Nietzsche and Music

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Philosophical Thoughts and Musical Experiments

Edited by

Aysegul Durakoglu, Michael Steinmann and Yunus Tuncel

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INTRODUCTION

> *When I don't hear any music, everything seems dead to me.*
> —Friedrich Nietzsche

This anthology was born out of an interest to explore in-depth Nietzsche's relationship to music; no doubt, a complex relationship that was formed in the early stages of his life. The antecedents of this project go back to an event that the editors organized in 2014 at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey. In this event, we combined Nietzsche's music, performed live by Aysegul Durakoglu, with lectures on his philosophy. From the beginning, we felt that we had started a more than promising collaboration.

It is often said that academics are too siloed and should engage more in inter-disciplinary work, but how often does such work really occur? At the first glance, the two worlds of music, or musicology, and philosophy seem very far apart as each attends to its field in a highly specialized and often arcane way. With Nietzsche, we felt that it was necessary to break down the boundaries between our respective academic worlds. We started to translate the more or less serendipitous ideas that lead to our first lecture concert into a more substantial project. Our plan was to bring musicians, performers, musicologists, philosophers, and others in related fields together to explore the mutual relationship of Nietzsche's music and thought. We assumed, from the start, that this relationship does not just mean that, on the one hand, there is music in Nietzsche's work, and, on the other hand, there is also philosophy. The philosophy, it seemed to us, has grown out of a musical sensibility, is grounded by it and in many ways leads back to music itself. The music, in turn, acquires additional meaning insofar as it translates itself into philosophical ideas and determines Nietzsche's understanding of life as a whole.

We hope to have achieved a conversation in which musicians, musicologists, and philosophers talk to each other, if only indirectly, with the same intensity and comprehension that music and philosophy speak in Nietzsche's work. With twenty chapters, we can of course only cover a

small area in this complex territory; no doubt, as musically inclined readers will sense, there is much left to explore. What follows below are remarks on Nietzsche's background as a musician and a brief summary of each of the chapters.

Nietzsche's Life as a Musician

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born on October 15, 1844, in Röcken, Saxony, part of the Prussian Empire at the time, where his first musical activities began with singing hymns at the Lutheran Church. He received his first musical education from his father, Carl Ludwig Nietzsche, the pastor of the church, and then his mother Franziska Nietzsche. After Nietzsche's father passed way when he was four, the family moved to Naumburg, where Nietzsche's mother, Franziska Nietzsche acquired a piano, and became Nietzsche's first piano teacher in 1851. Mother and son would play duets in their back room.[1] In two years he could play Beethoven's sonatas and transcriptions of Haydn's symphonies. In addition to these two composers, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Schubert, and Mendelssohn formed the framework of his early music education.[2] Nietzsche also attended public and private concerts in Naumburg in his early teen years. It is safe to say that he grew up in a milieu pervaded by music. Naumburg, where Nietzsche spent his childhood, offered an unusually rich array of musical possibilities, from oratorios in the cathedral to chamber music in private homes. The young Nietzsche writes fondly of his best friend, Gustav Krug, and the musical riches of the Krug family home, where the Pater familias was a good friend of Mendelssohn's and himself an accomplished amateur composer and musician. As well as playing music together, Nietzsche and the younger Krug would spend hours reading and discussing musical scores.

Exposed to compositions by great musicians earlier in his life, Nietzsche found a way of expressing himself in music, through early experiments with different styles that led to early compositional works. In 1861, he composed *Ermanarich*, inspired by Liszt's *Hungaria*. Inspired by Chopin, two Polish dances were composed in 1862, and a number of Lieder were written from 1861 to 1865, influenced by Schubert and Schumann. Between the years of

[1] Joachim Köhler, *Zarathustra's Secret: The Interior Life of Friedrich Nietzsche* tr. by R. Taylor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 15.
[2] Georges Liébert, *Nietzsche and Music*, tr. by D. Pellauer and G. Parkes (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 13.

1862 and 1871 his musical experiments resulted in a series of short piano pieces for two and four hands.[3] During this time period, there had been a few important events that inspired the young Nietzsche to write music and poetry, two of which stand out: the foundation of a small society, Germania, in 1860 with his close friends Wilhelm Pinder and Gustav Krug and the discovery of *Tristan and Isolde's* piano reduction by Hans von Bülow in 1861. There have been numerous accounts of Nietzsche spending much time on playing and singing the *Tristan* score. Later at Schulpforta, he continued his musical activities in the school's music room and compiled a "Book of Contemplations," which included songs, a violin and piano piece, and an "Allegro." In a draft of an autobiographical account from 1868 he mentioned that he had written countless compositions and acquired a more than amateurish knowledge of music theory,[4] which proves that he was seriously trying to advance his skills in composition. Shortly after his twentieth birthday, having music in his mind and heart, Nietzsche departed to study philology and theology at University of Bonn. He visited Schumann's grave and participated in the performance of Schumann's *Faust* as a member of the choir. Nietzsche always felt close affiliation to Robert Schumann who was likewise a great writer and an improviser on the piano. During his stay in Bonn, Nietzsche sang in Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at the Lower Rhine Festival of Cologne and in the same year, 1865, took part in the performance of J. S. Bach's *St. John Passion* in Leipzig.

The year of 1868 marks a turning point in Nietzsche's life, when in November he met Richard Wagner in Leipzig. Shortly after, in April 1869 when Nietzsche had moved to Basel to start teaching at the University of Basel, an intense but also controversial relationship started between the two. The first meeting had a great impression on Nietzsche who enjoyed hearing him speak of Schopenhauer and listening to him playing all parts of the *Meistersinger*. Wagner found in Schopenhauer's philosophy "the true homeland of his soul," and Nietzsche found his Dionysian spirit reawakened in Wagner's musical drama. A year later, Nietzsche expressed his feelings in a letter to his mother saying that three things were his relaxations: Schopenhauer, Schumann's music, and solitary walks.[5] While working on ancient Greek culture and tragedy, which later led to his writing of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche also found inspiration to compose a piece, "in the

[3] Nietzsche's compositions are collected, edited, and published by Curt Paul Janz in *Friedrich Nietzsche. Der musikalische Nachlass* (Basel: Brenreiter, 1976).
[4] Nietzsche. *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, Edited and translated by Christopher Middleton. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett, 1969), 47.
[5] Ibid., 12.

form of longish composition for two pianos, in which everything echoes a beautiful autumn, warm in the sun. Because it connects with a youthful memory, the opus is called *Echo of a New Year's Eve*."[6] He was excited to make this piece, "Nachklang einer Sylvesternacht,"[7] a new year's gift to Cosima Wagner and told his friend Carl von Gersdorff that he could detect the warm and happy tone which sounds throughout the whole work.

Like Wagner, Hans von Bülow also gave Nietzsche a harsh critique on his *Manfred-Meditation* which was finished in April 1872 and dedicated to Bülow,[8] saying that his music was even more detestable than he believed. Audiences were also not well disposed towards his music. "He played one of his compositions to an audience in Basel, which was received with displeasure, according to Julius Piccard."[9] Disheartened by Wagner who looked down on his music, and von Bülow who advised him to acquire the basic elements of musical composition, Nietzsche stopped playing piano and composing music for a long time.

Nietzsche's musical inspiration came to fruition in his early and at the time highly controversial work, *The Birth of Tragedy*, which was dedicated to Wagner. Nietzsche's encounter with Wagner is not only a significant event in his musical life, but also one of the most intriguing encounters of the nineteenth century. As already said, Nietzsche became familiar with Wagner's music in 1861 at the age of sixteen when he came across Hans von Bülow's piano reduction of *Tristan*. Despite Nietzsche's later alienation from Wagner, *Tristan* remained a masterpiece for him. One year after their first encounter, in 1869, Nietzsche attended two performances of Wagner's *Meistersinger*, one in Dresden conducted by von Bülow, the other one in Karlsruhe conducted by Hermann Levi. From April 1869 to April 1872, Nietzsche visited the Wagners twenty-three times at Tribschen, not far from Basel, Nietzsche's new home. In May 1872, Nietzsche was present at the foundation of the "Festspielhaus" in Bayreuth, but he was not accepted as writer and editor for its press. In August 1876, he attended the Bayreuth Festival and was repulsed by its whole atmosphere. He left early. Shortly before this episode he had published his fourth *Untimely Meditation*: *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*, an intimately close and insightful analysis of the life and works of a musician within the context of a grand artistic spectacle. In November 1876, Nietzsche and Wagner saw each other in

[6] Ibid., 85.
[7] Liébert, *Nietzsche and Music*, 48.
[8] Ibid., 51.
[9] Köhler, *Zarathustra's Secret*, 121.

Sorrento, Italy, for the last time. When Nietzsche sent a copy of his *Human, All Too Human* to Wagner, the latter declined to read it, out of friendship.

Nietzsche's Ideas on Music

Nietzsche's earliest, substantial ideas on music are to be found in his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy* (and also in his manuscript on *Greek Music Drama*, which was not published in his lifetime). Many of these ideas are influenced by his readings of Schopenhauer, Wagner's aesthetic writings, and his knowledge of Greek theater. After introducing two key terms into aesthetics, the Apollonian and the Dionysian, Nietzsche goes on to interpret Greek tragedy in light of these two artistic impulses. The Apollonian is the principle of individuation and is associated with image, dream, and pleasure, whereas the Dionysian is a state beyond the sphere of individuation, which is associated with symbolization, ecstasy, intoxication and suffering. As applied to the arts, visual and plastic arts and epic poetry are Apollonian, whereas musical arts and lyric poetry are Dionysian; since Greek theater, for Nietzsche, is a synthesis of all arts like Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, it is an agonistic union of both the Apollonian and the Dionysian forces. Since the Dionysian is primordial, music is also primordial and more universal than all other arts. Music is independent and does not need any language-based medium to establish its meaning. Nietzsche expresses his ideas on music as he discusses lyric poetry within the context of Greek drama:

> Our whole discussion insists that lyric poetry is dependent on the spirit of music just as music itself in its absolute sovereignty does not *need* the image and the concept, but merely *endures* them as accompaniments. The poems of the lyrist can express nothing that did not already lie hidden in that vast universality and absoluteness in the music that compelled him to figurative speech. Language can never adequately render the cosmic symbolism of music, because music stands in symbolic relation to the primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the primal unity, and therefore symbolizes a sphere which is beyond and prior to all phenomena. Rather, all phenomena, compared with it, are merely symbols: hence *language*, as the organ and symbol of phenomena, can never by any means disclose the innermost heart of music; language, in its attempt to imitate it, can only be in superficial contact with music; while all the eloquence of lyric poetry cannot bring the deepest significance of the latter one step nearer to us.[10]

[10] BT, §6, in BW, 56.

In Greek drama, according to Nietzsche, the chorus was at the core of the stage and, with its musical functions, set the ecstatic mood of the whole theater as one unified happening, which brought all the different parts of the stage into a sensible whole. Many of these ecstatic functions, such as the satyr chorus, were borrowed from the cult of Dionysus, which Nietzsche considers to be the origin of Greek theater. In a way, he projects the modern symphonic orchestra onto the ancient chorus, as Liébert observes, whereas for Wagner the latter was only an incomplete pre-figuration of the former.[11]

Nietzsche's early ideas on music, which are predominantly Schopenhauerian insofar as they are based on Schopenhauer's metaphysics of will, a will that is mostly musical, are shortsighted and full of problems, which he himself would later recognize.[12] To say, as part of a cosmology, that all beings come into being, live, and then disappear, that is, that all beings partake both of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, and then say that music is purely Dionysian and painting is purely Apollonian is inconsistent. In his post-Schopenhauerian and post-Wagnerian phase, Nietzsche saw the limitation of this dualism and the problems of Schopenhauerian metaphysics. One way of removing the difficulty, if we are still to use these two terms, is to say that music is more Dionysian than visual arts (but still has an Apollonian dimension), whereas visual arts are more Apollonian than musical arts (but still partake in the Dionysian). In addition, once Nietzsche moves away from Schopenhauer and Wagner, he also gives up the idea of a priority of music over other arts. As he declares in *The Case of Wagner,* one of his last books: no art should lord over other arts.[13] This is not to say that music ceases to be important for Nietzsche; he was found to be improvising on the piano before he collapsed into insanity in January 1889. Nietzsche, who had idolized Wagner, turned against him after their relationship ended. He claimed, in *The Case of Wagner*, that Wagner was representing a great corruption in music, and that he was more of an actor, not a musician of instinct, an "artist of decadence."[14] Meanwhile, Nietzsche found new pleasure in Bizet's music, offering a more elevating and life-affirming experience. The discovery of this new musical experience rejuvenated Nietzsche. In the preface to *The Case of Wagner*, he reconciled his reservations toward Wagner by saying that the later Wagner was a decayed and despairing romantic.[15]

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[11] Liebert, *Nietzsche and Music*, 16.
[12] BT 1886 Preface.
[13] CW, §5.
[14] Ibid., §5.
[15] CW, Preface.

From his first musical experiments in early age to his last years, music had been a leitmotif in Nietzsche's life appearing in his philosophical thoughts and musical experiments. From 1880 until his collapse in 1889, Nietzsche had been very productive despite frequent travels between Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France. Among the works of his last period, are *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-85); *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886); the already mentioned *Case of Wagner* (1888); and *Ecce Homo* (1888) all directly or indirectly including subjects and references on music. His last composition, "The Hymn to Life," a musical setting for mixed chorus and orchestra, was published in 1887. Nietzsche was quite satisfied with this work and wrote to his friend Peter Gast that the "Hymn" had passion and seriousness, expressing the emotions from which his philosophy had grown.[16]

Nietzsche collapsed into madness in early 1889 in Turin and spent the last eleven years of his life in mental darkness; an illness that was unique and has been widely interpreted. Medicinal explanations aside, for which there is ample material from a long history of ailments, Nietzsche's life was a perpetual struggle with himself, within himself, and with his own daemons. Nietzsche's daemons were of musical, poetic, philosophical, and religious nature. Musical works, poetry and thoughts all wanted to flow out of his soul in an ecstatic burst. To become art works and pieces of writing they had to be mastered and a form had to be given to the indomitable Dionysian forces.

As a writer and thinker, Nietzsche also embarked on other projects which then often led him away from the emphasis on Dionysian impulses. In his middle phase, we see him as a sharp-eyed and eloquent critic of modern culture, in all its aspects from epistemology and science to morality, religion, and art. The main work of this period, *Human All-Too Human* (1878), is dedicated to Voltaire, which was a step that allowed him to place himself in the tradition of the French moralists and enlightenment thinkers. In doing so, he also explicitly moved away from the Germanic focus that characterized Wagner and his circle. Nietzsche had become more Apollonian, one could say, if not Socratic. The mature Nietzsche, in *The Gay Science* (first edition 1882) and, again, *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), was often ironic and prone to mockery, especially of the culture of his fellow Germans, which too brought him closer to the caustic wit of Aristophanes and his comedies than to the tragic spirit of Aeschylus and Sophocles. But

[16] Nietzsche. *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche,* 273.

the mature thinker was also acutely aware of the need to wear masks, and he wore many of them. A truly free spirit, as Nietzsche wanted to be, is a cultural critic only where he needs to be but does not exhaust himself in the analysis of category mistakes, religious hypocrisy, mediocre art, or failed greatness in public life. The free spirit reserves his innermost insights for himself. The Dionysian inspiration was therefore never far in this phase, it resurfaced at the end of *Beyond Good and Evil*, among others, and in the conception of the will of power as an endless dynamic and uncontrollable desire at the foundation of all life. It also surfaced, of course, in the *Zarathustra*, a work that dramatizes the life-shattering insight into the eternal recurrence of everything, which either leads to complete desperation or the ability to accept life fully as it is, with all the suffering that it brings, summed up in the notion of *amor fati*.

While Nietzsche's conception of the Apollonian and Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* was greatly influenced by Wagner and Schopenhauer, it also had great impact in shaping the late German culture and music. Bringing back the ancient Greek culture and ritual practices allowed for a totally different perspective on art as emerging from the duality of the Apollonian and Dionysian. We can sense the impact most directly in Nietzsche's own musical experiments since music was the driving force in his thoughts and the form of cultural expression that was most relevant for his synthesis as a composer and philosopher. In terms of musical language, bringing back ancient Greek ideals meant recovery of ancient musical practices. It means going back to modality and moving toward atonality as seen in the music of the late German Romantic composers like Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss, Carl Orff, Gustav Mahler, and Arnold Schoenberg. For example, Carl Orff whose career began in the same culture following the late Wagnerian footsteps, adopted early modal structures to ancient text in his significant composition, *Carmina Burana*. Nietzsche's approach in relating music to extramusical realms of experience influenced Richard Strauss' orchestral works, especially in his tone poem *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Like Nietzsche, Strauss began his musical journey as a Wagnerian, using the latter's leitmotif techniques, and eventually departed from the traditional norms of musical form, building his structures more on extramusical aspects and conceptions. We can observe Nietzsche's impact on his approach of distorting or dismissing formal elements by using extramusical influences as a connecting element. The same approach can be traced in early works of Schoenberg who incorporated emotional intensity with Wagnerian use of chromaticism and dissonances, but soon departed from tonality and adopted the twelve-tone system.

Nietzsche was sufficiently equipped as a writer and a thinker to achieve this mastery of Dionysian forces, but he was not equally equipped in musical composition. Nonetheless, it was music that englobed his life as a whole and was the common element in his poetic and philosophical madness, the madness of a Dionysian thinker. After his collapse he was asked about his state at the hospital in Basel to which he responded that he felt well, but that he could express his state only in music. And later in the train to Jena, waking up from his chloral-induced sleep, he would sing the gondolier's song from Wagner's *Tristan*. During his asylum, he did not speak as much, but when he did, he spoke mostly about music. He improvised at the piano from time to time until his death in 1900. In madness, all Nietzsche could remember was the musical collections of his life. A madness that can ultimately be called musical.

Summary of Chapters

The anthology has six parts and a total of twenty articles. **Part I** on "Nietzsche's Philosophy and Music" starts with a chapter by James Melo titled, "The Musical Soul of the Universe: Nietzsche's Early Poetics of Song and the Depiction of Psychological Time in Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade*." In this chapter, Melo examines an early piece by Nietzsche, *On Music and Words*, and his presentation of a poetics of song through his discussion of the role of poetry in vocal music. He explores this poetics of song in relation to the two major influences on the young Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and Wagner. Taking his cues from the dialectic process between will and representation in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, he reflects on the connections between their philosophy and the musical expression of this same process in the quintessential lyrical-musical form of German Romanticism, the *Lied*, and demonstrates them in Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade.* In contrast to the mythological scope of Wagner's music dramas, Melo shows how the *Lied* becomes a snapshot of a highly individualized psychological state, which can be a fertile ground for probing the dialectic between inner and outer worlds, will and representation, and the Apollonian and Dionysian nature of music. According to Melo, Nietzsche opens a window into the role of music in human life, and more particularly, the place of music in his own life and in the development of his philosophical system.

In the following Chapter 2, "Thinking Through Music: On Non-Propositional Thought in Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*," Michael Steinmann explains that, for Nietzsche, music is not only an object of philosophical thought but rather a source or even a mode of thinking

itself. Music is expressive of a Dionysian, that is, pre-conceptual and ecstatic experience of the unity of nature and life. Steinmann attempts to show how music and thought are able to converge at a primordial, pre-conceptual level. The chapter traces both the similarities and differences between the ways in which music and philosophy are able to capture the unity of nature and life. In doing so, it questions the assumptions of a gap between the propositional and non-propositional aspects of musical art. In turn, Steinmann claims that there are non-propositional aspects of meaning that are inherent to thinking itself, for example, in the intuitive experience of the world as a whole. In this particular sense, the experience of thought can become similar to the experience of music. What Nietzsche writes in his 1886 Preface to *The Birth of Tragedy*, namely that this book should have been sung rather than written, can so indeed be taken seriously and is no merely rhetorical move.

The last chapter in this part, Chapter 3, is titled "Nietzsche on Emotion and *Affekt* in Music" by Yunus Tuncel who plunges into a problem area in the experience of music, or of all arts in general, that is, the problem of intellectualization of music. Over-rationalization takes away from the musical experience. Musical experience opens up the senses and emotions, as music directs itself to primordial affects in its own way. This is perhaps why music is often described as "the language of emotion." Tuncel explores the affectivity in music in Nietzsche and the kinds of affects that are unique to music and musical experience. One area that needs attention is movement and tempo in music and how music interacts with the movement of body as in dance and with performance in general. How do music's constituent elements in tone and sound and their arrangement/ordering in tempo, rhythm and melody create affects and emotions? What kinds of affects and emotions are they in the large scheme of values? In what ways can music play the role of transfiguration of emotions? These are some of the issues addressed here.

Although music takes up a significant space in Nietzsche's life, he was concerned with arts, creativity in general, and the idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which was important in the Romantic literature and Wagner. **Part II**, "Music, Other Arts, and *Gesamtkunstwerk*," addresses these issues and has three chapters, beginning with ""La Gaya Scienza" in Music: Nietzsche's Homage to Goethe, Italy, and Lightness in *Joke, Cunning, and Revenge*." In this chapter Martine Prange shows the shift in Nietzsche's model for music drama from Wagner to Goethe and presents Nietzsche's appreciation of the *opera buffa* from his interest in the Italian attempt to revive Greek

theatre in the '*dramma per musica'* (or opera), an interest he shared with his livelong *Lehrmeister* Goethe. After staging Mozart's *Zauberflöte* in the national theater of Weimar, of which Goethe was the artistic director, he took up the ambition to write operas himself. Goethe was particularly interested in Mozart's successful way of mixing the German and Italian spirit in his *opera buffa* compositions and, in so doing, enriching German 'heavy' and 'grey' culture with lightness and colorations. After losing hope in Wagner's abilities to revive the 'southern' ('Greek') tragic and Dionysian spirit in his music dramas, Nietzsche took Goethe's example to heart. Perhaps he could do what Wagner had failed to do, and Mozart and Goethe had achieved, by writing his philosophical works in the spirit of music (such as *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*), explored in other chapters of this anthology, by writing songs like "The Songs of Prince Vogelfrei," and by composing music and encouraging the young German composer Heinrich Köselitz (alias Peter Gast), a former student of Nietzsche's, to compose music in the Italian style.

In the following chapter of this part, Chapter 5: "Taking a Hammer to History: the Wagnerian Leitmotif and Nietzsche as Public Intellectual," Daniel H. Foster examines Nietzsche's relationship with Wagner, and how Nietzsche raises the leitmotif technique to the status of a literary art form for the public expression of complex ideas. This chapter compliments, and perhaps also contrasts, to the first chapter, as it shows how much Wagner remained in Nietzsche even after their gradual separation. According to Foster, Nietzsche emulates Siegfried's blacksmithing technique: having hammered the past to smithereens, he then melts down the splinters and remolds them into something simultaneously new and old. He learns this technique in part from Siegfried's creator, Richard Wagner. They had much in common: they were both Grecophiles interested in arts and scholarship and in their fusion, both inspired by ancient and modern authors, both desired and worked for re-formation of their culture, and, most importantly, they were both musicians. And while Nietzsche famously broke from Wagner in many significant ways, he never seemed to abandon the notion of death/rebirth and the relationship between his scholarly knowledge and his artistic output.

In Chapter 6, "Leisure and Music Drama from Plato via Nietzsche to the Posthuman Paradigm-Shift," Stefan L. Sorgner studies the posthuman paradigm-shift initiated by Nietzsche. He explores Nietzsche's reflections on music drama, tragedy, and opera to discern the central elements of this paradigm-shift so as to present central nodal point of a posthuman philosophy of music drama. While attempting to construct the pieces of

posthuman musical aesthetics, Sorgner engages with some major posthuman musical works by Sven Helbig as he revisits the culture of leisure and the notion of *Gesamtkunstwerk* in the light of contemporary, posthuman aesthetics.

Part III, "Nietzsche and Composers," examines the relationship of Nietzsche with other composers and their compositions, although not every relevant composer could be included in this anthology. In Chapter 7, "Nietzsche on the 'Music' of Greek Tragedy: Beethoven and Prometheus," Babette Babich studies the role of Beethoven in Nietzsche's aesthetics of music. Nietzsche refers to Beethoven both at the start and the end of his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*. As Babich shows, the initial reference to Beethoven, an extended one, is complicated for several reasons: the book opens up with "aesthetic science," but what is 'science' in this context and how can it be involved? Babich also questions why Nietzsche has "the spirit of music" in the title of his first book and what this could mean, and how are we to understand Nietzsche's closing reference to what he calls the "becoming-human of dissonance, "so uncanny, as it seems, that some readers claim that Nietzsche anticipates 20th century New Music." Babich further argues that Nietzsche articulates his discoveries regarding the prosody of ancient Greece based on his "Theory of Quantifying Rhythm," via a parallel with Beethoven, as Nietzsche contends in the *Birth of Tragedy*.

In Chapter 8, "Nietzsche's *Manfred Trilogy*," Tali Makell closely examines settings of Byron's Manfred poem by Schumann, Nietzsche and Tchaikovsky, and Nietzsche's relation to Robert Schumann (1810-1856) via the setting of Byron's *Manfred* to music. Drawn nearly as much to literature as to music, Schumann served as a model for the young Friedrich Nietzsche, whose songs and several of his piano compositions demonstrate the extent of this influence. But Nietzsche's youthful enthusiasm for Schumann cooled considerably over time, eventually becoming something akin to outright revulsion, a sentiment which he articulated in his harsh criticisms of Schumann, especially his musical setting of Byron's *Manfred*, that deeply affected both composers. Schumann's setting of the poem began in 1848, a year in which he suffered mightily from the auditory hallucinations which would eventually lead to his attempted suicide and insanity. Nietzsche's *Manfred* consists of three separate compositions, begun in the 1860s and completed in the early 1870s with the *Manfred Meditation*, a work which would mark the end of his active musical creativity. Tchaikovsky, another admirer of Schumann, was already an established composer when he began

writing his *Manfred*, which was undertaken partly through the suggestion of a friend and supporter, and which over time resulted in one of the composer's most personal musical statements. Tchaikovsky's M*anfred Symphony* was composed in 1885, though it underwent several revisions before reaching its final form. Each of the three works which comprise this triptych, employ the same basic thematic materials and the years of Nietzsche's early development from the romanticism of Schumann to his career as a philology professor and devotee of Richard Wagner. In this chapter, Makell discusses all three settings of Byron's *Manfred*, while also detailing Nietzsche's relationship with the music of Schumann and discussing the compositional point of view of each composer in relation to the work itself.

In Chapter 9, "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere by Way of the Aesthetic Transformation of the Public: Nietzsche's Hope of Wagner's Magic in *The Birth of Tragedy*," Martine S. Prange dives into yet another complex relationship in Nietzsche's life. As Prange suggests, when we are talking about Nietzsche and music, we are talking about the Dionysian and how Richard Wagner, as per Nietzsche, first made the Dionysian resound in his music dramas and failed to do so later. The story of the Nietzsche and Wagner friendship and enmity is the story of Nietzsche's highest artistic, cultural, and philosophical hope and deepest despair; it is Nietzsche's very own "history of suffering." In this chapter Prange tells this story by focusing particularly on Nietzsche's objection to the fact that Wagner overloaded his music with ideas, paying homage to the adage, as expressed in Wagner's early essay *Über deutsches Musikwesen*, that "The German person does not want only to feel his music, he also wants to think it." In so doing, Wagner's art in fact became 'Socratic.' And that was exactly what Nietzsche had warned against in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the book that had defended Wagner as anti-Socratic, tragic artist.

The last chapter in this part, Chapter 10: "Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and Nietzsche's Art of Transfiguration," by Jamie Parr and Venessa Ercole, examines Nietzsche's influence on Schoenberg based on the former's notion of transfiguration. For Nietzsche, philosophy is "the art of transfiguration," that also has an intrinsically 'musical' character. As Ercole and Parr demonstrate in this article, Arnold Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* may be read as an outstanding example of such a composition: they locate an illustration of the nature of Nietzschean artistic transfiguration in its score. Accordingly, this article first explores the role of transfiguration in Nietzsche's thought with an explicit emphasis on its 'musical' character.

Second, they consider Nietzsche's view of 'decadent' types of transfiguration, in and due to which the 'rhythm' of human existence becomes decidedly 'de-cadent'. In the third section, they examine first Richard Dehmel's poem *Verklärte Nacht*, which directly inspired Schoenberg to produce in music what he saw at the poem's heart: a declining affect that eventually is transformed by an ascending, affirmative affect. Ercole and Parr argue that this affirmative transformation of the negative reflects Nietzsche's understanding of the work of transfiguration, in which the negative is retained yet simultaneously elevated and made the source of an overall affirmation. Finally, they analyze Schoenberg's score, following the multiple transformations of its central motive, from its somber beginning in D-minor to its serenely transfigured ending in D-major. Seen from the point of view of Nietzsche's project, it is these transformations that make Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* instructive for any attempt to grasp what Nietzsche claimed about philosophy's 'musical' art of transfiguration, and how that philosophy might be observed to operate in the lives and creations of its adherents.

In his compositions, Nietzsche made experimentations according to his own musical experience and aesthetics, the influence of other composers, and his knowledge of ancient Greek culture and literature, all of which is the subject-matter of **Part IV:** "Nietzsche's Musical Compositions and Experiments." The first chapter of this part, Chapter 11, ""This Most Glorious Gift of God": On Some Formative Elements in Nietzsche's Musical Upbringing" by Cornelis Witthoefft shows the young Nietzsche's interest in sacred music. While Nietzsche is most remembered as a critic of Christianity, his youthful efforts between the ages of twelve and sixteen led to a number of sacred compositions. Witthoefft shows the influence that the revivalist, or neo-pietist, Awakening movement had on Nietzsche. In his early autobiography, *From My Life*, written at the age of thirteen, almost literal parallels to the description of the awakening experience in a prominent forerunner of this movement can be found. It is important, however, that this awakening, for Nietzsche, was not merely religious but from the beginning marked his dedication to making music. Witthoefft traces further influences on the adolescent, such as the father of his friend Krug, and shows that the early Nietzsche adopts the contemporary criticism of modern music, and, from another perspective, of the genre of chorales. Nietzsche studied Protestant chorales as early as 1854 and composed his first hymn in 1857. The chapter includes two of Nietzsche's creative interpretations of the chorale which have not been published before.

Studying his early sacred compositions can lead to a reassessment of the significance of Christian religion in Nietzsche's early life.

In the following chapter, Chapter 12, "*Pagan World and Christianity*: Nietzsche's Projected Oratorio and its Consequences," Cornelis Witthoefft continues his analysis of Nietzsche's early sacred compositions. He examines whether Nietzsche had in fact, as scholars thought for some time, worked on a piece called "Christmas Oratorio" in the tradition of Bach's famous work. Witthoefft shows that the model for Nietzsche's projected oratorio was not Bach, but in fact Hector Berlioz's *The Childhood of Christ*. The question is then to what extent a later stage of this project, "Pain is the Fundamental Tone of Nature," whose title is taken from the German religious poet Justinus Kerner, was genuinely Christian. The chapter ends by discussing two early texts, "Pagan World and Christianity" and "Fate and History," which show Nietzsche's ambivalence in the transition away from Christian faith. The former text makes clear that the experience of faith was for him first and foremost an experience of the heart and therefore a musical experience. But because the fusion of music and religion was too deeply rooted in Nietzsche's infancy, he could not easily separate himself emotionally from what he slowly began to reject rationally. In retrospect, Nietzsche recognizes his early attempts at composing music in the style of an oratorio in Wagner's *Parsifal*.

In Chapter 13: "Nietzsche's Use of Music as a Rhetorical Device," Benjamin Moritz takes a look at the kind of musical experimentations Nietzsche made. Friedrich Nietzsche's devotion to music is well-documented, his quotations on the subject pervasive, and even his musical compositions—once largely overlooked by scholars—are receiving increased examination. Moritz's first interactions with Nietzsche's music took place in graduate school, where his musicological and philosophical studies intersected and led to analyses of his musical works. Although these examinations were made within a biographical and philosophical context, they represented a microscopic approach that treated each composition as an intentional addition to Nietzsche's total corpus. Time and lived experience have since intervened to complicate his understanding of the role Nietzsche's musical compositions played in his life and works. While an approach that identifies Nietzsche's philosophy primarily as process rather than rubric is hardly revolutionary, its application to his music provides a more intellectually cohesive and satisfying environment in which his compositions can co-exist with his writings not as antagonists, but as experiments, trials, and even as a willing inclination to be deceived. In other

words, should his music be considered as intentional exemplars of an aesthetic principle, or is it better understood as one of the *results* of the lived experience? Nietzsche warns against the false faith resulting from, "…petrification and coagulation of a mass of images" into truths, abstractions, and correct perceptions. By examining his music as the accumulated detritus of a life well lived, one might gain insight into Nietzsche's larger aesthetic project – the life-long struggle to engage with existence authentically.

In the last chapter of this part, Chapter 14: "Piano Music of Friedrich Nietzsche: An Eclectic Analysis of Selected Piano Compositions," Aysegul Durakoglu, analyzes *Heldenklage* and *Da Geht ein Bach*, as she exposes their musical syntax. Music became Nietzsche's language transformed not only into his musical experience but also in his philosophical writings. Earlier in life, he was trained as a pianist, then his musical education and ambition urged him to compose music. Even though Nietzsche did not follow a musical path, his intimacy with music greatly influenced his way of thinking. Nietzsche composed over 70 pieces between the years of 1862 and 1868, although only 50 of them survived but have not had the attention they deserve. In this article, Durakoglu focuses on Nietzsche, the composer, and analyzes his piano pieces from a performer-analyst's perspective exploring the structural and stylistic aspects of his score, and bridging the intrinsic elements of his music into his onto-historical world. However, a critical review of his philosophy is necessary to evaluate his musical experiments to gain insights about the foundation of his creative process. A comprehensive method of analysis, built step by step, is modeled after Lawrence Ferrara's eclectic approach integrating philosophical approaches to musical analysis to reveal the musical syntax with the purpose of understanding the referential meaning and Nietzsche's thinking behind his music.

Nietzsche is considered to be a musical writer and his musical *daimon* permeates his writings. **Part V**, "Music in Nietzsche's Writings," is designed to bring out the music in Nietzsche's written works. The first two chapters are specifically on the musicality of *Zarathustra*. Chapter 15, "The Symphonic Structure of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: A Preliminary Outline"[17] by Graham Parkes unearths the symphonic aspect of this work. Why does

[17] This article was previously published in *Nietzsche's* Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: Before Sunrise*, edited by James Luchte (London: Continuum, 2008). We thank the author and Bloomsbury for allowing us to re-publish it in this anthology.

Nietzsche repeatedly refer to his *Zarathustra* as a symphony? Given that the protagonist not only speaks but also sings at crucial junctures in the book, then why not an opera – a new *Ring* in a different medium? Or, given the predominance of Zarathustra's voice over all the others, why not an oratorio with a dominating soloist, or even a concerto with Zarathustra's voice as the solo instrument? Yet no lesser authority than Gustav Mahler confirms Nietzsche's claim about his favorite work: The world of *Zarathustra* scholarship divides into those who think the work properly ends in Part III (which Nietzsche certainly thought was the end at the time he finished it) and those who think it includes fourth part, which he wrote around a year later but chose not to publish. If one is of the three-part persuasion, the book's structure would reflect the pre-classical symphony in three movements: a first movement in *sonata-allegro* form; a second, slow movement (*andante* or *adagio*) usually consisting of a theme and variations; and a third movement either 'in the tempo of a minuet' (sometimes minuet or scherzo and trio) or else in a faster dance-like tempo (*allegro* or *presto*). For those who include the fourth part, the form would be that of the later classical symphony in four movements, where the third would be a *minuet and trio* in ternary form, and the final movement dance-like in *rondo*. But since Nietzsche writes of 'the finale of [his] symphony' in four different letters after completing Part III, it makes sense to compare the structure of the first three parts of *Zarathustra* with that of the early classical symphonic forms with three movements.

Following on this chapter, in Chapter 16, "Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as a Score of Metaphors, Corresponding with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," Gaila G. Pander reads and hears *Zarathustra* as a symphony, as she sees parallels between it and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Nietzsche characterized his opus magnum *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in several ways as a symphony and as a tower. This essay explores these two characteristics and demonstrates their value and relevance for the interpretation of this work. In a short text (1881) on the planned structure of *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche took Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as a model. Based on this structural draft, *Zarathustra* (Parts I-III) will be read and interpreted as a score of metaphors. Nietzsche's literary symphony follows the structure of the classical sonata form as exemplified in Beethoven's Ninth. The symphonic model contributes to the architectural construction of the book. The image of the tower adds another element. It symbolizes the "artistic and step-by-step" ("artistisch und schrittweise") development of images. The essay sheds light on Nietzsche's construction of his "tower,'' with the aid of the musicological concepts he himself put to

work. It pays attention to his understanding of the rhythm, the dynamics, the period-intervals, the image-clustering, as well as the figuration, the harmony and the style. Pander maintains *Zarathustra* to be a solid construction or also a coherent musical score, displaying the pattern of an ascending spiral movement – comparable to the function of the tower steeple – finding its culmination in an apotheosis that embraces all things in a new cohesion. Just as Beethoven's Ninth unfolds its splendid glory in the "Ode to Joy," a song of praise upon entering the Elysium, so the text of *Zarathustra* prepares the reader for the experience of submergence into the Dionysian mystery. In "The Seven Seals (and in "The Yes and Amen Song)" this "tragedy from the spirit of music" reaches its finale, integrating all and everything.

The last chapter of this part, Chapter 17, "When Philosophy Yields to Music: The Case of Nietzsche's *Nachgesang,*" by Daniel Conway focuses on singing in Nietzsche. Nietzsche closes *Beyond Good and Evil* with a poem or "Aftersong" [*Nachgesang*], in which he extends a heartfelt invitation to those unknown "friends" who, he hopes, may join him in his efforts to produce a philosophy of the future. Those readers who genuinely aspire to the nobility he described in Part Nine of *Beyond Good and Evil* are now urged to join him in friendship and mutual recognition, but *only* as equals. That he elects in this final installment of the book to *sing* to his best readers is noteworthy. Nietzsche has been concerned in *Beyond Good and Evil* not simply to make his case discursively and dialogically, but also to initiate his best readers into the affective-somatic modes of existence—e.g., habits, customs, practices, and routines—that he deems appropriate to the preparatory labors he has assigned to them. In fact, the envisioned philosophy of the future will attain its optimal realization as a *way of life* that is more closely attuned to the mortal rhythms of an affirmatively worldly existence. That he now *sings* to them is meant to provide them with a final souvenir of the affective-somatic transformation he has induced in them. Nietzsche may mean to contrast his valedictory song with Zarathustra's farewell at the close of Part I. The suggestion here is that the singer will and must sing, regardless of audience, independent of anyone *understanding* what is sung. Unlike the unripe Zarathustra, that is, Nietzsche sings for everyone and no one. He will not adjust his song for those who do not understand. He is healthy enough to sing simply for the sake of doing so, in cheerful defiance of any (merely) rational algorithm or calculus, whether for audiences of the future or for no audiences at all. His singing is both the means and the end, an outward expression (and celebration) of the nobility of soul he has achieved.

Nietzsche's persistent engagement with arts and music, his new aesthetics and conception of art and its place in culture, and his musical background appealed to many artists, musicians, composers, and music movements in the twentieth century and still does in our century. The last part of the anthology, **Part VI**: "Nietzsche and Contemporary Music," explores this influence and has three chapters. In Chapter 18, "Russian Musical Interpretations of Nietzsche" by Rebecca A. Mitchell, we see Nietzsche in Russia around the turn to the twentieth century. Perhaps more than any other philosopher, Nietzsche's ideas permeated late imperial Russian cultural life. However, Russian elites read Nietzsche selectively. While emphasizing Nietzsche's youthful vision of music as the ultimate unifying force in *The Birth of Tragedy*, his rejection of God tended to be either ignored or dismissed, and the thinker himself framed as a prophet of Russia's future. This chapter looks at the complicated relationship between Nietzsche and the Russian musical and literary elite through close attention to the Medtner brothers (Emilii and Nikolai). Descended from a Baltic German family but raised in Moscow, the Medtner brothers proclaimed the German thinker's contemporary relevance for Russia in both text and music. This chapter looks at Emilii's devotion to Nietzsche's legacy, which included active propagation of Nietzsche's ideas in the contemporary periodical press as well as a planned biography of the philosopher, and Nikolai's musical setting of five songs to Nietzschean texts. Examination of the creative work of Emilii and Nikolai in the final years before the 1917 revolution serves to highlight both the particularity of Nietzsche reception in Russia and later Soviet erasure of Nietzschean influence from the official narrative of Russian cultural development.

In Chapter 19, "Dionysian Rock,"[18] David Kilpatrick traces Nietzsche's influence in the Rock culture. With the benefit of hindsight, Nietzsche concedes in his "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" (added to the third edition of *The Birth of Tragedy*) that much of the contemporary mythopoeic ambition of his first book can be dismissed as youthful naïveté. Indeed, his subsequent critiques of nationalism, as well as his personal and public repudiations of Wagner, necessitate repositioning or distancing from certain key pleas Nietzsche makes in the later sections of the book. Walter Kaufmann rather apologetically notes "the book might well end" with section 15, before Nietzsche shifts from the birth and death of tragedy in

[18] This article was previously published in the Spring 2012 issue of *The Agonist* (Volume V, Issue II). We thank the author and *The Agonist* for allowing us to re-publish it in this anthology.

antiquity to his romanticist cum modernist appeal for a rebirth. Kaufmann's efforts to redeem Nietzsche from fascist affiliation renders the defense of Nietzsche's most overt politically aestheticized hopes burdensome and problematic, embarrassing if not outright indefensible. But Nietzsche's insistence that this great question mark remains should dismiss such simplistic apologetics. What hopes remained for Nietzsche, filtered out from those later dismissed as hasty and what applications to the present would he still consider in attempting an answer to that great Dionysian question mark?

While Kilpatrick seeks Nietzschean traces in Rock, Ben Abelson does it in Heavy Metal in Chapter 20: "The Heaviest Weight: Finding Nietzsche in Metal." It is difficult to overstate Nietzsche's impact on 20th and now 21st century popular culture. Music, film, television, and even video games abound with references to Nietzsche's writings. However, perhaps nowhere else is Nietzsche's shadow most broadly cast than over the musico-cultural phenomenon of heavy metal, or simply "metal" as it is most often referred to nowadays. Numerous heavy metal songs and albums have names derived from his works. The connection between Nietzsche's ideas and metal is palpable for many musicians and listeners. Kilpatrick makes a compelling case for rock music in general as a candidate for the Dionysian music of the future sought by Nietzsche. However, for Abelson, metal has characteristics that reflect Nietzschean ideas more so than other genres derived from rock. In this chapter he makes the case for that claim, with some major caveats, by investigating the affinity between Nietzsche and metal along three interrelated dimensions. The first concerns Nietzsche's critique of Christianity and the apparent anti-Christian stance of most metal acts. The second, spiraling out of the first, is psycho-social, concerning Nietzsche's encounter with and desire to overcome nihilism and the degree to which that attitude is reflected in metal. The third concerns Nietzsche's musical aesthetics more directly, the way it is informed by his conception of the Apollonian and Dionysian artistic forces in *The Birth of Tragedy*, and how Nietzsche's preferences in regard to the music of his time might be applied to metal.

To conclude, we started this anthology as a puzzle to solve collectively with other musicians, musicologists, thinkers, and researchers, and we believe we found and placed some of the pieces of the puzzle. We are also aware that many other pieces are missing. In spite of the missing pieces, the anthology includes a great amount of information on Nietzsche's musical milieu and background from his birth until his mature years and on what he achieved and did not achieve as a musician and a composer. It shows his

musical aesthetics as it is formed in response to poets, musicians and philosophers of his time and the preceding age. It presents Nietzsche's ideas on music, his polemic with musicians, and analysis of some of his compositions. It exposes the musicality of Nietzsche's texts, specifically *Zarathustra*, and their performative aspect, and the organic fusion of thought, music and song in Nietzsche's works. Finally, it gives a small picture of Nietzsche's wider influence on the musical culture of the subsequent generations. All in all, we hope to open new vistas in the exploration of not only music and thought interaction in Nietzsche but also of the broader philosophy and music exchange in general.

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PART I:

NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY AND MUSIC

CHAPTER 1

THE MUSICAL SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE: NIETZSCHE'S EARLY POETICS OF SONG AND THE DEPICTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TIME IN SCHUBERT'S *GRETCHEN AM SPINNRADE*

JAMES MELO

In *Twilight of the Idols*, published in 1889 shortly after Nietzsche collapsed into madness in Turin and entered the twilight of his own life, which he endured for a little more than ten years in the grip of insanity before he died on 25 August 1900, he penned one of the most anthologized and universally quoted statements about music: "Without music, life would be a mistake." But this is only the kernel, the immediately graspable essence of aphorism 33 (one of 44 aphorisms that introduce the book), which reads in full:

> How little is required for happiness! The sound of a bagpipe. – Without music, life would be a mistake. Germans even imagine God singing songs.[1]

In this concentrated utterance, a tripartite summary of the musical experience, Nietzsche opens a window into the role of music in human life and, more particularly, the place of music in his own life and in the development of his philosophical system. It is significant that Nietzsche

[1] Norman, Judith and Aaron Ridley, Eds. *The Anti-Christ, Ecce-Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*. (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 2014), 160. The centrality of this aphorism in Nietzsche's conception of music and its relation to life has elicited many interpretations. Gregory Ivan Polakoff examines the implications of this aphorism through a discussion of the metaphor of musical dissonance and its role as a means of articulating the world, in his Doctoral Dissertation *"The Centre is Everywhere": Nietzsche's Overcoming of Modernity through Musical Dissonance* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2011).