# CHAPTER 1

# Nietzsche's Musical Stylistics: Writing a Philosophy of Science

## THE HERMENEUTIC CHALLENGE OF NIETZSCHE'S ELITISM: STYLE AND INTERPRETIVE AFFINITY

Nietzsche's writings on truth and Nietzsche's comments on science are routinely dismissed as confused or irrelevant to the substance of Nietzsche's philosophy. Expressed exotically, Nietzsche's understanding of truth is a fluidly protean, quasi-aesthetic, mytho-poietic ideal of nonexclusive truth. Expressed simply, simplistically, we may also say that for Nietzsche there is no truth. The only truth is the lie of truth and the truth seeker is condemned to such a lie, where at its best one has the truth that there is no truth about truth. Such an understanding of truth is beyond the opposition of truth and lie (the logical principle of noncontradiction). Like Nietzsche's idea of the genealogy of morals, which poses the question of morality beyond good and evil, Nietzsche's theory of truth proposes (and an early essay is explicitly titled) an *extramoral* interpretation of truth beyond truth and lie. Recognizing the world-making activity of the expression of power constellations in quantitative/qualitative terms, Nietzsche's account of truth is, in its philosophic origins, archically perspectival. Against those who hold correspondence theories of truth, Nietzsche maintains that truth is only interpretation. This assertion holds even against coherence or Tarskian theories of truth, where these last depend upon ontological riders (if *x is* in fact as it is judged to be). Hence Nietzsche's later perspectival reflections on truth pose the question of the perspectival value or vantage of the truth of nontruth: for Nietzsche once again, there is no truth, there are no facts, only interpretations.

Truth as Nietzsche has it was traditionally misunderstood as separate (separable) from the lie and identifiable without recourse

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to the merely partial, or to the "false" or merely apparent, or to the ambiguous and illusory. But in place of such an Eleatic and Platonic ideal, Nietzsche conceives truth as the chaotic totality of mutually interpretational power-perspectives, where no one perspective has primacy. Entwined with one another in a contest for supremacy, such a chaos of perspectives excludes the ideal of singular, ultimate truth. Thus, like Heidegger's understanding of aletheic truth, Nietzsche's perspectival truth is nonexclusive or open to the trivial, the discounted, the veiled, or the shadowed. A perspectival or ambivalent expression of hermeneutic truth reflects the epochal expression and free play of event-perspectives in an ever-emergent dynamic of power. Such a perspectivalist expression of truth is both propaeduetic to and the ennabling condition for an aesthetic hermeneutic or philosophy of the theory and practice of science.

But what sense is to be made of such talk? The conceptual difficulty of Nietzsche's claims is not adequately clarified by any author, not because commentators up till now have failed at the task but because this conceptual difficulty is inherent in Nietzsche's expression and cannot be "clarified." This is dramatized in the absurdly analytic project of "cognizing" Nietzsche's theory of truth. Even at its best, such a project inevitably ends up with a representation of Nietzsche's theory of truth as "noncognitivist." But to say this does not mean that Nietzsche's philosophic perspective on truth has no cognitive value. Just the contrary, as we shall see in the chapters to follow. But the paradox, the ambivalence, the contrariety implicit in a perspectivalist theory of truth where there are no facts, only interpretation, where there is no truth characteristically jars or skews such a cognitive value.

The linguistic dissonance is ineluctable. It is not possible to "translate" Nietzsche's talk of truth into analytic style talk about truth. Hence the language employed in the present study of Nietzsche's thinking on science and truth, emphasising his *perspectivalism*, reflects the deliberate challenge to coherence and consistency characterizing Nietzsche's philosophy on truth and language as such (where, for Nietzsche, truth and lie start out as different names for the same thing). The dissonant and contradictory character of Nietzsche's thought, in the best treatment of such a combination to date, led John Wilcox to characterize Nietzsche's thinking on truth and value as "non-cognitivist."[1] If this tactic of naming Nietzsche's views on truth noncognitivist may not be said

to have recommended Nietzsche to analytic thinkers on *truth*, it has nonetheless proved particularly fruitful for analytically styled *value* studies.[2] Unlike other reviews of Nietzsche's "cognitive" value, Wilcox's representation does not lead the reader far afield, where, as said, for Nietzsche, truth is a moral value and the *idea* of a truth value or the question of the value of truth follows from the question of morality.

Yet the deliberate ambiguity of the proliferation of allusions, allegorical, metaphorical, metonymic and otherwise, and the necessary elisions that characterize if they do not compose Nietzsche's style remain problematic for the reader interested in the philosophy of science (or, more generally, in epistemology or in aesthetics under the general schematic of philosophy as such), or even a reader with a broad interest in the contours of Nietzsche's thought in particular. What is here problematic is more than a matter of Anglo-American analytic taste in philosophic reading. The problem begins as it ends with the radical difficulty of reading Nietzsche.

I have suggested that there is no transparent way to talk about such notions concerning truth and lie, perspective and illusion except via an explication of the context of Nietzsche's own expression of his thinking on these matters. No one can say what Nietzsche's perspectivalism is about in simple terms without betraying the sense of Nietzsche's perspectivalism, for as Nietzsche indicated in a comment he offered more than once and with more than one published variation: "All truths are simple—is that not a compound lie?" In the present context, this means that the language used to represent Nietzsche's views on truth, science, and power cannot help but clash with the expectations of the philosophic reader with a background in traditional philosophy (of knowledge, language, or science).

To address this stylistic dissonance, in the sections to follow, I explicate the effective value or working of Nietzsche's style on the reader; this I name with the principally musical metaphor of *concinnity*.[3] A concinnous style is not a uniformly effective influence; rather, it depends upon the reader's own affinity for hearing the affects of such a style. As an esoteric conductor's or composer's style of this kind, within the limits of a select range, Nietzsche's style sounds out the "right" readers with, as he puts it, an "ear" for the "music," the tempo, the rhythm of Nietzsche's text. This sounding out finds the appropriate resonance in the reader

not now as an affect but as a charge to thought. This idea of challenge will be familiar to readers of Heidegger's phenomenology of thought. Throughout the chapters to follow, I offer specific examples from Nietzsche's writing to highlight Nietzsche's rhetorical, musical style.

Yet with such a claim concerning the musicality of Nietzsche's style of writing, I do not offer an account of Nietzsche's flourishes or rhetorical ornamentation. My claim here is that Nietzsche's style is not at all a matter of rhetorical excess, not given the ordinary elaboration of the meaning of rhetoric. For Nietzsche's writing, like music, may not be separated from the question of style, and that is true in Nietzsche's case more than it is true of any other author just where Nietzsche writes to or for the reader's spiritual ear and not the reader's intellectual eye. All of Nietzsche's (published) texts are composed in this musical way, some, of course, like his *Zarathustra* much more than others.[4] Given this expression, to speak of Nietzsche's concinnity means that to learn to read Nietzsche is more than a matter of learning to see, as for example the poet Stefan George did, that "this soul should have sung and not spoken," using, as so many inspired by Nietzsche's words have, Nietzsche's own words concerning his own first words in his first book. Instead, like George and like other readers philosophical and otherwise with an affinity for Nietzsche's text, Nietzsche's best readers (I might say: Nietzsche's only readers) are brought into the resonant space of an answering harmony. Such a musical expression exceeds the literal expression of the text, sounded over Nietzsche's new seas, tempting those with ears to hear, those he called the philosophers of the "best future."

I differ from an ecstatic reading of the music of Nietzsche's writing where I would name the answering song intrinsic to or needed to understand Nietzsche's musically styled philosophy not an esoteric refinement but the thoughtful correspondence that is the heart of philosophy in Heidegger's understanding of thought and of the meaning of philosophy. To read Nietzsche, to reflect the golden song of Nietzsche's sunrise, the short shadows of his bright midday, and the long shadows of his red and yellow afternoons, the benediction of Nietzsche's sunsets—where even the poorest fisherman rows with golden oars—and the lonely, musically resonant tears of his brown nights, one must be as reader, as quick-eared thinker, as Nietzsche was. One must be a tempter of new horizons and a new dawn, a philosopher. Thus this exigence

demands that the reader share the temperament of the thinker who attempts, asking as Nietzsche asks again and again, the question of the value of truth.

PHILOSOPHIC CONCINNITY:
THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC AND NIETZSCHEAN STYLE

*Concinnity* is the word I have been using to describe Nietzsche's style together with the art of reading appropriate to his style. *Concinnity* is derived from the Latin, *concinnitas*. In its colloquial adjectival significance, the word suggests a consummate, well articulated performance, an elegant or neat accomplishment. *Concino*, the etymologically unrelated but still much more than conceptually associated verb, means "to sing in chorus." And in the sense in which I employ the term, concinnity corresponds to its current technical, musical functionality, that is, the sounding, smooth (ordered, fitted, protentionally, or constitutionally architectonic) harmony of disparate or dissonant or answering themes singing together in chorus or in a round. Thus in the round, in the barcarole, in the chorale, in the symphony, music is liquid architecture. I mention the folk round to emphasise that this fluid arch-structure not only is a characteristic of classical compositions but also emerges in the rag or the jamming of jazz musicians who speak back and forth to one another, each balancing the other's voice across bass strings, piano, and saxophone. In this musical fashion, Nietzsche's style is an example of the rhetorical sublime, an architectonic effected in terms more contemporary to us than to Longinus as a (precociously) postmodern compositional technique. In writing, a concinnous style has two significant registers: in the first place, concinnity refers to what is expressed by the writing as a consequence of the stylistic play and interplay of written texts and, given the importance of Nietzsche's reader-specific, evocative style, beyond the text; in the second place, concinnity refers to the appropriate(d), creative response of the reader, that is to say, what the reader can *work up* or *out of* the text.

Nietzsche's concinnity is a playing of and between his own texts, evoking an echoing reception or choral response by playing among the reader's own background skein woven of anticipations, textual affinities, and reflective/projective recollections. Accordingly, and this is a consequence of capital importance,

Nietzsche's stylistic concinnity or auto-text-deconstructive style has a varying resonance for the general, atonal as well as for the sensitive or attuned reader.[5] Withal, concinnity requires that the reader, like a singer in a chorus, be part of Nietzsche's echoing musical project. Such a demand imposed upon the reader by Nietzsche's special style of philosophic composition can only be answered by the reader's own interpretive affinity if it also elicits or calls for this same affinity. In this way, Nietzsche's Zarathustra, announcing, "This is my way," simultaneously and inevitably invites his followers/readers to find their *own* way.

To use a metaphor from analytic or Anglo-American philosophy, the stylistic achievement of Nietzsche's concinnity or self-deconstructive style effectively makes its elections between readings and readers *like a child*. The analytic rendering of such a choosing, the non-exclusive disjunction, is largely a negative one. Nietzsche repeats only the Hegelian spirit of this negativity. Instead of the aesthetic, ascetic *either/or*, Nietzsche's style invites the mystical ambiguity of the dialectic *sowohl als auch*.[6] In its musically expressive efficacy, Nietzsche's style is pitched to the reader, architecturally as well as harmonically angled in the textual corpus of his own work as a kind of self-subverting (overt content) and reader-subverting (anticipatory expectations) double coding. This last characteristic of postmodern art and literature chooses between *several* styles by retaining them, "quoting" or implicating them all at once.[7]

Nietzsche's self-deconstructing, culture-deconstructive, "double-coded" textual style works as proof against the straight inevitability of the 'grand' narrative. The return of the question from reader to author, speaker to speaker, undercutting authority and thereby undercutting the modern tradition, is a typically Nietzschean stylistic chiasmus. This double-coded style works as a multiregister movement interior to the discourse that not only subverts the reader's self-presumption but also is its own overt, self-subverting reflection.[8]

Nietzsche's importance for an understanding of the post-modern situation is his reflection on the rule of error and the illusion of truth that is not a (weak) skepticism but an affirmative experimentation with illusion (in art) and thus a (strong) confirmational incorporation of error in life (i.e., in the grand style). Thus perspectivalism affirms a multiplicity of perspectives, none of which, including the operating perspective of the philosopher of perspecti-

valism, has any absolute claim. The emphasis upon the "post-human"—the celebrated *Übermensch*—in Nietzsche succeeds a critical reading of the nature of the human as such, shifting its position to the sliding or precessionally decentered subject of interpretive style.[9] Nietzsche's thought on the use and abuse of history, on the subject of discourse and the discourse of the subject, and, above all, on language, on truth and lie, and so forth, involves a textual inscription/subversion of heterogeneity that can continue to count as postmodern, but its ambivalent regard for that same heterogeneity, manifest in the name of egalitarian democracy, cultural, racial, and even gender pluralism, must continue to confound classification. In a language that qualifies domains and universes of discourse such that it is possible to formulate the propositions, "There is no truth," or "There is at least one truth," there can be no way of pronouncing the end of totalizing discourse apart from such a discourse. The means available are totalizing antitotalizing: hyperbole, parody, the aphorism, the sustained or even catachrestic contradiction. Employing all of these to extraordinary effect, of course, is Nietzsche's protean text.

A postmodern epistemic viewpoint retains the critical, scientific vision of modernity but together with this sophisticated self-reflexive awareness, it avows or more precisely *admits* the impossibility of scientific totalizing or absolutist knowledge. Thus the watchword and touchstone of Nietzsche's anti-totalizing perspectivalism is its resolute *provisionality*. Multivalent, heterogeneous, and above all, as concinnous (multivoiced or choral), the postmodern recoil of incredulous credulity is more than the modernist hyperbolic interrogation, because it also challenges the credibility of its doubt (and, accordingly, does not hesitate to undercut the doubting subject). It is for this reason that the modern scientific habit of modest, tentative declaration or sophisticated qualification (i.e., the "best possible" knowledge) does not qualify as Nietzschean even if it is (may also be) postmodern.

This return, this turning of the question is super-valently Nietzschean. To illustrate this stylistic dynamic, let us turn to an example of Nietzsche's style, from a passage to be more fully considered in a later chapter. Writing on 'The Prejudices of the Philosophers' in his (topologically, and indeed, topically, postmodern) book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche challenges the rationalist epistemic presumption of the physical scientist's understanding of nature. The physicist's law of nature, Nietzsche claims, is nothing

but a (bad) interpretation. And he concludes with the apparent concession: "Granted this too is only interpretation—and you will be eager enough to raise this objection?" With this, Nietzsche shows his philosophical teeth. The inscrutability of Nietzsche's point is evidenced by the almost complete lack of commentary on the significance of this intensification. For here Nietzsche underlines the spirit of an opposed perspective and incorporates it, harmonizes with it, and, having made it his own, returns it to its projected origin in the putatively self-defensive expression of the physical scientist. Charged with interpretation, with susceptibility to the complexities of hermeneutics and failing to master its complications, that is, accused of the hermeneutic sin of the humanities, the scientist turns into a kind of soft logician and accuses, *tu quoque*. That is the point of Nietzsche's conclusion. In the final chapter, I describe this rhetorical movement as a nonmovement, specifically as the movement that catches one up, halts the speaker, hearer, reader. Thus is Nietzsche's special aposiopesis, and it works as a caesura but is answered by a benediction or coda, "—well," as Nietzsche could reply, "da capo," or as he says here, "so much the better."[10]

## THE PROJECT OF COMMUNICATION: SELF-DECONSTRUCTION AND NIETZSCHEAN SELECTIVITY

Appropriation is both the redemptive ideal and the danger of the project of a retrieve. For Nietzsche, the ordinary or philological position of interpretive apprehension survives the prospect and fulfillment of a repetition. If, as he says, one is able to understand only what one *brings* to a text in the first place, the ordinary appropriation will be well matched by the ordinary text if by the same token it must conflate the extraordinary text with its antipode. The extraordinary or rare perspective cannot withstand the expositional transfiguration of the ordinary reading.

Because Nietzsche understood the enduring ascendance of the everyday perspective, which he named "nihilism" and we can name the "nexus of modernity/post-modernity," he held that unless conserved by extra-ordinary means, the rarer nature or noble vantage is foreclosed. It is in the melancholic service of this epochal aim that Nietzsche writes. As a result, his text has an

ethereal aristocratic orientation, assigned to spur what would be the best reader, whether or not this reader could ever exist.

Opposing traditional communicative efficacy in both challenging context and effective style, Nietzsche's text does not generate the proper understanding in the reader. Instead, in an oblique search for the right reader, Nietzsche disrupts or deconstructs the text available to the general reader. Like a barbed point, a "fish hook," Nietzsche's text penetrates the public reading to spur the "right reader."

Nietzsche conceived his style as a challenge to prospective readers. In this conception, Nietzsche employed an angler's metaphor for his own style: he saw his writing as a kind of cast and his readers as so many fish. For this Antichrist, this Dionysian angler, told himself the same story any fisherman tells himself when nothing takes his line: *"Die Fische fehlten . . . "* (*There were no fish. . . . )*[11] In the pathos of what Nietzsche called "the slow search for those related to me,"[12] the hook, the spin, the swerve of the text is the *esoteric* height of style. The effective selectivity of Nietzsche's style is more than rhetorical intention but claims to be a working aspect of his style.

Yet the concept of a popular selectivity is problematic and today more so than ever. If in the modern landscape, every porter dreams of an admirer, the postmodern vista features a Pulitzer in fact or by right (for by what right, on *whose* authority, is any author to be refused?) for every reporter. The same pluralist conception sponsors every reader's fancy as the singular (multiple) object of every author's (imaginary) selective intention. Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* was written, as its subtitle announces, "for everyone," even if this universal extension is just as quickly qualified via the contradictory conjunction, "and no one." Such a book must have, and its author must expect it to have, its necessary epiphany in the hands of any reader who thinks to take the book at its word. Similarly, a book for "free spirits" or "philosophers of the future" or "men of knowledge" or "artists of the spirit" betrays any vaunted selectivity as the book of casual choice, a counter-commodity for the heightened desires and easy diffidence, the ready disposal of a heterogeneous readership.

The postmodern eclipse of the author's singular relevance changes nothing but further advances the hermeneutic polyphony and ambivalence of reception. A style of reading always takes a

text on the terms of the reading. More than an author ever can, it is the reader who styles or constitutes the word of the received text. If Nietzsche's text is to have a selective effect, it is because it acknowledges the reader's self-selective authority and only thus affects, forearms, and so ultimately disarms the reader. Thus, the angling hook of Nietzsche's self-reflective style of authorship is a glancing, teasing anticipation of an egocentric style of reading that can never be foreclosed because it is literally populist. Authorial style against the reader's authority, style against style, Nietzsche cuts the veiled surface of the public text, seeking the reader who would be caught in this way. But the challenge or herald call of Nietzsche's style is an ambivalent passage where mutable maskings, shifting styles advance pointed assaults. The "right reader" of Nietzsche's text is an authorial reader but never an authority—never authorized—a reader-author greeting each mask with the reflection of its inner necessity. Lured by the shifting of such a multifarious text, the "engaged" reader is the reader conceived as thinker: willing to confront and answer the challenge of philosophic thought, the polished challenge of a writing style.

In writing, the rhetorical surface of style projects its underpinnings, suggesting what lies below the turns of the word in the folds of the veil. As the logocentric reader knows well enough, the mask of style is itself a matter of style. The philologist's theoretical aim is the ultimate secret of the unsecreted style—its spur, or meaning—its point. Hence, the philosopher against the philologist, the writer against himself, Nietzsche writes to expose the importunity of the theoretician, the knower bent on truth at any price. By precociously postmodern tropes, Nietzsche's style exposes the excentricity of expositions, where what is suggested in the image of the text is ever undercut in the same turn, at the next turn, or at all turns. The *imaginary Nietzsche* after all exposition, that is, the Nietzsche of consummate stylistic achievement, repeats the project of style to eternity, murmuring against all charges of contradiction, because that is the meaning of his challenge to the principle of noncontradiction: "So much the better."[13] To read philosophy styled in this way (to read Nietzsche) is to engage the daring of thought in a melancholy self-nursing, self-turning mode.

As the consummate author-stylist who invites each reader's interest, Nietzsche foregrounds the motif of barbed trial and masked challenge.[14] It is only interior to its accessibility that Nietzsche's style works as a mask. Dehiscing the esoteric value of the

text, Nietzsche's stylised dissemblance addresses the exoteric, the audience that is not the general, last or even higher, run of humanity. Against Nietzsche's apocalyptic assessment of his own writing, "non legor, non legar,"[15] the thoughtful reading counters the querulous challenge, "Am I understood? Have I been understood?" with the claim of understanding. The rare reader's prowess is limned by an accession to the text as a thinker of its thought.

But can such a "rare" reader be found? Is this precious dialectic of conflict and power proclaimed in earnest? If it is meant seriously, is its corollary plausible that would pronounce, as I would seem to be arguing here if only as a subtext of the current text, that none of Nietzsche's current academic readers may be counted as his "right readers?" But these readers are just the ones who must, of all readers, be counted as so forewarned, so admirably forearmed concerning the difficulty and distance of Nietzsche's text that their approach to his text should be the "right" one. Indeed, if any approach is to be right, if Nietzsche scholars cannot "read" Nietzsche, who can? If philologists were not the "right" readers for Nietzshe's philological study of *The Birth of Tragedy,* just who was? Who can have ears for such an author?

Thus the projection of such a skewed hermeneutic nexus of romance and rapture, conflict and accession transcends critique. And the mist of this transcendence collapses in the sun of an ordinary day, that is, in the light of common experience. After all, we are still talking about reading Nietzsche. And throughout the century that has passed since Nietzsche's final philosophical collapse in Turin, reading Nietzsche has been and remains a broadly esoteric (exoteric!) avenue of intellectual enjoyment and achievement. In all sobriety, in all simplicity, where more than a little is needed: reading Nietzsche is a common practice. And understanding Nietzsche is a easily managed feat, demonstrated by any college philosopher, theologian, or poet. Indeed, any beer-hall politician can do it.

Again, if philosophy as such may pride itself on its rigor, Nietzsche is scarcely a representative pinnacle of rigid complexity. As all casual and actual students of philosophy know, perhaps even better than the sometimes turgid students who are the scholars of his work, Nietzsche is fun. Thus it seems that the *elite* or rare power Nietzsche claims indispensable for winning hermeneutic access to his writings is so much routine hype feeding the popularity of his works.

Contrary to his own worst predictions, Nietzsche is more or less read and more or less understood these days—what then? what now? What can be the nature of Nietzsche's style such that, despite his claims for the spareness of its appeal, it nevertheless continues to win such catholic allegiance and, as a corollary to its general fascination, inspires volley after volley of conservative assault?

## NIETZSCHE'S STYLE: A MECHANICAL MODEL

More than an epi-textual flourish for publication, Nietzsche's style of philosophy emerges through the deliberate composition of his texts. This deliberate presentation is less that of calculating artifice than it is of artistry. But because Nietzsche offers his own cautions to the reader,[16] it would seem that it is the force of the author's self-interpretive urgings rather than critical literary insight that pronounces Nietzsche's style the consummation of stylistic mastery.

Nietzsche ensures that his readers will be apprised of his style by overtly announcing the range of his virtuosity, just as he underlines the necessity of an adequate response to that style where *he explicitly warns against easy presumption. Nietzsche's text is thus a kind of* gauntlet, thrown forth in a double sense: cast down as a challenge, it is also meant as a course to be run. In this twofold rite of passage, by assuming the traditional challenge of pride and desire, by running the course of bravery, the reader is bound. There is nothing surprising in such a double effect: between two metaphors, the gauntlet is cast, either to be taken up or to be run. In literary transactions, the reader's interpretive complicity, which I have already named as prerequisite to any hermeneutic account, and the author's demand for this 'good will'—in running or taking up the gauntlet—is essential to an expressive consummation. The rhetorical legacy emerges as the sensitive reader's patrimony. In the good will attending the rhetorical turn, style is the selective transmitting medium of Nietzsche's philosophic intention.

Analogically expressed, the selectivity of Nietzsche's style may be compared to the industrial chemical technique of vacuum filtration. Like gel chromatography, vacuum filtration is a selective technique. Like Nietzsche agonistic style, a vacuum is used to intensify the effect of a mechanical sieve. If the grade of the filter

can be compared to the difficulty of Nietzsche's style, a highly permeable filter would be one that transmits everything (all readers) at the lowest level, while at the ultimate stages or levels of difficulty, very little is transmitted by the increasingly selective and near impermeable (in industry: micropore) filters. On the terms of this analogy, the popular reception of Nietzsche's text may be seen as the operation of the first, broad transmission. This corresponds to Nietzsche's image as being easily or generally accessible among philosophic authors. But at the higher levels, representing the difficulty of discriminating and advancing to the esoteric operation of the style of writing, the same transmission is possible only for a few readers, corresponding to the development of more than an average, educated style of reading.[17]

Nietzsche's postmodern, parodic style, is the rhetorical movement of his text against the wrong, insensitive, and impotent reader. An active filter, the text draws and then evades the possibilities of reactive understanding. Seducing the reader with "ears to hear"—that is, the reader who can *think*—by means of the mutable allure of a shifting text, Nietzsche simultaneously diverts or deconstructs the public character of the text. The return of the question from reader to author, undercutting authority and the tradition, and, again, the reader, is a Nietzschean chiasmus on the level of style that was earlier reviewed as a postmodern, multi-register, concinnous movement interior to the discourse that is not only self-reflexive but self-subverting.

In the experimental register of the aphoristic and throughout his textual ventures, Nietzsche writes for the reader *able* to understand. Ultimately, it is by means of a technical, misdirection in the apprehendable text, an alogical, metaphorical, or metonymical composition, that the style of Nietzsche's irony excludes the general reader. In this way, readers with differing capacities for understanding are distinguished by their interpretive response to the text.

Nietzsche's coordination of style and exigent reading may be seen in the following brief illustration. We may recall that, in the concluding section of the preface to his *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche declaims the style of reading needed to match his style of writing: "one thing is necessary above all if one is to practice reading as an *art* in this way . . . *rumination*."[18] That is to say, the style of reading suited to the style of Nietzsche's writing/thinking is not discursive but rather a 'digestive,' appropriative, or incor-

porative style. Appositely, too, a ruminative style of reading is needed because, long received as a texture of oppositions (e.g., the perfect case and classic locus is his self-touted aphoristic), Nietzsche's proclaimed style is an announcement that should never be skimmed over or, worse, swallowed down but only sounded out. By shifting the metaphor of intestinal cyclings to the labyrinthine *ear*, we may review Nietzsche's style as unfamiliar music: seeking the harmony that gradually reconstitutes dissonant strangeness. The "music" of a text is not just the rhythm that moves the reader along, it is also the harmony that brings the reader back to a text, that draws the bowing of reflection back upon itself. Read once and, within the reflective memory of the first reading, read again, the first essay of the *Genealogy* illustrates the postmodern signature of advance and demurral, deliberate inscription and covert subversion that is Nietzsche's style.

In the very first section of the same essay, Nietzsche betrays the direction of his writing. Its first address is to the general reader. That is to say, given the explicit context of the currency, time of publication and appeal of the text, Nietzsche's average reader shares the casual psychologizing interest of the educated reader looking for something new about morality, something revealing the nature and cause of good and evil. Nietzsche writes, then, first of all with reference to the texts preceeding his own text in the same genre. These were the texts of his readership's prior acquaintance, authored by or influenced by the then- and still-current interpretive scientism, a brave modern sophistication Nietzsche ascribes to those (English psychologists!) with "a self-deceiving instinct for belittling man," out of "the mistrustfulness of disappointed ideals," or from a "subterranean hostility and rancor toward Christianity (and Plato)" or maybe derived from a "lascivious taste for the grotesque." Perhaps, Nietzsche suggests, these impulses are also present in the readers of such books, the past-present reader, his readers.

Strikingly or laughably risque, such psychological (today's own sociological, culture-critical) readings are at the same time the stalest, most mechanical readings of humanity: taking moral instincts according to their animal, physiological, or habitual origins. Today's popular accounts of propagation, gene-serving generosity are equally unflattering. *Ad hominem*, Nietzsche moves then to argue that the motives of such an analysis of morality require examination. Why? Then as now, the fixation on mecha-

nism requires an accounting. Hence the first section of the *Geneal-ogy* turns the reader toward the reticular alleys of low suspicion.

In the wake of this modern romantic psychologizing, invoking and reproving the prurient fascinations of the Victorian scholar/reader, we have learned to inquire. Postmodern, we are suspicious by nature. Just whose imaginary genealogy does Nietzsche trace here? The "English psychologists" named as such or, rather, the reader reading this work with a taste for such secret origins? Because unresolvable ambiguity is essential for the play of Nietzsche's rhetoric, the questions, who is the subject? who the author? who the reader? do not matter. On the terms of a hermeneutic reading projected according to the metaphor of rumination or resonant audition, the coils of the text have already doubled, redoubled, and collapsed. Choking the linked momentum of his rhapsodic psychologizing, Nietzsche deflects any conclusive attribution or original analysis: he is, he tells us, "*told* they are simply, old, cold and tedious frogs" Now, Nietzsche draws back, boldy launching the text into a blind passage. In this turn, it can be said that he gives himself away to the sensitive, retentive reader (only later returning in succeeding sections to address the philologist and the man of science). Thus writing for *his* "readers," he writes of his noblest, vainest, impossible hope for these men of (English) science, among whom we must count his current readers, then and now. For the reader interested in the genealogy of moral reflection, Nietzsche offers his best wishes,

> that these investigators and microscopists of the soul may be fundamentally brave, proud, and magnanimous animals, who know how to keep their hearts as well as their sufferings in bounds and have trained themselves to sacrifice all desirability to truth, *every* truth, even plain, harsh, ugly, repellent, unchristian, immoral truth.[19]

The double valencing of Nietzsche's style (broad appeal/narrow focus) is of interest in tracing the textual movement of this first passage. The broad appeal of Nietzsche's style is cast out like the reel of a fishing rod, but even on a good day the hook never even makes contact with, the lure never even entices all the fishes circumscribed by its arching passage. Thus if the mocking tone of the introductory litany of self-deception forbade the reader's identification with the (English) investigators of the psyche, this last account softens this very and indeed already implicit (German)

alliance. The play of the first rhetorical turn is superficially ironic. The reader is deflected from an identification with his prior (and that means immediate) reading interest. Because this first move works against both readers and original authorities, its irony lacks the arch of an even appeal, and the trope is not casually understood or romantic irony but rather a didactic or Socratic irony. Thus, just as the reader could begin to catch the direction of Nietzsche's appeal in the flatness of its duplicity, we must be ready to change metaphors, where Nietzsche deflects the direct impact, hooks, or puts "English" upon the spirit of his challenge, proposing the last passage as the generously willed ambivalence of a high melancholy reserve.

The common experience of familiarity with Nietzsche's texts is one of a certain mutability. When the reader returns to a familiar text by Nietzsche, whether one reviews a textual locus, context, phrase, or term, the reader finds Nietzsche's text renewedly new. I have elsewhere described this phenomenon as an effect of Nietzsche's self-deconstruction. This protean quality is characteristic of poetry, music, and the other arts. It is also characteristic of philosophy and any written text, in the wake of deconstructive readings, if not in the same way and to quite the same extent.

By speaking of Nietzsche's text as musical, it has been argued that Nietzsche's text is so composed that, like a musical piece, it is always different. To read Nietzsche, as to play or to perform a musical piece, is to interpret Nietzsche: and each time that interpretation as an interpretation must differ. The achievement, the interpretation of the text testifies as much to Nietzsche's philosophic artistry as to the reader's.

To offer an observation that I would venture as part of a phenomenology of Nietzsche's texts (and in this way confirmable by any reader), which is also a claim repeated in the essays on Nietzsche's style, whether naming Nietzsche a poet (and so excluding him from philosophic currency) or celebrating Nietzsche as consummate stylist, Nietzsche's texts are emminently mutable. Such mutability is characteristic of a philosophic text when the context of interpretation can be altered, either through a subsequent claim that forces a revision of preceding statements or because of a specific interpretive focus. Nietzsche's text has features of both philosophic and musical, poetic style and is thus susceptible to different readings (contexts) and interpretations. But this is also to say

again—and Nietzsche does say it—that Nietzsche is not for every-
one. And this limitation is not a matter of elitism or blind esoteri-
cism. Instead this limitation derives from the question of direc-
tion, it is a matter of a text given to those who can read differently.

Some read philosophy and poetry and listen to music from a
distant, foreign perspective, as the reflection of another. These are
vicarious readings. But just as the genuine reader of poetry is nei-
ther the scholar nor the critic nor even the general reader but only
the poet, so the reader of philosophy must be (ideally) a philoso-
pher. The poet is the one for whom the poet sings the whole music
of poetry's past in the first place. The lyric poet is thus the proper
hearer, the one addressed. In our era, poetry is no longer heard,
indeed, some would say that music itself is no longer heard as
music. But in its epic, primordial emergence, the poem is a song
sung not only by the poet but also by all its hearers. It is this that
is meant when Nietzsche, appropriating the claim of recent writ-
ers, of modern poets and critics like Shelley or like Schiller and
Lessing, would imagine that in the beginning every man must
have been a poet. This potency represents what Nietzsche regards
as the lordly right of *giving* names. When the poet first sang,
everyone hearing also sang, not vicariously, inspired not by the
poet's charm but by the song itself. In the same way, it has been
said that one must be a musician oneself, with music in one's
heart and head just to hear music properly. This is not to say as
Adorno would claim, with unimpeachable right in some other
context, that one must be a scholar capable of reading or envi-
sioning the score in order to be able to "hear" an opera. For the
matter of "expert listening" does not yet address the question of
hearing. A response to this question is given only with the tears
Adorno invoked as the matter of negative knowledge. This is the
knowledge granted, Adorno suggests, when one listens, say, to
Schubert's music. The question of proper musical hearing can
achieve only what Adorno calls a "negative knowing" that is, like
Nietzsche's, an anti-epistemology exhausting the whole meaning
of a "knowledge which would not be power."[20] One must be a
musician in this sense to hear music. Only then can one speak as
Adorno does of a reference to whole world "in weeping and
singing," which thus inaugurates one's entrance "into alienated
reality."[21]

In the present context, this means that one must be a philoso-
pher to read Nietzsche. There is no other way; one must be able,

as Heidegger would insist, to think in order to read Nietzsche. And thinking, as it may be said from Heidegger's many reflections on thinking, is not a matter of calculation or of being able to understand cognitive claims (these last are never too demanding). Instead what is at stake is the task (what Nietzsche calls the "adventure") of thinking without guides, without axioms, before an open horizon. Thinking is always thinking against foundations; it is always the step back, another beginning.

If science, if calculative philosophy is a matter of translating, as Nietzsche has it, the unknown into the known, the ennabling condition of philosophical thinking for Nietzsche as for Heidegger will be the capacity to discern the unknown in the known and to ask after it. This is the heart of Nietzsche's philosophical questioning, which Deleuze for one has discerned in Nietzsche's skill in finding the question of value, of worth, of moral right. This question is not to be articulated in the manner of Foucault, that is, not as such or as if it were the highest (the most worthy or truest) question but, rather, posed to the question of truth. What is the value of truth? What is truth good for? What power is granted by the kind of knowledge we call "truth"—what do we gain or win by it? Thus the meaning of science, and scientific truth, is indeed for Nietzsche to be found to begin with Bacon (rather than Galileo or Newton), but the value of knowledge as power over nature is precisely what is to be put in question. And we are still engaged in this task—as if for the first time. And Nietzsche can well ask his readers then as now, who of us has ears for such a question?

In all, the topological complexities of Nietzsche's turns cannot be traced in their entirety. But they can be sounded out, in a preliminary fashion, given, of course, as Nietzsche prefaces the assertion of the possibility of this first accessibility, "that one has first read [Nietzsche's] earlier writings and has not spared one's efforts in doing so."[22] The echo of the sounding tone, the course of rumination is not linear: self-interfering, self-reinforcing, the style of recollective attention complicates its own pattern. Because Nietzsche is writing for philosophers, driven by a *fundamental will* of knowledge," he questions the value of values, or admits truths beyond truth. "For such truths do exist."

## NOTES

1. Wilcox, *Truth and Value.*

2. Cf. K. Westphal, "Was Nietzsche a Cognitivist?" In this connection, it is significant that the strongest chapters in M. Clark's recent *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* are not the central chapters addressing truth but the latter chapters on the ascetic ideal, will to power, and the Eternal Return conceived with reference to value.

3. See my "On Nietzsche's Concinnity." Cf. my "Nietzsche's Self-Deconstruction."

4. This designation of *Zarathustra* as a text that should be included within the rubric or the discipline of music is Nietzsche's own as much as it accords with my own analysis.

5. Hence Nietzsche's musical stylistics is a deconstructive strategy in advance of Derridean deconstruction.

6. This, some would say, specifically Swabian spirit was not Nietzsche's own but was one he could have admired—even without the taste he asserted he did not have himself for Hegelian dialectics.

7. This is the irony of the postmodern. This coded coding, this having it both ways or, less frivolously, with a disposition closer to diffidence than to the tragic, this life program that knows better but acts, goes along anyway, embodies the only style of life-election remaining for our age: postmodern, post-Saturnine, past all lived melancholy that Umberto Eco sees as the resonant "age of lost innocence." The only way to approach the sober innocence and ideological idealism of the past is by the gently dehiscent way of irony, which invocation both sustains poetic reference and underscores our tacit recognition of its shimmering illusion. For Eco, what we know now is that rather than the modern occlusion of the past in the anticipatory service of an eschaton, "the past . . . must be revisited." This inevitable revisitation—there is no other way to the past other than the way of return—opposes the monotony of Habermas's protests, and never aspires to the delusions and the nostalgic vision of romantic neoclassicism, because it is clear that the past is to "be revisited with irony, not with innocence" (Umberto Eco, *The Postscript to the Name of the Rose*, trans. W. Weaver [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984], p. 67).

8. In its literary, philosophic, cultural expression, the postmodern is the modern in its fullest extension. That is to say, and this expression must be emphasized, the postmodern is the *enduring* failure of the modern. It is the rupture of the project of rationality—which yet retains its surface function, featured like pieces of a fractured mirror or like the reticulation of a cracked piece of acrylic or auto—glass, which yet preserves the superficial contours of the original surface in destruction.

9. For a postmodern position, the anti or post-humanism of Nietzsche's perspectivalism reveals its unimpeachable ambivalence.

10. JGB 22, KSA V, p. 37; BGE, p. 34.

11. EH, KSA VI, p. 350; E, p. 112. As such a masking deflection, cutting through all readers, Nietzsche's style is meant for no one in this publicality—Nietzsche's style is a selective device: a recurved barb, an angling hook.

12. Ibid. "der langsame Umblick nach Verwandten." Ibid.

13. In the tradition of postmodern restraint, it should be said that there is no interpretive progress-ideal that can confirm the *reality* of this stylistic achievement.

14. This barbed trial and masked challenge is similar (in affect not reality) to what shocked French Jesuits named the Northeastern American Indian practice of the "gauntlet." This ritualistic torture confirmed a captured enemy as an equal. Among the Five Nations of the Iroquois, running the gauntlet—two rows of armed warriors constituting the assaulting framework of a narrow passageway, raining clubs or fire brands upon the prisoner as he passed—although often a prelude to death was also a ritual of cultural respect and honor.

15. "I am not read, I *will* not be read" (EH, KSA V, p. 259).

16. For one example, Nietzsche's delayed preface to his first book, *Die Geburt der Tragödie: "Versuch einer Selbstkritik."*

17. So reviewed, Nietzsche's style is an exemplary vehicle of textual self-deconstruction, articulating a selective hermeneutic. The notion of a selective hermeneutic opens a critical avenue toward distinguishing the possibilities for understanding within Nietzsche's style. The notion of a self-deconstruction does not follow Derrida's trajectory but is deflected by the rhetorical strategy of Paul de Man. The self-reflective, self-critical position of the deconstructive self-exposition rhetorically assumed against the reader, describes a super-version, that is, an overcoming and extension, of Derrida's own critical deconstructive project.

18. GM viii, KSA V, p. 256; G, p. 23.

19. "Dass diese Forscher und Mikroskopiker der Seele im Grunde tapfere grossmüthige und Stolze Thiere seien, welche ihr Herz wie ihren Schmerz im Zaum zu halten wissen und sich dazu erzogen haben, der Wahrheit alle Wünschbarkeit zu opfern, *jeder* Wahrheit, sogar der Schlichten, herben, hässlichen, widrigen, unchristlichen, unmoralischen, Wahrheit" (GM I:1, KSA V, p. 258), G, p. 25.

20. Theodore W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, Trans. A. Mitchell and W. Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973) p. 129.

21. Ibid.

22. "dass man zuerst meine früheren Schriften gelesen und einige Mühe dabei nicht gespart hat" (GM viii, KSA V, p. 255), G, p. 22.