates depicted as a monstrosity. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, it is his overdeveloped "logical side" -- his "logical Socratism" -- in conjunction with his "great Cyclops' eye", or inability to see with any depth, that makes Socrates monstrous. In *Gay Science*, however, Socrates is monstrous because he is so dangerous and strong. Socrates detested life to the very bottom of his soul. His revenge upon life was "gruesome". It is not merely Socrates' ugly desire for revenge which made him so monstrous; for with his incredible strength for courage and wisdom, he became monstrously dangerous. Socrates was able to mock life by his own cheerfulness. This cheerfulness made Socrates dangerous, because it attracted to his side "the most overweening youths" (*GS*.340). As the "pied piper of Athens," Socrates charmed youths towards his philosophy by his own happy example. This, too, fed Socrates' revenge against life, for by means of his mocking cheerfulness Socrates attracted patients who allowed themselves to be treated by his own poisonous medicine. In fact, not only did Socrates appear to be an attractive and effective physician, but his medicine also appealed to the youth.

Socrates' poisonous draught was enticing to the youths because, as we have seen in *Daybreak*, Socrates advanced propositions "which one very much desires to be true" (*D*.456). Consequently, it was easy for youths to accept Socrates' false teachings without developing a bad conscience concerning their dishonesty. Again, in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche shows how the Stoics adopted Socrates' saying, "The virtuous man is the happiest man" as an "eye-catching sign for the great mass and a casuistic subtlety for the subtle". By means of offering

this attractive Socratic medicine, both Socrates and the Stoics are better enabled to poison their patients with mediocrity. By their teachings, human beings learn to seek as much pleasure and as little displeasure as possible. The poison of these teachings lies in the fact that pleasure and pain are "so tied together that whoever *wanted* to have as much as possible of the one *must* also have as much as possible of the other -- that whoever wanted to learn to 'jubilate up to the heavens' would also have to be prepared for 'depression unto death'" (GS.12). By offering human beings virtue as a means not to suffer from life, Socrates and the Stoics attracted the most overweening youths. However, this teaching rendered the youth effeminate; it made them "tremble and sob" (GS.340). By promising them relief from the suffering given to life, this medicine poisoned them completely for their highest happiness; hence it offered them only the most mediocre happiness, which is to avoid suffering as much as possible.

In the final reference to Socrates in *Gay Science*,¹²⁸ Nietzsche praises him for being more healthy than modern philosophers. As we have seen in *Daybreak*,¹²⁹ Nietzsche describes modern philosophy as the opposite of ancient philosophy. In Book five of *Gay Science*, he argues that in ancient times, "philosophers were afraid of the senses". They thought that "the senses might lure them away from their own world, from the cold realm of 'ideas'" (GS.372). Socrates and the ancient philosophers denied the sensual music of life as an ascetic measure which served to discipline their souls, and to harden them to coldness and

¹²⁸ The fifth book of *Gay Science* was not published until 1887, one year after *Beyond Good and Evil*. I have chosen to discuss it here because Nietzsche himself saw fit to include it in *Gay Science*, as where it most belongs.

¹²⁹ See especially (D.544).

to privation. Their prescriptions and "superstitions"¹³⁰ against the senses were in the service of their own health as thinkers.

Nietzsche argues that we have "unlearned this fear too much". Modern philosophers need to be more like the ancients because we now believe in the senses too readily. Today we are inclined to make the opposite judgement, "namely that *ideas* are worse seductresses than our senses". Nietzsche appears to consider both valuations -- the modern and the ancient -- equally wrong. However, the modern judgement is more crippling because it does not arise from a strength of character which prescribes ascetic measures for its own discipline and health. Rather, although modern philosophers deny the false world of ideas of the ancient philosophers, these ideas are allowed to creep back into their own philosophy through the senses. Without the discipline of the ancient philosophers, these ideas make modern philosophers "*even paler*": "Don't you sense a long concealed vampire in the background who begins with the senses and in the end is left with, and leaves, mere bones, mere clatter?". These modern philosophers are akin to those students who Nietzsche would rather have as enemies -- who say "Half and half" to everything. Although they preach restrictions, they are unwilling to suffer restrictions and ascetic measures for their own health. By sleight of hand, they idealize everything; unlike the ancients who simply denied themselves the music of life, these modern philosophers begin with this music, but suck the blood out of it, leaving only "categories, formulas, *words*". "In sum: All philosophical idealism to date was something like a disease, unless it was, as it was in Plato's case, the caution of an over-rich and dangerous

¹³⁰ Elsewhere, Nietzsche praises "*superstition*" as "second-order free spirit" because it offers some effective resistance to the common faith of a people: "Whoever is superstitious is always, compared with the religious human being, much more of a person; and a superstitious society is one in which there are many individuals and much delight in individuality" (*GS*.23).

health, the fear of *over-powerful* senses, the prudence of a prudent Socratic". In this passage, Nietzsche suggests that "we moderns are... not healthy enough *to be in need of* Plato's idealism" (*GS*.372). Modern philosophy arises from souls too weak to impose restrictions upon themselves as means to condition themselves for strength. Whereas the idealism of the ancients arises from an over-abundance of health, the idealism of modern philosophy expresses exhaustion, inability, and lack of discipline.

In conclusion, Nietzsche presents Socrates no longer as a free spirit; at most, Socrates is a "second-order free spirit" (*GS*.23). In *Gay Science*, Socrates is demonstrated to lack the joy of the truly free spirit. Socrates reaches the second stage in the liberation of the free spirit. He sees the true nature of things as chaos and meaninglessness, and he therefore dons the mask of the actor in order to live cheerfully. However, Socrates does not rise to the third stage in the "great liberation" of the free spirit as it is outlined in *Human, All Too Human*.¹³¹ He is unable to be playful at heart with the understanding that all is folly. Socrates remains, to the end of his days, resentful; in his monstrous desire for revenge, he applies his own morbid medicine to the youth of Athens.

Nietzsche no longer describes Socrates as one of the faithful, as he did in *Daybreak*. As an accomplished and wise actor, Socrates does not believe his own lies. He knows what poison he purveys in his teachings. He is a mocking monster, after all. And Socrates is aware that his own cheerful *mein* is only a facade which conceals his own deepest bitterness against life. In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche begins to focus on the problem of *ressentiment* as the deepest, darkest secret of Socrates. For this reason, his portrayal of Socrates has become increasingly negative.

¹³¹ For a detailed examination of the three stages in the genesis of the free spirit, consult pp. 110-113 of my thesis.

PART THREE: NIETZSCHE AS "PLATONIZER" VERSUS SOCRATES

As we have seen, Nietzsche's appraisal of Socrates changes throughout his writing career according to how he understands Socrates' relation to the Dionysian. At the beginning of the first period of his writing, we demonstrated that Socrates is viewed largely as a negative figure because Nietzsche has come to understand the problem of our modern Dionysian incapacities in terms of a quarrel between the moderns and the ancients, in which the ancients lose, and Socrates leads the moderns to victory. However, by Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche has come to reject this manner of approaching the problem of modernity. He no longer sees modernity as the result of the defeat of the ancient world by Socrates, the modern figure, but as the result of Christianity.

At the beginning of the middle period, Nietzsche separates Socrates from what he considers to be the root cause of our modern anti-Dionysian tendencies: namely, Jesus and Christianity. Socrates becomes a representative of "the finest state of the human soul", and the "most imperishable of intercessors" between human beings and Dionysus. At the beginning of this period, the Dionysian is the Socratic. However, by *Gay Science*, Nietzsche has come to reject the notion that the Socratic may be reconciled with the Dionysian in this manner. Although his attitude towards Socrates has changed through these two periods, Nietzsche's concern with the Dionysian remains constant and central to his thought. He merely articulates the problem differently from different perspectives during the different periods, viewing various characters now as his allies, later as his opponents, depending upon

whether or not he feels that they share his own Dionysian concerns.

The third and final period of Nietzsche's writing career begins after *Gay Science*. At the beginning of this period, Nietzsche no longer identifies the Socratic with the Dionysian; rather, he views the Socratic as an ally of the Christian in *ressentiment*, and therefore, as a fundamentally anti-Dionysian force. For this reason, Nietzsche desires to separate and to distance himself from Socrates and Christianity, both of which he considers to be sick, and therefore dangerous to his own health:

The sick represent the greatest danger for the healthy... That the sick should *not* make the healthy sick... should surely be our supreme concern on earth; but this requires above all that the healthy should be *segregated* from the sick, guarded even from the sight of the sick, that they may not confound themselves with the sick. (*GM*:III.14)

Nietzsche distances himself from the sickness of Socrates and Christianity by relating to them as characters and subjects for his writing. As a writer, Nietzsche is able to distance himself from that about which he is writing; he is able to stand over Socrates and Christianity, to experiment upon them, and to manipulate them. Nietzsche distinguishes himself in this manner as a Plato figure: as a writer who manipulates Socrates.

Nietzsche has always partly distinguished Plato from Socrates in his writings. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is a negative figure who corrupts Plato, who is initially a positive and hopeful figure with tragic-Dionysian concerns. In *Philosophy in The Tragic Age of The Greeks*, Socrates is depicted as a positive figure, whereas Plato becomes a negative figure. In *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, this view of Socrates as a positive figure and Plato as a negative figure continues, until *Schopenhauer As Educator*, where both portrayals are positive. In Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*, Socrates is once again depicted as the corrupter of Plato, who represents the failed possibility among the Greeks to

realize their "higher man". It is this view of Socrates as the corrupter of Plato that Nietzsche adopts during the beginning of his third and final period. This is precisely the view that is presented in *Beyond Good and Evil* and the *Will To Power* notebooks. Interestingly, Plato, as writer, is corrupted by his own material: Socrates. Nietzsche is aware of this danger of contagion in his own writing as well. He recognizes that his own position as an author who stands above his artwork does not grant him immunity to the problems that he discusses. However, as a Plato figure, Nietzsche desires to out-do Plato. Whereas Plato becomes corrupted by Socrates, Nietzsche writes about Socrates in order to become stronger and healthier.

Nietzsche's third and final period begins with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. I have characterized this final period as Nietzsche's "Platonizing" period. Not only does Nietzsche himself compare his own project to Plato's in the books of his final period; very many scholars besides myself also make this observation. In *Zarathustra*, for example, Nietzsche continues to investigate his own Dionysian concerns; however, he attempts to do so by "Platonizing" in an anti-Christian manner. Stanley Rosen notes the Platonic character of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*:

I see *Zarathustra* as an example of Nietzsche's *grosse Politik*, and in that sense his Platonism. Whereas Plato as it were establishes Western European history on a basis of philosophy by writing the *Republic*, Nietzsche publishes *Zarathustra* in order to destroy a Western Europe that has been enervated by a deteriorated, historically exhausted Christianity, or Platonism for the masses.¹³²

Nietzsche's primary rival in *Zarathustra* is Christ, in Rosen's view. However, "[t]he peculiar complexity and allusiveness of Nietzsche's rhetoric in *Zarathustra* arise from his attempt to

¹³² Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment* xiv.

convert Platonists and Christians in the same book". Rosen sees the double-teachings of *Zarathustra* as evidence of Nietzsche's Platonizing; for Plato "also conveys two teachings, one for the few and one for the many, in the same dialogue".¹³³ Indeed, Nietzsche himself comments upon the Platonizing character of *Zarathustra*: "In reading Teichmüller I am ever more transfixed with amazement at how little I know Plato and *how much Zarathustra platonize!*".¹³⁴

Rosen produces a great deal of evidence of Nietzsche's Platonizing in *Zarathustra*. On the level of style and form, Rosen points out that *Zarathustra* is "the only work by Nietzsche in which he does not speak in his own name but, like Plato, conceals himself behind the mask of a dramatic hero".¹³⁵ On the level of content, Rosen presents numerous parallels and similarities between Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* and Plato's *Apology*, *Parmenides*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Protagoras*, *Republic*, *Second Letter*, *Statesman*, *Symposium*, and *Theaetetus*.¹³⁶

In his collection of essays on *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy*, Leo Strauss argues that Nietzsche takes the stance of a Plato when he composes *Beyond Good and Evil*, the first book to follow *Zarathustra*: "[I]n *Beyond Good and Evil*... [Nietzsche] 'Platonizes' as regards the 'form' more than anywhere else".¹³⁷ As I have suggested above, Nietzsche Platonizes in order to distance himself from the sickness of Socrates and Christianity.

¹³³ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment* 185.

¹³⁴ Letter to Overbeck, 22 October 1883.

¹³⁵ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment* 17.

¹³⁶ Rosen, *The Mask of Enlightenment*. On *Apology*, 88-90; *Parmenides*, 110; *Phaedo*, 237; *Phaedrus*, 61-3, 66, 70, 99; *Protagoras*, 90; *Republic*, 43, 78, 98, 114, 230, 241; *Second Letter*, 183; *Statesman*, 10-11, 140, 196; *Symposium*, 31, 99, 115; *Theaetetus*, 62.

¹³⁷ Leo Strauss, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*" 175.

Moreover, Nietzsche intends not simply to emulate Plato in his position of power and strength as a writer; for he views Plato as having been corrupted by his subject material. Rather, Nietzsche desires to be a better Plato than was Plato himself: "Nietzsche intends... to overcome Plato not only by substituting his truth for Plato's but also by surpassing him in strength or power".¹³⁸

On The Genealogy of Morals follows *Beyond Good and Evil*, and it too expresses Nietzsche's anti-Christian, Platonizing tendencies. In the third essay, for instance, Nietzsche praises Plato for his understanding of lies. In this essay, Nietzsche criticizes "our educated people of today, our 'good people'" for only being capable of a "*dishonest* lie". This criticism of the "good" and the "moralized" is akin to Nietzsche's earlier criticisms of both Socrates and Christianity for lacking the virtue of honesty: "*honesty* is among neither the Socratic nor the Christian virtues" (D.456). Nietzsche invokes Plato (GM:III.19), who, like Nietzsche, makes reference to two sorts of lies: one is useful as a preventive and a drug "for so-called friends when from madness or some folly they attempt to do something bad"; the other is "hated not only by gods, but also by human beings".¹³⁹ By his clever use of Plato, Nietzsche suggests that a "*dishonest* lie" is akin to a lie in the soul -- the most fearsome of all lies; for such a lie is told by one who "voluntarily wishes to lie about the most sovereign things to what is most sovereign in himself". It is a lie "about the things that are" which is told by the "unlearned", and "to hold a lie there [in the soul] is what everyone would least accept... [E]veryone hates a lie in that place most of all".¹⁴⁰ In the third essay, Nietzsche's Platonizing can clearly be seen.

¹³⁸ Strauss, "Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*" 183.

¹³⁹ Plato, *Republic* 382c.

¹⁴⁰ Plato, *Republic* 382ab.

He finds in Plato someone who knows the difference between truth and lies. Plato's double-teaching is that the truth be told to the select few, and that "'honest' lies" be told to the many, rather than the "dishonest lies" of our "good people", of Socrates and Christianity.¹⁴¹

In *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche continues to distance himself from Socrates. It is worth noting that the second chapter of this book is not "The Problem of Plato", but "The Problem of Socrates". To be sure, "Platonism" remains a difficult problem for Nietzsche; however, he has come to understand his own project as somehow akin to Plato's project, such that, in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explicitly compares his own use of Schopenhauer and Wagner in *Untimely Meditations* with Plato's use of Socrates. As noted in the introduction to my thesis, both Walter Kaufmann and Leon Craig argue for the Platonizing character of Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*, which they view as his own personal *Apology*.¹⁴²

Given all of this evidence of Nietzsche's Platonizing during his final period, it is reasonable to suggest that, during this time, Nietzsche also Platonizes against Socrates. I do not discuss *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in the chapters which follow because Socrates is not mentioned in *Zarathustra*. However, *Zarathustra* has been demonstrated above to mark the beginning of Nietzsche's Platonizing period. He begins to Platonize against Socrates in *Beyond Good and Evil*, where he separates himself strongly from Socrates, portraying him as a negative figure. However, as Nietzsche continues to write books during this period, he becomes less certain about his negative portrayal of Socrates. By 1888, Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates becomes ambiguous once again.

¹⁴¹ For more discussion of Plato's double-teaching and its similarity to Nietzsche's own understanding, see Rosen, "Nietzsche's Platonism" 148; "Remarks on Nietzsche's Platonism" 197.

¹⁴² Craig, "Nietzsche's 'Apology': On Reading *Ecce Homo*"; Kaufmann, "Nietzsche's Attitude Toward Socrates" 408-409.

9. *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886)

Nietzsche's ambiguity on the question of whether Socrates is a good philosopher or a bad philosopher in *Gay Science* largely disappears in *Beyond Good and Evil*. In 1886, it becomes more clear to Nietzsche that Socrates is a bad philosopher who "deserved his hemlock". Not only is Socrates viewed as the corrupter of Plato; he is the corrupter of philosophy in general. Nietzsche examines the particular ways in which Socrates has brought about the corruption of philosophy. He is shown to be a dogmatist, and both sceptical and "objective" in the worst sense. He is viewed as a "mis-leader" and as an opponent of Dionysus. Most notably, Nietzsche begins to view Socrates as a leader of the mob, a promoter of the herd, and therefore as a destroyer of what is noble.

However, although Nietzsche is fairly certain of Socrates' anti-Dionysian status in *Beyond Good and Evil*, he is unwilling to portray Socrates, his best enemy, in a wholly negative way. As a formidable enemy, Socrates presents the opportunity for a great victory by his opposition. As a worthy enemy, Socrates is not entirely despicable to Nietzsche. For instance, as in *Gay Science*, Socrates is viewed as an opponent of faith. Socrates is also considered great both in his wisdom and his pride because of his ability to suffer deeply. He exhibits a "greatness of soul" that is no longer possible today. Moreover, although Nietzsche argues strongly in *Beyond Good and Evil* that Socrates is an anti-Dionysian figure, there also seems to be the suggestion that, although Socrates may not be a "true philosopher", he may, at least, be the "precursor to a philosopher".

Nietzsche describes *Beyond Good and Evil* as a "Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future". He seeks beyond what has so far been misconstrued as philosophy, and he labours to overcome all obstacles and impediments to the development of a new philosophy by "higher men" and philosophers of the future. He desires to encourage the growth of a new philosophy which he terms "beyond good and evil" (*BGE.4*). This would be a philosophy which no longer accepts moral conventions and evaluations as anything more than perspectives that may be ranked according to their ability to advance and preserve certain species of life. He criticizes the old faith in morality as a denial of perspective, and he proclaims his new faith and hope in the "*new philosophers*" who will be "strong and original enough to make a start on antithetical evaluations and to revalue and reverse 'eternal values'" (*BGE.203*). Nietzsche writes *Beyond Good and Evil* in order to prepare for the arrival of these "higher men", and as a free spirit, Nietzsche himself poses as a "herald" and a "precursor" to "these philosophers of the future" (*BGE.44*).

Before moving on to examine Nietzsche's view of Socrates as a bad philosopher, and therefore his view of what true philosophy is not, and what needs to be destroyed in the name of philosophy, I wish to closely examine Nietzsche's own conception of what precisely constitutes good philosophy. I find Nietzsche's own distinctions between bad philosophy -- which I have been referring to as "sophistry" -- and his own philosophy of power very slippery. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche writes that all the drives seek to philosophize: "each one of them would be only too glad to present *itself* as the ultimate goal of existence and as the legitimate *master* of all the other drives. For every drive is tyrannical: and it is as *such* that it tries to philosophize" (*BGE.6*). In this respect, Nietzsche's criticisms of the dishonesty of philosophers who defend the desires of their hearts with reasons sought after the

event seems to implicate all philosophers, including Nietzsche; for "philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to power, to 'creation of the world', to *causa prima*" (BGE.9). Philosophy is necessarily advocacy for a particular drive at the expense of all others. Perhaps a major distinction that Nietzsche wishes to draw between his own philosophy of power and bad philosophy or sophistry is that Nietzsche himself is openly sophistic, whereas sophists try to hide their sophistry, passing it off as "real *power* of spirituality, real *depth* of spiritual insight, in short philosophy" (BGE.252). However, it seems true that fundamentally there is no difference in kind between philosophy and sophistry for Nietzsche.

Perhaps philosophy merely promotes the noblest drives by allowing for distinctions, variety, and order of rank, whereas sophistry, in its dishonesty, denies all rank ordering, and therefore promotes only the basest instincts. However, if this is the best representation of Nietzsche's conception of the difference between philosophy and sophistry, it still remains unclear how different species of life may be ranked. Nietzsche admits his difficulties in making such judgements. For example, he points out that organisms cannot rightly be ranked according to their strength or weakness, and that "it should be kept in mind that 'strong' and 'weak' are relative concepts" (GS.118). There is no strength or weakness as such. There are only strengths and weaknesses in particular organisms. Similarly, health and sickness cannot readily be used to rank organisms; for "there is no health as such" (GS.120). The determination of health depends upon goals, horizons, energies, impulses, and errors. This means that there are as many sorts of health as there are types of life, and judging one type of life by the standards of health which describe another is therefore an error. It is difficult to see how any kind of ranking of the drives could be possible for Nietzsche. Hence, the very

possibility of philosophy seems to be jeopardized.

Having recognized these difficulties with Nietzsche's own distinctions between philosophy and sophistry, we may now examine Nietzsche's project of destroying what he considers to be the corruption of true philosophy, namely, sophistry. Part of his preparations for the higher men and philosophers of the future involves destroying the edifice which has so far been proclaimed as philosophy, and which has done the most to hinder true philosophy, in Nietzsche's estimation. Nietzsche's criticisms of bad philosophy are also criticisms of Socrates. As was demonstrated in *Gay Science* (GS.p2), Nietzsche speaks about two sorts of philosophers: there are good, Dionysian philosophers; and there are bad, anti-Dionysian philosophers. Although Nietzsche recognizes in Socrates both sorts of philosophers in *Gay Science*, already in 1882, he is beginning to suspect that Socrates is of the latter breed. By the time that he has written *Beyond Good and Evil* in 1886, Nietzsche has decided that Socrates is a bad philosopher. He views him as both dangerous and harmful to the appearance of higher men. Socrates is criticized as a dogmatist, as a sophist promoting mob morality, as the worst sort of sceptic with the weak will of an objective thinker, and, as we have already seen in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche views Socrates as the extraordinary opponent of Dionysus. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche's view of Socrates narrows. He finds less and less praiseworthy about Socrates, who has become a negative figure. Socrates is largely used as an example of the edifice which has so far been proclaimed as philosophy, and which, because it has done the most to hinder true philosophy, needs to be destroyed.

The first reference to Socrates as a corrupting influence in philosophy appears in the preface, in which Nietzsche discusses the perils of "dogmatism". Dogmatic philosophy arises from the very nature of things, for "nothing is 'given' as real except our world of desires and

passions", and "we can rise or sink to no other 'reality' than the reality of our drives" (*BGE.36*). Furthermore, "every drive is tyrannical: and it is as *such* that it tries to philosophize" (*BGE.6*). The great drives try to "inscribe themselves in the hearts of humans with eternal demands". Dogmatic philosophy is thought to arise from the most dangerous of these drives: "it certainly has to be admitted that the worst, most wearisomely protracted and most dangerous of all errors hitherto has been a dogmatist's error, namely Plato's invention of pure spirit and the good in itself". Plato's dogmatism is viewed by Nietzsche as a nihilistic denial of perspective, or "the basic condition of all life" (*BGE.p*). However, Nietzsche detects behind Plato -- whom he refers to as the "loveliest product of antiquity" -- the figure of Socrates as a "corrupter of youth", and as the physician who bestowed upon Plato his malady of dogmatism.

In keeping with his earlier writings, Nietzsche poses as physician and gadfly. He conceives of his own task as "*wakefulness itself*" from the dogmatism of Plato, and from the infections brought about by the "wicked Socrates", who is now considered to "have deserved his hemlock". As a physician, Nietzsche diagnoses the disease which infects modern human beings as having arisen both from Platonism and "the Christian ecclesiastical pressure of millennia -- for Christianity is Platonism for 'the people'". However, he views the struggle against these two great errors also as having cultivated certain strengths in modern human beings. By means of the challenge to resist such errors, Nietzsche claims that we now experience "a magnificent tension of the spirit such as has never existed on earth before" (*BGE.p*). In this way, he views the struggle against these two formidable opponents as our greatest opportunity for overcoming the weaknesses and sicknesses of the present. He compares this new tension to the tension of a bowstring, judging it as the essential means of

propulsion towards our "most distant targets": namely, the philosophers of the future. In 1886, Nietzsche's highest praise for Socrates is as a formidable enemy.

In keeping with his portrayal of Socrates as the corrupter of Plato and the ruination of philosophy, Nietzsche next discusses Socrates in order to illustrate his criticisms of other dangers which have infected philosophy: namely, inordinate praise for objectivity and the desire to explain everything. Nietzsche points out that "a thing explained is a thing we have no further concern with". He views the urge to explain as the tactic of a constitution that is too exhausted to remain under the strain of its own passionate tensions. He finds this exhaustion of the will to life underlying Apollo's γνῶθι σεαυτόν, Socratic philosophy, as well as the scientific drive to objectivity: "What did that god mean who counselled: 'know thyself!?' Does that perhaps mean: 'Have no further concern with thyself! become objective!' -- And Socrates? -- And the 'man of science'?" (*BGE.80*).

Nietzsche has described his difficulties with offering explanations of things previously in *Gay Science*, where "explanation" is contrasted with "description". According to Nietzsche, our descriptions are better today than those of ancient times, but "we do not explain any more than our predecessors". Although we have uncovered a "manifold one-after-another where the naive man and inquirer of older cultures saw only two separate things", our conceptions of causality do not offer us any greater comprehension of events. Quality still "appears as a 'miracle'"; although we may describe the phenomenon of "a push" by means of causal relations, "nobody has 'explained' a push". Nietzsche judges all explanations to be exercises in futility because, in order to offer an explanation of a thing, we must first render it as an image, "our image!" (*GS.112*). In this way, our descriptions of things and their causal relations are simply descriptions of ourselves. Cause and effect explanations are themselves

over-simplifications and errors which serve a particular drive. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, this "drive to truth" is demonstrated to be the drive to escape from the tensions which are given to existence, and which need to be suffered in order that life may be enhanced and strengthened. Essentially, the desire to explain everything is diagnosed as the disguised will to death.

Nietzsche discovers a similar problem in our uncautious praise for objectivity:

However gratefully one may go to welcome an *objective* spirit... in the end one has to learn to be cautious with one's gratitude too and put a stop to the exaggerated way in which the depersonalization of the spirit is today celebrated as redemption and transfiguration. (*BGE.207*)

Nietzsche is grateful to the "*objective* spirit" as a means to cast suspicion upon the over-generalizations and errors of morality. However, underlying an exaggerated objectivity Nietzsche also discovers a certain weakness; for "the objective man... is certainly one of the most precious instruments there are: but he belongs in the hand of one who is mightier". He himself is an "instrument"; he is neither "an end... in whom the *rest* of existence is justified," nor is he "a beginning, a begetting and first cause, something solid, powerful and based firmly on itself that wants to be master". Nietzsche portrays the objective man as a "'selfless' man" because of his lack of passion for things. This lack of passion is considered by Nietzsche to be indicative of the objective man's incapacity to assert his will to power, "which is precisely the will to life" (*BGE.259*). He no longer knows how to affirm or how to deny; he does not command, neither does he destroy (*BGE.207*); he is unpassionately objective in everything. Hence, the objectivity of "the scholar" and "the average man of science" remains barren on its own; but this "old maid" objectivity may serve as a midwife for the "genius... a being which either *begets* or *bears*" (*BGE.206*).

On its own, objectivity cannot propel human beings beyond good and evil. Objective

"'knowledge for its own sake' -- this is the last snare set by morality" (*BGE.64*). As we have seen, Nietzsche views faith in morality as disguised disgust and exhaustion for life and its tensions. Without the strength to suffer these tensions and to love an existence that is full of suffering, human beings become exhausted and sickly, unable to overcome their own shortcomings. This exhaustion renders them barren and incapable of giving birth to a philosophy beyond good and evil, since only "that which is done out of love always takes place beyond good and evil" (*BGE.153*). For this reason, "mightier" beings who, unlike strictly objective men, are strong enough for a great love, are needed in order to bear the fruit of the future philosopher. Socrates is therefore criticized both for his objectivity as the father of science, and in his desire to offer explanations for everything, as one who suffers not from over-abundance, but from exhaustion and the impoverishment of his own will to power.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche is critical of Socratism as a "mob" valuation. In particular, Nietzsche attacks Socrates' argument that

[n]o one wants to do injury to himself, therefore all badness is involuntary. For the bad man does injury to himself: this he would not do if he knew that badness is bad. Thus the bad man is bad only in consequence of an error; if one cures him of his error, one necessarily makes him -- good. (*BGE.190*)

As we have seen, Nietzsche has already dealt with the notion of involuntary badness in Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*. In 1878, Nietzsche allies himself with this notion, using Socrates' words to convey the innocence of human action. However, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche opposes himself to this statement, not with the intent of renouncing his previous criticisms of notions of accountability; but by means of offering a different interpretation of this same Socratic assertion, Nietzsche intends to criticize its underlying "mob" valuation of good and bad: "This way of reasoning smells of the *mob*, which sees in bad behaviour only its disagreeable consequences and actually judges 'it is *stupid* to act badly';

while it takes 'good' without further ado to be identical with 'useful and pleasant'. The Socratic valuations of good and bad are deemed ignoble because they treat badness as a disease and an error which needs to be cured, whereas Nietzsche views badness -- namely, any actions which do not serve the collective needs of the herd -- as essential to human nobility. As a physician who promotes herd valuations by treating badness like an error that needs to be cured, Socrates is shown by Nietzsche to be a corrupter of what is noble. In particular, it is suggested that Socrates is the corrupter of Plato, who, although "he was really too noble" for Socratism, attempted "to interpret something refined and noble into his teacher's proposition". However, all Plato succeeded in doing through his efforts was to give Socrates the mask of his own corrupted nobility. Socrates remains a monstrosity, despite Plato's efforts: "What is the Platonic Socrates if not *proste Platon opithen te Platon messe te chimaira?*" (BGE.190).¹⁴³

As in *Gay Science*, and in contrast to *Daybreak*, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as an opponent of faith. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche writes that "the old theological problem of 'faith' and 'knowledge' -- or, more clearly, of instinct and reason... first appeared in the person of Socrates", and later became the inheritance of Christian theology. Socrates, whose tastes were those of "a superior dialectician", is purported to have initially favoured knowledge and reason over instinct and faith: "and what indeed did he do all his life long but laugh at the clumsy incapacity of his noble Athenians, who were men of instinct, like all noble men, and were never able to supply adequate information about the reasons for their actions?" (BGE.191). However, Socrates is said to have laughed at himself secretly, because he realized that he too was driven by instincts and not reason. The important difference that Nietzsche

¹⁴³ "Plato in front, Plato behind, and a chimera in between" (my translation).

is illustrating here between Socrates and the Athenian nobility is that, whereas nobles act according to noble instincts, and do so honestly without appealing to rationalizations as justification for their activity, Socrates acts from his ignoble tastes and mob instincts. Moreover, Socrates demands reasons and explanations for every action, which renders as ridiculous all nobler actions that cannot be evaluated "according to a 'why?', that is to say according to utility and fitness for a purpose" (*BGE.191*). In this way, "that old moral problem" of whether instinct or reason deserves authority is shown by Nietzsche to be a clever deception devised by Socrates. For, on the one hand, Socrates recognizes that all actions arise from the instincts. However, on the other hand, Socrates insists on evaluating actions as if they arose from a chain of reasoning. It is by means of this deceptive manner of evaluation that Socrates mocks nobler natures, having his revenge upon them, defeating them with dialectics, and simultaneously promoting the herd instincts by allying them with reason.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as a rationalizing, bad philosopher, or sophist. Fundamentally, Socrates "had seen through the irrational aspect of moral judgement". However, the sophistry of Socrates arises when he further reasons, "why... should one therefore abandon the instincts! One must help both them *and* reason to receive their due -- one must follow the instincts, but persuade reason to aid them with good arguments" (*BGE.191*). In this way, reasoning simply becomes a rationalization or an excuse by which the drives assert themselves. By encouraging the view that a concordance between reason and the instincts would serve better to render both the instincts and reason their due, Socrates creates three problems: (1) Socrates strengthens the herd instincts and enfeebles the nobler instincts, effectively demanding that all the instincts be herd-like. (2) He relaxes the internal oppositions in the psyche between what is herd-like and what is noble, what is slavish

and what is masterful. Reason no longer offers effective opposition to the herd-instincts, but is used to legitimize and emancipate the plebeian instincts. (3) From his deep-seated *ressentiment*, he teaches others to deny any order of rank or "*pathos of distance*" in either the soul or society; consequently, he teaches the negation of any good ordering (*cosmos*) of existence. I shall investigate each of these Socratic corruptions in turn.

First, the view that there ought to be a concordance between reason and the instincts is "the actual *falsity* of that great ironist, who had so many secrets"; for such an alliance between reason and the instincts only serves to assist and strengthen the herd instincts, and to enfeeble the nobler instincts. On the one hand, rationalizations are not employed by the noble instincts because such instincts are strong and healthy enough to act for power without appealing to reasons; they do not need justification according to a "why?" or to be evaluated according to their "fitness for a purpose" in order to assert themselves. This is why noble men of instinct are so clumsy at giving sufficient reasons for their actions, according to Nietzsche. On the other hand, the herd instincts require reasons, rationalizations, and evaluation according to utility and purpose in order to assert themselves. By demanding reasons from all the drives, Socrates demands that all drives be herd-like. Since nobles drives do not require reasons in order to assert themselves, the authority of reason, when it is held to be valid, undermines the authority of the nobler drives by evaluating them according to its own false presuppositions. In this way, the herd instincts are no longer mastered by the nobler instincts; rather, they are enabled to rise to ascendancy and strength by their alliance with reason.

Second, among the nobility, reason was not used to legitimize the herd instincts. Rather, the noble instincts offered opposition to the herd instincts. This inward tension between what is noble and base served to deepen the soul, and to strengthen the noble virtues,

all the while managing the herd instincts effectively, which could only gain ascendancy through their alliance with arguments and dialectics. In this way, Nietzsche portrays the healthiest and most noble souls as those who manage their weakest, most herd-like instincts by maintaining these instincts in a position of servitude without allowing them to have reason as their ally. By Socrates' prescriptions, however, human beings are taught to rationalize their instincts and desires. Nietzsche views Plato as having been tricked by Socrates in this regard; for whereas Socrates is considered by Nietzsche to have understood that his own teachings were sophistry, Plato is "more innocent in such things and without the craftiness of the plebeian". Nevertheless, both taught that "reason and instinct move of themselves towards *one* goal, towards 'God'" (*BGE*.191). With Plato and Socrates, reason no longer opposes and resists the instincts, offering an increased tension and an *agon* by which the soul might be strengthened and conditioned. Rather, reason is used to legitimize the instincts by uniting with them. Without this healthy opposition and internal *agon* between reason and the instincts, human beings have no self-control or self-mastery; they become comfort-loving and lazy. Their most slavish and herd-like instincts begin to dominate, and without imposing restrictions upon themselves, their nobility as masters erodes as well.

Third, Socrates' demand that the instincts be allied with reason is further shown to be sophistic insofar as it serves only Socrates' own herd-like desires, and yet he claims to give all instincts their due by means of this teaching. Socrates is shown to understand the true character of action: however, he lacks the strength and the "intellectual conscience" for this truth. Instead, Socrates "induced his conscience to acquiesce in a sort of self-outwitting" (*BGE*.191). Socrates secretly knows the truth about reason and the instincts, but he denies this truth, and he misleads others with his own false prescriptions. Socrates' irony is therefore his

negation of existence; it is the means whereby he vents his revenge upon all things; he sees things as they are, and yet he refuses to accept things as they are. In particular, Socrates' demand for a concordance between reason and the instincts serves to deny any "*pathos of distance*" (BGE.257), or distinction between noble and base desires. Without this distancing, all the drives are treated equally. No "*order of rank*" is recognized between "man and man", or between "morality and morality" (BGE.228). Instead, Socrates preaches that all drives are equally in need of justification by good arguments, and therefore that all drives are fundamentally herd-like in character. Hence, according to Socrates, reason properly acts as a partisan for each drive wishing to assert its power. However, as an advocate for each drive rather than as a means of establishing a rank ordering amongst the drives, reason only leads to a chaos of exhausted instincts, and to the herd-like desire for comfort and rest.

It is important to understand that Nietzsche does not suggest that all nobility is unreasonable, nor is Nietzsche himself a misologist. The place of reason in the noble constitution is certainly less clear from Nietzsche's account than it is in the constitution of the mob-like individual who, like the sophist, simply uses reason to gratify his every desire. Nevertheless, Nietzsche does find reason essential for the cultivation of nobility. Previously, we have seen that Nietzsche often praises reason, science, and in particular, the "intellectual conscience" for its ability to undermine moral judgements, to offer resistance against unbridled passions, to discipline and strengthen the individual, and to dispel the gloominess brought about by the bad conscience. Nietzsche praises rigorous thinking as an antidote for the excesses brought about in the undisciplined, unmastered soul. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche writes that "nothing is 'given' as real except our world of desires and passions", and that "thinking is only the relationship of these drives to one another" (BGE.36). It would

seem, then, that in both the noble and herd-like constitutions, reason and thought relate the drives to one another. Moreover, this relation is one of war, according to Nietzsche. Reason serves to oppose the drives against one another. By its ordering of the drives, reason creates various oppositions and restrictions for each drive by means of which the strength of each drive might be conditioned through warlike struggle.

However, merely opposing the drives to one another is not sufficient to build this strength. All the drives are naturally opposed to one another. Naturally, all is chaos and conflict: "Life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of the strange and weaker, suppression, severity, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and, at the least and mildest, exploitation" (*BGE.259*). As Nietzsche clearly demonstrates, the weakest human beings are products of a dissolute mixing and chaos of drives which are in constant struggle. Such individuals become weary of this constant disarray and turmoil; hence, from their weariness they seek an end to this struggle; for them, happiness is simply a sedative for their constant inward turmoil, or an end to their struggle. In this way, it is not sufficient for reason to act as an advocate for every drive, opposing each drive against all others:

If... the contrariety and war in such a nature should act as one *more* stimulus and enticement to life... there has also been inherited and cultivated a proper mastery and subtlety in conducting a war against oneself, that is to say self-control, self-outwitting: then there arise those marvellously incomprehensible and unfathomable men, those enigmatic men predestined for victory and the seduction of others, the fairest examples of which are Alcibiades and Caesar. (*BGE.200*)

In short, internal conflict amongst the drives is necessary and ought to be encouraged. Not all war is debilitating. In fact, as we have seen in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche seeks warlike natures for his students. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche recommends constant war, such that "under conditions of peace the warlike man attacks himself" (*BGE.76*). However, the war

of the instincts only leads to exhaustion if reason does not know how to marshall the drives effectively -- if there is no Caesar on the battlefield that can order the chaos and thereby bring about a victory. Essentially, in the noble nature, reason is the ordering principle which relates the drives to one another, marshalling them up for a glorious battle. In noble natures, reason is therefore not an advocate for plebeian drives, as it is among herd-like individuals, who remain an unruly, unmastered chaos of competing and exhausted drives. By contrast, reason, in the herd-like constitution, treats all the drives as equals, and therefore as equally plebeian. War within such a soul is unmanaged by a Caesar, and all the drives therefore expunge themselves in a war of all against all.

For Nietzsche, reason best serves the individual by establishing a right relation between the drives. In its proper place, reason marshals up a distance between what is noble and what is base within the soul itself. It functions to increase the tensions between the noble and the base within the soul, thus promoting "that longing for an ever-increasing widening of distance within the soul itself, the formation of ever higher, rarer, more remote, tenser, more comprehensive states" (*BGE.257*). Not by relaxing the tensions in the soul by treating all the drives equally, but by maintaining and increasing the tensions between what is noble and what is base, what is masterful and what is slavish, does reason best serve to strengthen the individual. Not by decreasing the amount of suffering human beings must undergo in lieu of these tensions, but rather by increasing their suffering under greater tensions are human beings ennobled; for "*how* deeply human beings can suffer almost determines their order of rank... Profound suffering ennobles; it separates" (*BGE.270*). By denying the order of rank among men and moralities, as well as the need for a healthy pathos of distance within both the soul and society, Socrates willfully makes human beings more herd-like and sickly by his own

prescriptions for health.

Although Socrates is considered by Nietzsche to be thoroughly plebeian, there is also a definite sense in which he views Socrates as a soul of high rank due to his pride, his elect knowledge, and his profound suffering. Nietzsche's Socrates might well be described as displaying "the spiritual haughtiness and disgust of every human being who has suffered deeply" (*BGE.270*), and it is the depth of each person's ability to suffer which determines his or her rank. Moreover, Socrates may be described as one who, "by virtue of his suffering... *knows more* than even the cleverest and wisest can know", and who therefore possesses the "pride of the elect of knowledge" (*BGE.270*). Socrates takes great joy in deceiving others who do not share his elect knowledge, such as Plato.

Socrates may be described by the following words:

There are 'cheerful people' who employ cheerfulness because they are misunderstood on account of it -- they *want* to be misunderstood... There are free insolent spirits who would like to conceal and deny that they are broken, proud, incurable hearts. (*BGE.270*)

Socrates, and Nietzsche too, may be such cheerful, broken, proud, and insolent free spirits. As we have seen in *Gay Science*, Socrates' cheerfulness during life is considered by Nietzsche to be a useful facade by means of which Socrates was enabled to attract and defeat even the most noble natures. Nietzsche, like Socrates, employs the mask; he admits that "one does not only wish to be understood when one writes; one wishes just as surely *not* to be understood... All the nobler spirits and tastes select their audience when they wish to communicate; and choosing that, one at the same time erects barriers against 'the others'" (*GS.381*). For this reason, Nietzsche writes that "I am certainly doing everything I can to be hard to understand myself!" (*BGE.27*).

Both Nietzsche and Socrates understand the fundamental character of existence, and

both possess the "pride of the elect of knowledge". Similarly, both want to be misunderstood. However, Nietzsche only seeks to be misunderstood by those who are not able to comprehend his insights. He makes distinctions of rank among his audience. He seeks warlike souls that are strong enough to hear him, and he is not concerned if his teachings are not accepted or understood by those who are too weak for them. In stark contrast, Socrates seeks to be misunderstood by everyone, even inducing his own conscience "to acquiesce in a sort of self-outwitting" (*BGE*.191). Socrates too is a proud, broken spirit, but he is not strong enough for his own insights, and he makes no distinctions of rank among his audience. Whereas Nietzsche would like to be understood by those who are strong enough, Socrates would like everyone to misunderstand him -- even himself.

Nietzsche's criticisms of Socrates as a bad philosopher or sophist echo his previous criticisms of bad philosophy in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. In 1874, he criticizes contemporary philosophy for not being dangerous, for not offering effective opposition to what is timely, and for never having disturbed anyone. Because of sophists who simply philosophize in order to serve other and far less glorious purposes than "the truth", philosophy is shown to have acquired a bad name. Similarly, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, he writes that "what makes one regard philosophers half mistrustfully and half mockingly is... that they display altogether insufficient honesty" (*BGE*.5). Nietzsche describes their dishonesty as follows:

[G]enerally a desire of the heart sifted and made abstract, is defended by them with reasons sought after the event -- they are one and all advocates who do not want to be regarded as such, and for the most part no better than cunning pleaders for their prejudices, which they baptize 'truths'. (*BGE*.5)

These dishonest philosophers are depicted as cowards by Nietzsche; for they lack the "courage of the conscience" to admit that their arguments are simply rationalizations which

they use to justify their own desires.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche claims to have discovered "what Socrates thought he did not know, and what that celebrated old serpent once promised to teach"; namely, the knowledge of good and evil. Nietzsche finds that all principle moral judgements about good and evil have become herd valuations: "*Morality is in Europe today herd-animal morality*". "Herd morality" is viewed by Nietzsche as only one kind of human morality beside which higher moralities "are possible or ought to be possible". However, "against such a 'possibility', against such an 'ought'", herd morality proclaims itself as the only morality: "it says, obstinately and stubbornly, 'I am morality itself, and nothing is morality besides me!'" (*BGE.202*). In this way, herd valuations of good and evil prove harmful to higher types of individuals. Herd-like human beings are easily propagated under such conditions, whereas "the corruption, the ruination of higher human beings, of more strangely constituted souls, is the rule" (*BGE.269*). On the one hand, "the more similar, more ordinary human beings have had and still have the advantage"; on the other hand, "the more select, subtle, rare and harder to understand are liable to remain alone, succumb to accidents in their isolation and seldom propagate themselves " (*BGE.268*).

Here, we see a change in Nietzsche's criticisms of Socrates. In Nietzsche's previous writings, Socrates has been portrayed largely as an opponent of the herd. For instance, in *We Philologists*, Socrates is depicted as the antagonist to the herd, and not as one who follows (*W.21*). Similarly, in *Daybreak*, Socrates was depicted as one who opposed the morality of custom, and therefore the sacrifice of the individual to the comfort of the herd. Instead, Socrates offered more rare, individual valuations (*D.9*). However, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Socrates is not only an ally to the herd, but its greatest exponent. Herd valuations are

Socrates' valuations, and these valuations betray Socrates' own herd-like character; for "a human being's evaluations betray something of the *structure* of his soul and where it sees its conditions of life, its real needs" (*BGE.268*).

Again, although Nietzsche is critical of Socrates as a purveyor of herd morality, Nietzsche rejects neither Socrates' influence nor herd morality whole-heartedly; for he sees that their influence, though it has brought much sickness to human beings and "an irreplaceable quantity of force and spirit" has been "suppressed, stifled and spoiled" (*BGE.188*) by its restrictions, morality has also offered human beings their greatest obstacles and challenges, the overcoming of which can only lead to greater strength, "higher feelings", and transfiguration. In this regard, Nietzsche affirms all moralities as a means to strength and discipline through the constraints which they offer:

Every morality is... a piece of tyranny against 'nature', likewise against 'reason': but that can be no objection to it unless one is in possession of some other morality which decrees that any kind of tyranny and unreason is impermissible. The essential and invaluable element in every morality is that it is a protracted constraint. (*BGE.188*)

According to Nietzsche, a certain degree of the individual's freedom needs to be sacrificed and held under subjection by the tyranny of the "arbitrary laws" of morality in order that there might be a higher kind of "freedom, subtlety, boldness, dance and masterly certainty" (*BGE.188*). For example the grace of dance requires discipline in accordance to its own laws. There must be a restriction of the chaotic drives in order that form, order, and beauty might be exhibited in the dancer's movements: "protracted *obedience* in *one* direction: from out of that there always emerges... something for the sake of which it is worthwhile to live on earth, for example virtue, art, music, dance, reason, spirituality -- something transfiguring, refined, mad and divine". Through the violence and severity of morality, human beings have

developed "strength, ruthless curiosity and subtle flexibility" (*BGE*.188). In this way, moral restrictions, as a kind of spiritual "slavery", provide discipline that is indispensable for breeding health.

Even the moral valuations of the herd are deemed necessary and useful to the higher man. These valuations provide the rule against which the higher man emerges as the exception. As a "superior human being", the higher man will instinctively aspire to be set free from the crowd and its valuations; in this way, the herd and its morality provide the higher man with a basis from which to aspire, and with a worthy and powerful enemy against whom he might test his strength. However, "as a man of knowledge... he will be impelled by an even stronger instinct to make straight for this rule". Without suffering from "disgust, satiety, sympathy, gloom and loneliness" in his dealings with the average human being, the philosopher "is certainly not a man of an elevated taste". The philosopher cannot continually avoid the burden and displeasure of mingling with the herd; if he continually avoids it and remains withdrawn from it, then "he is not made, not predestined for knowledge" (*BGE*.26). By avoiding what is herd-like, he also displays cowardice against what is most herd-like in his own character, and he cannot master it. For this reason, Nietzsche emphasizes the need to maintain the dangerous tension between what is high and exceptional, and what is common, average, and herd-like. He advises the eradication of neither pole in the psyche; rather, he counsels the need for a "pathos of distance" between what is noble and base, and therefore the need for what is exceptional to separate itself from the rule. Further, because what is slavish and what is masterful exist "even within the same man, within *one* soul" (*BGE*.260), Nietzsche counsels that the philosopher, as a man of knowledge and a knower of himself, come to

understand his own herd-like character. Like Socrates in Plato's *Republic*,¹⁴⁴ Nietzsche counsels that the philosopher "would go down, would above all 'go in'" (BGE.26) to the gloom and loneliness of the cave "voluntarily" in obedience to the law which he himself has imposed over his entire being so that his rule and mastery might extend even to the darkest reaches of his psyche.

Nietzsche writes of this drudgerous task as a necessary discomfort and precursor to philosophy. Human beings who involve themselves only in the drudgery of understanding all that is herd-like and average Nietzsche refers to as "philosophical labourers" and "men of science". However, Nietzsche insists that these men "should once and for all cease to be confused with philosophers" (BGE.211):

It may be required for the education of a philosopher that he himself has also once stood all those steps on which his servants, the scientific labourers of philosophy, remain standing... he himself must perhaps have been critic and sceptic and dogmatist and historian and, in addition, poet and collector and traveller and reader of riddles and moralist and seer and 'free spirit' and practically everything, so as to traverse the whole range of human values and value-feelings and be *able* to gaze from the heights into every distance... But all these are only preconditions of his task: this task itself demands something different -- it demands that he *create values*. (BGE.211)

The drudgery of philosophical labour is important only as a means towards philosophy. Contrary to "the applause of every positivist in France and Germany" (BGE.210), philosophy is not itself this drudgery. Philosophy is not simply criticism and critical science, as positivistic philosophical labourers and men of science would suggest. Rather, "if he is

¹⁴⁴ The first word of Plato's *Republic* is *katebēn* (κατέβην): "I went down" (327a). Similarly, in discussion of the cave ikon, Socrates counsels Glaucon, saying, "you must go down" (*katabateon*, καταβατέον, 520c). In his Platonizing, Nietzsche purposely echoes the words of Socrates in *Beyond Good and Evil* in order to draw parallels with his own philosophy. Nietzsche also alludes to Plato's cave ikon in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. For an examination of Nietzsche's treatment of the cave ikon, see Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates* 249-250.

lucky... as a favourite child of knowledge ought to be, he [the aspiring philosopher] will encounter means of facilitating and cutting short his task" (*BGE.26*), which is the drudgerous scrutiny of what is gloomy and herd-like.

Nietzsche's Socrates may be well described as one such precursor to the "true philosopher". As we have seen in Volume Two of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche praises Socrates for participating in every temperament. Similarly, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Socrates is still alluded to as possessing a manifold nature; he is one who, from the heights of his soul, descends into the depths of his own cave and gloom; Socrates gazes with "manifold eyes and a manifold conscience" (*BGE.211*) upon existence. As a man of knowledge, he has seen into the very nature of all things as a chaos of instincts which assert themselves by means of various perspectives. Socrates himself has been critic and sceptic and dogmatist; he is the father of science, a riddler, a moralist, a seer and, to a certain extent, a free spirit. Socrates, in this way, is "practically everything"; his own character traverses the whole range of human values and value feelings. However, "all these are only preconditions" to philosophy; although Socrates participates in these preconditions, he never manages to overcome or to distance himself from these preconditions. Rather, he remains a dogmatist, a sceptic, a moralist, a labourer; hence, he never overcomes his disgust and his gloom.

As we have seen in his earlier works, Nietzsche seeks a philosophy that is strong, warlike, and above all, dangerous: "When a philosopher today gives us to understand that he is not a sceptic... all the world is offended to hear it... he is henceforth considered dangerous. It is as if, in his rejection of scepticism, they seemed to hear some evil". The crowd looks favourably upon the philosopher only if he is sceptical -- only if he is too delicate to either affirm or deny: "the sceptic, that delicate creature, is all too easily frightened; his conscience

is schooled to wince at every No, indeed even at a hard decisive Yes, and to sense something like a sting". In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Socrates is criticized for exhibiting this weakness of scepticism in his claim, "I know that I know nothing".¹⁴⁵ According to Nietzsche, Socrates avoids affirming or denying anything by professing ignorance about all things except that he is ignorant. In this way, Socrates maintains his "noble continence" and is thereby praised for his humility; moreover, he avoids suffering by not asserting his will, by not affirming or denying anything, because asserting the will requires struggle, exertion, the overcoming of obstacles by strength, and suffering. According to Nietzsche, scepticism is the most spiritual expression of debility and sickness. The sceptic has a weak, sickly will that is altogether too fatigued to overcome resistance and obstacles; hence, the sceptic is no longer able to take pleasure in willing, but experiences a "paralysis of will", which he dresses up as "'objectivity', 'scientificity', 'l'art pour l'art'", and "'pure will-less knowledge'" (*BGE.208*). In this way, Socrates' scepticism is illustrated by Nietzsche to be a "sickness of will".

Although Socrates does not afford Nietzsche's praise as a new philosopher of the future, Socrates may still afford his praise as a philosopher insofar as he is untimely, and he reveals a certain "greatness of soul". "Nothing is so completely timely as weakness of will: consequently, in the philosopher's ideal precisely strength of will, the hardness and capacity for protracted decisions, must constitute part of the concept 'greatness'" (*BGE.212*). As an untimely individual and a philosopher, Socrates is considered by Nietzsche to possess a strength which his own age lacks:

In the age of Socrates, among men of nothing but wearied instincts, among

¹⁴⁵ This is the traditional interpretation of Socrates' claim to ignorance in Plato's *Apology*, 23ab. It is recorded by ancient authors like the Cynic, Dio of Prusa (C.E. 100), nicknamed Dio Chrysostom (12, 13-14).

conservative ancient Athenians who let themselves go -- 'towards happiness', as they said, towards pleasure, as they behaved -- and who at the same time had in their mouths the old pretentious words to which their lives had long ceased to give them any right, *irony* was perhaps required for greatness of soul, that Socratic malicious certitude of the old physician and plebeian who cut remorselessly into his own flesh as he did into the flesh and heart of the 'noble', with a look which said distinctly enough: 'do not dissemble before me! Here -- we are equal! (*BGE.212*)

Socrates' "hardness", his "strength of will" and "capacity for protracted decisions" -- in short, his "greatness of soul" -- is demonstrated by his maliciousness as a doctor with a remorseless resolve to cut into the flesh and heart of both himself and others like him.

In the age of Socrates, the ancient Athenians still maintained a pathos of distance between the noble and the plebeian. However, by Socrates' time, this distinction was a facade,¹⁴⁶ for Nietzsche points out that the Athenian nobility suffered from the weariness of their own instincts just as plebs suffer. The nobles of Socrates' day were no longer noble, according to Nietzsche. In such an environment bereft of truly noble individuals, irony is demonstrated by Nietzsche to be the final means towards greatness of soul. Socrates uses ironic speech as a means to expose the plebeian character of the nobility of his day. By cutting maliciously into the flesh and hearts of the nobles as if it were his own, Socrates effectively embodies the philosopher's conception of "greatness". As a plebeian character, Socrates becomes great by revealing the false nobility of the Athenian noblemen. He exposes them as nothing more than plebeians like himself. His plebeian greatness is the lowest form of greatness; however, even Socrates' greatness as an ironist is no longer possible today, according to Nietzsche. In ancient Athens it was the noble who bestowed honours and the

¹⁴⁶ For a good examination of the history and changes that take place in ancient Greek conceptions of good and bad, of noble and the plebeian, see Zeitlin, *Nietzsche: A Re-examination* 71-85.

plebeian who was honourless. Hence, by stripping plebeians of their honour, Socrates exhibited greatness, upholding honour only for a non-existent nobility; Socrates showed that none deserved such honour. However, Nietzsche points out that today only the herd of plebs is thought to rightly bestow honours, and it bestows these honours only upon itself. In short, there is no possibility for even the plebeian greatness of Socrates where there is no pathos of distance or recognition of an order of rank among individuals and moralities.

As we have seen in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche refers to Socrates as "the pied piper of Athens". By referring to Socrates with this title, he suggests that Socrates is able to attract human beings and to lead them towards their own destruction. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche refers to two sorts of pied pipers of the spirit. The first type most resembles Socrates, being described as a "mis-leader". The mis-leading pied piper is described by Nietzsche as "one who has lost respect for himself" and "can no longer command" or "lead as a man of knowledge". Rather, he may only lead as an imposter or a "great actor" who poses as a philosopher. His great power is always over the mob, for "the mob has long confounded and confused the philosopher with someone else, whether with the man of science or with the religiously exalted, dead to the senses, 'dead to the world' fanatic and drunkard of God". The "rabble" deem this mis-leader to be wise because he leads them in "a kind of flight"; his leadership is "an artifice and means for getting oneself out of a dangerous game". This sort of leadership is "mis-leading" according to Nietzsche because "the genuine philosopher... risks *himself* constantly; he plays *the* dangerous game" (*BGE.205*). The best leader, in this way, leads those who follow him into the heart of danger, not away from it towards comfort.

The second pied piper is Dionysus, whom Nietzsche refers to as "that great hidden

one". Dionysus is described as "the tempter god and born pied piper of consciences whose voice knows how to descend into the underworld of every soul, who says no word and gives no glance in which there lies no touch of enticement". He is "the genius of the heart who makes everything loud and self-satisfied fall silent and teaches it to listen". Dionysus addresses every soul; he is said to divine "hidden and forgotten treasure". By his touch everyone goes away "richer in himself" and "full of hopes that as of yet have no names" (BGE.295). Nietzsche refers to himself as "the last disciple and initiate of the god Dionysus" (BGE.295; TLX5; EH.p2), and he suggests that his own philosophy offers "a little taste" of the philosophy of Dionysus, whom Nietzsche contests is a philosopher, as are all the gods.¹⁴⁷ As in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche depicts Socrates as the arch rival of Dionysus; whereas Socrates would "mis-lead" human beings, making them comfortable, soft, and moral in their herd-like goodness, Dionysus would advance man, "and make him stronger, more evil and more profound than he is". Unlike Socrates, Dionysus would assist man, the "brave, ingenious animal without equal on earth" in making his way "through every labyrinth" (BGE.295). In Greek myth, it is Dionysus who loves Ariadne, and it is Ariadne who helps Theseus to find his way out of the labyrinth.¹⁴⁸ In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche describes the unique character of the

¹⁴⁷ Here, Nietzsche is implicitly criticizing Socrates for his suggestion in Plato's *Symposium* that the gods do not philosophize.

¹⁴⁸ Ancient Greek myth relates that Ariadne was the daughter of Minos, king of Crete. Minos made war on Megara and subdued it, and he would have subdued Athens too had not the people agreed to regularly send a tribute of seven youths and seven maidens to be fed to the Minotaur, a monster half-man, half-bull who dwelled somewhere in the king's labyrinth. The deaths of these youths were compensation for the death of Minos' son Androgeus in Attica. The hero Theseus decided to put a stop to this regular sacrificing by volunteering the next time the tribute came due. When the ship carrying Theseus and the other victims arrived in Crete, Ariadne saw him and was immediately smitten.

Ariadne made Theseus promise to take her with him if he should survive and leave

modern soul as a labyrinth (*D.*169). The modern soul is a confused and frightening battle ground for Nietzsche. There is no way out of our modern confusions without the madness of Dionysus.

Crete. In order to help Theseus so that he would not get lost in the labyrinth as he hunted the Minotaur, she gave him a ball of thread to trace his path back to the exit. Having killed the Minotaur with his bare hands, Theseus followed Ariadne's thread back to the entrance, and together with Ariadne and his companions, he fled from Crete. Theseus is said to have abandoned Ariadne on the island of Naxos. Ariadne's abandonment is considered to be directly related to the god Dionysus.

Homer suggests that Ariadne was killed on Naxos by Artemis having been denounced by Dionysus for making love with Theseus in a grotto sacred to the god (*Odyssey* 11.324). Most accounts, however, argue that Theseus left her on the island. Some explain that Dionysus fell in love with Ariadne and carried her away (Apollodorus, *Epitome* 1.9; Diodorus Siculus 4.61). Others remark that Dionysus appeared to Theseus in a dream, and demanded Ariadne for himself (Diodorus 5.51). Other accounts record that Theseus had fallen in love with Aegle, daughter of Panopeus of Phocis, suggesting that Theseus never really loved Ariadne, but only used her in order to accomplish his task (Plutarch, *Theseus* 20). According to Robert E. Bell, however, the oldest stories relate that she was left on Naxos by Theseus: "some say she killed herself in despair, but most stories say that Dionysus happened along and was overcome with her beauty. He married her and raised her among the immortals. He also placed his wedding present to her, a crown, among the stars". Together, they had many children. See Robert E. Bell, *Women of Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991) 65-66.

10. *On The Genealogy of Morals* (1887)

There are two references to Socrates in *On The Genealogy of Morals*, and both appear in the third essay concerning "the ascetic ideal". First, Nietzsche challenges Socrates' understanding of the physician, arguing that the physician must have been sick in order to understand sickness, whereas Socrates suggests that a good physician cannot be sick himself if he is to treat sickness. Second, Socrates is discussed in relation to both the ascetic priest as a leader of the herd, and as a philosopher. Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates in *On The Genealogy of Morals* illustrates Nietzsche's own growing uncertainty since *Beyond Good and Evil* concerning who precisely is Socrates.

In the third essay, Nietzsche asks, "What is the meaning of ascetic ideals?". Briefly, Nietzsche explains that the ascetic ideal is the expression of a form of life that is too weak to assert itself. As we have seen previously, "life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of the strange and weaker, suppression, severity, imposition of one's own forms and, at the least and mildest, exploitation... life *is* will to power" (*BGE*.259). When this will to power cannot express itself outwardly, it turns back inwardly upon itself. When the will to power of a given organism is too weak to inflict cruelty and torture for the happy feeling of its own powerful expansion, this organism turns towards self-cruelty and self-torture in order to preserve what little will to power it possesses by allowing it to assert itself. In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes:

The wish to preserve oneself is the symptom of a condition of distress, of

a limitation of the really fundamental instinct of life which aims at *the expansion of power* and, wishing for that, frequently risks and even sacrifices self-preservation. (GS.349)

Such a famished and weak organism is not rich enough to entertain the many perspectives of its multiple experiences. Being unable to digest its own experiences, the weakly constituted individual suffers from a kind of indigestion: "he cannot get over an experience and have done with it" (GM:III.16). As described in *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, such individuals become filled with indigestible "knowledge stones" which make them sick.. The ascetic ideal offers relief from this form of indigestion by denying the multitude of perspectives which arise from the richness of experience. It fosters a single perspective as the truth so that this single instinct or "will to truth" becomes the strongest. Essentially, the problem of the ascetic ideal is the error of faith, according to Nietzsche.

However, Nietzsche does not flatly reject the ascetic ideal as a destructive and damaging force. Rather, he stresses that the ascetic ideal is used differently by different people in order to propagate many different sorts of life. Whereas the ascetic ideal is employed for nihilistic purposes by the "physiologically deformed and deranged" (GM:III.1), a "certain asceticism, a severe and cheerful continence with the best will, belongs to the most favourable conditions of supreme spirituality" (GM:III.9). The ascetic ideal is also a useful tool in the hands of the philosopher.

Nietzsche writes that "every animal -- therefore *la bête philosophe*, too -- instinctively strives for an optimum of favourable conditions under which it can expend all its strength and achieve its maximal feeling of power" (GM:III.7). "Great, fruitful, inventive spirits" all use the ascetic ideal for power, and in order to dominate. Among these spirits, the philosopher "is concerned with one thing alone, and assembles and saves up everything -- time, energy,

love, and interest -- only for that one thing". The philosopher feeds his lesser drives to his "dominating instinct". He engages in a kind of asceticism in order to save up his energies for increased power. Nietzsche provides the example of sexual abstinence. Sexual energy is sublimated to maintain the greatest spiritual tension, and to store up the philosopher's energies. By feeding his baser drives to his more spiritual drives, "the greater energy then *uses up* the lesser" (*GM:III.8*). Although the philosopher never marries or has children because of these ascetic restrictions, a different kind of fruitfulness and a spiritual pregnancy results. In this way, the ascetic ideal and the philosopher are always bound together. The harshness, the discipline and cruel impositions of the ascetic ideal are necessary to realize everything great, and "every smallest step on earth has been paid for by spiritual and physical torture" (*GM:III.9*).

"All good things were formerly bad things" (*GM:III.9*). Nietzsche argues that the noblest most spiritual form of the will to power -- namely, philosophy -- has its origins in the weakness of "the inactive, brooding, unwarlike element in the instincts of contemplative men". Sickly and weak contemplatives are always looked upon by the strong with a threatening mistrust. Threatened with extinction, these contemplative men become cruel towards themselves since they were incapable of cruelty outwardly. They become cruel in order to be feared by the strong, but also "so as to fear and reverence themselves". The philosopher emerges from the lower contemplative types, such as the ascetic priest, sorcerer, and religious man. He still wears the "mask" of these "*previously established* types" in order to exist. He adopts their pose as a world-denier hostile to life and suspicious of the senses, because philosophy arises under the "emergency conditions" of weakness and a lack of power. In order to build up strength, the philosopher requires ascetic measures. Hence, the manner of

the "ascetic priest" is adopted, it serves as a "caterpillar" and a "cocoon" for the emergence of the philosopher, "that many-coloured and dangerous winged creature" and "spirit". However, in order for such a transformation to occur, a sufficient will to freedom must be present in the individual; otherwise, he shall remain worm-like, "repulsive and gloomy", doomed to "creep about" like the ascetic priest (*GM:III.10*).

The ascetic ideal of the priest offers a single perspective which serves to deny all other perspectives. In this regard it is only useful to the philosopher as one of many perspectives. It becomes damaging when it is held as a faith: when it is treated as more than a perspective, or as the only legitimate perspective. When the individual's will to freedom from faith is not strong enough, he is unable to be transformed into a philosophic spirit; he remains only an ascetic priest.

However, those who are strong enough and truly philosophic are most endangered not by each other but by the weakest and the sickly. For this reason, Nietzsche argues that the strong and the healthy must be kept apart from the sickly and weak: "That the sick should not make the healthy sick... should surely be our supreme concern on earth; but this requires above all that the healthy should be *segregated* from the sick, guarded even from the sight of the sick, that they may not confound themselves with the sick". The healthy must be allowed to perform "their task". Hence, "the pathos of distance *ought* to keep their tastes eternally separate" from those of the sick. The "task" of these healthy ones is not to be doctors and nurses to the sick; for by their association with the sick they too would become sick.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ According to Nietzsche, the two great contagions which would infect the healthy by their association with the sick are "pity" at their suffering, and "nausea" at their sickliness. For this reason, he counsels his friends to keep good company, "or solitude, if it must be!" (*GM:III.14*).

Rather, the task of the healthy is to be "*liable* for the future of man" (*GM:III.14*), as our hope for greatness and the overcoming of sickness towards new heights.

Nietzsche explains that the doctoring of the sick should be left instead to the ascetic priest, who is both protector and physician to the herd, and whose art is dominion over the herd. On the one hand, Nietzsche thinks that the ascetic priest must be sick in order to understand sickness. Here, he is purposely opposing Socrates' claims that the doctor himself cannot be sick if he is to apply the proper treatments to the infirmed; similarly, Socrates claims that a true and just judge can not himself be a criminal full of injustice if he is to render good judgements.¹⁵⁰ Nietzsche finds both of these propositions unacceptable.

On the other hand, the ascetic priest must also be strong and the master of himself if he is to rule. As protector of the herd, the ascetic priest must defend the herd against both the strong and healthy "beasts of prey" who would exert their power over the weak from envy, and against their own *ressentiment*, or desire to condemn and to punish all of existence for their impotence and suffering. The ascetic priest must therefore be "the natural opponent *and despiser* of all rude, stormy, unbridled, hard, violent beast-of-prey health and might"; and yet he must also know how to manage the *ressentiment* of the herd, which is constantly accumulating. The ascetic priest allows their spite to vent itself in small quantities: "to detonate this explosive that it does not blow up herd and herdsman is his essential art" (*GM:III.15*). By allowing small explosions of *ressentiment*, the ascetic priest maintains the herd in their permanently sick condition, yet he saves them from a more vicious and massively destructive full-blown nihilism. In effect, the ascetic priest "*alters the direction of ressentiment*"; he turns it back upon the resentful individual by manipulating the feelings of

¹⁵⁰ See the story told at the end of Plato's *Gorgias*, 523a-527e.

guilt. The priest -- "that artist in guilt feelings" (*GM:III.20*) -- plays upon the suffering of the weak who resent their suffering and who look for someone to blame. He teaches the resentful man to have a "bad conscience", to redirect his desire for revenge back upon himself. In this way, the man of bad conscience comes to find the "cause" of his suffering within himself. He therefore understands his suffering as punishment, as the feelings of guilt, fear, and sin.

In this sense, the ascetic priest is shown to be very beneficial for the welfare of the healthy; for his treatments indicate that "the curative instinct of life" is working through him, attempting "to render the sick to a certain degree *harmless*". The ascetic priest effectively works for "the self-destruction of the incurable", and he redirects "the *ressentiment* of the less severely afflicted sternly back upon themselves" (*GM:III.16*). Life demonstrates a certain interest in seeing that such ascetic priests continue to exist,¹⁵¹ for by managing the sickness of the herd, and by culling out those whose nihilism is incurable and too far advanced, the priest allows for a pathos of distance to exist between the sick and the healthy; he keeps the sick too busy destroying and lacerating themselves to heavily persecute the healthy and infect them with their contagion. By means of priestly rule, there is maintained at least the possibility for health and higher individuals.

However, the ascetic priest is not a true physician. He only combats pain; he does not treat the disease itself.¹⁵² The priest only views things from a single perspective, and from

¹⁵¹ For Nietzsche, this interest is further evinced by the fact that, although the ascetic priest's instincts forbid him to propagate, and he does not breed his "mode of valuation through heredity", he nevertheless appears "in almost every age", and "he prospers everywhere" (*GM:III.11*). This indicates to Nietzsche that there is something valuable for life and perhaps necessary to life in the priest's continued existence.

¹⁵² For a detailed description of the various priestly medications offered, see (*GM:III.18-21*).

this vantage point all he is able to offer his patients is "consolation" in their suffering (*GM:III.17*). The treatment which he offers is his ascetic ideal. This ideal "expresses a will" that is singular in its perspective. The ascetic ideal posits a universal goal, and "it interprets epochs, nations, and men inexorably with a view to this one goal; it permits no other interpretation, no other goal". Moreover, "it submits to no power, it believes in its own predominance over every other power, in its absolute *superiority of rank* over every other power". In short, the ascetic ideal is a "closed system of will, goal, and interpretation" (*GM:III.23*). Insofar as one has succumb to an ascetic ideal, there is no room for awe or wonder at existence. One is no longer open to one's Dionysian experiences.

The main problem Nietzsche locates in the ascetic ideal, when it becomes a faith and is no longer viewed as a means or a cocoon for the spirit, is its underlying unconditional will to truth. As we have seen in *Gay Science* (*GS.344*), he views the will to truth as fundamentally life-denying and nihilistic. In *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche discovers the will to truth of the ascetic ideal at the heart of science (*GM:III.25*; cf.*GS.344*). Moreover, he discovers this will to truth in atheism, immoralism, and even in his own project (*GM:III.24*),¹⁵³ as well as in historiography (*GM:III.26*). Nietzsche admits that art, "in which precisely the *lie* is sanctified and the *will to deception* has a good conscience, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science" (*GM:III.25*); however, he does not discover in art any real or effective opposition to this ideal because, as Nietzsche has long argued, the artist is far too timely to deserve serious attention. In *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche reinforces this judgement of art:

¹⁵³ Even earlier in *Daybreak*, Nietzsche admits that he too still works from with a "moral imperative" as a "man of conscience" (*D.p4*).

Let us, first of all, eliminate the artists: they do not stand nearly independently enough in the world and *against* the world for their changing valuations to deserve attention *in themselves!* They have at all times been valets of some morality, philosophy, or religion. (*GM:III.5*)

In Nietzsche's estimation, "the ascetic ideal has at present only *one* kind of real enemy capable of *harming* it: the comedians of this ideal -- for they arouse mistrust of it" (*GM:III.27*; cf. *GS.1,86,153,432*). Nietzsche counts himself among these comedians; he is one who mocks, pesters, insults, and shocks as a means to disclose the will to truth as ridiculous, and so that it loses its attractive lustre and credibility as the search for knowledge and truth.¹⁵⁴

Fundamentally, Nietzsche thinks that there is no way to attack the ascetic ideal from outside of its will to truth; just as it is impossible to treat the sick without being inside the sick house, so too can no effective critique or cure for our modern problems be found without first taking these problems on as our own. In *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche is the sick physician who tells rude jokes within the madhouse. And yet he is not simply an ascetic priest, for he only poses as the priest in order to overcome the priest, just as a caterpillar must pupate in order to become a butterfly.

Socrates is discussed by Nietzsche in relation to both the ascetic priest and the philosopher. In the third essay of *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche writes that true philosophers are both irritated by the senses, and make use of the ascetic ideal. If both of these criterion are lacking then the individual in question is only a "so-called philosopher" (*GM:III.7*). Socrates, however, appears to satisfy both criteria. As we have seen in *Gay Science* (*GS.372*), Socrates, like all ancient philosophers, was afraid of the senses. This fear

¹⁵⁴ For a brief discussion of Nietzsche's appeal to comedy as a means of opposition to the ascetic ideal, see Barry Cooper, *Action into Nature* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991) 262.

of the senses is considered by Nietzsche to arise from an over-abundant health. Socrates' caution against the senses -- his "idealism" -- is, in *Gay Science*, viewed not as a sign of exhaustion, disease, or *ressentiment*; rather, it is viewed as the prudent ascetic prescription of a healthy constitution against over-powerful senses.

Similarly, in *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Socrates' asceticism can be seen in the fact that he "married *ironically*" in order to demonstrate that the philosopher abhors marriage as an impediment. Indeed, according to the account given by Diogenes Laertius -- elsewhere quoted by Nietzsche -- Socrates is driven out of his home by his wife, Xanthippe.¹⁵⁵ Nietzsche speaks of family too as a fetter which binds the philosopher, such that the philosopher can only gain his freedom like Socrates by leaving his household and family.

In these respects, Socrates certainly qualifies as a philosopher. However, there are also passages in *On The Genealogy of Morals* which seem to suggest that Socrates is no better than the best ascetic priest. In section 14, for instance, Nietzsche writes: "The will of the weak to represent *some* form of superiority, their instinct for devious paths to tyranny over the healthy -- where can it not be discovered, this will to power of the weakest!" (*GM:III.14*). This statement can be clearly understood to describe Nietzsche's view of Socrates. In Socrates, the will to power of the weakest finds its means of self-assertion, and it gains the upper hand through dialectics. Again, in section 17, Nietzsche criticizes the ascetic priest for posing as a physician, but in fact, "he combats only suffering itself... *not* its cause, *not* the real sickness: this must be our most fundamental objection to priestly medication" (*GM:III.17*). These criticisms of the ascetic priest's malpractice aptly describe Nietzsche's criticisms of

¹⁵⁵ See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* II 36-37. This view is preserved throughout ancient Greek, Roman, and Christian literature.

Socrates, for Socrates is considered to offer only comfort to those whom he medicates. As we have seen previously, Socrates' medications are actually a poison whereby the most overweening youths are made effeminate. So on the one hand, Socrates is considered a philosopher, and he is to this extent strong and healthy. On the other hand, Socrates is the most extraordinary ascetic priest; he is not only the "pied piper of Athens". He is also the "pied piper of the spirit". His ability to attract followers and his dominion over the herd spans the ages, not being limited by geographical or temporal distances as is the dominion of most shepherds and herdsmen. In this way, Nietzsche's appraisal of Socrates changes from *Beyond Good and Evil*, becoming profoundly ambiguous in 1887.

11. Nietzsche's Twilight Writings of 1888.

Twilight of The Idols, *Antichrist*, and *Ecce Homo* were all composed in the final year of Nietzsche's writing career. For this reason, I refer to them as "Nietzsche's Twilight Writings". When taken together, these three great works provide us with our most comprehensive view of Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates in 1888. However, in discussing these three texts, I will also be referring to the *Will To Power* notebooks from 1885 to 1888, which Nietzsche relies upon heavily for his portrayal of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols*. The depiction of Socrates in these notebooks is more negative than the one offered in *Twilight of The Idols*, and by indicating which passages Nietzsche re-uses and which ones he discards, I will demonstrate that his portrayal of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols* is more moderate than the one offered in both *Beyond Good and Evil* and the notebooks. Nietzsche's moderation of his position on Socrates in 1888 is further evinced by his depiction of Socrates in both *Antichrist* and *Ecce Homo*. Certainly, the view of Socrates provided in *Twilight of The Idols* is a negative one. However, his presentation of Socrates in both *Antichrist* and *Ecce Homo* is quite positive. Overall, the "Twilight Writings" of Nietzsche, when discussed collectively, lead us to conclude that Nietzsche ends his writing career uncertain about precisely who is Socrates, and whether he is a Dionysian, or an anti-Dionysian figure.

i. *Will To Power* (notebooks 1885-1888)

Certainly, Nietzsche's notebooks do not deserve the same status as those works which he actually published or planned to publish. However, it is worth examining the *Will To Power* notebooks insofar as they provide us with: (1) a means of seeing what direction Nietzsche's own thoughts on Socrates were to take in the writing of *Twilight of The Idols*, for he relies heavily upon these notebooks, even utilizing certain passages *verbatim*, in *Twilight of The Idols*; (2) a means of dating how far back in his own writing career that he himself had considered many of the criticisms of Socrates he voices in *Twilight of The Idols*; and (3) evidence of Nietzsche's own redaction, of what he considered valid and invalid criticisms of Socrates. I shall examine his notebooks with these three points in mind. I will thereby demonstrate that: (1) Nietzsche's position on Socrates in the *Will To Power* is more severe than the position that emerges in *Twilight of The Idols*, (2) many of Nietzsche's most severe criticisms of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols* originate in the earliest parts of the final period of Nietzsche's writing career, at a time when he was more certain of Socrates' status as an anti-Dionysian figure, and (3) Nietzsche discards particularly negative passages of the notebooks in order to offer a more favourable portrait of Socrates as a worthy enemy in *Twilight of The Idols*.

There is only one reference to Socrates in the notebooks from 1885 to 1886, and Nietzsche later utilizes this reference -- almost *verbatim* -- in *Twilight of The Idols*. He remarks that the "reversal of taste" in ancient Athens "in favour of dialectics" is the

accomplishment of Socrates, "the *roturier*" or non-aristocrat.¹⁵⁶ Through Socratic dialectics, "the mob" achieves victory over "a more noble taste, the taste of nobility". Before Socrates, "the dialectical manner was repudiated in good society; one believed it compromised one; youth was warned against it. Why this display of reasons? Why should one demonstrate? Against others one possessed authority. One commanded: that sufficed" (WP.431). To give reasons for one's actions was seen as a sign that one had already compromised one's power and authority. This indicated that one lacked power to act authoritatively, and that, consequently, one's actions required rationalizations in order to be effective and to be considered legitimate.

As we have seen in *Gay Science* (GS.112), Nietzsche judges the need to give reasons and explanations to be a sign of an exhausted and a nihilistic will. In his notebooks from 1885 to 1886, Nietzsche remarks that nobler, aristocratic types would, for this reason, find dialectics demeaning: "One mistrusted such public presentation of one's arguments. Honest things do not display their reasons in that way. There is something indecent about showing all one's cards. What can be 'demonstrated' is of little worth".¹⁵⁷ The worthlessness of dialectics is demonstrated by their weakness to convince, and by the mistrust they inspire. Ancient orators avoided using dialectics precisely because of their ineffectual nature: "Nothing is easier to expunge than the effect of a dialectician". For this reason, dialectics are

¹⁵⁶ In his *Letters*, Seneca also explicitly states that Socrates was not an aristocrat (44, 3).

¹⁵⁷ In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche writes "One no longer loves one's knowledge enough when one has communicated it" (BGE.160). This demonstrates Nietzsche's difficulty with Socratic dialectics; for Socrates "shows all his cards" to everyone, which suggests that he does not cherish his own ability to act and to exert his will as would a noble individual. Rather, Socrates' will is feeble and ineffective without the added assistance of dialectics.

only used as a last resort, when all else has failed, out of a condition of weakness and helplessness: "Dialectics can only be an emergency measure", and therefore, a sign of distress. In this way, dialectics are the tool of the weak against the strong and the noble. With dialectics, one has "a merciless weapon in one's hand. One can tyrannize with it. One compromises when one conquers. One leaves it to one's victim to prove that he is not an idiot". By means of dialectics, the weak look and feel triumphant; their opponents are denigrated, whose intelligence has been deprived of its "potency". In short, "the irony of the dialectician is a form of mob revenge" (WP.431), and Socrates empowers the mob in their revolt against all that is above them and noble. These are precisely the criticisms which appear later in *Twilight of The Idols*.

Nietzsche uses all of the criticisms of Socrates from the notebooks of 1885 and 1886 in *Twilight of The Idols*. However, Nietzsche discards passages from the notebooks from 1887 to 1888 in which Socrates is presented as an "anti-scientific" and therefore anti-agonal character. First, I will discuss the passages from the *Will To Power* notebooks which agree with Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols*; second, I will discuss the passages which Nietzsche does not re-use, and why.

In the 1887-1888 notebooks, Socrates is depicted as the anti-Hellenic spokesman for morality, and as a hater of science. Decadence begins to flourish with Socrates' "denaturalization of moral values". He is the first bad philosopher, and Nietzsche opposes him to the "Sophists", whom he considers to be realists and true Greeks. Socrates' one strength is shown to be his shrewdness in dialectics, which arises as an agonal weapon against powerful, destructive instincts. However, even Socrates' strength as a dialectician is symptomatic of his decadence; for it arises as the "emergency reactive measure" of one who

is threatened by destruction from his own inward anarchy of instincts, his weaknesses, and his lack of self-mastery. The very fact that Socrates believes that he can escape his own decadence by opposing it is a sign of his declining will to power, in Nietzsche's view, as we shall see.

In 1887, Nietzsche asks, "Whose will to power is morality?". He responds with the claim that, ever since Socrates, "the common factor in history" has been "the attempt to make moral values dominate over all other values" (WP.274) as their guide and judge. The will to power of moral values has developed tremendously on earth due to the instincts of the mediocre herd, the suffering, and the underprivileged who oppose and seek to dominate the strong and independent, the fortunate and the exceptional. As he has argued earlier, Nietzsche continues to attribute the rise of the herd instincts to the leadership of Socrates. Although it is not later quoted *verbatim*, this passage from the notebooks does not contradict his position in *Twilight of the Idols*.

According to Nietzsche in 1887, Socrates manages to propagate moral values by touting "dialectic as a way to virtue... evidently because Sophistry counted as the way to immorality" (WP.578). The "Sophist", Nietzsche remarks, is still "completely Hellenic", as are the pre-Socratic philosophers. However, "the appearance of the Greek philosophers from Socrates onwards is a symptom of decadence; the anti-Hellenic instincts come to the top" (WP.427). This view of Socrates as an anti-Hellenic force harkens back to Nietzsche's views of the 1870's, the main difference being that formerly Socrates' untimeliness was viewed favourably; he was praised by Nietzsche for being the gadfly of Athens. From 1887 through 1888, Socrates' untimeliness has largely disappeared; rather, Socrates becomes the hallmark, spokesman, and main agent of infection for the decadence and the anarchy of the instincts

already present in his age. Socrates' untimeliness is, in these notebooks, reduced to the quack medicine which he offers in opposition to the decadent, anarchic, self-destructive instincts of his own times. The view of Socrates expressed in these notebooks (WP.427,578) coincides well with the view presented in *Twilight of The Idols*.

In 1888, Nietzsche continues to examine the resistance Socrates and post-Socratic philosophers have offered to the "realism" of the "Sophists". The Greek sophists are considered to be realists because "they formulate values and practises common to everyone on the level of values -- they possess the courage of all strong spirits to *know* their own immorality" (WP.429). As in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche focuses upon honesty as the major distinction between bad philosophers and Sophists, who count for Nietzsche as courageous and warlike souls, and therefore as true philosophers. As in *Daybreak*, Nietzsche offers Thucydides as an example of one who illustrates the most comprehensive delight in all that is typical in human beings and events; he praises Thucydides as a "realist" and as one among the Sophists. This corresponds with Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols* (TI.X.2), where he pits Socrates and the Socratic schools against Thucydides and the Sophists.

According to Nietzsche, Thucydides best portrays the true nature of politics: "Do you suppose perchance that these little Greek free cities, which from rage and envy would have liked to devour each other, were guided by philanthropic and righteous principles?". Unlike the moralizing philosophers who followed Socrates, Thucydides was not too cowardly to affirm the harsh immorality of existence. In agreement with *Philosophy in Hard Times*, Nietzsche continues to be critical of bad philosophers for their bashfulness. Both Socrates and Plato are, in this regard, counted among the bad philosophers as advocates of philanthropy and righteousness; they have taken up "the cause of virtue and justice" in a dishonest fashion

(WP.429; *cf.* *TI.II.2*).

Nietzsche views Socrates as having caused "the disintegration of Greek instincts" by educating human beings in dialectics as though these were "the road to virtue", and by making a mockery when a given "morality did not know how to justify itself logically" (WP.430). According to Nietzsche, Socrates' demand in education that everything be made conscious undermines education itself:

The great rationality of all education in morality has always been that one tried to attain to the certainty of an instinct: so that neither good intentions nor good means had to enter consciousness as such. As the soldier exercises, so should man learn to act. In fact, this unconsciousness belongs to any kind of perfection: even the mathematician employs his combinations unconsciously. (WP.430)

Nietzsche points out that an effective education for a warlike individual provides training which makes action immediate and instinctual. Soldiers do not have time for developing lines of reasoning or for rationalizing during battle; insofar as a soldier hesitates to think, his soldierly ability is diminished considerably. Nietzsche argues that an effective moral education likewise must become unconscious and enable individuals to attain to the certainty of instinct. Socrates fundamentally misunderstands education because he demands logical justification for each action. Effective action does not wait to become conscious, and this is part of its value, because "without unconsciousness it is no good" (WP.430).

Because of Socrates' perverse demand that all morals be derived from correct reasoning and logical principles, Nietzsche judges that "this means that moral judgements are torn from their conditionality". All activity and judgements arise under particular circumstances. The problem he locates in Socratic dialectics is that these judgements become abstracted from their particularity, and that they are subsequently misunderstood as universal laws, ideals, even as signs of a true world beyond this world. Nietzsche refers to this process of abstraction as "the

denaturalization of moral values". He considers it to be the creation of "a degenerate type of man -- 'the good man', 'the happy man', 'the wise man'". Socrates is such a man. Like Plato, Socrates is only a "scarecrow of the ancient philosopher"; he is likened to a plant that attempts to live without any soil, in abstraction from its own particularity; further, by denying the authority of all warlike instincts because they cannot justify themselves rationally, Socrates is left bereft of "any particular regulating instincts". In this way, "Socrates represents a moment of the profoundest perversity in the history of values" (WP.430). This description of Socrates in the notebooks corresponds well with *Twilight of The Idols*, where Socrates is depicted as a decadent who suffers from the "anarchy of his instincts" (TI.II.4).

In aphorism 432 of *The Will To Power* notebooks, Nietzsche re-iterates the profound antithesis detailed in *The Birth of Tragedy* between "the tragic disposition" and "the Socratic disposition". On the one hand, he views the Socratic disposition as "a phenomenon of decadence". However, on the other hand, he admits that there is something healthy and strong about this disposition; for "a robust health and strength is still exhibited in the whole *habitus*, in the dialectics, efficiency, and self-discipline of the scientific man". As a dialectician and a seeker after causes and reasons, Socrates is considered by Nietzsche to be a scientific man. This *habitus* is said by Nietzsche to be "the health of the plebeian"; the strength of the Socratic is his wickedness, his cunning, his ability to make ugly, his "dialectical dryness", and his "shrewdness as tyrant in opposition to a 'tyrant' (instinct)". Although Nietzsche utilizes most of the ideas from this passage in *Twilight of The Idols*, he does not continue to refer to Socrates as exhibiting "the health of the plebeian". Rather, in *Twilight of The Idols*, Socrates becomes thoroughly sick.

Everything in Socrates is said to be "exaggerated, eccentric, caricature";¹⁵⁸ he is "a *buffo* with the instincts of Voltaire" (WP.432).¹⁵⁹ The notion of Socrates as a buffoon¹⁶⁰ suggests that his cheerfulness and mockery stem from his ignobility, as one who has lost respect for himself (*cf.* BGE.205), and as one who, like the objective man, can no longer "take himself seriously" (BGE.207). However, the title of "buffoon" also suggests Socrates' artistry as an actor.¹⁶¹ We have seen previously, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, that Socrates the actor is a "mis-leader" and a pied-piper of the spirit. As an actor, Socrates is also an artist, who employs "falseness with a good conscience". Furthermore, as an artist, Socrates experiences,

¹⁵⁸ It is well-worth noting at this point that Nietzsche too appears exaggerated and eccentric on purpose. Nietzsche too utilizes caricature as a device against his opponents. In 1887-1888, he writes: "Every society has the tendency to reduce its opponents to caricatures -- at least in imagination -- and, as it were, to starve them... Plato, for example, becomes a caricature in my hands" (WP.374). As an immoralist, Nietzsche openly caricaturizes moralists. The important distinction to be made here between Socrates and the regular moralist seems to be that Socrates is only a caricature. He is, in fact, already starved and reduced by nature. He is his own opponent because of the inner turmoil of his anarchic instincts and drives. In order to wage war upon himself, Socrates has caricatured himself, thereby rendering himself hollow as a true "scarecrow of the philosopher".

¹⁵⁹ This is a cryptic statement. Nietzsche uses it to criticize Socrates, but Nietzsche himself writes quite favourably about Voltaire. Moreover, Nietzsche also seems well-described as a buffoon insofar as he too is an artist who employs the falseness of the mask with a good conscience. See (GS.361).

¹⁶⁰ See Cicero, *The Nature of The Gods* I.34,93: "Zeno [an Epicurean controversialist] attacked with abuse not merely his contemporaries like Apollodorus Silus and the rest but Socrates as well, the very father of philosophy; he said he was the buffoon of Athens." This tradition was passed on through Municius Felix, a Roman Christian from Africa (*circa.* early third century): "Then let Socrates, 'the buffoon of Athens', look to his laurels, professing to know nothing -- and boasting the support of a lying demon" (*Octavius*, 38.5). Lactantius, another Christian writer (C.E. 240-320) also agrees with Zeno's appraisal of Socrates as a buffoon in *Divine Institutes* (3, 3).

¹⁶¹ It is in this sense that Nietzsche later refers to himself, as well as Shakespeare, as a "buffoon" (*EH:II.4; IV.1*). The buffoon, as artist, is a deep-sufferer and an actor who employs the mask, or falseness, with a good conscience. He is a buffoon because he is rude; he shocks and offends in order to have an effect.

like Nietzsche, "the inner craving for a role and mask, for *appearance*" (GS.361). The abilities of the actor and the artist to wield the mask effectively are shown in *Gay Science* to

have developed most easily in families of the lower classes who had to survive under changing pressures and coercions, in deep dependency... always adapting themselves again to new circumstances, who always had to change their mien and posture, until they learned gradually to turn their coat with *every* wind and thus virtually to *become* a coat. (GS.361)

As an actor and an artist of the lowest class, Socrates has learned to become entirely dressing, or caricature.¹⁶² Eventually, this actor's capacity, "accumulated from generation to generation, becomes domineering, unreasonable, and intractable". The actor's instinct "learns to lord it over other instincts, and generates the actor, the 'artist'... the zany, the teller of lies, the buffoon" (GS.361). Socrates' own buffoonery, like his dialectics, arises in direct response to danger as an "emergency measure" to preserve himself against the powerful forces which threaten to destroy him in his own weak and sickly state of diminished will to power. The notion of Socrates as a buffoon is also found in *Twilight of The Idols*.

As in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche claims once again in 1888 that Socrates was the discoverer of a new form of *agon* in dialectics: "he is the first fencing master to the leading circles of Athens; he represents nothing but the highest form of shrewdness: he calls it 'virtue'... to have oneself under control, so as to go into battle with reasons and not with affects". As in *Daybreak*, Nietzsche once again returns in 1888 to examine the dishonest union posited by Socrates between virtue and happiness. As in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche takes notice of the attractiveness of this dishonest union when he inquires "from what partial and

¹⁶² The notion of Socrates as pure caricature appears to be developed from a view expressed by Xenophon in his *Memoirs of Socrates* (2, 6, 39), as well as by Cicero in *On Moral Obligation*. Cicero writes: "Socrates used to put it excellently: 'The nearest way to glory -- a kind of short-cut -- is to act in such a way that you are what you want to be thought to be'" (2, 12, 43).

idiosyncratic states the Socratic problem derives: his equalization of reason=virtue=happiness. It was with this absurdity of a doctrine of identity that he fascinated: the philosophers of antiquity never again freed themselves from this fascination" (WP.432). In *Twilight of The Idols*, Socrates' ability to fascinate remains central to Nietzsche's criticisms.

Because of Socrates' dishonesty, Nietzsche attributes to him an "absolute lack of objective interest: hatred for science; the idiosyncrasy of feeling oneself as a problem" (WP.432). Socrates is portrayed as a hater of science and unobjective in the worst sense because he refuses to affirm the true character of existence; namely, that the Socratic equation between reason, happiness, and virtue is false. As has been illustrated previously in *The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge*, and in *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom*, Socrates is criticized for feeling himself to be a problem. The Socratic disposition turns inward upon itself in self-laceration in order to assert its will to power and to find its happiness; for happiness is nothing other than the feeling of power. The Socratic disposition turns inward because it is too weak to assert itself outwardly. In this way, Socrates' false equation of happiness with virtue and reason is shown to be true only for the Socratic constitution, for whom the tyranny of reason and virtue are devices of self-inflicted cruelty, and are therefore means towards the happiness of the weakest will to power. It is precisely this tyranny of reason over all of the instincts that is criticized by Nietzsche in *Twilight of The Idols* (TI:II.10).

So far, Nietzsche's depiction of Socrates in 1888 is very much akin to his earlier appraisal of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy*. However, unlike in 1872, Nietzsche interprets Socrates' divine sign as an "acoustic hallucination", much as he argued in Volume One of *Human, All Too Human*. In this way, Socrates' instincts are levelled, and rendered wholly

plebeian. Whereas the instincts of Socrates were understood in *The Birth of Tragedy* to be attuned to the Dionysian ground of being, the instincts of the plebeian Socrates described in 1888 betray his poor spirit and the emergency of his situation as one whose will to power is weak and sickly. In *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche agrees with his assessment in the notebooks concerning the plebeian nature of Socrates' instincts. However, he does so without mention of his δαιμόνιον.

According to Nietzsche, when a spirit is "rich" it resists any preoccupation with morality. By contrast, in Socrates, there is a great, singular regard for morality, such that Nietzsche refers to him as a "monomaniac" (WP.432). Socrates' moral philosophy is shown to be a "practical" philosophy which responds to his own emergency as one who suffers from a deficiency of will to power. In particular, his "shrewdness" and "logicality" are considered to have arisen as emergency reactive measures against powerful drives and instincts. This view concurs with Nietzsche's stated views of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy* where Socrates, as a physician, is deemed to have saved the Greeks from destruction by their own tyrannical instincts: "The Greek philosophers rest on the same fundamental facts of inner experience as Socrates: five steps from excess, from anarchy, from intemperance -- all men of decadence. They need him as a physician". Socrates prescribes logic as a treatment for "the ferocity and anarchy of the instincts". The "superfetation of logic and of clarity of reason" enables an ordering drive to predominate in anarchic souls. Logic is, in this regard, "will to power, to self-mastery, to 'happiness'" (WP.433). Nietzsche judges that both the ferocity of the unmastered instincts and the superfetation of logic and reason are abnormalities; both belong together -- logical Socratism being a reaction to dangerous and destructive instincts -- and both are symptoms of decadence. Socrates is therefore viewed as the

prototypically decadent human being. This view also corresponds with the view presented in *Twilight of The Idols*.

One of the most important criticisms of Socrates that Nietzsche adopts in *Twilight of The Idols* from his notebooks is his critique of Socrates' misdiagnosis of decadence as a physician. According to Nietzsche, "it is a self-deception of philosophers and moralists to imagine that they escape decadence by opposing it. That is beyond their will; and, however little they acknowledge it, one later discovers that they were among the most powerful promoters of decadence" (WP.435). Nietzsche argues that by opposing decadence one actually does the most to promote decadence. He expresses this view as early as 1880, when he writes:

At long last we learn that of which our ignorance in our youth caused us so much harm: that we have first to *do* what is excellent, then *seek out* what is excellent, whenever and under whatever name it is to be found, but avoid all that is bad and mediocre *without combatting it*. (HH:II.ii.183)

In this aphorism, Nietzsche regards his own youthful writings as having likewise been misdirected attempts to battle against decadence, and therefore as a misdiagnosis of decadence much akin to the prescriptions of Socrates in their decadence. In Nietzsche's opinion, to battle against decadence is itself a sign of great decadence: "All rejection and negation points to a lack of fruitfulness: if only we were fruitful fields, we would at bottom let nothing perish unused and see in every event, thing and man welcome manure, rain or sunshine" (HH:II.ii.332). A truly strong and healthily-constituted individual would in this way not battle his own decadence, but rather integrate and incorporate decadence into his own being without attempting to annihilate it. He would work for his self-mastery, not his self-destruction.

Nietzsche expresses his preference for self-mastery rather than self-destruction in his conception of *Amor fati*. In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes:

I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who make things beautiful. *Amor fati*: let that be my love henceforth! I do not want to wage war against what is ugly. I do not want to accuse; I do not even want to accuse those who accuse. *Looking away* shall be my only negation. (GS.276)

As a physician of the soul, Nietzsche recommends *Amor fati* as the best treatment for decadence, and he views this treatment as being at odds with the treatments offered by Socrates.¹⁶³

In agreement with his views in *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom*, *Human, All Too Human*, *The Gay Science*, and *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche criticizes Socrates as the corrupter and mis-leader of Plato. Plato is viewed by Nietzsche as "the seducer of the nobility" who was himself seduced "by the *roturier* Socrates". It was Plato who "severed the instincts from the *polis*, from contest, from military efficiency, from art and beauty, from the mysteries, from belief in tradition and ancestors". Plato "negated all the presuppositions of the 'noble Greek' of the old stamp"; he "conspired with tyrants, pursued politics of the future and provided the example of the most complete severance of the instincts from the past". Plato is considered to be "profound" and passionate in everything *anti-Hellenic*" (WP.435). In the notebooks of 1888, Plato is depicted as the most powerful force against everything Greek, and Nietzsche views Socrates as being responsible for this powerful anti-Hellenic disposition in Plato. He speaks of Socrates as the beginning of decadence in philosophy: "The real philosophers of Greece are those before Socrates (-- with Socrates something changes)" (WP.437).

¹⁶³ By contrast, Leon Craig argues that Socratic ignorance counsels *Amor fati*, and therefore that there is much more affinity between the treatments offered by Nietzsche and Socrates than Nietzsche himself is willing to admit. See Leon Craig, "Nietzsche's 'Apology': On Reading *Ecce Homo*," Presented to The Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Ottawa, Ontario, June 1982, p. 40.

Although Nietzsche is very critical of those who oppose decadence for having most effectively promoted it, he continues that "the struggle against Socrates, Plato, all the Socratic schools, proceeds from the profound instinct that one does not make men better when one represents to them that virtue is demonstrable and asks for reasons". He still affirms the need for struggle, for contest, and for a warlike constitution. He still struggles against Socrates. However, he does not wish to destroy his enemies, for as we have seen, he affirms the need for good enemies in order to condition and strengthen one's character. He affirms the validity of the "agonal instinct," and he consequently is willing to affirm the contests of the Socratic dialecticians insofar as their activity arises from this instinct. However, Nietzsche is critical of "these born dialecticians" insofar as they "glorify their personal ability as the highest quality," and "represent all other good things as conditioned by it" (WP.441). By doing so, dialecticians seek to deny and destroy any kind of enemy that does not submit to their own dialectical procedures. Inherent in the dialectical drive of Socrates, Nietzsche finds the agonal instinct; however, also in this drive, Nietzsche discovers an anti-agonal instinct: a will to have no enemies.

Nietzsche views this anti-agonal instinct in dialectics as "anti-scientific" (WP.441); for the glorification of dialectical ability as the highest of all human qualities is a wholly inaccurate and dishonest portrayal of the true character of existence. It is not simply unscientific, but "anti-scientific" because it expresses not simply ignorance concerning the nature of things, but a willful denial of what is real. These criticisms of Socrates as anti-agonal, insofar as he is "anti-scientific", do not re-appear in *Twilight of The Idols*. Socrates is presented in a slightly less negative light in *Twilight of The Idols* because he is more of an agonal figure. Depicted as a "great erotic" in *Twilight of The Idols*, Socrates understands and

loves *agon*. He becomes a more warlike figure in *Twilight of The Idols*. Consequently, he is also a slightly more positive one.

Whereas in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is depicted as the father of science, in 1888 Nietzsche judges Socrates to be a hater of "physicists and physicians". In fact, "we find from the beginning of Greek philosophy onwards a struggle against science... always for the good of *morality*". Unlike in *Daybreak* and *Gay Science*, Socrates is viewed as an ally of morality who assaults "the Sophists in order to get rid of science". However, Nietzsche in no way favours the scientists either; for "the physicists are all so completely subjected as to take up the schema of truth, of real being, into the fundamentals of their science". Like Socrates, the scientists too are subjects who have faith in "the will to truth". Both bad philosophers and physicists in this way teach "contempt for objective interest". They are not strong enough to affirm those parts of existence which objectively exist, but which serve as their enemies and demand their active engagement in agonal struggle. Instead, they are partisan to their weakest drives; they "return to the practical interest, the personal utility of all knowledge". In short, they are only willing to affirm what does not offer them any opposition because they are too weak for opposition. Due to their decadence and weakness, physicists and philosophers detest the strength exhibited in a warlike science that is strong enough for *agon* and battle: "they hate the measured step, the tempo of science, they hate the lack of urgency, the perseverance, the indifference to himself of the man of science" (WP.442). Again, these criticisms of Socrates with regard to his "anti-scientific", and therefore anti-agonal tendencies are not reproduced in *Twilight of The Idols*. This omission preserves Socrates' status as a good enemy.

One final aphorism is not re-produced in *Twilight of The Idols*, and it too concerns

Socrates' relation to science. As an ally of morality, Socrates is hostile to science because "science takes things seriously that have nothing to do with 'good' and 'evil'", which "consequently makes the feeling for 'good' and 'evil' seem less important". Morality demands that the whole human being give all his attention and devote all his forces towards cultivating the moral feelings. Hence, science is considered to be a wasteful, if not sinful squandering of energy on the non-moral subjects of "plants and stars". According to Nietzsche in his notebooks of 1888, "scientific procedures rapidly declined in Greece once Socrates had introduced into science the disease of moralizing" (WP.443). Socrates' treatments as a physician who offers morality as a medicine only serve to make human beings sicker, according to Nietzsche.

ii. Twilight of The Idols (1888)

In *Twilight of The Idols* Socrates remains a negative figure. He is described as an eternal idol and a timely force that needs to be overcome. He is ugly, resentful and decadent. He uses irony improperly, and he is a criminal whose noble capacities for evil have been thwarted by his lack of an inner "pathos of distance". He is a bad physician, who misdiagnoses decadence by making reason into a tyrant, which only serves to weaken human beings for war, and to decrease their will to power.

However, Nietzsche's criticisms of Socrates shift in their focus. As we have seen, in 1879, most of his scorn falls upon the dying Socrates. It is the dying Socrates who is particularly resentful. By contrast, the living Socrates remains much more of an ambiguous figure throughout Nietzsche's work. However, in *Twilight of The Idols*, although the dying

Socrates is certainly a very negative figure, he is no longer a wholly negative one. The living Socrates presented in *Twilight of The Idols* is an unwise doctor. He misdiagnoses decadence. However, the dying Socrates is a wise physician, for he understands that the only true cure for decadence is not the tyranny of reason over the instincts, but death. This is a significant change in Nietzsche's appraisal of Socrates.

The living Socrates, although still a negative character in *Twilight of The Idols*, becomes more ambiguous by receiving some of Nietzsche's praise. The living Socrates is now described as a "great erotic" who loves and understands *agon*. Insofar as Socrates loves *agon*, Nietzsche considers him to be a good enemy.

In *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche himself poses as Socrates' "pied piper" adversary. As in *Beyond Good and Evil*, where Socrates' own influence as a pied piper is shown not simply to affect the youth of Athens, but to span the entirety of human history since Socrates, so too in *Twilight of The Idols* does Nietzsche describe Socrates not merely as an idol of his age, but as an eternal idol. As an eternal idol, Socrates is most hollow and rotten, and part of Nietzsche's task in *Twilight of The Idols* is to pose questions to Socrates "with a hammer, and, perhaps, to hear as a reply that famous hollow sound which speaks of bloated entrails". As we have seen in *Gay Science*, part of Socrates' allure is his silence. Nietzsche wishes to dispel some of this allure by exposing Socrates as an idol, and he does so by making Socrates answer his questions: "that which would remain silent must become outspoken" (II.p). In this regard, *Twilight of The Idols* should partly be read as a declaration of war upon Socrates, whose treatments Nietzsche wishes to expose not as a solution or a cure for sickness, but as part of the problem of sickness. Hence, he devotes the entire second chapter of *Twilight of The Idols* to "The Problem of Socrates".

Nietzsche considers his war against Socrates to be a spiritual exercise; it is the "spiritualization of *hostility*," which consists in "a profound appreciation of the value of having enemies". Waging a glorious war involves "acting and thinking in the opposite way from that which has been the rule" (*TI.V.3*). In this respect, Nietzsche suggests that Socrates should no longer be considered as an untimely individual; rather, along with Christianity, Socrates is viewed as a timely force, as part of what has been the rule, and therefore as something which must be overcome.

Socrates' timeliness is particularly opposed by Nietzsche because it is a timeless or eternal timeliness. As an eternal idol, Socrates' timeliness is a vigorous force throughout history which offers the greatest resistance and challenge to the untimely individual who stands opposed to his age. In *Twilight of The Idols* -- as in *Antichrist* -- Christianity too is viewed as such an eternally timely idol by Nietzsche. However, in *Twilight of The Idols* -- and in *Antichrist*, as we shall see -- Nietzsche still judges Socrates to be a better enemy than Christianity;¹⁶⁴ for Socrates loves *agon* as a "great erotic" (*TI.II.8*), and to this extent, Socrates is warlike. However, "the church always wanted the destruction of its enemies" (*TI.V.3*). To

¹⁶⁴ This view is upheld by Nietzsche's remarks in both *Gay Science* and *Beyond Good and Evil*. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche is critical of Christianity as Platonism for the people. On the one hand, this would seem to suggest that Nietzsche's difficulties with Christianity are its Platonic-Socratic roots. Although this is partially true, there is equally well evidence in Nietzsche's writings which suggests the opposite view. In *Gay Science*, we have demonstrated that Nietzsche views Plato's Platonism and the prudence of Socrates as a sign of their abundant strength, and that modern human beings lack the strength for any such idealism. In this way, the problem Nietzsche finds with Christianity is not so much its Platonism as it is the fact that it is Platonism "for the people." By serving the herd, the ascetic measures of Plato's "idealism" no longer serve the strong and over-abundant constitution; rather, these ascetic measures are made to foster everything weak and herd-like in human beings. In this respect, Nietzsche understands Plato and Socrates to be better enemies than Christianity. Also see (*TI.IX.23*) for an explanation of their contrasting relationships to *agon*.

this extent, it repudiates *agon*, and it seeks to end all struggle by having no enemies left to battle. Although Nietzsche, as one among the "immoralists" and "Antichristians", finds it to his advantage that the church exists to offer its opposition, fundamentally, Nietzsche deems Christianity to be a less worthy enemy because it denounces war: "One has renounced the *great life* when one renounces war" (TI.V.3).

Nietzsche begins his attack on Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols* by noting that "concerning life, the wisest men of all ages have judged alike: *it is no good*". The wisest have always been "full of weariness of life, full of resistance to life," such that even the dying Socrates said: "To live -- that means to be sick a long time. I owe Asclepius the Saviour a rooster". Socrates was tired of living, and Nietzsche detects something sickly in the weariness of all these sages. For this reason, he deems them all "decadents" (TI.II.1), and he describes them as "types of decline" (TI.II.2).

Nietzsche writes that he first recognized this about the great sages through coming to understand Socrates and Plato as "symptoms of degeneration, tools of Greek dissolution, pseudo-Greek, anti-Greek" in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Moreover, he views all of their judgements about life as errors. Fundamentally, all judgements concerning the value of life -- whether they are used to condemn or to praise life -- can, in the end, never be true: "they have value only as symptoms... in themselves such judgements are stupidities.... *The value of life cannot be estimated*. Not by the living, for they are an interested party... not by the dead, for a different reason" (TI.II.2). In effect, such judgements say nothing about the value of life. Rather, they only serve to illuminate something about the particular forms of life from which they arise. Judgements which affirm and praise life are symptomatic of a vital, ascending, and rigorous form of life. By contrast, judgements which condemn or deny the worth of life

betray an exhausted, declining, and therefore decadent form of life. The great sages are judged by Nietzsche to express opinions that are symptomatic of the latter sort of life, and their great wisdom is exposed by Nietzsche as not being wisdom at all; for although they claim to know the value of life, they cannot truly know its value. In this way, the sages, including Socrates, profess to know what they cannot know; they account their own ignorance to be wisdom, and as we have seen in *On The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, "to delude oneself that one possesses a virtue one does not possess is an illness bordering on madness" (UM:H.6;88). Previously Socrates was viewed as being free from this delusion. In 1888, however, Socrates is considered to have succumb to it.

Many of Nietzsche's criticisms of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols* have already been made in his earlier writings. For example, Nietzsche contrasts the timidity of the Socratic schools towards the reality of suffering with the courage of Thucydides and the Sophists (TI.X.2). This contrast has been drawn previously in *Daybreak*, and it is outlined again in his notebooks from 1887 and 1888. Nietzsche also writes in *Twilight of The Idols* that "the Socratic virtues were preached because the Greeks had lost them" (TI.X.3). This too has been noted earlier in *Daybreak*. *The Will To Power* notebooks from 1885 to 1888 are later relied upon by Nietzsche when he constructs his picture of Socrates in *Twilight of The Idols*. In *Twilight of The Idols*, as in *The Will To Power* notebooks, Socrates is viewed as a decadent, plebeian figure, an exaggeration, a caricature, and a buffoon. However, in *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche elaborates upon Socrates' status as a buffoon:

Wherever authority still forms part of good bearing, where one does not give reasons but commands, the dialectician is a kind of buffoon: one laughs at him, one does not take him seriously. Socrates was the buffoon who *got himself taken seriously*: what really happened there? (TI.II.5)

As a buffoon, Socrates was taken seriously precisely because the authority of the Athenian

nobility and their ability to command had decayed by his time. As noted in *Beyond Good and Evil*, the nobles themselves had become decadent and plebeian; hence, the dialectician's art no longer appeared "indecent" because it offered a means for what is plebeian to come to the top" (TI.II.5). Nietzsche insists in both his 1885-1886 notebooks and in *Twilight of The Idols* that a taste for dialectics arose among the Greeks as an emergency measure and a self-defense mechanism for a form of life which expressed the lowest level of will to power. Dialectics became the weapon of last resort for those lacking the strength for noble action, and who therefore needed to rely upon their ability to rationalize. As seen previously in the notebooks from 1885 and 1886, Nietzsche believes that "we no longer esteem ourselves sufficiently when we communicate ourselves... Whatever we have words for, that we have already got beyond. In all talk there is a grain of contempt. Language... was invented only for what is average, medium, communicable" (TI.IX.26). With language, the speaker can only vulgarize, according to Nietzsche. This is his major criticism of Socratic dialectics.

The dialectician's taste for ironic speech is symptomatic of a meagre will to power. As far back as 1878, the "habituation to irony" is viewed as a corruptive force which spoils the character, such that "in the end one comes to resemble a snapping dog which has learned how to laugh but forgotten how to bite" (HH:I.372). In *Twilight of The Idols*, the irony of Socrates is likewise exposed as the "malicious and jeering superiority" of the plebeian who is full of *ressentiment*, but is too weak to bite. Through Socratic irony and dialectic, the plebeian avenges himself upon what is noble. In this way, dialectic is "only a form of *revenge* in Socrates" (TI.II.7).

Nietzsche makes mention of Socrates' ugliness in his earlier writings. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is depicted as a monstrosity and a cyclops. In *The Struggle Between*

Science and Wisdom, Socrates is likened to Thersites, "the ugly man of the people." In both instances, Nietzsche uses Socrates's physical ugliness metaphorically to represent something monstrous and ugly about his character. In *We Philologists*, Nietzsche writes of Socrates' character, describing him as one who is "capable of everything evil". In *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche returns to the metaphor of Socrates' physical ugliness in order to express precisely Socrates' underlying evil nature.

Nietzsche appeals to an account of Socrates which is recorded by Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations*. This account runs as follows:

Zopyrus, who claimed to discern every man's nature from his appearance, accused Socrates in company of a number of vices which he enumerated, and when he was ridiculed by the rest who said they failed to recognize such vices in Socrates, Socrates himself came to his rescue by saying that he was naturally inclined to the vices named, but had cast them out of him by the help of reason. (IV.xxxvii.80)¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ This account is also recorded by the third century Aristotelian commentator, Alexander of Aphrodisias in his work, *Fate* (6). It is worth noting that in *De Fato*, Cicero dismisses the opinion of Zopyrus as follows:

Again, do we not read how Socrates was stigmatized by the 'physiognomist' Zopyrus, who professed to discover men's entire characters and natures from their body, eyes, face and brow? He said that Socrates was stupid and thick-witted because he had not got hollows in the neck above the collar-bone -- he used to say these portions of his anatomy were blocked and stopped up; he also added that he was addicted to women -- at which Alcibiades is said to have given a loud guffaw! But it is possible that these defects may be due to natural causes; but their eradication and entire removal, recalling the man himself from the serious vices to which he was inclined, does not rest with natural causes, but with will, effort, training. (10-11)

Unlike Nietzsche, Cicero rejects Zopyrus' evaluation of Socrates because it is obvious to him that Socrates was neither stupid nor addicted to women. (The view of Socrates as addicted to women is carried on through later Christian writers such as Cyril of Alexandria; see *Against Julian* 7, 226.) However, like Nietzsche, Cicero is willing to admit that some defects of character do have their origin in "natural causes", or physiology; but unlike Nietzsche, Cicero thinks that one can overcome these defects by struggling against them. As we have seen, Nietzsche feels that opposing decadence only makes one more decadent.

Nietzsche writes that "ugliness, in itself an objection, is among the Greeks almost a refutation" (TI.II.3). "Nothing is ugly except the degenerating man... everything ugly weakens and saddens man. It reminds him of decay, danger, impotence; it actually deprives him of strength". What is ugly is understood as a sign and symptom of degeneration, and it is for this reason that ugliness is objectionable and hated by the noble Greeks; for ugliness represents to one who is beautiful "the *decline of his type*" (TI.IX.20).

Socrates' ugliness made him a non-Greek. Like Zopyrus, Nietzsche argues that "ugliness is often enough the expression of a development that has been crossed, *thwarted* by crossing. Or it appears as *declining* development" (TI.II.3). In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates' monstrous ugliness is deemed to be the result of his grotesquely over-developed logical faculty, and his under-developed instincts. In *Twilight of The Idols*, Socrates' physical ugliness becomes a metaphor for the inward ugliness of his "declining development; it suggests "the admitted wantonness and anarchy of his instincts", but also "the hypertrophy of the logical faculty" (TI.II.4) already criticized in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Further, "the anthropologists among the criminologists tell us that the typical criminal is ugly... But the criminal is a decadent. Was Socrates a typical criminal?". According to both Nietzsche and Zopyrus, Socrates was very much like the typical criminal insofar as "he harboured in himself all the bad vices and appetites" (TI.II.3).

Socrates' status as a criminal in *Twilight of The Idols* suggests that he was both a strong figure, and yet also a sick and decadent one. Nietzsche discusses the "*criminal and what is related to him*":

The criminal type is the type of strong human being under unfavourable circumstances: a strong human being made sick. He lacks the wilderness, a somehow freer and more dangerous environment and form of existence, where everything that is weapons and armour in the instincts of the strong human being

has its rightful place. His *virtues* are ostracized by society; the most vivid drives with which he is endowed soon grow together with the depressing affects -- with suspicion, fear, and dishonour. Yet this is almost the recipe for physiological degeneration. Whoever must do secretly, with long suspense, caution, and cunning, what he can do best and would like to do, becomes anemic. (TI.IX.45)

As a criminal, Socrates is not criticized for "being capable of everything evil". This, in fact, is Socrates' initial and underlying strength. Rather, Socrates was ruined and rendered sick by having come to understand his own ability to be evil as dishonourable and worthy of contempt. In effect, Socrates does not maintain a broad soul full of tensions. He does not maintain the "*pathos of distance*" in his own soul between what is noble and what is base, which is "characteristic of every strong age". Rather, the strength to withstand tension, the width of the tensions between extremes of good and evil, nobility and baseness, becomes ever smaller until finally "the extremes themselves become blurred to the point of similarity" (TI.IX.37). In this way, "the most vivid drives with which he is endowed soon grow together with the depressing affects" (TI.IX.45); his once noble capacity for evil is thereby rendered plebeian and criminal.

In *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche continues to draw attention to Socrates' ability to fascinate. He lists three means by which Socrates became such an effective pied piper. First, he notes that Socrates "fascinated by appealing to the agonistic impulses of the Greeks -- he introduced a variation into the wrestling match between young men and youths". Indeed, Socrates understood the desires of the Greeks so well that Nietzsche refers to him as "a great *erotic*" (TI.II.8).¹⁶⁶ Second, Socrates fascinated because he exemplified the most "extreme

¹⁶⁶ Nietzsche speaks of Plato in identical terms as a great erotic: "Philosophy after the fashion of Plato might rather be defined as an erotic contest, as a further development and turning inward of the ancient agonistic gymnastics and of its *presuppositions*. What ultimately grew out of this philosophic eroticism of Plato? A new

case" of the decadence which was becoming prevalent in his own society. In effect, his "awe-inspiring ugliness" made him fascinating to his fellow Athenians, just as the ugliness of a road-side car accident is fascinating to modern human beings. Third, Socrates "fascinated, of course, even more as an answer, a solution, and apparent *cure*" (TI.II.9) for the decadence which had infected all of Athenian society. It is this third sort of fascination which Nietzsche seeks, above all, to dispel in "The Problem of Socrates".

According to Nietzsche, Socrates was able to fascinate because "he seemed to be a physician, a saviour" (TI.II.11). Briefly, Socrates perceived that his own declining condition was no longer an exception in Athens. As suggested in *Beyond Good and Evil* (BGE.212), Socrates "saw *through* his noble Athenians". He realized that his own idiosyncratic decadence was now shared by everyone: "old Athens was coming to an end. And Socrates understood that all the world *needed* him -- his means, his cure, his personal artifice of self preservation". In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates is said to have harnessed the energies of human beings and made them serve the knowledge drive in order to save them from destruction and universal wars of mass extermination. So too in *Twilight of The Idols* is Socrates said to have known that everywhere "the instincts were in anarchy; everywhere one was within five paces of excess". Socrates understood, therefore, that he was only the most extreme and "striking instance of what was then beginning to be a universal distress: no one was any longer master over himself, the instincts turned *against* each other" (TI.II.9).

In the decadent constitution, each instinct seeks to assert its will to power over all others. As we have already seen, without organization or tactical mastery of these chaotic drives in an effective battle array, the entire organism becomes quickly exhausted from

art form of the Greek agon: dialectics" (TI.IX.23).

constant, gruelling, and haphazard internal conflict. In *Twilight of The Idols*, the anarchic struggle between the drives in the decadent constitution is ameliorated through the invention of "a *counter-tyrant* who is stronger" (TI.II.9). The election of reason as tyrant over the anarchic drives serves to avoid the immediate exhaustion and destruction of the decadent organism by preventing this chaos of drives from going to war. This is the prudence of the decadent constitution: to avoid going to war at all costs. However, the tyranny of reason is symptomatic of both a cowardice for war and a concern for self-preservation, both of which are signs of a declining will to power.

Although Nietzsche is critical of the tyranny of reason over the anarchic drives, in *Twilight of The Idols*, he remarks upon the perils of allowing the drives to do battle freely in the decadent constitution:

"Freedom which I do *not* mean." In times like these, abandonment to one's instincts is one calamity more. Our instincts contradict, disturb, destroy each other; I have already defined what is *modern* as physiological self-contradiction. Rationality in education would require that under iron pressure at least one of these instinct systems be paralyzed to permit another to gain in power, to become strong, to become master. Today the individual still has to be made possible by being pruned: possible means *whole*. (TI.IX.41)

Nietzsche is not here recommending a free-for-all battle of the instincts, but rather, a "pruning" of the instincts so that a glorious battle might take place. This would constitute a proper rational education. Presently, human beings are simply a chaotic jumble of instincts which cancel-out each other's quantum of power. In such a condition, all the drives remain weak; every weak drive is allowed to fight every other weak drive, such that no single drive is able to gain the upper hand and become strong. Contrary to the tyranny of reason imposed as an emergency measure over the decadent constitution, a truly rational education would place a kind of pressure upon the soul, giving it some direction, and fortifying part of it so that it

might do battle against the other drives, conquering them, and thereby becoming stronger. However, the tyranny of reason is incapable of organizing these drives in a masterful way for a truly glorious war. It does not marshal up the drives in battle array, but as tyrant, it opposes all of the drives equally. In this way, no battle-lines are drawn within the soul. There are no extreme tensions of great opposing forces; there is no great pathos of distance between the drives because all are treated equally. In this way, decadent individuals are constantly without a means of organizing their inner forces for war. Although they are held back by tyrannical reason from complete nihilism and self-destruction at the hands of their own anarchic drives, they always remain exhausted and weak from lack of internal organization for battle. Consequently, the soul that is tyrannized by reason remains unwarlike; it is never able to exert and to expand its own will to power. For this reason, decadent individuals are never happy because happiness, as we have seen, is the feeling of an increased will to power.

In *Twilight of The Idols*, Socrates is demonstrated to have turned reason into such a tyrant. His prescription as a physician is "either to perish or -- to be *absurdly rational*" (TI.II.10). In Nietzsche's estimation, "Socrates was a misunderstanding", and so too are his prescriptions against sickness a misdiagnosis; for "to *have* to fight the instincts -- that is the formula of decadence: as long as life is *ascending*, happiness equals instinct" (TI.II.11).

Socrates was, with regard to his misdiagnosis, not a wise physician. His only wisdom seems to lie in his having realized that his own rationalistic treatments against decadence were ineffective: "'Socrates is no physician,' he said softly to himself; 'here death alone is the physician. Socrates himself has merely been sick a long time'" (TI.II.12). His wisdom, in short, is his wanting to die. By his own example, and not by his words, the dying Socrates

is shown to be an effective and wise doctor for the hopelessly diseased. In this respect, at least, Nietzsche suggests that decadents who seek an effective cure from Socrates ought not to imitate the way in which he lived -- as one who tyrannized over his raging and mob-like instincts, but imitate the way in which he died, having committed suicide. Socrates' example serves to illustrate Nietzsche's own appraisal of the best way for the doctor to treat rampant and terminal illness:

The sick man is a parasite of society. In a certain state it is indecent to live longer. To go on vegetating in cowardly dependence on physicians and machinations, after the meaning of life, the right to life, has been lost, that ought to prompt a profound contempt in society. The physicians, in turn, would have to be mediators of this contempt -- not prescriptions, but every day a new dose of nausea with their patients. To create a new responsibility, that of the physician, for all cases in which the highest interest of life, of ascending life, demands the most inconsiderate pushing down and aside of degenerating life. (TI.IX.36)

In this way, Nietzsche's view of Socrates once again appears to shift. In 1872, Nietzsche favours the dying, heroic Socrates to the living Socrates. Through the mid 1870's, Nietzsche gains an appreciation for the living Socrates which peaks in 1880, while simultaneously developing a disdain for the dying Socrates which first surfaces in 1879. From 1880 onwards, the living Socrates is wrestled with constantly. By contrast, the dying Socrates of 1888 is viewed most favourably since *The Birth of Tragedy*, insofar as Socrates is admitted to possess a kind of wisdom that is best suited to decadent individuals.

iii. Antichrist (1888)

Nietzsche's single reference to Socrates in *Antichrist* is incidental. His primary concern in this work is to illuminate what he considers to be the problems of Christianity. In a passing remark, Socrates appears as a positive figure, probably because Nietzsche is so vigorous and unrelenting in his attack against Christianity. However, although Socrates is only a peripheral figure in *Antichrist*, the reader is invited to compare and contrast Socrates with Jesus. After explaining the relevance of the single reference made to Socrates in *Antichrist*, I will demonstrate, by comparing Nietzsche's portrayals of Jesus and Socrates, that, in 1888, he has come to respect Socrates as a good enemy in 1888, but that he finds Jesus incapable of being an enemy.

There is only a single passing reference to Socrates in *The Antichrist*, in which Socrates is compared with Buddha and contrasted with Christianity. According to Nietzsche, both Christianity and Buddhism are nihilistic religions. However, "Buddhism is a hundred times more realistic than Christianity". Nietzsche accounts Buddhism to be "the only genuinely positivistic religion in history". Here, positivism counts as an asset insofar as it indicates a rejection of religious concepts: "Buddhism is profoundly distinguished from Christianity by the fact that the self-deception of the moral concepts lies far behind it... it stands *beyond* good and evil". As evidence of Buddhism's characteristic realism, Nietzsche remarks that, unlike Christianity, Buddhism "no longer says 'struggle against sin' but, duly respectful of reality, 'struggle against suffering'" (A.20). As we have seen, for Nietzsche, suffering is real, but sin is only a misinterpretation of suffering.

Although Nietzsche accounts Buddhism to be more honest than Christianity about

reality, he judges Buddhism too as a symptom of decadence. Nietzsche demonstrates the underlying decadence of Buddhism by uncovering what he considers to be "the *two* physiological facts" upon which Buddhism is based. First, he discovers "an excessive sensitivity" in the Buddhist constitution "which manifests itself in a refined susceptibility to pain". Second, Nietzsche detects "an over-spiritualization, an all-too-long preoccupation with concepts and logical procedures". Nietzsche sees this second physiological fact as having been conditioned by the origins of Buddhism, which he locates in a "philosophical movement" that "spanned centuries" (A.20). In its first physiological fact, Buddhism is much different than Socrates, who is said to have had little sensitivity and a great threshold for pain;¹⁶⁷ however, in respect to its over-concern with concepts and logical procedures, Buddhism is depicted very much like Socrates.

These two physiological facts lead to a general state of depression in the organism, and Buddhism offers a response to such depression. Buddha is said to have proceeded against this depression of will to power with "hygienic measures". Against exhaustion, he recommends a life of wandering in the open air, moderation, diet, and wariness both of intoxicants and "of all emotions that activate the gall bladder or heat the blood". Buddha "understands goodness and graciousness as health-promoting". Unlike Christianity, Buddha "does not ask his followers to fight those who think otherwise."¹⁶⁸ there is nothing to which his doctrine is more opposed than the feeling of revenge, antipathy, *ressentiment*" (A.20). In this regard, Buddha

¹⁶⁷ For example, see Plato's account of Socrates on expedition in *The Symposium*, 219c-221b.

¹⁶⁸ It is worth noting, in support of Nietzsche, that there has never been a Buddhist holy war. See S. Sivaraksa, "Buddhism and Nonviolence" *Seeds of Peace* (Parallax Press, 1992) 81-92.

differs from Socrates, who is considered by Nietzsche to have slandered and opposed life by his *ressentiment*.

Buddha is most like Socrates insofar as both act as physicians treating a form of spiritual exhaustion which manifests itself as "excessive 'objectivity'" (A.20). This form of "objectivity", as we have seen in *Beyond Good and Evil* (BGE.80), betrays "the individual's loss of interest in himself," or his decaying "egoism". In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Socrates is considered to have fallen prey to this form of "objectivity" and decaying "egoism". However, in *Antichrist*, both Buddha and Socrates offer criticisms of this "excessive 'objectivity'" and promote egoism as a treatment against it:

In the Buddha's doctrine, egoism becomes a duty... Perhaps one may here recall that Athenian who also waged war against any pure "scientism" -- Socrates, who elevated personal egoism to an ethic, even in the realm of problems. (A.20)

In this way, Nietzsche allies himself somewhat with Buddha and Socrates as he attacks Christianity in *The Antichrist*.

In Nietzsche's comparison of Socrates and Jesus earlier in *Human, All Too Human*, Socrates is demonstrated to be more to Nietzsche's tastes than Jesus. In *The Antichrist*, no such comparison is directly offered. However, although Socrates is still favoured by Nietzsche over Jesus in 1888, the "pathos of distance" between their two characters is no longer so wide. If we examine "the psychology of the redeemer" in *The Antichrist*, we find eight fruitful comparisons and contrasts between Socrates and Jesus. First, like Socrates, Jesus is by no means a hero: "if anything is unevangelical it is the concept of the hero". Second, unlike Socrates, Jesus does not desire *agon*; he does not thrive on competition and tests of strength: "Just the opposite of all wrestling, of all feeling-oneself-in-a-struggle, has here become instinct". Jesus' incapacity for struggle is witnessed by his words "resist not evil" in the

Sermon on the Mount. He is incapable of being an enemy (A.29). In this respect, Nietzsche considers him to be Socrates' inferior.

Third, unlike Socrates, Jesus is an "idiot" (A.29). For Nietzsche, an idiot is someone who has no awareness, let alone understanding, of the outside world. Nietzsche considers Jesus to be an idiot because "he accepted only *inner* realities as realities, as 'truths'... he understood the rest, everything natural, temporal, spatial, historical, only as signs, as occasions for parables" (A.34). In one respect, Nietzsche views Jesus' idiocy to have revealed something true to human beings. In his idiocy, Jesus teaches that "the Kingdom of God is in you". Jesus does not promise blessedness, for blessedness "is not tied to conditions: it is the only reality". Jesus knew that life -- his own inner life -- was blessed. In Jesus "the 'evangel', the concept of guilt and punishment is lacking; also the concept of reward, 'sin' -- any distance separating God and man -- is abolished: precisely this is the 'glad tidings'" (A.33). Hence, Jesus knew that the Kingdom of God truly is in each person because each person is divine and innocent, according to his teachings.¹³⁸ In this respect, Nietzsche's Jesus of 1880 is not much different from his Jesus of 1888; for both are representations of a Jesus who fundamentally recognizes his own divinity and innocence; similarly, both misunderstand the rest of the world, the former due to his desire to judge and condemn the world, and the latter due to his lack of awareness of the world, or his idiocy.

In another respect, however, Nietzsche views Jesus' idiocy as a sign of his decadence, and as his "instinctive hatred of every reality" (A.29). According to Nietzsche, Jesus' assertion that "the Kingdom of God is in you" can also be interpreted as the sign of an excitable

¹³⁸ In *Antichrist*, any teachings to the contrary are dismissed by Nietzsche as additions made later-Christians.

pathology which "shrinks from any contact, from grasping a solid object":

One should translate such a physiological *habitus* into its ultimate consequence -- an instinctive hatred of every reality, a flight into "what cannot be grasped", "the incomprehensible", an aversion to every formula, to every concept of time and space, to all that is solid, custom, institution, church; a being at home in a world which is no longer in contact with any kind of reality, a merely "inner" world, a "true" world, an "eternal" world. "The kingdom of God is *in you*". (A.29)

Jesus' "*instinctive hatred of reality*" is understood by Nietzsche as "a consequence of an extreme capacity for suffering and excitement which no longer wants any contact at all because it feels every contact too deeply". Unlike Socrates, Jesus instinctively avoids all hostility because he experiences "any resistance, even any compulsion to resist, as unendurable *displeasure*" (A.30). As a means of avoiding all such displeasure, Jesus "finds blessedness (pleasure) only in no longer offering any resistance to anybody, neither to evil nor to him who is evil -- love as the only, as the *last* possible, way of life" (A.30).¹³⁹ In this regard, Jesus' idiocy is not only a sign of his own weak mental faculties and his lack of awareness of the world; his "hatred of every reality" may also be seen, from a certain perspective, as an indication of his own underlying *ressentiment*.¹⁴⁰

Fourth, although there are suggestions that Jesus displays an underlying *ressentiment* in his desire to avoid contact "with any kind of reality", Nietzsche points out that Jesus died, quite unlike Socrates, free from *ressentiment* (A.40; cf. WP.162).¹⁴¹ This is a reversal of Nietzsche's earlier interpretation of Jesus' death in 1879, in which both Socrates and Jesus are

¹³⁹ By preaching love of enemies, Jesus becomes, like Socrates, a leader for the herd. In his notebooks from 1887 to 1888, Nietzsche writes "'love': the ideal state of the herd animal that no longer wants to have enemies" (WP.335).

¹⁴⁰ This view of Jesus as fundamentally resentful corresponds with Nietzsche's stated view of 1879.

¹⁴¹ See (WP.162) for a similar interpretation of Jesus' death.

shown to have died resentfully. In 1888, however, both deaths are viewed more favourably. Socrates dies resentfully, but wisely as a decadent. Jesus, on the other hand, dies without *ressentiment*, but only because he is incapable of *ressentiment*. As in *Human, All Too Human*, Jesus is shown to lack the breadth of spirit, and therefore the ability to see from multiple perspectives, which Socrates possesses. Jesus understands something that Socrates does not understand because he recognizes his own innocence and divinity. However, this knowledge of Jesus is "*pure foolishness*" (A.32). Unlike Socrates, Jesus does not battle and negate "the world", but this is not because he is strong enough not to have to negate; rather, it is because he is idiotic and does not recognize "the world", that it might be negated: "he never had any reason to negate 'the world'... To negate is the very thing that is impossible for him" (A.33).

Fifth, like Socrates, Jesus too is esteemed by Nietzsche to be a kind of "free spirit" insofar as "he does not care for anything solid". Jesus recognizes as real only "the innermost: 'life' or 'truth' or 'light' is his word for the innermost -- all the rest, the whole of reality, the whole of nature, language itself, has for him only the value of a sign, a simile" (A.32). Jesus is a free spirit insofar as, only recognizing what is "innermost", he "no longer required any formulas, any rites for his intercourse with God -- not even prayer" (A.33). As an "anti-realist" (A.32), Jesus stands alongside Socrates as one who has broken away from the customs and traditional morality of his day.

Sixth, Jesus is no dialectician. "[T]he very idea is lacking that a faith, a 'truth', might be proved by reason" (A.32). Dialectic is foreign to Jesus, who deems his own "inner' lights" or "feelings of pleasure and self-affirmations" to be his "proofs of strength". In this respect, Jesus is very much unlike Socrates, the great dialectician, and perhaps Jesus is healthier, in this regard.

Seventh, unlike the life of Socrates, the life of Jesus "is still possible today, for certain people even necessary: genuine, original Christianity will be possible at all times" (A.39). Whereas in *The Birth of Tragedy*, *Schopenhauer as Educator*, and *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche expresses doubt that the greatness of Socrates is possible today, there is something less great that is certainly and always possible in the life of Jesus.

Eighth, and finally, unlike Socrates, who ruled his instincts with the tyrant of reason, Jesus was ruled only by his instincts, "and *what instincts!*" (A.39). By this exclamation, Nietzsche suggests that the instincts of Jesus are not to his credit. As we have seen in *Antichrist*, Jesus avoids all conflict in order to avoid suffering. In his notes from 1887 to 1888, Nietzsche remarks:

Christ's example: he does not resist those who are harming him; he does not defend himself; he does more: he "turns the other cheek"... He forbids his disciples to defend him; he makes it clear that he could get help but *will not*. (WP.207)

Jesus does not do anything to help himself. This suggests to Nietzsche that the instincts which rule in him are decadent, weak, and exhausted.

With this picture of Jesus' soul, we can finally begin to understand Nietzsche's ambiguous praise for "the Roman Caesar with Christ's soul" (WP.983). On the one hand, we may interpret this synthesis as expressing the greatest opposition, tension of soul, and pathos of distance between what is great and warlike (the Roman Caesar) and what is most lowly and decadent (Christ's soul). As we have seen, the greater the tension and pathos of distance that is exhibited within a soul, the stronger and deeper that soul becomes. On the other hand, this synthesis may also be interpreted to describe an individual who recognizes his own innocence and divinity (Christ), and yet is not ignorant of the rest of the world either (the Roman Caesar); moreover, the Roman Caesar is at most a barbarian and a blonde beast. He is a

"strong" but "bungled" man; for he suffers due to "an overpowering desire to inflict pain and to find an outlet for inner tensions in hostile acts and ideas" (A.22). Fundamentally for Nietzsche, this is a sign that he lacks power: "Certainly the state in which we hurt others is rarely as agreeable... as that in which we benefit others; it is a sign that we are still lacking power, or it shows a sense of frustration in the face of this poverty" (GS.13). The strongest human being, in Nietzsche's estimation, is one who is warlike like Caesar, and yet also peaceful at heart like Jesus.

iv. Ecce Homo (1888)

In his final work, Nietzsche makes few explicit references to Socrates. However, from these references, we are shown three things: (1) We learn that Nietzsche considers himself similar to Socrates in an admirable way; namely, he praises both himself and Socrates for possessing a "dialectician's clarity *par excellence*". (2) We learn that Nietzsche still affirms his initial judgements about Socrates; he still views Socrates as "an instrument of Greek disintegration", "a decadent". However, he has come to think that there has never yet been a "*tragic philosopher*" who possessed "*tragic wisdom*", or one who was truly Dionysian. Nietzsche claims to be the first such philosopher. (3) We learn that Nietzsche considers himself to be much like Plato, for the manner in which Plato used Socrates is similar to the manner in which Nietzsche uses "altogether undiagnosed types".

Besides his explicit references to Socrates, two implicit comparisons are also suggested. First, in *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche refers to Socrates as a "buffoon". However, in *Ecce Homo*, he also refers to himself, as well as Shakespeare, as a buffoon. Nietzsche claims his

own superiority to Socrates, Shakespeare, and even himself in this regard, for he is able to make "even buffoons behave themselves". Unlike Socrates, he is his own master. Second, Nietzsche provides his readers with a list of his own practises for making war "in four propositions". All four illuminate Nietzsche's relation to Socrates, and prove that, for Nietzsche, Socrates is a good enemy. In this section of my thesis, I will first examine Nietzsche's explicit, then his implicit, references to Socrates.

Ecce Homo reveals more about Nietzsche's self-understanding of his relation to Socrates. In "Why I Am So Wise" Nietzsche compares himself with Socrates, admitting that he, like Socrates, is a dialectician, and therefore also a decadent. However, Nietzsche points out that there are great advantages to be gathered from the sicknesses of a decadent: "In the midst of the torments that go with an uninterrupted three-day migraine, accompanied by laborious vomiting of phlegm, I possessed a dialectician's clarity *par excellence* and thought through with very cold blood matters for which under healthier circumstances I am not mountain-climber, not subtle, not *cold* enough". Nietzsche praises his physical sickness, even his "over-all exhaustion" (*EH.I.1*), for having given him a certain clarity of thought about his spiritual sickness, or his decadence. He attributes his own insights about decadence in part to his physical sickness, which forced him "to see reason, to reflect on reason in reality" (*EH.II.2*). Moreover, Nietzsche contends that "for a typically healthy person... being sick can even become an energetic *stimulus* for life, for living more". Through his own physical sickness, Nietzsche has not only learned about being sick physically, but also spiritual sickness and health. He writes that his physical sickness encouraged what is strong within himself -- namely, his spirit -- to cultivate a will to health: "I turned my will to health, to *life*, into a philosophy" (*EH.I.2*).

In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche plays with the concepts of health and sickness. According to Nietzsche's own distinctions between spiritual and physical health and sickness, his own health and sickness may be distinguished from the health and sickness of Socrates as follows:

Table C:

	<i>Body</i>	<i>Spirit</i>
<i>Nietzsche</i>	sick	decadent + healthy
<i>Socrates</i>	healthy	decadent

Unlike Socrates, Nietzsche was not physically vigorous or healthy, but very ill. Like Socrates, Nietzsche is a decadent. However, unlike Socrates, Nietzsche is also the picture of spiritual health: "Apart from the fact that I am a decadent, I am also the opposite". He claims to be both healthy and sick because he believes that he has "always instinctively chosen the *right* means against wretched states; while the decadent typically chooses means that are disadvantageous for him". Socrates, in this way, is the typical decadent, misdiagnosing his sickness, and therefore choosing means that are disadvantageous for him. Nietzsche, by contrast, writes: "I took myself in hand, I made myself healthy again: the condition for this -- every physiologist would admit that -- is *that one be healthy at bottom*" (EH.I.2). In this way, Nietzsche identifies with Socrates as a sick decadent and a dialectician. However, he distances himself from Socrates insofar as he claims to be healthy in spirit in a way that Socrates is not.

In his reminiscences about his books, Nietzsche writes that "the two decisive

innovations" of *The Birth of Tragedy* are, first, "its understanding of the Dionysian phenomenon among the Greeks", and secondly, "there is the understanding of Socratism: Socrates is recognized for the first time as an instrument of Greek disintegration, or a typical decadent" (EH:BT.1). Simultaneous with his "discovery that Socrates was a decadent" (EH:BT.2), Nietzsche proclaims himself as "the first *tragic philosopher* -- that is, the most extreme opposite and antipode of a pessimistic philosopher". In this regard, he opposes himself to Socrates -- the prototypical pessimistic philosopher for whom life itself was a disease. Moreover, Nietzsche distances himself from the entirety of human history; for he writes that he has looked "in vain" for signs of Dionysian wisdom "even among the *great* Greeks in philosophy, those of the two centuries *before* Socrates". Socrates is viewed as the end of great Greek philosophy in *Ecce Homo*; however, even the pre-Socratics were not Dionysian philosophers. Nietzsche claims to be the first "*tragic philosopher*" (EH:BT.3), in this regard.

The final reference to Socrates in *Ecce Homo* occurs in Nietzsche's discussion of *Untimely Meditations*: in particular, of *Schopenhauer as Educator* and *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*. During this discussion, Nietzsche confesses that he used both Schopenhauer and Wagner in the same manner as "Plato employed Socrates"; namely, "I caught hold of two famous and as yet altogether undiagnosed types, as one catches hold of an opportunity, in order to say something" (EH:UM.3). Socrates, like both Schopenhauer and Wagner, is considered to be an undiagnosed type. Nietzsche understands both himself and Plato to have used caricatures in order to "say something". Fundamentally, Socrates is simply a tool in the hands of both Nietzsche and Plato, that both authors might express their understandings of things. This constitutes part of Nietzsche's "Platonizing".

Nietzsche distinguishes and separates himself from Socrates in these explicit references. On the one hand, he demonstrates that, as a decadent, he is healthy, whereas Socrates is only sick. On the other hand, he demonstrates that he is an artist and a poet, and one who caricaturizes, whereas Socrates is only a caricature in his hands, or a tool to "say something". However, Nietzsche also encourages implicit comparisons between himself and Socrates. As we have seen in both the *Will To Power* notebooks and in *Twilight of The Idols*, Nietzsche refers to Socrates as a buffoon. The complex image of the buffoon connotes a cheerful and mocking demeanor that stems from a kind of low birth, ignobility, and decadence. It suggests a comedian and a clown, an artist or an actor who wears a mask, and who "employs falseness with a good conscience". In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche himself is the buffoon: "I do not want to be a holy man; sooner even a buffoon.-- Perhaps I am a buffoon". As a buffoon, Nietzsche is a decadent who shocks and offends. However, he is no ordinary buffoon, for although he is a rude and shocking decadent, he tells the truth from his own health. His truth is not the truth of a "holy man"; it is not a decadent lie: "my truth is *terrible*; for so far one has called *lies* truth" (*EH:IV.1*). As a buffoon, Nietzsche compares himself not only with Socrates, but also with Shakespeare, as one who has suffered deeply (*EH:II.4*). Like both Socrates and Shakespeare, Nietzsche needs the comedic mask of a buffoon in order to express the "terrible" truth of his suffering.

Nietzsche remains at odds with Socrates throughout his writing career. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche states that he himself "is warlike by nature":

Attacking is one of my instincts. Being *able* to be an enemy, *being* an enemy -- perhaps that presupposes a strong nature; in any case, it belongs to every strong nature. It needs objects of resistance; hence it *looks for* what resists: the *aggressive* pathos belongs just as necessarily to strength as vengefulness and rancour belong to weakness. (*EH:I.7*)

As a warlike philosopher, Nietzsche seeks out those who are capable of being his enemies. Unlike Jesus, Socrates is understood by Nietzsche to be able to be an enemy. Fundamentally, Socrates has a strong nature. Moreover, Nietzsche is careful to note that, in order to wage a glorious war, one must seek out enemies who are one's equals. This, for Nietzsche, is "the first presupposition of an *honest* duel": "Where one feels contempt, one *cannot* wage war; where one commands, where one sees something beneath oneself, one has no business waging war" (*EH*:I.7). Nietzsche sees Socrates as his equal; he constantly battles Socrates, but without contempt.

Nietzsche outlines his own practices of war in four propositions: "First: I only attack causes that are victorious; I may even wait until they become victorious". Socrates is therefore attacked by Nietzsche because he offers a competent challenge and danger. "Second: I only attack causes against which I would not find allies, so that I stand alone". Nietzsche feels that he is alone in his insights concerning Socrates. He writes that "Socrates is recognized for the first time" only in his own writings as an "instrument of Greek disintegration". He therefore considers his battle against Socrates as a personal challenge and a true test of his own strength, because there are no other thinkers upon whom he might rely for support. "Third: I never attack persons; I merely avail myself of the person as of a strong magnifying glass that allows one to make visible a general but creeping and elusive calamity". Again, Nietzsche deals with Socrates in the way that Plato employed Socrates: he is used as a tool to say something. Socrates, like Plato, becomes a caricature in Nietzsche's hands. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche suggests that he attacks Socrates not as a person, but as an intensified representation of a most dangerous and calamitous force of sickness. For Nietzsche, Socrates is often viewed as the representative of all that is anti-Dionysian. "Fourth,

I only attack things when every personal quarrel is excluded". Nietzsche's attack on Socrates is therefore "proof of good will... even of gratitude". Nietzsche writes that he honours and distinguishes his enemies by attacking them, because this proves that they are strong and that Nietzsche considers them formidable opponents who are equal to himself. Nietzsche understands his own attack on Christianity in this manner, writing, "I myself, an opponent of Christianity *de rigueur*, am far from blaming individuals for the calamity of millennia" (*EH:I.7*). It is likewise with Socrates: He does not blame Socrates for the calamity of millennia. This is not how to approach combat, in Nietzsche's estimation. At most, as an individual, Socrates is simply a buffoon; he offers little challenge to Nietzsche, who writes: "I tame every bear, I make even buffoons behave themselves" (*EH:I.4*). Rather, Nietzsche attacks his caricature of Socrates; for it is this caricature, and not Socrates himself, that provides Nietzsche with a truly formidable opponent.

CONCLUSION

In my thesis, I have demonstrated that, despite Nietzsche's changing and inconsistent views on Socrates, his own Dionysian concerns remain constant throughout all three of his writing periods, and that his own view of Socrates largely depends upon the manner in which he is approaching the problem of cultivating his own Dionysian concerns at the time. In his earliest period, Nietzsche begins by viewing Socrates as the first modern, and therefore anti-Dionysian character in history. However, Nietzsche becomes less certain of this conclusion as his own views on Apollo and Dionysus change.

In the earliest period of his writing, both the Apollonian and the Dionysian are considered to be fundamental principles of existence that are in tension with one another. This initial understanding of the Apollonian and the Dionysian fades, because Nietzsche begins to understand the tensions within the soul not as tensions between these two god-forces, but as tensions between what is base and what is noble, what is weak and what is strong, what is slavish and what is masterful. He becomes concerned specifically with establishing an ordering of rank, or a "pathos of distance", within the soul and society, and his Apollonian-Dionysian distinction no longer suits his discussion of these matters, for neither term directly corresponds to what is noble or base, weak or strong, slavish or masterful. Hence, although Nietzsche's concern with the Dionysian remains, the Apollonian distinction is dropped. Nietzsche comes to view existence as conditioned by two different forces after *The Birth of Tragedy*: the Dionysian and the anti-Dionysian. Socrates is thereafter viewed as standing in

different relations at different times to each of these drives.

Nietzsche's initial Apollonian-Dionysian distinction fades as his views on art change. Initially, Nietzsche views art as a redemptive agent for human beings, whereby they might contemplate the Dionysian through Apollonian forms. However, after *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche begins to suspect that art, or the need for illusion, is a "timely" force, and therefore a weakness. As we have seen, art is needed by those not strong enough for the "terrible" truth, or "true philosophy". The benefits of art are inferior to those which accrue from the solitude of the thinker and the philosopher, because in solitude "that element into which one formerly wanted to drive for a few moments through the gateway of art is the element in which one now continually dwells; formerly one dreamed through art of possessing something which one now possesses in fact". Through philosophy, "one comes to desire of art either nothing at all or something quite different from what one desired before -- that is to say one's taste alters" (D.531). The truly Dionysian individual does not need the Apollonian illusions of art. Dionysus bestows his gifts upon the strongest without need of Apollo, through philosophy. Although he still affirms both the Apollonian and Dionysian as art-creating tendencies in *Twilight of The Idols* (TI.IX.10), Nietzsche no longer views Apollo as a cosmic principle. Only Dionysus, his disciple Nietzsche, and their opponents remain.

During his middle period, Nietzsche views Socrates and the Socratic as truly Dionysian. This view changes as Nietzsche comes to consider Socrates to be an ally of Christianity, whereupon, in his third period, he views Socrates as an anti-Dionysian figure. In the remainder of my conclusion, however, I intend to illustrate that Nietzsche's Dionysian concerns are fundamentally Socratic in spite of what Nietzsche himself says about Socrates. I argue that Nietzsche, as a Dionysian, was half-way to recognizing what Socrates himself

knew about the erotic or the Dionysian. Socrates' own insight into the erotic or the Dionysian was what both attracted and eluded Nietzsche throughout his writing.

In order to demonstrate Nietzsche's own Socratism, I examine Nietzsche's view of Dionysus, and I compare and contrast it with Socrates' view of Eros. In addition, I note that Socrates' Eros is replaced in Plato's *Laws* by the Dionysian. This link between Eros and Dionysus enables me to compare the stated views of both Plato and Socrates on Eros and Dionysus with the view of Dionysus that is offered by Nietzsche. I conclude that Socrates' Eros and Plato's Dionysus are Nietzsche's Dionysus. However, Nietzsche is not Socrates, nor is he Plato. Unlike Plato and Socrates, Nietzsche misinterprets his own Dionysian experiences. Although Nietzsche had Socratic leanings, he fails to understand properly the Socratic and the Dionysian.

The primary drive behind all of Nietzsche's work is the desire for Dionysus. This is why Nietzsche rails so hard against morality, Christianity, faith, Socrates -- anything that he feels closes human beings off from Dionysus. Moreover, Nietzsche views madness as the only means to break through these impediments. When human beings become open to divine madness, they are enabled to see more, and their vision brings with it a new awe and reverence.

On the one hand, Nietzsche is aware that "man's feelings are exalted" by morality through the creation of "*an imaginary world*", and Nietzsche praises these "higher feelings" in human beings. However, on the other hand, he realizes that for the moment, one "has to be suspicious of *all higher feelings*, so greatly are they nourished by delusion and nonsense". It is not that all higher feelings are themselves nonsense; rather, "of all the gradual

purifications awaiting mankind, the purification of the higher feelings will certainly be one of the most gradual" (D.33). In other words, Nietzsche wishes to cultivate higher feelings that are purified of their moral origins. For this reason, he counsels mistrust of the affects, which he views as thoroughly botched by moral evaluations, and he bids human beings to trust only "the gods which are in us: our reason and our experience" (D.35). This gradual purification of the higher feelings results in bouts of madness, whereby human beings experience release from their former delusions and nonsense.

According to Nietzsche, madness breaks through the confusions of morality; it makes room for what is new and for freedom of thought: "everywhere it was madness which prepared the way for the new ideas which broke the spell of a venerated usage and superstition". In this regard, Nietzsche agrees with Plato that "it is through madness that the greatest good things have come to Greece", such that, "all superior men", even "*if they were not actually mad*", had "no alternative but to make themselves or pretend to be mad" (D.14). Madness is therefore mandatory for all greatness (cf.D.18; GS.10); it is needed in order to explore truth, and to break from "the universal binding force of a faith" (GS.76).

However, like Plato's Socrates,¹⁴² Nietzsche distinguishes between two sorts of madness; one is looked upon favourably, and the other is treated as a disease. In *Gay Science*, the former sort of mania is described as the mania of the exceptional and the dangerous. Nietzsche counts himself among these madmen, saying: "*We others are the exception and the danger -- and we need eternally to be defended*". The latter sort of madness arises when its exceptional form "*wants to become the rule*" (GS.76). Here, Nietzsche suggests that all human beings are fundamentally mad; all are subject to mania of various sorts. However, human

¹⁴² See Plato's *Phaedrus*, 244a-245c.

beings become sick and form herds from a sort of madness which would seek to destroy all that is not in accord with itself, and all that opposes it. This madness is fundamentally nihilistic and life-denying because life is opposition, according to Nietzsche. Hence, "madness is something rare in individuals -- but in groups, parties, peoples, ages it is the rule" (BGE.156). Like Plato's Socrates, Nietzsche would therefore have human beings cultivate the former sort of madness, but overcome the latter form. Most of Nietzsche's work is concerned with overcoming and treating this sick form of madness, and ultimately he, like Plato, looks to Dionysus as the true doctor of the soul who offers awe as the curative gift for our psychic diseases.

Nietzsche offers strong opposition to faith and morality because he feels that the "certainty" which these offer is an impediment to our spiritual health. By getting rid of certainty, Nietzsche argues that human beings will once more be enabled to wonder at the world and to ask questions: "In place of that 'immediate certainty' in which people may believe... the philosopher acquires... a series of metaphysical questions, true questions of conscience for the intellect" (BGE.16). The absence of awe and questioning in the face of existence is viewed as the most contemptible type of injustice by Nietzsche:

To stand in the midst of this *rerum concordia discors* [discordant concord of things] and of this whole marvellous uncertainty and rich ambiguity of existence *without questioning*, without trembling with the craving and the rapture of such questioning, without at least hating the person who questions, perhaps even finding him faintly amusing¹⁴³ -- that is what I feel to be contemptible... this is my type of injustice. (GS.2)

In short, the major problem that Nietzsche discovers in all sorts of faith and morality is that

¹⁴³ Most likely, Nietzsche is describing himself here. He wants to be hated and amusing to his readers in order that they too will be shaken from their moral presuppositions, and begin to tremble with awe and questioning.

they ruin the openness of human beings to "the rich ambiguity of existence". By their certainty, human beings become closed to the "whole marvellous uncertainty" of being alive.

For this reason, Nietzsche bids strong spirits such as himself to become wanderers. As wanderers, human beings lack any home, or any single dependable thing in which they can believe or trust. Wandering individuals are not able to have faith, according to Nietzsche:

You will never pray again, never adore again, never again rest in endless trust; you do not permit yourself to stop before any ultimate wisdom, ultimate goodness, ultimate power, while unharnessing your thoughts; you have no perpetual guardian and friend for your seven solitudes; you live without a view of mountains with snow on their peaks and fire in their hearts; there is no avenger for you anymore nor any final improver; there is no longer any reason in what happens, no love in what will happen to you; no resting place is open any longer to your heart, where it only needs to find and no longer to seek. (GS.285)

The wanderer is driven beyond all of these impediments by his passion for what is beyond the desires for such things: "This penchant and passion for what is true, real, non-apparent, certain -- how it aggravates me! Why does this gloomy and restless fellow keep following and driving *me*? I want to rest, but he will not allow it" (GS.309). As a wanderer, Nietzsche is driven away by all desires for certainty and purpose. He attempts to get beyond these desires, which he deems gloomy and restless. He desires to get beyond all their moral bindings. However, this means that he must never rest either, because there is only rest where there is belief.

In a famous passage in *Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes that "God is dead" (GS.125). However, Nietzsche points out later in *Gay Science* that by suggesting that God is dead, he means that "the belief in the Christian god has become unbelievable" (GS.343). For Nietzsche, this statement does not mean that all gods are dead. On the contrary, the gods are very much alive. Although we have slain the Christian god, Eros and Dionysus are still alive.

As Nietzsche remarks, even Christianity could not kill Eros: "Christianity gave Eros poison to drink -- he did not die of it, to be sure, but degenerated into vice" (*BGE*.168). Because of Christianity, Eros has been made vicious; by being told for two thousand years that it is sinful, eros has become sinful.¹⁴⁴ This poisoning and rendering of the pantheon of gods as sinful which results from monotheism is viewed by Nietzsche as "perhaps the greatest danger that has yet confronted humanity" (*GS*.143). Faith in the Christian god has made the erotic desires of human beings mob-like and vicious. For this reason, Nietzsche argues that it is necessary for human beings to overcome their faith in God, as well as their faith in truth; any monotheistic faith is destructive, and a force of sickness among human beings.

However, it is crucially important to note that the renunciation of belief in God does not therefore mean that we should have faith in "man as the measure of the value of things":

The whole pose of 'man *against* the world', of man as a 'world-negating' principle, of man as the measure of the value of things, as judge of the world who in the end places existence itself upon his scales and finds it wanting -- the monstrous insipidity of this pose has finally come home to us and we are sick of it. (*GS*.346)¹⁴⁵

Human beings are no more a valid standard of measurement than God, according to Nietzsche.

In fact, Nietzsche points out that we have no real basis for certainty of judgement in anything,

¹⁴⁴ This same principle is demonstrated by Nietzsche's claim that "the Christian resolve to find the world ugly and bad has made the world ugly and bad" (*GS*.130). This is simply a truth that any child knows from the experience of being educated. If a teacher or a parent, for example, constantly tells a child that he or she is stupid or not good at a particular subject, there is a very great chance that the child will end up being very poor in school, having taken the educator's slander as truth.

¹⁴⁵ Although Nietzsche stresses that man is not the measure of all things, and that such a stance is full of false pride and *ressentiment*, scholars continually accuse Nietzsche of accepting this Protagorean principle. For example, see A.H.J. Knight, *Some Aspects of The Life and Work of Nietzsche* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967) 147. However, in his 1873-1874 notebooks, Nietzsche explicitly criticizes the Protagorean πάντων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος as relativistic. See (*HT*.56).

and that in order to attain to "real *power* of spirituality, real *depth* of spiritual insight, in short philosophy" (*BGE.252*), human beings need to renounce the certainty they derive from belief in all such standards of measurement. Those who are able to live as philosophers must restlessly wander without a home; as "genuine" philosophers, they need to exhibit the "courage" to be themselves; they must know how "to stand alone" (*GM.III.5*). Unlike the many who are not so inclined to wander and who would find such wandering unpalatable, these philosophical few are driven by their passion and madness to wander. It is from this passion for what repulses the many that their nobility arises:

What makes a person 'noble'?... the passion that attacks those who are noble is peculiar, and they fail to realize this. It involves the use of a rare and singular standard and almost a madness: the feeling of heat in things that feel cold to everybody else; the discovery of values for which no scales have been invented yet; offering sacrifices on altars that are dedicated to an unknown god; a courage without any desire for honours; a self-sufficiency that overflows and gives to men and things. (*GS.55*)

What is noble in human beings arises from their rarity, their abundance of spirit, their ability to see more; in particular, it is their higher feelings for an unknown god. Nietzsche himself writes a poem dedicated "To the Unknown God":

Once more before I wander on
and turn my eyes to distant lands,
in solitude I raise my hands
to you on high to whom I fly,
whom in my heart's profundity
I hallowed altars to implore
that evermore
your voice might call again to me.

On them is glowing, inscribed deep,
the word: Unto the Unknown God.
His am I, although in the sinners' squad
until this hour I did keep:
that in my fight I can't untie
and, though I fly,
force me to serve the god again.

I want to know you, Unknown One,
 you that are reaching deep into my soul
 and ravaging my life, a savage gale,
 you Inconceivable and yet Related One!
 I want to know you -- even serve.¹⁴⁶

It is obvious from this poem that not all gods are dead for Nietzsche. It is rather the Christian god -- the god of truth -- who has died, with all of his epithets and surrounding theology; moreover, all that has arisen from this god's morality and that has been built on faith in this god is shown by Nietzsche to have also been undermined by this god's death. His paean to the unknown god, in contrast, is dedicated to a living and vital god. This god is best known to Nietzsche as Dionysus.¹⁴⁷

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche adopts atheism in order to overcome the difficulties which arise from even attempting to consider how to serve the unknown god because of the impediments and confusions which are offered by the dead Christian god:

Why atheism today? -- 'The father' in God is thoroughly refuted; likewise 'the judge', 'the rewarder'. Likewise his 'free will': he does not hear -- and if he heard he would still not know how to help. The worst thing is: he seems incapable of making himself clearly understood: is he himself vague about what he means? (BGE.53)

Atheism is shown by Nietzsche to be the best defense against the falsehoods of the Christian god because all of the names and titles carried by this god have been shown to be erroneous limitations; they are merely horizons which limit our ability to see; hence, they obscure our vision of the unknown god.

¹⁴⁶ Taken from Walter Kaufmann, Ed. and Trans. *Twenty-Five German Poets* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975) 149.

¹⁴⁷ Albert Camus is of the opinion that Nietzsche's god is in fact the world, and that, as a "rebel", Nietzsche's desire to become god is actually his desire to participate in the divinity of the world. See Camus, *The Rebel* 73-74.

Nietzsche writes of Dionysus, in contrast, as one who rejects such epithets. Rather, he is "that great hidden one, the tempter god and born pied piper of consciences whose voice knows how to descend into the underworld of every soul"; Dionysus is "the genius of the heart" whom Nietzsche, the madman, seeks. Referring to himself as "the last disciple and initiate of the god Dionysus" (*BGE.295*), Nietzsche glimpses him in everything; for "the world is overfull of beautiful things". However, it is "nevertheless poor, very poor when it comes to beautiful moments and unveilings of these things". "life is a woman", according to Nietzsche, because it covers its beauty with a veil "interwoven with gold, a veil of beautiful possibilities, sparkling with promise, resistance, bashfulness, mockery, pity, and seduction" (*GS.339*). In its seductive bashfulness, in the concealment of its own beauty, life is very much like Dionysus, according to Nietzsche's descriptions of the god; for Dionysus too is seductive as a pied piper; and Dionysus, "the hidden one", also conceals himself playfully, mockingly. Nietzsche seeks Dionysus; he follows him, and he writes in order to cultivate his wanderer's passion for Dionysus. His love for Dionysus urges him to wander endlessly in loneliness, searching for Dionysus beyond all words, names, and faith. This is "*the danger of the happiest*", according to Nietzsche: "to enjoy a strong, bold, audacious soul; to go through life... festively, impelled by the longing for undiscovered worlds and seas, people and gods" (*GS.302*).

Living a life in search of what is hidden and undiscovered entails developing sharper sight, and sharper sight is "originality". It is "to *see* something that has no name as yet and hence cannot be mentioned although it stares us all in the face" (*GS.261*). This ability to see what cannot be spoken about is the mark of all "higher men":

What distinguishes the higher human beings from the lower is that the former see and hear immeasurably more, and see and hear thoughtfully --

and precisely this distinguishes human beings from animals, and the higher animals from the lower. (GS.301)

The constant wandering of the philosopher arises from the keener sense of sight which he has developed, and which causes him to search beyond every horizon and every perspective. In this regard, Nietzsche seeks beyond the perspectivism which is so commonly associated with him; for he writes: "Above all, one should not wish to divest existence of its *rich ambiguity*: that is a dictate of good taste, gentlemen, the taste of reverence for everything that lies beyond your horizon" (GS.373). He wants to cultivate in human beings a reverence for everything which lies beyond their horizons and perspectival seeings. Beyond all of these perspectives, limitations, and horizons the unknown god, Dionysus, hides playfully.

Nietzsche agrees with "the primitive logic of feeling" which states: "every evil the sight of which edifies a god is justified". All things in life are only justified as "*festival plays for the gods*" (GM:II.7). Our own existence is depicted by Nietzsche as having its justification in its ability to please the gods. In effect, we exist as divine play-things. "The ultimate meaning of Trojan Wars and other such tragic errors" is as a divine comedy. Nietzsche's primary struggle is, for this reason, to find a means of playing with the gods, and to be pleasing to Dionysus. The sight of life should not induce nausea and pity; for such lives do not bring pleasure to gods. Rather, Nietzsche attempts to offer treatments for the sicknesses which have made us too ill for divine play. His entire project, in this way, is directed towards play: "I do not know any other way of associating with great tasks than *play*: as a sign of greatness, this is an essential presupposition" (EH:II.10). By learning to play and to take joy in the comedy of existence, human beings may once again come to participate in festivals to the gods, according to Nietzsche.

There are strong parallels between Nietzsche's conception of Dionysian madness and the Socratic portrayal of erotic mania. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates acknowledges, like Nietzsche, that there are two sorts of madness: that one is bad for human beings, and is a sickness; whereas the other is good and divine; indeed, "the greatest of goods comes to us through madness, however, when it is given by a god" (244a).¹⁴⁸ Both forms of madness arise from a vision of the beautiful, according to Socrates; for beauty reminds us of the gods, and we apprehend it "shining most brightly through the clearest of our senses... beauty alone has this portion, so that it is most easily seen and most beloved" (250d).

According to Socrates, he who does not revere beauty when he looks upon it is one who "submitting to pleasure, attempts to go as a quadruped and to beget children, and having intercourse with his pride he neither fears nor is he ashamed pursuing pleasure contrary to nature" (250e-251a). The madness of those without reverence for beauty is, in this passage, likened to the mania of the human being turned herd animal -- very much as Nietzsche depicts the madness of the "crowd" or the "rule". However, Socrates continues:

he who is newly initiated, who has seen much at that time, whenever he sees a godlike face or bodily appearance which has imitated beauty well, at first he shudders and something of the fear of that time comes upon him; next, beholding him as a god he reveres him, and if he did not fear being considered exceedingly mad, he would sacrifice to his beloved as a divine image and a god. (251a)

With awe and reverence, the manic individual may properly approach nearer to his beloved. When such awe is present, the chariot of the soul described in Plato's *Phaedrus* is not rocked and thrown off kilter by chaotic passion and lust at the sight of the beautiful; rather, when its charioteer -- the mind, or the intellect (*nous*, νοῦς) -- is prudent and able to execute good

¹⁴⁸ All translations of *Phaedrus* are my own.

commands, the entire chariot no longer rushes upon the beloved threatening to trample him, but moves in an orderly and graceful fashion towards the beloved.

The soul is described by Socrates in various ways in the *Phaedrus*. In one of these descriptions, Socrates likens the soul to a chariot:

Indeed, let it [the soul] be likened with respect to its inborn power to both a winged team of steeds and their winged charioteer. And so both the horses and the charioteers of the gods are all both good and of good descent, but the others are mixed; and first, the pair of steeds is ruled by a driver of our own; next, one of its horses is beautiful and good and of noble stock, but the other is the opposite and from opposite stock. And indeed, in our case, the driving is difficult and troublesome from necessity. (246ab)

In this image, the entire chariot of the psyche is ruled over by its νοῦς, or intellect. When the beloved appears before the psyche, this vision of its beauty maddens the soul, drawing it forth: "Whenever the driver sees the beloved sight, the entire soul is warmed by the perception; it is filled both with a tickling and the tortures of longing" (253e-254a). At this point, the unruly horse in the team leaps and dashes towards the beloved, paying no heed to the driver's whip and goad. The entire chariot of the soul is thrown into disorder by its unruly steed, and both the charioteer and the noble horse must struggle viciously in order to resist the pull of the black-skinned horse:

The one of the horses obedient to the driver, both then and always constrained by shame, controls himself lest he should trample his beloved; but the other one no longer heeds either the stings of the driver or his whip, and he bears forth bounding with force, offering all troubles to both his teammate and driver, forcing them to approach their beloveds and to remember the delights of indulging in lust. And in the beginning they struggle against him indignantly, being forced to do terrible and unlawful things. But finally, whenever there is no end to their trouble, they are driven by his leading, having yielded and agreed to do his bidding. And they both come towards him and they see the face of their beloveds flashing like lightning. (254ab)

According to Socrates, when the charioteer -- who, from the exhaustion of constant struggle, has given up his reins and his mastery of the unruly passions -- gazes upon his beloved, "his

memory is borne towards the nature of the beautiful, and once more he sees it with a sound mind standing in its holy place" (254b). Moreover, when he sees this "he is afraid, and having been struck with awe he falls upon his back, and at the same time, he is forced to pull back upon the reins so hard that each horse sits upon its haunches" (254bc). In this way, the noble horse is made to feel shame (*aischynēs*, αἰσχύνης) and amazement (*thambous*, θάμβους), whereas the other, contriving to recover from the pain of the bit and his fall, becomes angry at the driver and his teammate for deserting him.

This jarring forward and jerking back of the soul's chariot continues until such times as the driver gains mastery over the chariot. He does so by inflicting ever greater cruelties upon the unruly horse, bespattering "his railing tongue and jaws with blood", forcing "his legs and haunches to the ground", and causing him pain, until finally the bad horse ceases from his unruliness and henceforth obeys the driver, so that when he sees the beautiful one, "he is overwhelmed with fear". From that time on, according to Socrates' account, "the soul of the lover follows the beloved with awe and reverence" (254e).

Using another image of the psyche, Socrates illustrates that the soul's awesome vision of its beautiful beloved causes it to sprout wings. Socrates tells Phaedrus about the lover who is awestruck by his beloved:

And as he gazes upon such a one, a reaction both of sweat and unusual heat from his shuddering seizes him; for having received the over-flow of beauty through his eyes, he is warmed, which moistens the nature of his feathers; and having been heated up, the parts from which they grow out melted, which for a long time had been so hardened and closed up that the feathers could not shoot forth; and as the nourishment continually streams in, the quills of the feathers swelled and they hastened to grow out from the roots upon the entire form of the soul; for it was at one time all feathered. (251ab)

Socrates notes, in agreement with Nietzsche, that a soul that would grow wings must undergo a certain degree of suffering in order to be transformed:

And so in this process the entire soul bubbles and gushes forth, and just as in the suffering of those who are cutting teeth there arises in the gums, whenever the teeth begin to grow, a desire to itch and an irritation around the gums; indeed, the soul of one beginning to grow feathers suffers the same way. It bubbles and gushes forth and tickles while the feathers grow. (251bc)

Combining these two images of the chariot and the winged soul, Socrates shows that the awe-struck chariot, having sprouted wings and being driven by a masterful charioteer who best follows after a god, may be lifted up by its mania, such that the head of the charioteer is raised above all the things of the *cosmos*, and may briefly glimpse of the highest realities which the gods themselves constantly see:

And such is the life of the gods. But of the other souls, that which best follows and resembles a god raises the head of the charioteer up into the outer region and is carried round in the revolution, being troubled by the horses and scarcely beholding the things which exist. (247e-248a)

Once again, Socrates' description of erotic madness as the means whereby human beings can aspire beyond all that is apparent -- beyond every perspective and horizon -- and with much difficulty and suffering, glimpse the hidden beauties of the gods, is very much akin to Nietzsche's own desire to cultivate the awe of Dionysus in his own soul so that he might follow "the hidden god" in his own procession or chorus.

In Plato's *Symposium*, Socrates speaks of Eros as a homeless wanderer, born of Poverty, but also as dangerous hunter born of Resource, full of war-like bravery and recklessness:

And so Eros, because he was the son of Resource and Poverty, was placed in quite a state. First, he is always poor, and far from tender and beautiful as most suppose him; rather, he is hard and rough, shoeless and without a home, and always being without a bed, sleeping in doorways and along roadsides in the open-air; having the nature of his mother, he always dwells together with need. But besides this, according to his father's nature, he is plotting against the good and the beautiful; being brave and reckless and impetuous, and a dangerous hunter, always weaving some stratagem; both desirous of prudence and full of resources, loving wisdom throughout his entire life, a master cheat and sorcerer

and sophist. And having been born neither immortal nor mortal, at one time in the same day he both flourishes and is alive whenever he prospers, but then at another time he is dying, and then again he revives according to the nature of his father;¹⁴⁹ but what is provided always passes away, so that Eros is at no time either resourceless or wealthy, and moreover, he is midway between wisdom and ignorance. (203ce)¹⁵⁰

Socrates' Eros is a war-like wanderer capable of all sorts of evil and full of desires. And yet Eros understands enough not to desire anything provided for him as though it were not destined to pass away. Moreover, Eros avoids all certainty because he stands between wisdom and ignorance. As one who is homeless yet always plotting against good and evil, Eros is drawn beyond all good and evil by his love of wisdom. As an expert in the hunt and in stratagems, Eros seeks beyond good and evil, beyond all beautiful things, eventually attaining to a vision of beauty itself, which does not itself pass away, but is eternal:

For he who until this has been educated in erotics, having viewed the beautiful things in their correct order, being already about to go to the end of erotics all of a sudden he will see something wondrous and beautiful in its nature; and this... indeed is that for the sake of which were all the previous toils. First, it always exists, and neither comes to be nor perishes, neither increasing nor decreasing; next, it is not beautiful in one part but ugly in another; nor is it such at one time but not at another, nor in one respect beautiful but in another ugly, nor here beautiful, but there ugly, nor in some place is it beautiful, but in another ugly. (210e-211a)

In this way, war-like Eros hunts after what is eternal. In order to do so, he must seek beyond all passing things, not supposing that he has found the object of his desires in anything temporal. He must continue loving and desiring beyond all these things; he must always be hungry for his beloved as the child of Poverty, and ever seeking as the child of Resource.

¹⁴⁹ For a description of the wandering journeys of Eros (Ἔρως), as well as his ability to constantly die and to be reborn among all things which pass away, consult the Pamphylian myth of the bold warrior Ἔρος (Ἡρόδος) in Plato's *Republic* (614b-621d).

¹⁵⁰ In this thesis, all translations of Plato's *Symposium* are my own.

This is the nature of the daemon Eros, according to Socrates. Moreover, human beings who would seek out the lovable must follow Eros, as Socrates followed him. They must be stricken with erotic madness: the awe and wonder bestowed by the daemon upon human beings; "for this sense of wonder is the very condition of a philosopher" (*Theaetetus* 155d, my translation).¹⁵¹

However, although Socrates' erotic madness is the very similar to Nietzsche's Dionysian madness,¹⁵² Nietzsche and Socrates look to the Dionysian and the erotic for different reasons. Nietzsche struggles to awaken the Dionysian or erotic urges in human beings above all else. Human beings have become so sick that even to cultivate such madness in them seems, to Nietzsche, to be the highest of tasks. Because so much has become confused, and because human beings have become so closed to wonder, so incapable of incessant wandering due to their modern exhaustion and herd-like madness, Nietzsche can see no higher aspiration for them than to become Dionysians. Moreover, Nietzsche denies the existence of anything beyond the Dionysian god: of any god for whom Dionysus serves as a messenger. This is not the case with Socrates.

Socrates is more fortunate than Nietzsche because he does not begin as one who is buried under such a foul mess of confusions. Socrates begins with Eros, whereas Nietzsche has to fight merely to end with Eros, in the form of Dionysus. Socrates was a light spirit. When we read Plato's dialogues, we find him truly astonishing -- how easily he moves through the most difficult confusions of his interlocutors! Socrates could be content to be a man. But

¹⁵¹ In Plato's *Theaetetus*, it is noted that Iris, who is goddess of the rainbow, but also the messenger of the gods, is the daughter of Wonder (*Thaumas*). This suggests that intercourse between the gods and mortals is only made possible through wonder.

¹⁵² Also noted by Rosen, "Remarks on Nietzsche's Platonism" 201.

not Nietzsche, who writes in *Ecce Homo*: "I am no man, I am dynamite" (*EH:IV.1*). Indeed, Nietzsche needs to be dynamite in order to explode, to scatter, and to destroy all the heavy confusions which suffocate his spirit and prohibit it from growing out its erotic wings. Fundamentally, Nietzsche's problems are different than the problems of Socrates. Moreover, when Nietzsche criticizes Socrates, he is offering good treatments for our own confusions. However, Nietzsche fundamentally misunderstands Socrates because he misunderstands Dionysus.

The clearest statement of the difference between Nietzsche's Dionysus and Socrates' Eros is that, for Socrates, Eros is not a god, but rather a daemon. Moreover, "none of the gods philosophize or desire to become wise, because they already are wise" (*Symposium* 203e-204a). Nietzsche purposely opposes Socrates' statement in *Beyond Good and Evil*, insisting that "Dionysus is a philosopher, and that gods too therefore philosophize" (*BGE.295*). For Socrates, Eros is a messenger between the gods and human beings; but for Nietzsche, there are no gods in Socrates' sense. There is only Dionysus, who is not a messenger for any higher god; rather, he himself is the highest god.

The best way to illustrate the deficiencies of Nietzsche's account of Dionysus -- and therefore of his account of Socrates -- is to examine Plato's *Laws*, where Socrates is replaced by the Athenian Stranger, and Eros is replaced by Dionysus. This dialogue, because it deals explicitly with Dionysian madness in a most Socratic fashion, is crucial for our understanding of the difference between Socrates and Nietzsche.

In Plato's *Laws*,¹⁵³ there is a discussion of the foundation of the Spartan and Cretan regimes. Both regimes (*politeiai*, πολιτεΐαι) are claimed to be founded by divine men who have had direct dealings with the gods (*theoi*, θεοί) Zeus and Apollo. Throughout Books I and II, there seems to be some question concerning not only the legitimacy of the foundations of these particular regimes, but perhaps even concerning the legitimacy of these gods themselves. The subject of drinking parties (*ta symposia*, τὰ συμπόσια) arises as a topic for conversation through Megillus (637a), the Athenian stranger's Lakedaimonian interlocutor. The Athenian has been criticizing the Spartan laws (*nomoi*, νομοί) for a certain lop-sidedness with respect to how they educate the citizens about pleasures and pains; by these νομοί, the Spartans become courageous against pain, but cowards when exposed to pleasures and opportunities for licence.¹⁵⁴ As examples of their immoderation, resulting from bad laws that restrict pleasures improperly, the Athenian lists their excesses, such as homosexuality and pederasty, and he concludes the exchange with a remark about their "loose women" (633c).

Megillus takes some offense at the truth of the Athenian's words, and he accuses the Athenian of hypocrisy. As Megillus demonstrates, Athens also allows its fair share of licence;

¹⁵³ I have relied upon Thomas Pangle's translation of Plato's *Laws*. I have only used the Loeb Greek text to check Pangle's interpretation.

¹⁵⁴ Plato's Athenian stranger is not the first to have levelled this criticism at the Lakedaimonians. In his *Histories*, Herodotus also notes that the Spartans, when they leave the confines and restrictions of their own city and travel about, are particularly prone to all sorts of vices and licence. For an example of this, see Herodotus' discussion of the Lakedaimonians' gift of a bronze bowl to Croesus in return for his friendship and patronage (I, 69-71). This bowl, when they were abroad and having heard of Croesus' capture, they promptly sold to the highest bidder out of their lust for money, and then they weaved an elaborate lie about its robbery by the Samians in order to cover up the vileness of their deed.

in particular, he makes mention of their συμπόσια and orgiastic festivals to Dionysus. In Megillus' estimation, these festivals and συμπόσια are a corrupting force. Megillus' sole concern in legislating for cities (*poleis*, πόλεις) is that these cities cultivate virtue for war. His concern is therefore to conquer all cowardice among the citizens. Megillus desires citizens who are hard and ruthless, and who direct all of their efforts and undertakings toward war-like things and preparing for war; hence, he considers it prudent to ban drinking in excess. This marks the beginning of a lengthy discussion of συμπόσια. The remainder of this section of my thesis will examine the significance of the συμπόσιον, and what it is about getting drunk that the Athenian wishes to affirm and even to promote in Magnesia.

The Athenian stranger partially agrees with Megillus in his criticisms of both συμπόσια and the public drunkenness of the Dionysia. He states that without "endurance" such events become "pretty stupid" (637c). The Athenian himself has encountered many συμπόσια in many places, but he has hardly seen or heard of a single one being run correctly (639de). However, the Athenian is not so willing as his interlocutors to dismiss, let alone to ban, συμπόσια or drunkenness as though these were entirely adverse to the good ordering of a political regime. He disagrees with Megillus that συμπόσια necessarily impede the cultivation of war-like virtues, and he lists a great range of barbarian nations who, "all being warlike races", get drunk (637de). The problem, he contends, is that συμπόσια do not get run properly (639de). The question then becomes: What would it take to run one well?

The Athenian stranger points out that συμπόσια cannot be run well if they are treated the same as bands of warriors. Like armies, συμπόσια require a "correct ruler" (*orthon archonta*, ὀρθὸν ἀρχοντα). Unlike armies which are gatherings of men who are

fighting against enemies in war, συμπόσια are composed of friends communing with friends in peace and goodwill (640b). The correct ruler over a συμπόσιον, then, is the guardian of their friendship, and one who sees to it that their friendship will increase (640d). Such a ruler, claims the Athenian, must be both sober (*nēphonta*, νήφοντα)¹⁵⁵ and wise (*sophon*, σοφόν).

At this point, Kleinias stops the Athenian and asks about what good even a well-run συμπόσιον could do, either for private individuals (*idiōtais*, ιδιώταις), or for the πόλις (641a). The Athenian responds by suggesting that spending time drinking together is not only a great contribution to education (*paideia*, παιδεία), but also that it may even bring victory in war (641bc). This is said by the Athenian surely to get the attention of his war-loving interlocutors. Having grasped their interest, the Athenian leads them into a broader discussion, claiming that a small thing like getting drunk cannot be regulated properly without first speaking about music (*mousikē*, μουσική) and παιδεία (642a).

In order to understand the significance of the συμπόσιον in Plato's *Laws* as a form of παιδεία, we must first examine the Athenian's depiction of "each of us living beings as

¹⁵⁵ The Greek word for "sober" here is derived from the verb, *nēpho* (νήφω), which means literally, "to drink no wine". Metaphorically, it means "to be sober" or "dispassionate". However, there are good grounds for assuming that the right ruler of a συμπόσιον must certainly be one of the drinkers. As the Athenian stranger suggests by his examples of the navigator and the general, the right leader of a συμποσιόν must have a knowledge of what he rules; but like them, neither must he be prone to drunkenness, just as a good navigator does not get drunk from sea-sickness, nor does a good general become "seasick with the drunkenness of terror". All three men are exposed to the dangers of drunkenness, and yet they overcome its pitfalls, and they lead other men to overcome these pitfalls as well. As we shall see, in Plato's *Laws* the Athenian stranger refers to the right ruler of a συμπόσιον, or its "Dionysian leader", as "the good lawgiver, whose laws must be fellow drinkers at the banquet" (τόν ἀγαθὸν νομοθέτην, οὗ νόμους εἶναι δεῖ συμποτικούς, 671c). Here, the right ruler is a fellow drinker. This image recalls Socrates in Plato's *Symposium*, who drank along with the others, even surpassing them in his drinking, and yet he never became drunk.

a divine puppet" (644d). Human beings are described as puppets of the gods, "either for their play or for some serious purpose" we do not know. But what we do know is that, as puppets, we are suspended in a region between virtue (*aretē*, ἀρετή) and vice (*kakia*, κακία) by means of three cords (*mērinthoi*, μήρινθοι) or tendons (*neura*, νεῦρα) which draw and pull against one another "in opposite directions towards opposing deeds" (644e). There are two hard iron cords which pull us downwards; these are pleasure (*hēdonēn*, ἡδονήν) and pain (*lupen*, λύπην), and the expectations for the future associated with each, these being boldness (*tharros*, θάρρος) and fear (*phobos*, φόβος) respectively (644cd). The Athenian tells his two friends that pleasure and pain are "two opposed and imprudent counsellors" (644c). Hence, over these and their associated expectations, "there is calculation as to which of them is better and which worse" (644d). Calculation (*logismos*, λογισμός) is the soft (*malakēn*, μαλακήν), golden (*chrysēn*, χρυσήν) cord, and by this cord the puppet hangs from its puppeteer in tension between the pulls of virtue and vice. Given these cords, the stranger argues that "each person should always follow one of the cords, never letting go of it and pulling with it against the others" (644e). This is the leading (*agōgēn*, ἀγωγήν) and golden cord of λογισμός.

Thomas Pangle interprets the three cords as portraying the proper relation in a human being between the passions and reason. Reason, for Pangle, is strictly λογισμός; and the passions which are represented by the other two cords must be made subject "to the rule of calculation".¹⁵⁶ Living a good life, then, is simply a matter of calculating which expectations for the future are best, and of making choices in accordance with these findings. So long as

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Pangle, "Interpretive Essay" *The Laws of Plato* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 401.

each puppet merely holds on to its own golden cord, it will never be cut off from its puppeteer. However, the puppet who merely hangs from the golden cord without joy (*chara*, χαρά), without the desire to dance (*choreuein*, χορεύειν), or to please its puppeteer by responding to the puppeteer's sacred pulls, will never play with the god either.

Pangle finds problems with the Athenian's image of the divine puppet. He notes that the image, as he has interpreted it, leaves unclear how λογισμὸς gets its goal or direction: "Does the image mean to say that calculation simply figures out its goal for itself?".¹⁵⁷ Pangle has correctly noted that the puppet image has short-comings. The Athenian himself admits as much, saying that "the myth of virtue" about the divine puppet needs to be "saved" (645b). However, Pangle's interpretation does nothing to save this image; instead, he overlooks what is most important and serious about the puppet: that it is the plaything of the god.

Zdravko Planinc points out that, for Plato, λογισμὸς is not a virtue. It is cleverness. Consequently, λογισμος cannot save the puppet from vice. The puppet is only saved by the sacred (*hieran*, ἱερὰν) pull (*agōgēn*, ἀγωγῆν) of the god that draws it up towards the divine mind (*Nous*, Νοῦς) and prudence (*phronēsis*, φρόνησις). Taking Planinc's insight into this image, we can understand Pangle's view properly and thereby avoid his confusion. Pangle's point is that both individual human beings as well as political communities can be (and ought to be) clever in the calculation of expectations and outcomes, and that a political community may call its common, calculated opinion about how to arrive at what is considered to be the best outcome its νομοί. However, if we stop here, as Pangle does, then there would be no virtue in such νομοί. The puppet would not behave well, being unaware that it is a plaything of the god, and believing that it has complete command over its own strings.

¹⁵⁷ Pangle, "Interpretive Essay" 400-401.

Hence, as Planinc notes with regard to this image, for there to be virtue in either an individual or a political community, each must assist the upward pull of the god. Private individuals may do so with certain "helpers", and political communities may do so by founding their νομοὶ on the reasonings (*logoi*, λόγοι) of the god or some human beings who know of such things.¹⁵⁸

The Athenian points out that whatever you intend to be good at you must practise it from childhood, "whether playing or being serious" (643b). As children we develop excellences by playing at games that educate. Such games teach us "correct erotic attachments". Our pleasures and our desires are directed toward activities in which we must become perfect. In this way, the core of παιδεία is nurturing and drawing the soul of the child at play toward "a correct erotic attachment to what he must do when he becomes a man" (643c). Proper παιδεία in erotics makes you desire to become a good and just citizen (643e), and παιδεία of this sort is the noblest thing for a human being (644b).

We can learn more about παιδεία by turning again to the puppet image. The Athenian states that virtue and vice first appear in the soul by way of its sensation of pleasure and pain, and their associated expectations (653ab). The first task of παιδεία is to teach the soul to resist these downward pulls. Thus, παιδεία is said by the Athenian to be the first virtue in children; it arranges their appetites and affections before their reasoning capacity and their faculty of λογισμός have been adequately developed. Once their reason has developed, then the rightly-ordered passions team up with reason to affirm the good habits which education has taught them (653ab). This "consonance" between reason and passion is virtue,

¹⁵⁸ Zdravko Planinc, *Plato's Political Philosophy* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991) 179.

and by means of virtue the soul is taught always to choose the correct and golden cord.

However, being educated as a youngster is not sufficient. Human beings forget what they have learned (653c), and need to be re-educated constantly. Human beings always need to be reminded that they are divine puppets, and therefore that their excellence ought to be in pleasing the gods as their play-things. In this way, a good and rightly educated puppet is one who plays games with the gods, and who does so beautifully.

The Athenian tells a beautiful and innocent tale about all living things in order to speak about our highest education:

Every young thing, so to speak, is incapable of remaining calm in body or in voice, but always seeks to move and cry: young things leap and jump as if they were dancing with pleasure and playing together, and emit all sorts of cries. The other animals, the argument goes, lack perception of orders and disorders in motions (the orders which have received the names of "rhythms" and "harmony"); we, in contrast, have been given the aforementioned gods as fellow-dancers, and they have given us the pleasant perception of rhythm and harmony. Using this, they move us, and lead us in choruses, joining us together with songs and dances; and that is why they bestowed the name "choruses" -- from the "joy" which is natural to these activities. (653d-654a)

The Athenian's beautiful argument "sings" to us, showing that the gods gave to every living thing a capacity for intelligence (νοῦς), and that before any living thing possesses this intelligence to its own given capacity, each lacks it and is driven completely mad (*pan mainetai*, πᾶν μαινεται), crying out and jumping (672c). According to the Athenian, these leaps and cries are the source for all μουσικῆς and gymnastic (*gymnastikēs*, γυμναστικῆς) by which human beings are educated (672cd). Further, in order that human beings might dance and sing with the gods -- for this is their calling as divine play-things -- they are given the perception of rhythm (*rhythmou*, ῥυθμοῦ) and harmony (*harmonias*, ἁρμονίας). A good παιδεία, therefore, teaches each play-thing to sing (*adein*, ἄδειν) and to dance (*choreuein*, χορεύειν) well by way of training it in music and gymnastic. This becomes the

critical distinction between the educated and the uneducated human being: the former may join in song (*ōdē*, ὠδή) and dance (*choros*, χορὸς) with the gods; whereas the latter is untrained in choral performances and therefore is unable to play with the gods. Παιδεία in music and gymnastic, as the puppet's first education, comes to human beings through Apollo and the Muses (654a).

In Apollinian and musical παιδεία, the soul is reminded of rhythm and harmony, and consequently, of order (*taxis*, τάξις). The human being, as a divine puppet, thereby learns to be a pleasing play-thing for the gods. It no longer leaps and cries chaotically like the innocent young things at play. In its play, it is distinguished. It is graceful.

Having learned these things, Kleinias asks the Athenian, "If we introduce drunkenness into this puppet what effect shall we produce?" (645a). There are two benefits which arise from intoxicating the puppet. The first is the lesser benefit; namely, that the puppet's Apollinian and musical παιδεία may be tested by intoxication. On the one hand, drinking wine makes pleasures, pains, the spirited emotions, and the erotic emotions more intense (645d). On the other hand, sensations, memories, opinions, and prudent thoughts are abandoned by "anyone who becomes thoroughly soused" (645e). In effect, the rule of thought and λογισμὸς tends to fade away with drink, and the soul becomes like it once was as a child. By drinking, souls may be tested for their character. If a soul is rightly educated by the Muses, when "soused" its passions will remain ordered even amidst their enhanced intensity, just as a child may be ordered by the Muses¹⁵⁹ before its *logismos* has developed.

¹⁵⁹ The Muses are said to accompany Apollo in voice as he himself plays the "all-beautiful phorminx". See Burkert, *Greek Religion* 145-146. In Plato's *Laws*, Apollo, to whom the second χορὸς of adults between the ages of 18 and 30 is dedicated (664bd), is said to be the leader of the Muses (653d), and the children's χορὸς is said to be dedicated to the Muses (654a).

If there is virtue present in the soul, and not simply the sort of calculation which Pangle suggests, then there will be shown a constancy of character in the puppet.

In addition, with drink one may test not only the firm order of the passions bestowed by virtue of the Muses; one may also test the strength of the *logismos*, or how well the soul abides in its rationality, and in its "endurance" for Apollinian rhythms and harmony. "The puppets should be 'plied with drink' in order to test the firmness of the control of the λογισμὸς in their souls".¹⁶⁰ When the puppet is subjected to drunkenness, in other words, it is possible to observe the true nature of that person through play, in a way that involves no other pay-off or penalty (650b).

However, there is a second and higher benefit to be gained from drunkenness. According to the Athenian, wine-drinking may not only test the character of the intoxicated puppet; it may also act as a safeguard to παιδεία (653a). Συμπόσια and festivals were given to human beings by the gods in order to re-educate them, and so that they might have rest from the weariness of their labours, and in play (*paidia*, παιδιά), that they might be reminded of the gods. In the education of human beings, the Athenian states that there are two forms of fear (φόβος) which must be considered. The first sort is the fear of evils, "when we expect them to come to pass" (646e). This is the sort of fear that both Spartan and Cretan military training and παιδεία seek to overcome, in order that the citizens of these regimes might learn courage in the face of pain. The second sort of fear "opposes suffering and other fears, but also opposes the most frequent and greatest pleasures" (647a). Such pleasures are feared as being shameful in the opinions of men (646e), but are also deemed shameful by the gods; for when ignoble boldness in shameful pleasures appears in the puppet,

¹⁶⁰ Eric Voegelin, *Plato* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1966) 240.

it is the job of the laws and their helpers "to send in as a combatant the noblest sort of fear accompanied by justice, the divine fear [*theion phobon*, θεῖον φόβον] to which we gave the name 'awe' and 'shame'" (671d). In both cases, this fear (φόβος) or shame (*aischynēn*, αἰσχύνην) is given the name of "awe" (*aidōs*, αἰδώς)¹⁶¹ by the Athenian. He accords it the greatest of honours, and he judges its absence to be "the greatest evil for everyone both in private and in public life" (647b). The Athenian also notes, for the benefit of Megillus perhaps, that a certain kind of fear or awe is useful in war. The suggestion here is that, if drink can be used to bring human beings to an experience of awe, and awe is good for war, then συμπόσια can be beneficial for the development of the warrior virtues when they are properly conducted.

On the one hand, the Athenian notes how military training, by dragging a man into the midst of his fears, helps him to conquer them and teaches him courage. He notes that "a man becomes perfect in courage by fighting against and conquering the cowardice within him".

¹⁶¹ The word αἰδώς can be used synonymously with the word αἰσχύνη. Both can mean "shame", "modesty", or "self-respect". However, αἰδώς can have the higher meaning of "reverence", which has pious overtones. In these two passages (647a, 671d), Pangle translates αἰδώς as "awe" in order to preserve its divine meaning.

The Athenian stranger and Kleinias agree that in both of these circumstances (647a, 671d), it is correct to call the fear that human beings experience by "the name 'awe' and 'shame'" (671d). Pangle wants to suggest that Plato uses the term αἰδώς equivocally when distinguishing between divine fear and fear of opinion, such that divine fear is fear of opinion writ large. Αἰδώς in its divine sense becomes a rhetorically useful and politically effective tool for manipulating and controlling the passions of a religious people who can be shamed before one another, and made to fear authority and punishment.

However, Pangle's interpretation of Plato's use of αἰδώς is not accurate. The Athenian mentions two kinds of awe. Although both are rendered in Greek as αἰδώς, their meanings are not equivocal. Pangle is correct, however, to note that the relationship between fear of opinion and divine fear is unclear. Given that these two kinds of αἰδώς are different, in what ways are they different, and to what extent do their meanings overlap?

However, on the other hand, to train oneself in gymnastic in order to conquer cowardice with respect to pain is only to attain half of one's potential virtue. Each must also be trained to conquer cowardice in the soul with respect to "the many pleasures and desires that try to seduce him into shamelessness and injustice" (647d). So whereas each human being is to be educated in order to be fearless in the face of bad things and enemies, in the face of good things and friends each must be made to fear shame "on account of vileness" (647b). Both fearlessness and fearfulness must be made present in the soul simultaneously in order for there to be proper *paideia*, and drinking is a harmless way of developing each person's strength with respect to pleasures; for wine drags each man into such pleasures, and being among friends, each is challenged to overcome his weaknesses for these pleasures by the shame he feels before his fellows.

However, the Athenian does not allow drinking among the young, and only moderate drinking among those who are between 18 and 30 years old. Only among those who are older than 30 years of age does he allow drunkenness. The reason for this is that wine is not a miraculous "fear drug" (647e) for human beings; it is not a drink that in the main brings awe and shame down to human beings as divine gifts; rather, it does quite the opposite of such a drug: it "induces fearlessness, boldness that is too great, at the wrong time, and toward the wrong things" (649a). For this reason, the Athenian restricts the use of drunkenness to men over 30 years old, presumably because such men have already developed enough of their character according to the Muses of Apollo that the waning of λογισμὸς will not pose a serious threat to them but occur in a harmless and playful way.

For men over the age of 30, the higher benefit of wine truly accrues. As divine puppets, all human beings must never cease from singing and playing with the gods. Songs

(*odai*, ὄδαι) are incantations (*epōdai*, ἐπῳδαὶ) for souls (659e); that is, they instill seriousness and rightness into souls as part of their play. Human beings are trained to be good puppets by means of songs, myths, and arguments (664a). However, with age, human beings become more moderate and full of shame (665e). Consequently they are less willing to sing as the young things sing. Wine is needed to encourage the older men to sing (666a). The Athenian describes wine as "a drug that heals the austerity of old age" (666b). It softens their hard disposition "so that it becomes more malleable, like iron when it is plunged into fire" (666c). In this way, the souls of the drinkers become youthful and fiery and soft. The rule of λογισμὸς in them drops away in relaxation, and they become like children again, ready to be led by a wise helper who has the ability and knowledge to educate and mold souls (671b).

Applying the puppet image to the older men, we find that they too need "helpers" to assist the sacred pull of the god, if they are to be golden (645ab). Λογισμὸς is not sufficient on its own to refine the gold within the older men. With the assistance of the Dionysian gift of wine, and with the help of the Dionysian leaders (those men who are over 60 years old), in their child-like state, these men become more open to the god, and more responsive to the god's sacred pull. Eric Voegelin notes that the falling away of λογισμὸς in the old men "becomes ambivalent in so far as the relaxation will also increase the faculty of participation in the choric rituals in honour of the god; the drinking will enable the puppets to perform better their roles in the 'serious play'".¹⁶² The συμπόσιον of older men is the Dionysian χορός. It sings the best and most beautiful songs (665d). The συμπόσιον is composed of drunken friends who are ruled over by a Dionysian leader. This sober and wise man is "the

¹⁶² Voegelin, *Plato* 240.

good lawgiver", and his νομοὶ are his fellow drinkers. Together, the lawgiver (*nomotheten*, νομοθέτην) and his νομοὶ make "whoever becomes sanguine, bold, and more shameless than he should be, whoever refuses to take his orderly turn in being silent and in speaking, in drinking and in music, willing to act just the opposite" (671c). The νομοὶ who are the law-breaker's fellow drinkers will be able to combat all lawlessness during the συμπόσιον by means of the "divine fear" or "awe" that is inspired in the soul of one who fears doing any vile act. In this way, the νομοὶ moderate the soul of every man among his friends (671e).

Παιδεία in music and gymnastics is of the utmost importance to the health of both the individual and the πολίς. Proper παιδεία in music teaches human beings to behave as divine puppets. However, proper παιδεία requires proper music, that the proper songs be sung, that the proper stories (*mythoi*, μῦθοι) be told, and that the best arguments (λόγοι) resound in the soul. The Athenian stranger shows that there are three things that must be known in order to make good judgements as to the worth of any particular music or art. The good judge "must know first what the thing is, and then know how correctly, and then... how well any of the images of it in words, tunes, and rhythms are produced" (669ab). In Plato's *Laws*, musical and gymnastic παιδεία in both Crete and Sparta is shown to fail somehow. These regimes claim to have the origin of their νομοὶ in Zeus and Apollo with the help of divine men. However, Apollo's worshippers are the poets and the bards,¹⁶³ they only have the first and the second sorts of knowledge. They possess a general knowledge of what the thing is, and a technical knowledge of how to manipulate and reproduce it. These knowledges are what is minimally necessary for their art; however, the poets and the artists of Apollo lack the third sort of knowledge which would enable them to distinguish between good and bad

¹⁶³ Burkert, *Greek Religion* 145.

art. Simply being aware of what causes pleasure or pain, and knowing how to calculate about these things and to master them technically so that the desired outcome might be ensured does not give one the third sort of knowledge which could distinguish between good and bad ends. This was, in part, Pangle's criticism of the representation of λογισμὸς in the Athenian's "myth of virtue". This third knowledge is wisdom, and it is only acquired insofar as each human being follows the god's sacred pull.

Eric Voegelin notes that the digression in Books I and II of Plato's *Laws* about συμπόσια serves the very important function of introducing the Dionysian element into the choric rites of the πολίς alongside the Apollinian.¹⁶⁴ Whereas the young are neither able nor permitted to criticize the νομοί, the old men may make arguments against the νομοὶ before a magistrate (634de). Hence, the third, Dionysian χορὸς is able to function as a genuine judge and critic of music and performances; Dionysus gave the gift of wine as a medicine to put awe into the soul and strength into the body (672d), and by means of this awe and new-found strength, the Dionysian men are led upward by the god's sacred pull into wisdom. In this way, they gain the third sort of knowledge. Dionysus becomes the guardian of the city's νομοὶ and its παιδεία. "Dionysus thus governs the νομοὶ; he supersedes Zeus and Apollo"¹⁶⁵ by bringing awe to human beings.

However, the Athenian does not allow Dionysus to reign sovereign (*tyranneuein*, τυραννεύειν). Dionysus too is ruled by a higher authority, and he serves as one of the god's "helpers". This god is Νοῦς. Νοῦς rules over Zeus, Apollo, and Dionysus. He is the Divine Puppeteer himself. And though Dionysus gives human beings the cure so that they

¹⁶⁴ Voegelin, *Plato* 241.

¹⁶⁵ Voegelin, *Plato* 241.

may assist the god's divine pull, it is only by the sacred pull of $\text{No}\bar{\upsilon}\varsigma$ that these puppets come to life, move, dance, and sing beautifully.

In closing, the subordination of Dionysus to $\text{No}\bar{\upsilon}\varsigma$ in Plato's *Laws* is the precise difference between Socrates' and Nietzsche's understanding of divine madness. For the Athenian Stranger, who is admittedly very Socratic, $\text{No}\bar{\upsilon}\varsigma$ is understood to provide direction and the sacred pull to which human beings may respond, having been given the gift of Dionysus. For Nietzsche, by contrast, there is no god beyond Dionysus. Hence, there is no direction to orient the madman: "Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down?" (*GS*.125). There is no sacred pull to which the gift of Dionysus offers a response. There is only the gift, according to Nietzsche.

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