

Nietzsche's Thinking in Relationship with the Aesthetical

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This paper debates the new theories of philosophical and aesthetical discourse by applying them to Nietzsche's thinking on art. The article consists of four general subjects, each of them focusing on an essential part of Nietzsche's special relationship to art: 1) Art generated by the philosophical text itself, through the form of the fragment; 2) The artistic relationship as an interdisciplinary ground for philosophical knowledge of the world (especially as applied in Nietzsche's and Schopenhauer's work); 3) A critical debate on Wolfgang Iser's theory about the interdisciplinary aspects of the philosophical and aesthetic discourse; 4) The backgrounds of Nietzsche's aesthetics project explained in Claus Zittel's theory on Nietzsche's "aesthetic turn." Thus, Nietzsche's thinking is defined as a relationist project, emphasizing the "self-destruction dynamic" of his aesthetical perspectivism.

I. „The methodology” of the fragment

It cannot represent a novelty for us today the fact that the faith of Nietzsche's writings is strongly related to the cultural destiny of Germany and, sometimes, to the cultural destiny of Europe¹. The "myth" of Nietzsche's work often embodied prophetic, sceptical, decadent or romantic features. Nevertheless, more than a "philosopher of the future", he is a man of his times and a forerunner of what Baudelaire already named using the word *modernity*.

Nietzsche's style is much closer to the romantic tradition, although his fragments and aphorisms incline towards avoiding the romantic model of *totality*. Friedrich Schlegel, for example, might be considered as an architect of this new literary style, the style of the fragment. The fragment is thus delineated either

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as a limited and concentrated unity of the entire literary work, or as a “form without form” (*formlose Form*), rejecting the unity model of the work of art at the level of the lexical and stylistic structure. The term “fragment” depicts itself using a double functionality, either as a text-phenomenon or as a reflective form². Beside its function as an autonomous literary form, the fragment also includes a philosophical or poetical relevance, thus becoming a self-standing literary form. The encyclopaedic project of Novalis³ (*Allgemeines Brouillon*) designs an experiment material, a monologue built up on extracts and thought-continuities. In his turn, Schlegel discovers a real “theory of the fragment”, differentiating itself from the moralistic aphorisms of La Rochefoucauld or Chamfort. The French aphorism tradition, foregoing the Romanticism, sketches itself in a moralistic and pragmatic course. To Schlegel or Novalis, the form is not just a literary expression, but also a prototype for the *universal experience of knowledge*. The fragment sets to work the thinking process, postulating knowledge as a tension between particular and general, between experience and theory. This thinking form takes in, since its literary birth, eschatological or messianic formulas (see Luther’s general formula on the fragmentary knowledge of man, extracted from the Bible, I Cor. 13, 9). The Romantic thinking re-shapes the fragment, considering it an intermediary type, a short step towards a future plenitude of knowledge. The Romanticism’s discovery of the dynamism of reflection with the use of logical oppositions orchestrates the dialectics of to-

tal, visualising it as a “lust for the infinity”. The fragment thus becomes the embodiment of a set of instruments of thought – planned to designate the “knowledge of the infinity” – situated at the boundary between finite and infinity, as a play among synthetic wisdom, ironical conscience of language and allegorical signification. Hence, the fragment appears not as a style element, but as an uncontrollable, spontaneous manner of glimpsing at the reality, using the power of imagination. At the boundary between system and non-system, the fragmentary romantic universalism sets out a kind of “negative dialectics”, revealing the indirect testimony of the absolute, otherwise impossible to achieve through the common logic of discourse. The kind of fragmentary thinking is thus patterned by heterogeneity, incomprehensibility and inconsequence, aspects that reflect certain qualities, conferring a certain aesthetical value. This feature comes out from the presupposition that thinking does not build itself in the shape of deductive relationships, but as a continuous, but incongruent movement. At the time when language speculates thinking, thinking will also try to speculate the qualities of language.

The relationship between thinking and language manifests itself as a delineative relationship, which will cause the emerging of a new kind of rhetorical theory, separated from argumentation. Novalis formulates the project of a theory of signification and insists on the “truth” that reveals itself in the sphere of language⁴. Novalis will seek to discover an “essence” of language,

which will drive him to the search for the rules of linguistic creativity. In his essay *Monologue* from 1798/99, parallel to Hölderlin, Novalis sketches out a model of thinking about „the language that speaks to itself” (*der sich selbst sprechenden Sprache*)⁵. Hence, in the context of the relationship between romanticism and rhetoric we have an interesting mutation: „It can be thus said: romanticism is a transformation of rhetoric. It overruns rhetoric in Hegel’s double sense of *Aufhebung*. Romanticism generates the extinction of rhetoric; nevertheless, rhetoric is still included into romanticism”⁶. At first sight, the phrase may sound laconic, but its signification is clear: the relationship between thinking and language disseminates itself to a level where language “thinks for itself”. This aspect, totally assumed by the romantics, will generate a long-range effect, engendering a further theory of signs, alongside with a doctrine on the internal dynamics of the significant.

This moment of discontinuity, where thinking does not legitimise anymore the existence of language, is the moment of the separation between word and concept. This feature will become visible in a radical form in Nietzsche’s early texts. His thinking will assume the romantic topic of the fragment, operating however into another philosophical context.

Nietzsche rejects the systematic philosophy of his predecessors (Kant, Hegel), staking on the fallibility of their method in searching for the “truth”. The philosopher suspects philosophy of “self-evidence”, of incapacity to discuss its fundamental thesis. Such a system generates grounds, which it cannot further dis-

cuss. The uniqueness of the Nietzsche model is sustained either by the project of an “experimental philosophy, or by the aphoristic, quasi-poetical form of the fragments.

The “crisis” of Nietzsche’s thinking reveals itself in the way in which the ideas try to respect a certain coherence, beginning with the problematization, with the endless “dialectization” of the key concepts of philosophy. The type of Nietzsche’s counter-argument is essentially extra-theoretical; Nietzsche often speaks about moral prejudices which crystallize conservative thinking, as well as reactive⁷ tendencies, specific to Romanticism: „The will for system: to a philosopher, morally explained, a superior form of perversion, a character’s disease; immorally explained, this will is the will of appearing more naive than you really are” [*Nachlass, Herbst 1887*]; „– different philosophical systems can be seen as educational methods of the spirit; they have always *cultivated* in themselves, in the best manner, a special spiritual power: with their unique claim, seeing things exactly this way and no other way... [*Nachlass, April– Juni 1887*].

From this standpoint, Walter Kaufmann⁸ approached Nietzsche’s theory to Hegel’s negative dialectics. One should rather say that Nietzsche does follow Hegel until the first step of his dialectics: the negativity. Nietzsche rejects the term *Aufhebung*, provided by Hegel with the sense of *sublimation*; to Nietzsche, there is no sublimation of negativity to a concept, but only a continuous negativity, a “combination” of contraries into an extreme ambivalence, a

discredit of the principle of “truth” on the ground that *appearance* (*Schein*) and the “*Will to Illusion*” (*Wille zur Täuschung*) are more powerful and “more real” than the truth”⁹.

Hence, continuing our explanation, we will find the first answer to this problem: the fragmentary style is a *recherché* style, built-up with the help of a philosophical intention: Nietzsche’s thinking is an „experiment thinking”, a *project* kind of thinking; we must know that Nietzsche often spoke about his theories as “essays”, without claiming the purity of a system, that is, an absolute simplification of reality, starting with a short number of thesis: “From this point of view, Nietzsche’s aphoristic style is an interesting attempt to send us back to the objects themselves, through the labyrinth of concepts and opinions. The *decadence* style methodically serves the experimentalism; *experiment* and *attempt* represent key-concepts for Nietzsche, being thus frequently used”¹⁰.

Orientating towards the new sense of the term *appearance* (*Schein*), Nietzsche defies his contemporaries; we can observe that the theoretical discourse combines itself with a quasi-poetical kind of discourse. The kind of aesthetical explanation, towards which Nietzsche’s thinking aims, sabotages the classical sense of the aesthetical discourse. A transfer of paradigms occurs, proposing an intervention of the aesthetical directly into the theoretical discourse, through a quasi-aesthetical or “post-aesthetical” method¹¹.

II. The symptoms of the aesthetical discourse

II. 1 Reality and knowledge in Schopenhauer’s and Nietzsche’s work

In his early treatises (*On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*), Nietzsche will sustain a subtle approach between language and concepts, joining aesthetics and knowledge into a famous theory concerning the lack of sense and the caducity of scientific knowledge. Using a style of thinking similar to Schopenhauer’s style, Nietzsche argued: “Basically the right perception – that would mean the adequate expression of an object in the subject – seems to me to be a self-contradictory absurdity. For between two absolutely different spheres such as subject and object, there can be no expression, but almost an *aesthetic* stance, I mean an allusive transference, a stammering translation into a completely foreign medium. For this, however, in any case a freely fictionalising and freely inventive middle sphere and middle faculty is necessary”¹². Nietzsche’s style, conceived as an experiment of thinking, although apparently related to Schopenhauer’s style at first sight, articulates an already different thinking, separated from the transcendentalist antinomies or from Schopenhauer’s *Will*. Already since 1813, as the treaty *Ueber die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde* has been published, Schopenhauer approached the problem of rep-

resentation debating in the German idealistic manner: „Our conscience, as long as it reveals itself as sensibility, intellect or reason, is separated into subject and object and does not contain anything else besides these two elements. Being an object to a subject, and being our representation are one and the same thing (...) But nothing can be an object to us and being at the same time self-standing or independent, and not just subject; but all our representations are included in a relationship based on laws and formally a priori established”¹³. Schopenhauer will then differentiate between the immediate representations of the conscience and the “non-actual” representations, with a view to strengthening the stability and the generality of the experience and of the phenomenal world to the subject who possess knowledge, without presupposing a thing in itself outside the conscience. The result of Schopenhauer’s critic over Kantianism is discouraging: „there is no more ground to guarantee the existence of the object outside the conscience”¹⁴. In the first phase of his critics on the traditional metaphysics, Schopenhauer has to show scepticism against the idealistic claim that the existence of the real could act dogmatically, following the path of the possibility of a legitimating divine essence. Hence, Schopenhauer will rebuild the traditional doctrine of the *Idea* at the level of the existence of the representation, thus, “not establishing an essence outside the conscience, but claiming that all the existent things can be seen as representations inside the unity of conscience”¹⁵. Thus,

debating the problem of representation,

Schopenhauer establishes three fundamental steps:

1) First step: the separation between two kinds of representations: the immediate representation and the representation of the existence as a whole (the world for one subject), as a ground for our actual un-mediate representation. In this case, causality becomes the formal condition for the possibility of experience.

2) Second step: the world as a representation at large in the frame of the possibility of a fundamental-synthetic unity of a concrete and particular representation. The role of the platonic *Ideas* is very important at this level.

3) Third step: the *Will* as a condition of the possibility of the unity of the world conceived as a representation. The *Will* mediates between the general and the particular, but not in a substantialist sense, but inside the scheme of a transcendental understanding¹⁶.

From this standpoint, we can outline the complex problem of the genealogy of the *Will* in Schopenhauer’s theoretical evolution. At the beginning of his philosophical career, Schopenhauer saw this notion as a short-term solution to the problem of Kant’s transcendental argument; in his later works, the term *Will* becomes a metaphysical or a “quasi-metaphysical” notion. Schopenhauer’s amendments to the problem of the transcendental argument will utterly change the arguments of the classical idealism. The concept of representation (*Vorstellung*) is visualized as reciprocity between subject and object. Using the new sense of representation, glimpsing the interde-

pendency of subject and object, the German philosopher defies the classical subjectivist or objectivist tradition, which emphasized either the importance of the subject, or of the object. In Schopenhauer's point of view, there is no pre-existence of the subject to the object, or the other way ¹⁷.

Another point of the Schopenhauer's thesis is based on a possible self-cognition of the body as an object of the world. In Schopenhauer's opinion, the human being is a body who has immediate cognition of itself. As a body endowed with sensation, the human being is a part of the external world, a part which knows itself as a subject. Hence, the body has the quality of being represented at the time when it is not just an object among other objects, but represents itself as a non-reflective and immediate perception. The body shows itself to our internal senses, as a "*Will* well beyond any representation, being thus always a possibility, if I objectify my body as a body"¹⁸. This aspect can generate many consequences to Schopenhauer's theory of metaphysics in *The World as Will and Representation*:

1) First, the metaphysical argument can be extracted from the doctrine on the self-perception of body; consequently, the "being" of the world can be envisaged at the time when the self-perception of the body reveals itself as a manifestation of the *Will*: "The action of the body is nothing else but the objectified, intuitive act of *Will*"¹⁹;

2) Secondly, the relevance of knowledge of the "essential" world diminishes if our bodily perceptive

status allows an immediate "act of *Will*". There are two major possibilities: both body and spirit are *a priori*, or they are both immanent structures (in this case, the spirit has nothing privileged with regard to "essence"). Hence, the extension of the argument regarding the "objectivity of the cognition of my own body" will raise serious questions concerning the persistence of classical German Idealism in Schopenhauer's later works.

Another feature of the Will is its arbitrariness, which Schopenhauer defines as an a-teleological "freedom"²⁰. As a "contingent formula of the world", the *Will* is opposed to Hegel's notion of *Spirit*. During the evolution of his philosophical thinking, Schopenhauer's *Will* subordinates the rational experience – which Hegel named "experience of the Spirit"²¹ – to itself. The fact that *Will* objectifies itself at the level of *Ideas*²² is not the result of a rational plan or of a new teleological architecture. Gerhard Plumpe establishes three levels of the manifestation of *Will*, which are the stages of its objectification: *Will of the World – Ideas – Individual things* (the last stage representing a space and time object). The result of this scenario is the fact that knowledge represents no longer the excellence of the human essence, playing a pre-established ontological role, but a plain instrument in the dynamics of the *Will*; the *Will* objectifies itself as representation into the immanent world. This turning point is a key moment of the dissemination of the philosophical principle into the immanent structure of the world. Thus, we cannot talk about some kind of a

monistic or dualistic “core” of Schopenhauer’s scheme; the metaphysics of the *Will* structures itself into the frames of the real world. However, the term *Will*, in Schopenhauer’s later work, remains suspended between a formula of the contingency of the world and a hidden substratum of reality.

This short presentation of Schopenhauer’s metaphysical options has the mission to start the clarifying of both the relationship between art and knowledge and of the relevance of Schopenhauer’s influence to Nietzsche’s early works. Thus, we are now able to pinpoint two fundamental aspects of Schopenhauer’s thinking: 1) the doctrine of the *Will* as an immanent superstructure and the pre-eminence of the Will towards scientific, rational knowledge; 2) the fictional character of the manifestation of the Will at the level of the human acts of conscience.

II. 2. Art and knowledge in Schopenhauer’s and Nietzsche’s work

The problem of the *art theory* in Schopenhauer’s thinking directly involves the fictional character of the world generated by *Will*. In his scheme, art becomes a “quietive” of the Will, an escape from the dictate of the arbitrariness and of the absurd sense of existence. In Schopenhauer’s opinion, art possesses a purifying, illuminating function; the term *katharsis* extends itself from the area of passions and actions to the sphere of the entire existence. Art renders possible “the painless status, which Epicure praises as the supreme Good, as

a divine status; for we are, at least for that moment, unleashed from the impulse of *Will*, we celebrate the Sabbath of the *Will*’s hard labour, the wheel of Ixion remains still”²³. The way in which Schopenhauer establishes art as a quietive of the Will comes directly from the area of cognition. To Schopenhauer, art is a form of cognition, and not a kind of cognition specific to the fragmentary time and space cognition – subjected to the dynamics of the Will –, but a superior, “objective” form of knowledge, a capacity which manifests itself exclusively through parables and examples; this cognition is carried out by the exemplary element of humanity, the *genius*. To the man endowed with high creative powers, the *Will* can be subdued through an unusual capacity of cognition. The artist, the creative man in general, has access to the knowledge of *Ideas*, as objectifications of the *Will*. As a kind of knowledge, art separates itself from the subject-object frame, situating itself beyond the principle of causality. The subject becomes “pure” at the time when he ecstatically exceeds individuality, becoming “the pure eye of the world” (*klaren Weltauge*). The consequence of this effort generates the “contemplative” feature and promotes an “aesthetically anti-individuality culture”²⁴. The relationship between art and knowledge of the genius is at large an ecstatically maintained relationship. The genius places itself above the conventional order of the world, exceeding the former time and space coordination and the causal relationships. The object dedicated to the artistic contemplation becomes, for one moment, an “exponent of to-

tality”, an allegory of existence as a whole, aiming at the essence of all existence. The knowledge of the world through aesthetical contemplation is a kind of “vertically directed cognition”, seeking the essence of individuality far beyond the relationship.

From this standpoint, the artistic experience might be designated as being independent from the principle of the sufficient reason²⁵. Despite his anti-metaphysical theoretical attitude, Schopenhauer’s aestheticism still reminds us of the nostalgic search for the mysterious *noumen* of reality. Postulating a contemplative kind of knowledge through the allegorical gesture of the artist, the search for the hidden “sense” of existence reveals a profound attempt to save reality from the danger of total fiction or solipsism, and especially, to exceed the incertitude and the arbitrariness of an undetermined *Will*.

The idea that may be driven from here is the fact that the aesthetical discourse looses its strict autonomous sphere into the large scheme of knowledge. Starting with romanticism’s holistic tendencies and German Idealism – integrating aesthetical theory into a wider sphere of knowledge – the aesthetical discourse delineates itself with the help of moral, existentialist or epistemological judgements. This aspect seems to be the result of rationality widely involved in the various forms of understanding, imposing a holistic view onto the different fields of knowledge.

A different kind of strategy is involved in Nietzsche’s famous early work *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*, by radically changing the function

of the aesthetical and expanding the role of the aesthetical relationship to fundamental cognitive relationship. According to Wolfgang Iser²⁶, Nietzsche extends the frame of knowledge in three senses:

1) Nietzsche shows that the reality at large – and not just its transcendental structure – is a “ready-made” (constructed); 2) the reality is generated with the help of fictional “instruments”: forms of intuition, metaphors, phantasms; 3) if reality itself is a product, then there is the possibility of the existence of many different realities. Nietzsche’s treatise clearly mentions that reality is generated with the help of a metaphorical activity: “Everything that sets man off from the animal depends upon this capacity to dilute the concrete metaphors into a schema; for in the realm of such schemata, something is possible that might never succeed under the intuited first impressions; to build up a pyramidal order according to castes and classes, a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, boundary determinations, which now stands opposite the other, concrete world of primary impressions, as the more solid, more universal, more familiar, more human, and therefore as the regulatory and imperative world. Whereas any intuitive metaphor is individual and unique and therefore always eludes any commentary, the great structure of concepts displays the rigid regularity of a Roman columbarium and has the aura of that severity and coldness typical of mathematics. Whoever feels the breath of that coldness will scarcely believe that even the concept, bony and cube-shaped like a die, and equally rotatable, is just what is left over

as the *residue of a metaphor*, and that the illusion of the artistic transference of a nerve stimulus into images is, if not the mother, then the grandmother of any concept”²⁷. The truth is the result of a “translation” process from a nervous impulse, through sound, to the structure of the word. Thus, reality, in its turn, seems to be a manifestation of a systematically self-denial of our individual impulses, images and intuitions, transformed into pure conventions, at the time when they make contact to our social reality. The subject, Nietzsche argues, “has an unconquerable tendency to let himself be deceived and he is as if enchanted with happiness when the rhapsodist tells him epic legends as true or the actor in a drama plays the king more regally than any real monarch does”²⁸. He thus forgets “the original intuitive metaphors, taking them as the things themselves”. The impulse towards objectivity (controlled by science) is born at the time when humans forget their individual contribution to the social reality. The structures of the common reality are based on “primary aesthetical projections”. The classical signification of the term *aesthetical* dissolves here into a generic terminus involving the imaginative activity and the plasticity of thinking in the construction of orientation forms inside reality. We can thus discuss about a different signification of the term *aesthetical*, when we already suppose the existence of a “common transversal rationality”, as Wolfgang Iser explains.

The result of this philosophical orientation establishes not just the presence of aesthetical elements at the foundation of reality, but also the spectacular

overthrow of the scene; reality presents itself as a major aesthetical project: “In Nietzsche’s case, both truth and reality become aesthetical”, says Iser, arguing with the help of a famous phrase from *The Birth of Tragedy*, # 2: “to look at science in the perspective of the artist, but at art in that of life”. Iser explains: “Nietzsche pretends thus – in the case of our fundamental question regarding the moral, aesthetical and cognitive discourse – that there would be a conversion from the perspective of science to that of aesthetics, and, finally, to the moral perspective. This is Nietzsche’s option concerning the legitimating exigencies, the types of rationalities or the kinds of discourse”²⁹. Somewhere else, Iser explains more clearly his point of view: “this is not only a pure aesthetic discourse, but also a fundamentally moral – pragmatic discourse”³⁰. The cognitive discourse is also perceived as aesthetically grounded: “The pure cognitive discourse, if we think of its aim – taking a glimpse at the truth – is an univocal discourse. Then, even the truth proved itself as a category that could not be analysed without its aesthetical components. Our path towards the truth is aesthetically grounded; a step further, and reality appears always as a fictional product; therefore, it is true that only the thing that appears as adequate inside this construction and the selection among different types of this construction are based on aesthetical parameters. At close quarters, one may recognize everywhere scattered moments of aesthetical rationality inside cognitive rationality”³¹. In this ensemble of types of discourse, Iser counts on a “theory of including

[discourses]” (*Verflechtungstheorie*), which situates itself in the middle of heterogeneity and unity thesis³².

Welsch’s solution sometimes seems quite amazingly coherent and tempting, but one must not forget that this kind of relationship among different kinds of discourse inside an omnipotent rationality rejects the analysis on the intrinsic character of the work of art, systematically avoiding any theory on the work of art as such.

As a result, we might accept the thesis concerning the different values of the aesthetical discourse, but not exclusively; the aesthetic thinking may put forward hypothesis, which should influence our way to represent, but it cannot exclusively serve some theories that mostly are objectivistic, that is, applicable to theoretical-epistemological debates, rather than to art theory disputes. The aesthetical discourse is essentially a discourse directed to the work of art, and consequently, to the rhetorical forms of style (in the case of a literary work). Unfortunately, few studies referring to Nietzsche insistently deal with his theories on the integrality of both artistic and philosophical phenomenon at large or on the poetical character of his philosophical style, adhering itself to the title of work of art.

II.3 Philosophy as a work of art. The playing-role of the aesthetical

A remarkable study in this direction is the work of a young researcher from Frankfurt, Claus Zittel, who tries to prove the applicability, that is, the homogene-

ity and coherence of Nietzsche’s thinking regarding both art and aesthetical discourse; following this line of argument, Zittel’s work³³ on Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* tries to prove that Nietzsche’s aesthetical thinking is applicable to his philosophy. Through a wide range study on *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, his theory tends to stroke two fundamental aims: first, to test the relevance of the aesthetical discourse in the work of art as such; secondly, to draw some conclusions from the rhetorical sublimation of the philosophical discourse into a quasi-literary discourse, breaking the limits between theory and work of art.

The *Part II* of his work treats art as a relationship, theorizing the correspondence of Nietzsche’s relationism to the relational structure of the *Zarathustra* text, revealing a strong connection between the theoretical treatises and the poetical praxis. Furthermore, the author tries to speculate a notion of *correspondence* that should not be understood as a bridge between two different ends, but as a dynamic constitutive relationship³⁴. Following the famous definition of truth from *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*³⁵, Zittel proposes the term *relationality* as a central concept for Nietzsche’s theory. Language especially is, according to Nietzsche, a classical example of the implication of relationality into the field of knowledge: “Words are but symbols for the relations of things to one another and to us; nowhere do they touch upon absolute truth. Above all, the word “being” designates only the most general relationship, which connects all things, as does the word “non-being.” But if the ex-

istence of things themselves cannot be proved, surely the interrelationship of things, their so-called being or non-being, will advance us not a step toward the land of truth. Through words and concepts we shall never reach beyond the wall of relations, to some sort of fabulous primal ground of things^{“36}.

Zittel's study has great concern for the philosophical orientation of Nietzsche's texts. Therefore, as we shall see, the young Nietzsche theorizes a dual world of relationships, where words and notions still hide a “real foundation” (*wahrer Urgrund*) of the world, partially expressed by music. This underworld transcends the margins of the rational world and can send us beyond the net of relationships to that mysterious foundation of existence. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, music plays a different role in that construction: it cannot manage to go beyond the wall of relationships, but it can touch the “heart” of reality through the agency of relationship: “By means of the pre-established harmony between perfect drama and its music, the drama attains a superlative vividness unattainable in mere spoken drama. In the independently moving lines of the melody all the living figures of the scene simplify themselves before us to the distinctness of curved lines, and the harmonies of these lines sympathize in a most delicate manner with the events on the stage. These harmonies make the relations of things immediately perceptible to us in a sensuous, by no means abstract manner, and thus we perceive that it is only in these relations that the essence of a character and of a melodic line is revealed clearly. And while music

thus compels us to see more and more profoundly than usual, and we see the action on the stage as a delicate web, the world of the stage is expanded infinitely and illuminated for our spiritualized eye. How could a word-poet furnish anything analogous, when he strives to attain this internal expansion and illumination of the visible stage-world by means of a much more imperfect mechanism, indirectly, proceeding from word and concept? Although musical tragedy also avails itself of the word, it can at the same time place beside it the basis and origin of the word, making the development of the word clear to us, from the inside^{“37}.

Soon, Nietzsche will renounce to that “underworld“ essentialist picture, thus radically modifying also the status of the “relationship-world“. Relationships will no longer exist as traces of the unknown world: “Remarkably is, also according to the impressions of the young Nietzsche, that an object can be perceived only as a fictional, relational construction, and that is the reason why we cannot push through an essentialist notion of this object. We must therefore renounce to essentialist definitions^{”38}. Because the activity of the concepts is not a priori epistemologically created, we cannot have knowledge of the world, or of its objects, but we “are falsifying the world to ourselves, according to the measure of our needs and knowledge^{”39}. This is the fact due to which knowledge can constitute itself in a twofold way: 1) the subject possesses knowledge according to his individual perspective; 2) the subject is in itself an as-

sembly of social and cultural relationships. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, people are socially built-up entities even in their most intimate structure, these social structures being dynamically created. The result of this process is radical: the world no longer “exists as a world in itself, it is essentially a relationship-world; it has a different face according to the situation and to the perspective”⁴⁰. Therefore, there are no “essences in themselves”, but “relationships constitute themselves into essences”⁴¹. The relinquishment of the essence-phenomenon dualism emphasizes a change of perspective, which leads towards a relational kind of thinking. At the time when the “real world” becomes a “fable”, a radical adjustment to the world’s ontological anatomy occurs: the term *appearance* (*Schein*) becomes a generative concept, circumstantiating the basic sense of *essence*: “the appearance acts as essence” (*Gay Science*, # 58). From this point of view, one may assert that this orientation is not an upside-down polarization of the ideal world, but a *horizontal* view, that shapes any *vertical* path of the degrees of essence and, implicitly, the intermediary steps between essence and phenomenon. According to Zittel, the horizontal shape of the relational world is *agonal*; this characteristic dominates the various kinds of interpretations that mutually legitimise themselves⁴². The results of these differences will crystallize into more aspects that are primary: a) first, we have a theory regarding the relational construction of “essence”; b) secondly, the “essences” lose their consistence and become mere fictional entities.

We will not further insist on this aspect, but regarding the relationship between the aesthetical and the theoretical, we might say that Nietzsche intends to elaborate a rigorous deconstruction of the object and subject, concepts that he reduces to „dynamic quanta”, playing in an active game of the *Will to Power*. “The things are no more autarkical entities, but *dynamic quanta*, in a tensioning relationship with other dynamic quanta, whose essence lies in the same relationship, in their action on them – thus, the *Will to Power* is not an essence or a becoming, but a *pathos* – the elementary fact from which we have, from the outset, a becoming, an action...”⁴³. *Pathos* plainly explains a conflict situation, a “constellation of forces”. The *Will to Power* is a correct denominator for this matter. The term *Will to Power* reflects a dynamic conflict scenario, which causes a *deployment of individuality* (*Entfaltung der Individualität*), reason that is at hand especially in the poetical game of *Zarathustra*. The integration of the subject into a wider context, along with its relativisation, are classical themes for the late texts: „Nun giebt es gar keine andere Art Aktion: und die „Welt“ ist nur ein Wort für das Gesamtspiel dieser Aktionen. Die *Realität* besteht exakt in dieser Partikulär-Aktion und Reaktion jedes Einzelnen gegen das Ganze...” (13.371)⁴⁴. Nietzsche seeks to annihilate even the last methodological presuppositions of thinking, liberating theory from the old patterns of the philosophical theorems.

From now on, there is just one step further until the total deployment of perspectivism and of its

aesthetical roots. Since the *Will* projects, at the level of the theory, the individual perspective, this second element is able to integrate the *Will* into a *context of power*. The context of power is, paradoxically, essentially *fictional*; therefore, we cannot have a meta-perspective over the individual perspective, which should legitimise the conceptualisation of a transcendental perspective. The meta-level of the contextual individual relationships is not possible anymore and, consequently, it cannot be achieved; as individuals, we are always situated “in the middle” of the problem⁴⁵. “Nietzsche’s perspectivism cannot be objectified from the point of view of the transcendental philosophy; that is why, for him, that kind of knowledge leans itself totally on the appearance and fallibility of the marginal human projections. There is no way out from this kind of fallibility. The failure cannot be thus corrected or transcended, but emphasized”⁴⁶. The author’s argument is based on a large-scale fragment on knowledge, from which we shall extract a few lines: „Wir sehen unsere Gesetze in die Welt hinein und wiederum können wir diese Gesetze nicht anders fassen als die Folge dieser Welt auf uns. Der Ausgangspunkt ist die Täuschung des Spiegels, wir sind *lebendige Spiegelbilder*. Was ist also Erkenntniß? Ihre Voraussetzung ist eine irrthümliche Beschränkung, als ob es eine Maaßeinheit der Empfindung gebe; überall wo Spiegel und Tastorgane vorkommen, entsteht eine Sphäre. Denkt man sich diese Beschränktheit weg, so ist Erkenntniß auch weggedacht — ein Auffassen von ‚absoluten Relationen‘ ist Unsinn. Der Irrthum ist also

die Basis der Erkenntniß, der Schein. Nur durch die *Vergleichung vieler Scheine* entsteht Wahrscheinlichkeit, also Grade des Scheins”⁴⁷. If perspectives are integrated into a relational dynamic without being synthesized, then this picture can be correctly adjusted with the special type of the aesthetical construction.

At the level of the aesthetical, the term *work of art*, founded on the thesis of unity and on the classical coherence conditions, tries to be released from its typical determinations. Zittel’s view tends to be adequate to the theories of the contemporary aesthetics: “In the aesthetical constructions, unity can be theorized as a context of the concurrent perspectives and thus as a differentiated unity”⁴⁸. At this point, commentaries indicate a maximum moment of tension between art and the perspective of life. Nietzsche is supposed to generate reductionism in this case, by placing art into a unique life-perspective. Thus, by continuing the model we followed, one must say that, in this case, there is impossible for any hierarchies of interpretations or perspectives to exist. On the other hand, we can observe that Nietzsche proposes a real *dynamic of perspectives*, subscribing art to a multi-perspectival interpretation. Art, in the perspective of science, becomes the physiology of the aesthetical; in the perspective of moral, it becomes a lie; life, in the perspective of art becomes life as a work of art⁴⁹. We are facing many interpretations, none of which being hierarchical related to the other. An unique perspective on art would restrain thinking to a basic “metaphysical belief” (*metaphysischer Grundglaube*).

Following this reading on Nietzsche's work, we realize, concerning the relationship between art and life in itself, that life is, relating to art, not a value in itself; art is a mere harsh material for the work of art. The aesthetics of the work of art discovers itself as an aesthetical thinking of the significant that refuses itself any approach to the *sense*. It is plain that, not having a perfect or unique model of the work of art, the signification of the term *imitation* dissolves itself into an endless game of spectralities, since the genealogy of the artistic creation (imitable object – creator – imitation) looses its causality and, implicitly, its classical signification. In Zittel's opinion, *Zarathustra* is an excellent proof with a view to explaining the "nihilism". The *Zarathustra* text attempts to block the "conversion" from one sense to another – refusing even the makeover of a *sense* into a *non-sense* and back – thus rejecting every continuity of the search for the sense with the use of the rhetorical instruments of language. "The reflective aesthetical form from *Zarathustra* is liable to express the non-sense of every concept, it refuses the unbreakable translation of the refuse from *sense* to *lack of sense*, so that even the view concerning the lack of sense finally looses its sense..."⁵⁰. The lack of sense is no more a "ready-made", but inclines to a "*self-destruction dynamic*" (*Selbstaufhebungsdynamik*), which is generated to dissolve every construction that leads to a continuity of the sense, to a positive logic of sense. "Nietzsche orchestrates in *Thus spoke Zarathustra* a logic of destruction, which cannot be directed towards a certain goal, but generates itself from

the broken pieces of the former sense construction"⁵¹. The aesthetical construction does not communicate with the other perspectives anymore, but rejects the integration of sense and marches towards self-destruction. The text itself is the controlling instrument of the sense and performs the self-destruction of the sense. The aesthetical discourse is relative in a twofold way: to itself and to other perspectives.

The subject is too long to be consumed in these pages. What we can observe, as a preliminary conclusion, is that Nietzsche succeeds in the transformation of the "appearance", giving a new sense to this concept. Paradoxically, Nietzsche will discuss about art as a "real appearance"⁵², legitimising the *appearance* which art implies as a condition for the aesthetical, visualizing through this concept the manifestation of the "spectral" truth of the *Will to Power*. This point raises the question about the function of the aesthetical in Nietzsche's work: is Nietzsche's poetical text understood as a legitimising of the philosophical character of the *Will* or is it a mature, standing for itself aesthetical construction?

Zittel endows Nietzsche's thinking on *appearance* with a precise cognitive value, performing the changing towards a "constellative thinking", offering a much more adequate and flexible frame to thinking with the use of the multi-perspectival construction of the aesthetical discourse.

1 Remarkable is, in this case, the analysis of Nietzsche “effect” on the European culture during the first half of the XX-th century, sketched out in Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche. Philosoph–Psychologe–Antichrist*. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1988, pp. 1-19 (translated by Jörg Salaquarda following the original English edition – Kaufmann, Walter, *Nietzsche: philosopher, psychologist, antichrist*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1950)

2 Cf. Eberhard Ostermann, Chapter *Fragment/Aphorismus*, in *Romantik–Handbuch*, Hrsg. von Helmut Schanze, Kröner Verlag, 1994, p. 277.

3 An excellent display on the history of the fragmentary style appears in: Vasile Voia, *Novalis*, Ed. Univers, Bucuresti, 1981, pp. 215-221. See also Friedrich Schlegel, *Athenaeum*, fr. 206: „A fragment must be conceived as a work of art, entirely separated from the external world and perfect through itself, as well as a hedgehog”.

4 Cf. Helmut Schanze, *Romantische Rhetorik*, in: *Romantik–Handbuch*, p. 342.

5 Cf. Helmut Schanze, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

6 Cf. Helmut Schanze, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

7 The term *reactive*, applied to the revolutionary tendencies of romanticism, is extremely important; we are thus able to separate Nietzsche’s nihilism from the romantic kind of negativity. The problem is that Nietzsche’s texts do not indicate a destruction of the sense towards the constitution of another sense; the texts often distinguish a stylistic *self-destruction* of the sense. Gerhard Plumpe (Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *Ästhetische Kommunikation der Moderne*, Bd. 2, Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1993, chap. *Nach der Ästhetik. Nietzsche*) proposes the double *active-reactive* to delineate the positive tendency of thinking – Nietzsche’s famous “Yes” applied to the work of art as a stimulant of life. Plumpe’s explanation remains marginal, as long as in this case it is not about a certain existentialism in-

volved into the aesthetical, but rather about serious philosophical connotations related to the aesthetical.

8 Cf. Walter Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95.

9 Cf. Peter V. Zima, *Literarische Ästhetik*, Francke Verlag, Tübingen u. Basel, 1995, p. 42 – „Nietzsche ist durchaus Hegelianer, wenn er mit Heraklit das Werden gegen die statischen Metaphysiken (Platon, Kant) verteidigt u. wenn er die Einheit der Gegensätze gegen der metaphysischen Dualismus (wahr/falsch; gut/böse) ausspielt. Doch sein Werden gipfelt nicht im Absoluten, u. seine Dialektik bringt keine Synthese, kein System hervor, sondern wirkt destruktiv. Ihr Charakteristikum ist die radikale Ambivalenz, die durch kein bestimmte Negation, durch kein systematische Aufhebung zu bändigen ist“.

10 Cf. Walter Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

11 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

12 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense* (1873), in: *On Rhetoric and Language*, edited and translated with a critical introduction by Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, David J. Parent, Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 252.

13 Cf. A. Schopenhauer, *Ueber die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde* (1813), *apud* Yasuo Kamata, *Platonische Idee und die anschauliche Welt bei Schopenhauer* – (Vortrag während des Internationalen Schopenhauer-Jubiläumskongresses vom 6. bis 8. Mai 1988 in Frankfurt a. M., gehalten am 8. Mai).

14 Cf. Yasuo Kamata, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

15 Ibidem.

16 Ibidem.

17 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, cap. *Programme ästhetischer Kommunikation IV. Schopenhauers Willenstherapie*, p. 220.

18 Cf. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, *apud* Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

19 Ibidem.

20 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

21 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 225: “Der Geist ist ein Instrument des Willens, der sich auf der Stufe seiner Objektivation im Bereich der Erkenntniss bedient, um sein drängen auszuagieren“.

22 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

23 Cf. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, *apud* Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

24 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

25 Cf. Gerhard Plumpe, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

26 Cf. Wolfgang Welsch, *Vernunft*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M., 1996, p. 495.

27 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense (1873)*, in: *op.cit.*, p. 250-251.

28 Ibidem, p. 255.

29 Cf. W. Welsch, *op. cit.*, p. 496.

30 Cf. W. Welsch, *op. cit.*, p. 527.

31 Ibidem.

32 Cf. W. Welsch, *op. cit.*, p. 534.

33 Cf. Claus Zittel, *Das ästhetische Kalkül von Friedrich Nietzsches „Also sprach Zarathustra“*. (Nietzsche in der Diskussion), Würzburg, 2000.

34 Cf. Claus Zittel, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

35 „What is truth? a mobile army of metaphors, in short, a sum of human relations which were poetically and rhetorically heightened, transferred, and adorned, and after long use seem

solid, canonical, and binding to a nation “ (Fr. Nietzsche, *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*. 1).

36 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, #11, translated by Marianne Cowan, Regnery, 1962.

37 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, # 21.

38 Cf. Claus Zittel, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

39 Ibidem.

40 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bände* (KSA), Herausgegeben bei Giorgio Colli u. Massimo Montinari, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1999, *Nachlass*, 13. 241.

41 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA, Nachlass*, (13. 303).

42 Cf. Claus Zittel, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

43 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA, Nachlass*, (13. 259).

44 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA, Nachlass*, (13. 371).

45 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA*, (9.454).

46 Cf. Claus Zittel, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

47 Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA*, (9.311f).

48 Claus Zittel, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

49 Idem, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

50 Idem, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

51 Idem, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

52 “Bedeutung der Kunst als des wahrhaftigen Scheines“ (*KSA*, 7.633)