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# Nietzsche's "Gay Science"

## *Poetry and Love, Science and Music*

*In his notes from Basel, as early as 1869, Nietzsche had paralleled the musical culture of ancient Greece and the song culture of medieval Europe precisely for the sake of an understanding of Greek lyric poetry and tragedy. Thus, as we have seen, Nietzsche could declare that "for the Greeks, text and music were so intimately joined that without exception one and the same artist created both of them." He further observed that the marriage of text and music was "hardly a rarity: think of the troubadours, the Minnesänger, and even the guild of Meistersingers" (FS 5, 308; cf. 367).*

### Laughter and Song: On Tragic "Science" and "Gay Scholarship"

In *The Gay Science* Nietzsche elaborates the troubadour's art—or science—of song.[1] *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Gay Science* have commonalities in addition to music. Both were reissued in later editions. In the case of *The Birth of Tragedy*, the later edition would feature a new subtitle as well as a self-critical preface emphasizing the preeminence of science as the veritable core or focus of the book. In the case of *The Gay Science*, the 1887 title page substitutes a comic rhyme in place of the 1882 epigraph from Emerson and (like the later-added fourth book supplement to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*), appends an additional, fifth book, polished with a further cycle of songs,—*Lieder des Prinzen Vogelfrei*[2]—invoking at once the knightly as well as the chastely[3] erotic character of the troubadour (and recurring in the arch allusions of Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*).

A good many readers have underscored the preeminence of the art of laughter of the text: apotheosizing Nietzsche as the philosopher who teaches us to laugh. But an emphasis upon the parodic art of laughter tends to obscure the serious claims of Nietzsche's 'gay' science. Nietzsche himself decries the "vanity" of then-contemporary scholars incensed by his use of the "word 'science' "—a pique that not has quite played itself out—and their complaint: " 'gay' it may be but it is certainly not 'science' " (KSA 12, 149). Their objection manifestly touched a nerve, for Nietzsche had intended, so he would claim, to articulate a profoundly "serious" science (GS §382). Deeply serious, Nietzsche's "gay" science would be gay out of profundity—just as the ancient Greeks had discovered the art of drawing their delight in the surfaces of things, their gay "superficiality," from the depths of tragic wisdom (GS §iv).

From the start, Nietzsche understood his joyful science to go beyond the fun of mockery and "light feet." Invoking the troubadours' art of song,[4] *The Gay Science* might be regarded as a handbook to the art of poetry, as Nietzsche plays on the notion of *vademecum* in the series of short poems that made up his " 'Joke, Cunning, and Revenge': Prelude in German Rhymes," a title alluding to Goethe's *Scherz, List, und Rache*, by way of a contemporary musical setting.[5] In this sense, *The Gay Science* explicates the science of philology as much as it exemplifies the musical art of poetic composition. But this will also mean that one might say, as Heidegger argued in a different tonality in his Nietzsche lectures, that *The Gay Science* may properly be regarded as Nietzsche's most *scientific* work.

## Provençal Song, Mirth, and Poetic Language

As we know from the quotation marks in the subtitle Nietzsche added to the second edition of *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, the language of *"la gaya scienza"* is not Nietzsche's. Indeed, in his notes, Nietzsche will reprove the blindness of his academic readers beyond their "misunderstanding of cheerfulness" [*Heiterkeit*]. Indeed and starting with "the title" itself, Nietzsche sniffed, "most scholars forgot its Provençal meaning."[6]

From Provence to the Occitan, one of Nietzsche's *Nachlaß* drafts, *Gai Saber*, begins with an address to "the mistral."[7] This is the troubadour's art (or technic) of poetic song, an art at once secret,[8] anonymous and thus non-subjective,[9] but also including disputation[10] and comprising, perhaps above all, the important ideal of action (and *pathos*) at a distance: *l'amour lointain*. Nietzsche's exploration of the noble art of poetic song[11] is intriguing enough to compel attention. Detailing these song forms in his notes as he does,[12] Nietzsche also seems

to have framed some of his own poetic efforts in this tradition. To take an obvious instance, the appendix of songs added to *The Gay Science* in 1887 includes a dance song entitled, "To the Mistral," to be heard together with Nietzsche's praise of the south and affirming Nietzsche's love of Dame Truth herself [*Im Süden*]. Even more, as one literary scholar has reminded us in his reflections on the origins of the "*gay saber*," the playful context of laughter—"hilarity"—and the joy of play is as central to the same medieval tradition of vernacular (as opposed to sacred) song as it is to Nietzsche's *The Gay Science.*[13] *The Gay Science* begins with just such a reference to gaiety as such as it also recollects the focus of Nietzsche's first book on musical poetry, *The Birth of Tragedy*, " 'Not only laughter and gay wisdom but the tragic too, with all its sublime unreason, belongs among the means and necessities of the preservation of the species' " (GS §1).

Nevertheless a focus on the art of the troubadour as key to Nietzsche's "gay" science inevitably takes the interpreter in a single direction. As the art of contest in poetic song and given Nietzsche's courtly allusions to Goethe as noted previously or else, and more patently, to Wagner, it is important to explore the tradition of the troubadour. Indeed, one might even be inspired to go still further afield to a plausible connection with Frédéric Mistral, the Occitan poet who popularized the inventive Provençal tradition of poetry, and who was a contemporary of Nietzsche's day.[14]

But we should also move slowly here—not just for reasons of philological care (Nietzsche's *lento*). Hence if the clearly erotic undercurrent (along with the recurrent focus on shame in *The Gay Science*—we recall that Nietzsche concludes both books 2 and 3 on the note of shame: "as long as you are in any way *ashamed* of yourselves, you do not yet belong to us" [GS §107] and, again, "*What is the seal of liberation?* No longer to be ashamed before oneself" [GS §275, see also §273 and §274]) cannot ultimately legitimate the assertion of Nietzsche's homosexuality,[15] a similar restraint is also essential in this case. If Nietzsche himself claims the reference to the troubadours for his own part (and to this extent, the current reading is not speculation), the riddle of *The Gay Science* hardly reduces to this.

We need more than a recollection of the Provençal character and atmosphere of the troubadour in order to understand Nietzsche's conception of a joyful science, even if, given the element of a complex and "involuntary parody" (GS §382), the spirit of the Occitan certainly helps, especially where Nietzsche adverts to dissonance throughout (betraying the disquiet of the mistral wind as well as its seasonal relief). For nothing less than a critique of science is essential for an understanding of the ideal

of Nietzsche's gay science. As we have already seen in the first chapter above, a reflection on ancient Greek music drama had occupied Nietzsche's first concerns with the general question of what he would retrospectively call the "problem of science" in his 1886 reflections on his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*. This object of Nietzsche's scientific or rigorously scholarly concern was Nietzsche's declared discovery of the birth of tragedy in the folk song, in lyric poetry—read and heard in the music of the Greek lyric word (BT §§5, 17, etc.).

Seen from this perspective, *The Gay Science* tells us Nietzsche's life work in terms of his scholarly achievements as well as his own deployment of the same: putting this "science" to work on his own behalf and taking this as far as the consummate promise of his troubadour's (and even Catharist) ideal of self-overcoming. This is the context of impossible love, the condemnation "never to love," as that intimate disappointment in which David B. Allison quotes Nietzsche's resolution to effect his own healing transfiguration.[16] If the "gay science" is a handbook of song, it prefigures what Allison has delicately analyzed as what will become Nietzsche's recipe for inventing "the alchemical trick for transforming this—muck [*Kothe*] into gold."[17] If Nietzsche's self-therapy works for the love of a woman, for Lou, as Allison argues, it is because the alchemical transformation consummates *amor fati*—loving life, real life, not just "warts and all," but exactly including as intimately necessary to life, the whole gamut of illness and suffering, misrecognition and disappointment, as well as death, constituting a patent catalog of the all-too real horrors of ancient tragedy.

For Nietzsche's "gay science" is a passionate, fully joyful science. But to say this is also to say that a gay science is a *dedicated science*: scientific "all the way down." This is a science including the most painful and troubling insights, daring, to use Nietzsche's language here, every ultimate or "last consequence" (BGE §22; KSA 13, 257). Doubting as well as Montaigne, more radical than Descartes, and still more critical than Kant or Schopenhauer, dispensing with Spinoza's and with Hegel's (but also with Darwin's and even Newton's) faith, Nietzsche's joyful, *newly* joyful, scientist carries "the *will* henceforth to question further, more deeply, stringently, harshly, cruelly, and quietly than one had questioned heretofore" (GS §iii). Even confidence in life itself, as a value, of course, but also as such, now "becomes a *problem*." The result is a new kind of love and a new kind of joy, a new passion, a "new happiness."

The commitment of a joyful science includes body and mind (Descartes), just because Nietzsche does not distinguish these any more than he distinguishes between soul and spirit (Kant and Hegel). The reference to the body derives from Nietzsche's experience of suffering as

an adventure in transmutation. This transfigured suffering or pain he calls "convalescence," reminding us of the influence of the body and its milieu—interior and exterior, physiological and ecological—in the purest aspirations of reason. Like Montaigne, again, if also, again, playing off Spinoza and Leibniz, Nietzsche invokes the need for self-questioning and for self-experimentation precisely with an eye to the importance of physiological influences as these may be found on every level of thought, finally pronouncing philosophy nothing but an "interpretation" and "misunderstanding" of the body (GS §ii). As a philosopher in the fashion of the gay science, you can play or "experiment" with yourself in your own thinking, you can be the phenomenologist of yourself, varying the effects of health, illness, convalescence, or the persistence of illness and pain on thought itself. For neither science, nor scholarship, nor philosophy, Nietzsche tells us, has ever been "about 'truth' " (Ibid.). Each of these occupations, as Nietzsche tells us, has always had some other motivation or aim in mind, for example, "health, future, growth, power, life . . ." (Ibid.). Acknowledging the passions of knowledge heretofore, Nietzsche is at pains to argue that the ideal of objectivity is a delusion either of self-deceiving idealism or a calculated mendacity. Belief in such an ideal is the default of science altogether. In its place, Nietzsche argues against both the idea and the ideal of pure science, dedicated to sheer knowledge as if knowing should be its own end (GS §23), as he also argues against knowledge for gain and profit.[18] In every case, his reference point is the *noble* (cf. D §308 and BGE §212) ideal of *la gaya scienza*. Contra the idealistic convictions of the "will to truth," to "truth at any price," Nietzsche dares the proposition that truth, once "laid bare," no longer remains true (GS §iv). A gay science will *need* to know itself as art.

Reflecting on the title of Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft,* Martin Heidegger has emphasized that metonymically tuned with *Wissenschaft*, science, the word *fröhliche*, happy or gay, light or joyful, evokes *Leidenschaft*, passion.[19] In this way, Heidegger argues, Nietzsche's passionate, joyful science can be opposed to the dusty scholarship for the sake of assonance, let us call it the "grey science," of his peers.[20] This same claim supports the surmise that like *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche's joyful science was intended as a challenge to Wilamowitz (and thence contra philology as the discipline that had excluded Nietzsche's contributions).

The test of Nietzsche's joyful science, *amor fati*, finds its planned—and executed—exemplification in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as well as in the retrospective song cycle appended to the later-written fifth book of *The Gay Science.*[21] In this experimental fashion, in this very scientific way,

the promise articulated on behalf of music in *The Birth of Tragedy* might finally be fulfilled, as his reflections in *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Ecce Homo* suggest. If the "spirit of science" [*der Geist der Wissenschaft*] and techno-mechanical progress could be shown to have the power to vanquish myth (even if only with a myth of its own) and poetry (even if only with poetry of its own),[22] the "spirit of music" might be thought—this remains Nietzsche's finest hope, it is his philosophical music of the future—to have retained the power to give birth once again to tragedy. Such a rebirth compels us to seek out the "spirit of science" precisely in terms of its antagonistic opposition to music's power of mythical creativity.[23]

As preserved in written form, like Homer's epic song, like Greek musical tragedy, *la gaya scienza* corresponds to the textual fusion of oral traditions—composition, transmission, performance—in the now-frozen poems of the troubadours. It is important, as with the ancient tradition of epic poetry, that the knightly art of poetry, the *gai saber* as it was recorded in the fourteenth century,[24] presumed a much older tradition dating back to the twelfth or eleventh century.[25] In a parallel fashion, Nietzsche's discovery had been that the musical tradition of the folk song gave birth to the archetypical Greek tragic art form, a genealogy that was for Nietzsche to be descried in the rhythmic structures that he called the music of lyric poetry.

The "spirit of music" gives birth to tragedy, the tragic art and knowledge that is ultimately the metaphysical comfort of the artist (BT §25).[26] In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche articulates this "metaphysical" comfort as the distance and light of art (GS §339). By contrast with such a metaphysical or musical comfort, the comfort of "the spirit of science" is a physical one: "eine irdische Consonanz" (BT §17). In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche will analyze this saving grace and working functionality as the reason we, too, remain "still pious" (GS §344). Astonishing in its patent, empirical, but insuperably contingent success, what "holds up" (GS §46) in science as the (technological) scientific solution to life is the gift of a deus ex machina, as Nietzsche clarifies the vision of Prometheus for us (GS §300), the "God of the machines and the foundries" (BT §17), put to work on behalf of a "higher" egoism, confident in the "world's correction through knowing," and of the viability of a "life guided by science" (Ibid.) but above all, capable of concentrating the individual within the most restrictive sphere of problem solving (the scientific method).

To illuminate the point of Nietzsche's allusion here, if Goethe's own Faust had been locked together with the spirit of the Earth so densely summoned forth at the start and compelled to turn within the same circle, he might well have declared, in advance of the whole trag-

edy, I *and* II, "Ich will dich: du bist werth erkannt zu werden" (BT §17; cf. GS §1). For Nietzsche, as for the rest of us, the method at work—stipulation, mechanism, and above all delimitation, that is, the working practice of method *as such*—is the key to the modern scientific age. The same methodification is also the means whereby science becomes art, but to say this is also to say that science departs from theory alone, from its metaphysical heaven or perfection, to become practicable and livable, viable, as such.[27] Nietzsche's Zarathustra thus teaches loyalty to the earth.

However effective they are (and they are very effective as Nietzsche underscores), the expression of natural laws in human relations or numerical formulae (GS §246) remains a metaphorical convention: a Protagorean conventionalism Nietzsche famously compares to a deaf person's visually metaphorical judgment of the acoustic quality of music on the basis of Chladni sand/sound figures (GS §373)—an image that gave Nietzsche proof of the veritably metaphorical convertibility of sound and light in wave forms or vibrations, or "Schwingungen," as Nietzsche triumphantly declared (KSA 7, 164)—and today we might reimagine the Chladni metaphor as the "music" of a digital music file printed as binary character text—or else, and more ellipitically, as the visual "musicality" of the gleaming refraction surface of a music CD hung as a light-catcher. The full context here is as follows: "The *human being* as the measure of things is similarly the basic concept of science. Every law of nature is ultimately a sum of anthropological relations. Especially number: the quantitative reduction of every law, their expression in numerical formulas is a μεταφορά, as someone one who lacks the ability to hear judges music and tonality according to the Chladni sound patterns" (KSA 7, 494; cf. 445).

In this way, when Nietzsche first sets up the opposition between art and science in terms of music and myth—that is: in distinction to logic and calculative advantage—what is at issue is a proportionate achievement. As Nietzsche had argued in his first book, both art *and* science are ordered to life. Art seeks to harmonize dissonance, resolving it by transfiguration—not by elimination but by way of musical incorporation: "a becoming-human of dissonance" (BT §25, cf. §24). By contrast, especially in the guise of the technological science of modernity, as it begins with Socrates and the promise of logic and truth, mechanical or physical science effectively corrects or improves the world. In this fasion, science substitutes an earthly consonance in place of the elusive promise of the tragic art, or music, which for its part offers no solutions to mortal problems (this is tragedy), only beautiful concinnities as I have called Nietzsche's harmonies (this is the art of music).

For Nietzsche, a focus on science may not be distinguished from aesthetics (art) as we have already seen nor indeed from ethics (morality).

Nietzsche opposes, first, the failure of music in such a scientifically improved world; second, the self-deceiving truth of earthly consonance with respect to its own illusions (this would be a "lack" of science, beyond the praise for the probity of the thinker that compels him to turn to science [GS §335]; this would be "the good, stupid will to 'believe,' " which Nietzsche challenges as a "lack of philology," that is, "the lack of suspicion and patience . . ." [BGE §192]).

When " 'modern scientific' " rationality (GS §358) turns its eye on suffering, it conceives and so reduces suffering to a "problem" to be solved (KSA 1, 394). There is a whole skein of difficulties here for Nietzsche, beginning with the question of the nature and extent of suffering (psychic or physical, cultural or historical) and including the quality and character of comfort and relief. The compassionate and tragic element will always be important for Nietzsche, a sensitive pathos he shared with Schopenhauer. But beyond Schopenhauer, Nietzsche would also argue that the problem of suffering eludes ameliorating reduction for the very reason that a solution to the problem of suffering also and inevitably elides the whole fateful range of what belongs to suffering (GS §338, 318). This is a complex point and it does not mean that Nietzsche was in favor of passively enduring much less inflicting suffering. But to strip off the multilayered, complex covering of truth (that is, its illusions) is *also* to dissolve what is true (GS §iv) in the same way that Rome as an empire came to dominate its world, to use Nietzsche's example of cultural supremacy (for a contemporary example, we can think of what we call "globalism"). Imperial Rome blithely obliterated the traces of its past (better said, the past of its predecessors) without the slightest inkling of bad conscience: "brushing off the dust on the wings of the moment of the historical butterfly" (GS §83). In one's own life, this layered and interwoven complexity is the inscrutability and that is exactly to say the *meaning* of suffering (GS §318). More critically, it is the problem of the meaning and significance of suffering for another (this is the problem of "other pains," as it were [GS §338]). In this reflection, key to the notion of the eternal return, Nietzsche touches upon the deep relation of suffering to happiness as well as everything that suffering necessitates and makes possible (Ibid.). This complex problem is Nietzsche's great challenge to contemporary expressions of care ethics or the ethics of compassion as Nietzsche would speak of the higher ethic of friendship (KSA 8, 333); it is his intriguing and still-untapped contribution to understanding Heidegger's notion of care in the elusive reflection contra pity (*Mitleid*) that would teach what Nietzsche names *Mitfreude* (GS §338).

Nietzsche's gay science of morality is complicated precisely because he is interested less in promulgating a moral theory than in questioning

the presumptions of the same. For Nietzsche, questioning is the most important element in science (GS §2, §375) and what Nietzsche confesses as his personal "injustice" is his very scientific conviction that everyone must somehow, ultimately *have to have* this "Lust des Fragens" (GS §2). In Kantian terms, Nietzsche permitted himself to believe that everyone was in some measure possessed by a passion for questioning "at any price" (GS §344).

## Science and *Leidenschaft*

Reviewing the motivations of established scholarship, that is, a job, a career, dusty and bored with itself ("lacking anything better to do"), the "scientific drive" of traditional, grey scientists turns out to be nothing but "their boredom" (GS §123).[28] By contrast what Nietzsche calls "the passion of the knowledge seeker" is a very erotic drive: a drive for possession. This is acquisitive to the point of abandon, "yearning for undiscovered worlds and seas" (GS §302), completely lacking selflessness, lacking disinterest, and in place of the ideal of scholarly detachment, "an all-desiring self that would like, as it were, to see with the eyes and seize with the hands of many individuals—a self that would like to bring back the entire past, that wants to lose nothing it could possibly possess!" (GS §249). So far from science's celebrated objectivity and neutrality (GS §351), "the great *passion* of the knowledge seeker" is a matter of intimate and absolute or utter cupidity (GS §249, §345). As Nietzsche regarded this passionate drive from the perspective of "nobility" (GS §3), the archaic quality of Nietzsche's joyful passion is ineluctably alien to modern sensibilities—if simply and fundamentally because (and this is what Nietzsche always understood by the ideal of nobility) the cupidity or desire of gay science is a non-venal one (GS §330).[29]

Both science and art draw upon the same creative powers, both are directed to the purpose of life, and most importantly for Nietzsche, both are illusions. Denying a Platonic world of noumenal truth, there is for Nietzsche only nominal truth (GS §58)—sheer illusion—but no noumenon. Indeed what is key to Nietzsche's inversion of Plato/Kant (i.e., Christianity), is that without the noumenal, there is no phenomenal world; without metaphysics, no physics. The world is mere will to power, chaos, and nothing besides (GS §109). The only truth is illusion, and there is no truth beyond illusion. But this is Schopenhauer's world, not Kant's. To make any headway with this, one needs a non-Western logic, the logic of the veil of Maya. But to say this, for the Nietzsche who always remains a scientist, ultimately means that one is grateful to art. In the context of this non-Western logic, the critical distance Nietzsche

maintains with respect to Buddhism may well correspond to his rigorously preserved "scientific" attitude (see GS §§78, 299, 301, 339).

But what is science? Science is routinely presumed to be a matter of method (and quantifying analysis) and it was exactly the character of science as method that Nietzsche had in mind. Hence in the context of his early (and later) reflections, when Nietzsche proposed to examine "the problem of science," what he means by science presupposes its broadest sense because what he wanted to address was nothing less than the specifically *scientific* character of science. For this reason too, Nietzsche's talk of science with regard to aesthetics and ancient philology (i.e., in his book on tragedy) inevitably exceeded aesthetic philology in its scope and works and brought Nietzsche to speak of logic, rationality, and even of the mechanized way of life of modernity, in order to speak, in the classical mode, of the contemporary possibilities of Western culture.

It is the meaning of science that remains problematic here. And very few scholars have adverted to the problems of the compound construction of a "gay science." Among the few who do so, Heidegger asks "What does *gay science* mean?" reminding us with this question that Nietzsche's "science [*Wissenschaft*] is not a collective noun for the sciences as we find them today, with all their paraphernalia in the shape they assumed during the course of the last century" (N2, 20). Heidegger thus contrasts Nietzsche's conception of a gay science to the nineteenth-century ideal of the positive, measuring, or technologically defined sciences.[30] The point is not that Nietzsche opposes positive science but rather that such positive, or technologically defined sciences are immoderate precisely at this point for they have seduced themselves into taking their own axioms as demonstrated truths. By contrast with modern science and its calculative technologies (where physics is *the* paradigmatic science), the passion of Nietzsche's *fröhliche Wissenschaft* "resounds" like "the passion of a well-grounded mastery over the things that confront us and over our own way of responding to what confronts us, positing all these things in magnificent and essential goals" (N2, 20). In order to make some headway with the question of this passion for knowledge, a gay science, as already suggested, needs the art of love. And the erotic art must be learned, so Nietzsche argues, exactly as we "learn" to love anything at all.

Nietzsche's example for such learning is music itself: the cultivated love that is, like every other art of love, an acquired passion (GS §334). Indeed, for Nietzsche, only such a cultivated passion for knowledge has a justifiable claim to the title of science. In this sense, a supposed science of music apart from the art of music, apart from "what is music in it" (GS §373), would not be merely abstract. Blind and empty, a tone-deaf musical science would not be a science worthy of the name (GS §374).

## The Music of the Gay Science and the Meaning of *Wissenschaft*

Science, regarded as a "symptom of life," Nietzsche argued, could well constitute a "subtle form of self-defense against the truth" (BT §ii). Suggesting that truth (and the will to truth) might be less than salutary, Nietzsche opposes both Socratic rationality (better living through science) and Christianity (truth saves). For the same reason, the task of presenting "*the problem of science itself*, science considered for the first time as problematic, as questionable" (Ibid.) exposes the thinker to the danger of truth. We recall Nietzsche's description of his own first book's grappling with what he called a "problem with horns" (Ibid.). Ignoring the focus on science as problematic, scholars have routinely argued that Nietzsche's attempt "to view science through the lens of the artist and art through that of life" was not addressed to what we take to be science today, not natural science, not *real* science.[31]

Walter Kaufmann (whose influence in an English-speaking context as Nietsche's translator—like that of R. J. Hollingdale's—can hardly be overemphasized) has assured us that the science in Nietzsche's *The Gay Science* has nothing to do with *science* per se but rather and only refers to the troubadour's art, just as earlier noted. And it is quite clear that Kaufmann is not uncovering an obscure detail but one Nietzsche himself emphasizes not only indirectly but on the title page to the second edition as well as in his later writings and throughout his *Nachlaß* notes (complete, as we have already seen, with schematizations of the song forms). Indeed, if anything, Kaufmann's gloss tells us *less* than Nietzsche does. For *The Gay Science* manifestly refers to the troubadour's art. But what art of song was that to be for Nietzsche? Was that the art of the famous Jaufré Raudel (c. 1125–1128) or Guiraut Riquier, the so-called last of the troubadours?[32] Was it the lyre song of Homer's Achilles? Or Pindar's "crown"[33] of song? Or Machiavelli's musical art? Or are we merely speaking of Orpheus? Or Wagner? Or, and this solution is still the favorite amongst most readers, are we speaking of Nietzsche himself, when he claimed that one *should* range his Zarathustra under the rubric of music, and given the portents of his concluding *incipit* in *The Gay Science*? At the very least, it would seem that Nietzsche aligns the gay science, as the art of the troubadour, with the ancient musical art of tragedy, as Nietzsche sings himself the song of his songs—and including the troubadour's *serenas* or evensong, or, given the context of music and Venice, his *planctus* or *planh* in his *Ecce Homo*.[34]

For Nietzsche, as for any German, both in his day and our own, the term *Wissenschaft* or science applies as much to historical studies of ancient philology as to the natural sciences. Where the problem of science qua science, that is, the problem of the scientificity of science, also

corresponds to the logical problem of reflexivity, the general problem of science as such—both natural (and phenomenological) and philological (and hermeneutical)—calls for critical reflection. Nietzsche had argued that science as such (including the natural, physical sciences, as well as mathematics and logic) cannot be critically conceived (or founded) on its own ground nor indeed (and this was Nietzsche's most esoteric point as a hermeneutic of hermeneutics) can philology be so founded. It was because he wrote as a philological scholar, as a *scientist*, by his own perfectly rigorous definition of the term, that Nietzsche could regard his methodological considerations as directly relevant to the "problem of science."

We may note that in distinction to the narrow focus of the English *science*, the inclusiveness of the German *Wissenschaft* illuminates the parallels between Nietzsche's self-critique and Kant's expression of metaphysics in terms of a science of the future (as a future metaphysics).[35] Again, it is important to affirm that the present author is well able, as others seemingly are not, to assume that Nietzsche had "read" Kant.[36] For Nietzsche, accordingly, and as he writes in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the achievement of Kant's critical philosophy, a tradition of critique culminating in Schopenhauer, the same critical tradition that continues in Adorno and Horkheimer,[37] was to engage what Nietzsche regarded as the logical contradictions of the logical optimism of modern science.[38] This logical optimism is the positivist confidence that knowledge is both possible (in theory) and attainable (in practice). We still subscribe to the same optimism in our ongoing conviction that "all the riddles of the universe can be known and fathomed" (BT §18), and thus we faithfully denounce as anti-scientific and willfully obscure anyone who challenges this scientistic conviction.

Yet here the question of the meaning of *Wissenschaft* for Nietzsche (as for Kant, Hegel, and even Goethe but also Marx, Freud, Dilthey, Weber, Husserl, Heidegger, et al.) remains elusive. For if the *fröhlich* in the title of *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* has required our attention, taking us to passion (with Heidegger) but also taking us to a willingness to dance over the abyss of unreciprocated or failed love or the dark neediness of the soul (with Allison), and ultimately to Nietzsche's own concerns as he summarizes these for us, daring the dangerous play of experimental questioning (GS §374), the meaning of *Wissenschaft* turns out to be similarly complicated. It is worth asking, again, what Nietzsche means by "science," be it "gay" or otherwise?

Intriguingly, although it is routinely observed that the German term *Wissenschaft* and the English word for *science* ought to be distinguished, commentators tend not to explicate the difference in question. I have elsewhere explored this point in greater detail, but here

it is worth recalling that a differentiation between these terms is important as is the recollection that beyond such definitions, each word also carries with it its own penumbra of meaning and substitutions, articulating on each side a divergent range of associations, both metonymic and metaphorical.[39]

Dating from the fourteenth century, the term *Wissenschaft* was coined in German for the needs of a theological and mystical context in order to translate the Latin *sciens*, *scientia*, terms given as *science* in English, and related to *scire*, to know, *scindere*, to cut or divide. Key here in understanding *Wissenschaft* are the set of associations of the root terms, in particular the powerful etymological array via *wissen* linked to the Old High German *wizzan* and Old Saxon *wita* but also the English *wit* and *wot* and thence to the Sanskrit *vēda* and the ancient Greek *οἶδα* as well as the Latin, *videre*. As a philologist, Nietzsche was characteristically conscious of this root connection between vision and scientific knowledge—hence his focus on the ocular tendency of science in general—but especially natural science. See the following note: "Science aims *to interpret the same phenomenon through different senses* and to reduce everything to the most *exact* sense: the optical. Thus do we learn to understand the senses—the darker are illuminated by the lighter" (KSA 11, 114). And it might be worth investigating the degree to which this ocular conception inspired both his focus on what he called the "science of aesthetics" in his first book, his emphasis upon the importance of the haptic sense in the physical sciences (cf. TI, " 'Reason' in Philosophy," §3), and his special attention to the sense of "taste," a focus he earlier played back to its etymological association with wisdom as such: "The Greek word that signifies 'wise' etymologically belongs to *sapio*, I taste, *sapiens*, the one who tastes, *sisyphos*, the man of the keenest taste; a keen ability to distinguish and to recognize thus constitutes for folk consciousness, the authentic philosophical art" (KSA 1, 813). Whether deliberate or not, Nietzsche's example is in remarkable parallel with David Hume's reflections on aesthetic taste.[40]

Importantly however—and Heidegger makes much of this—it is only since the eighteenth century that the current meaning of the sciences (that is: as opposed to and as distinct from the arts) can be dated. If it can be argued that the meanings of *Wissenschaft* and *science* now and increasingly tend to coincide, *Wissenschaft*, as we have seen that Heidegger has also emphasized, yet remains unquestionably broader, as it corresponds to the collective pursuit of knowledge kinds. This collectivity is the meaning of *-schaft*, analogous to the suffix *-ship*, as in *scholarship* (a word that only partially renders *Wissenschaft*).[41] As the noun corresponding to *wissen*, *Wissenschaft* also retains the connotations of the "ways" or

conduits of knowing, ways that can still be heard in English with the archaic *wis* (to show the way, to instruct) or *wist* (to know).

Reviewing the above definitions, it is plain that although Nietzsche's identification of himself as a "scientific" practitioner may still strike a contemporary English speaker as sufficiently non-idiomatic to call forth at least a footnote (if not whole books on source scholarship) designed to explain the problem away, remanding it to the conventionality of the history of ideas and influences, his identification of his research interests as "scientific" would be routine in contemporary German usage. But this is exactly not to say that all Nietzsche was talking about was his own disciplinary field of ancient Greek philology. For Nietzsche, as should now be clear, what made his own discipline scientific was what made any discipline scientific.

The problem is not at issue in German readings of Nietzsche (though there remains a related problem in German contributions to epistemology and the philosophy of science to just the degree that these fields continue to be received as Anglo-Saxon disciplines). The problem is in understanding Nietzsche's references. And the problem is the problem of equivocation. For in spite of all the well-known rigor of the study of classics, we can only be hard pressed to see classics as a "science" per se. For this reason, when Nietzsche, a classicist, speaks of himself as advancing science, we do not quite take his reference except by putatively broadening his claim to an assertion about "scholarship" in general, but by which we mean literature, in fact, and particularly, classical philology, and then, following Wilamowitz's academically devastating critique of Nietzsche's supposed innovations, not even that.

Nietzsche poses the question of science not as a resoluble but much rather as a critical problem. As a critical project, Nietzsche adverts to the stubborn difficulty of putting science in question—the difficulty of questioning what is ordinarily unquestionable. Science, indeed, as presumptive authority and as "method" is ordinarily the ground or foundation for critical questioning. For this same critical reason, Nietzsche holds that the project of raising "the problem of science itself . . . as a problem, as questionable" (BT §ii) was a task to be accomplished over time, not merely a point to be made, or a problem to be remedied.

If Nietzsche liked to assert that he aspired to a more radical doubt than Descartes (KSA 11, 640–641), and if Nietzsche was surely more critical than Kant in calling for the key reflex of the critical project to be turned against itself (GS §357; cf. BGE §11), Nietzsche nonetheless differs from the Enlightenment project of philosophical modernity in general. Thus Nietzsche *does not* exclude his own deliberately provocative solution as a problem at the limit of critical reflection. Instead, Nietzsche

presupposes an unrelenting self-critique, precisely for the sake of science and this is why Nietzsche's reflection continues to matter for the sake of any possible philosophy of science that may be able to come forth as a science.

Self-criticism, critique of one's tacit assumptions, has to be a constant attendant to philosophical critique but—and Nietzsche is just as quick to remind us of this—where are we to position ourselves for the sake of such self-critique? Raising the question of the subject, challenging that there is nothing that thinks, the Archimedean standpoint provided by the Cartesian thinking subject is suspended where it emerges: in the middle of nowhere, and this is, if it is nothing else, a questionable foundation. The result is the giddiness Nietzsche claims endemic to the modern era, an era without definable up and down (and the orienting disposition of the same to above and below), without belief in God (cf. GS §125), and increasingly lacking even the firm foundation of the ultimacy of the human subject.

## Gay Science: Passion, Vocation, Music

As a *Leidenschaft* in Heidegger's sense, Nietzsche's science opposes the usual conception of either science or scholarship, even and perhaps especially philosophy, (even if, as Nietzsche remarks, philosophy is the discipline named for love or passion). As already emphasized, Nietzsche's gay science is not just relevant to science in general but exactly opposed to the nineteenth-century ideal of the positive, measuring, calculative, or technologically defined sciences.[42]

If this were an armchair problem of the classically metaphysical kind we could let it go at that: as a puzzle of the ordinary Kuhnian kind—science as Popperian problem solving. But because the problem is the problem of science as the "theory of the real" (see GS §57), we have been attempting to take it by its figurative horns, in the very spirit of Nietzsche's own metaphorical invocation of the Cretan art of bull dancing (BT §ii). The "horns" of this dilemma may also remind us of Nietzsche's polemical language in his preface to *Beyond Good and Evil*, whereby all of us, as philosophers and as scientists/philologists, conceived as impotent, or at least as inconsequential, suitors of the truth, are also crowned with all the allusions to the liar that are inevitable with reference to Nietzsche or even, thinking of Ariadne, to Theseus himself. But here, our ambition is more sober than trivial matters of scholarly pride, or what Nietzsche called "scientific pedantry." An unquestioning inattention to modern science and technology continues to rule in modern confidence, that is, in what Nietzsche called our "convictions."

For Nietzsche, we explain (or as he takes care to specify, we "describe" [GS §112]) everything with reference to ourselves and our own motivational intentionality, consequently and inevitably, here Nietzsche goes beyond *both* Kant and Schopenhauer, we fashion (or invent) the very concept of a cause (GS §112; cf. GS §357) and thereby misconstrue both the world *and* ourselves in a single blow.[43] Nietzsche's critical reflections on science may be summarized as the critical reflexive question of science raised in terms of the conditions of any possibility of knowing, that is to say: looking at science itself as a problem, *scientifically*, and that is, again, from the perspective of art and life. Like the sand patterns of the Chladni sound figures that so captivated Nietzsche's imagination,[44] the question of science can be raised in terms of music, not only in terms of the troubadour's musical art but also in terms of its remainder. This is music's ineffable residue, sedimented in the words that still remain to be sung.[45]

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche outlines a critical revision of the standard genealogy of science out of the spirit of myth and magic and alchemy as he also finds science modeled on the occluded paradigm of religion (GS §300; GM III, 25). Nietzsche does not merely parallel science and religion in terms of both faith and ultimate goals, that is, piety and metaphysics (GS §344) but earlier, in a rarely remarked upon aphoristic tour de force, Nietzsche plays between science and religion and the prejudices proper to both. Thus Nietzsche tells a parable to explain (and not quite to denounce)[46] an earlier era's wholly scientific (one thinks of the Jesuit scholar, Robert Bellarmine's) resistance to Galileo and to Copernicus and so on. In the very way that the noble passion of love (the purity of the lover, the same purity that forgives even the visceral vigor of lust itself, as Nietzsche notes [GS §62]) would be disinclined to wish or to be asked to imagine the inner guts of the beloved, the whole network of tissue and blood and nerves in all their glistening truth, so the believer would have had, in times gone by, a similar lover's horror with respect to the divine sensorium. In earlier, more religiously (as opposed to more scientifically) pious times, one recoiled from the viewpoint that would reveal the beloved: the cosmos and thus God himself, laid bare by the incursions of telescopes and astronomical theory: "In everything that was said about nature by astronomers, geologists, physiologists, and doctors, he saw an intrusion on his choicest property and thus an assault—and a shameless one on the part of the attacker" (GS §59). We see here the sensitivity of Nietzsche's rhetorical style at work: beginning where "all the world" knows its way around and knows all about (namely: about love and love affairs, think of the philosophers of sex and love), Nietzsche's parable takes the reader to a more esoteric

insight, namely into scientific cosmology itself and the trajectories of its historical contextuality and thence to the philosophy of science as such.

For the sake of the philosophical question of truth and logical rationality, Nietzsche raises the question of science as the question of the measure of the world of real—not ideal (GS §57)—things. For Nietzsche, just as one cuts away the metaphysical domain of the noumenal, real/ideal world and loses the phenomenal world in the same process, the clarification of the human being in modern scientific, evolutionary, and physiological terms also works to eliminate the pure possibility of knowledge as such. If what works in us are tissues and cells, genes and evolutionary history, associations and habits, then we cannot speak of knowledge, and certainly not "reality." The problem is worse than a Kantian conceptual scheme, space-time, causality, et cetera, the problem is the in-mixture of ecology, physiology, and electrochemical processes. Thus Nietzsche can conclude: "There is for us no 'reality' . . ." (GS §57). When, in the subsequent section, Nietzsche goes on to detail his radical nominalism he is not merely invoking the sovereignty of human invention but its impotence. Thus he declares his conviction, "that unspeakably more lies in what things are called than in what they are" (GS §58). This is complicated as it begins in arbitrary convention but ends in something even more durable than habit as there is also (and there are entire sciences like philology but also, like anthropology and the other "human" sciences that seek to adumbrate Nietzsche's insight here) a natural history of conventions or habits. Thus he reflects that "appearance from the very start almost becomes essence and works as such" (Ibid.). But cutting through all of this is itself a proof of its efficacy and origin and above all, "it is, we should not forget, enough to create new names and estimates and probabilities in order to create new 'things' in the long run" (Ibid.). This poetic creativity is the ultimate meaning of the troubadour's art (*trobar*, an etymologically disputed term, meaning invention but also related to tropes and their variations)[47] as a science (GS §335): it is the heart of what Nietzsche called *"la gai saber."*

For Nietzsche, "all of life is based on semblance, art, deception, points of view, and the necessity of perspectives and error" (BT §v).[48] Nietzsche saw that the critical self-immolation of knowledge ("the truth that one is eternally condemned to untruth" [KSA 1, 760]) at the limit of the critical philosophic enterprise is to be combined with the sober notion that insight into illusion does not abrogate it and, above all, such insight does not mean that illusion lacks effective or operative power. To the contrary, "from every point of view," Nietzsche argued, "the *erroneousness* of the world in which we live is the surest and the firmest thing we can get our eyes on" (BGE §34; cf. GS §§111, 112). Nor, as we have

traced the etymology of *Wissenschaft*,[48] is this visual metaphor an incidental one here. For Nietzsche, to regard the body as a complexly knowing instrumentarium, widely keyed to all its senses and not restricted to sight alone, is to understand the body itself as mind, that is, not as opposed to the mind, and not imagined as a Cartesian or Lockean adjunct to the mind, but, writ large and veritably Hobbesian (if beyond Hobbes), a "grand reason, a plurality with one sensibility, a war and a peace."[49]

As "physician of culture," the philosopher is to be an artist of science, a composer of reflective thought, refusing the calculations of science as the thickness deadly to the "music" of life (GS §372; 373). Refusing such calculations, the gay science promotes a more musical, more passionate science. In this way, the "only" help for science turns out to be not more science or better scientific understanding but the therapeutic resources and risks of art.[50] The goal is not a more charming, comic, or "light" science but, much rather—and much more—a science worthy of the name, if perhaps for the first time: a gay science with the courage truly to question (GS §§345, 346, 351) resisting what Nietzsche analyzes as the always latent tendency of degraded and ordinary science, "grey science," I have been calling it, to rigidify into either the damning exclusions of dogma, "You must be mistaken! Where have you left your senses! This *dare not* be the truth!" (GS §25), or empty and mindless problem solving ("an exercise in arithmetic and an indoor diversion for mathematicians" [GS §373]).

What Nietzsche means by thinking in the critical service of science (as the artful "mastery" of this same, newly gay science) can only be expressed in its contextual connections to topics in other kinds of philosophic reflection traditionally regarded as distinct. One allies laughter and wisdom, rejoining art and science because, for Nietzsche, the problem of science corresponds to the problem of art and life.

It is for this reason that one always misses the point when one declares that Nietzsche is "against" (or "for") science. Instead, Nietzsche's interpretive touchstone contrasts what affirms mortal life on this earth with what denies that life. But because mortal life includes sickness, decay, and death, this tragic perspective opposes the nihilism (be it mystico-religious or rational-scientific) that would seek, as does religion, to redeem or else, as does science, to improve life because *both* perspectives turn out to *deny* mortality (suffering, frustration, death—an emphasis common to the troubadours as well as ancient Greek music drama or tragedy and, indeed, opera).

Like the problem of suffering, Nietzsche's philosophy of science addresses the problem of mortal life without seeking to solve it. For

Nietzsche, "knowledge and becoming" (truth and life) mutually and incorrigibly exclude each other (KSA 12, 382; cf. 312). Thus to say that "our art is the reflection of *desperate knowledge*" (KSA 7, 476) is to set art and knowledge on the same level and for this same reason, both art and knowledge can be used either against life or in the service of life (and we recall that "life" is the "woman" of Nietzsche's troubadour song in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* [see too GS §229]). But when Nietzsche writes in *The Gay Science* that "*science* can serve either goal" (GS §12), he cannot be articulating a traditionally naïve expression of science's celebrated neutrality, as we have seen. Instead, and precisely as a logical or theoretical project, science is the kind of art or illusion (or convention) that remains inherently nihilistic. Because science (as such) is not objectively neutral, science must *always* be critically reviewed not on its own basis (we have noted that science is not and cannot be in a position to do this) but rather on the ground of what makes science possible, and that is what Nietzsche originally named the "light" of art.

It is art that gives us perspective on things (GS §339) just as art teaches us to regard them from the proper distance (GS §107). This is the perspectival knowledge proper to the art (or science as Nietzsche would say) of rhetoric. That same framing optic—or perspective prism, to use a Goethean metaphor for Nietzsche's own approach to science—focuses on life in its complexity, regarded in such a way that it can be seen in all its shifting complexity. "At times we need to have a rest from ourselves," he writes, a pause gained "by looking at and down at ourselves and from an artistic distance, laughing *at* ourselves or crying *at* ourselves; we have to discover the hero no less than the fool in our passion for knowledge; we must now and then be pleased with our folly in order to be able to remain pleased by our wisdom" (GS §107).

This artful joy (or gaiety) is what Nietzsche encourages us to learn from "the artists," and to learn this in the same manner and with the same expectations with which we learn from doctors and pharmacists how best to down a bitter drink: by thinning it, to diffuse or veil it, or by mixing sugar and wine into the potion (GS §299). The bitter potion stays bitter, but it can be drunk. Art has at its disposal a variety of means for *making* things beautiful, alluring, and desirable, precisely when they aren't—for "in themselves, they never are" (Ibid.). Here Nietzsche calls upon us to be wiser than, to go further than, the artist who forgets his magic at the point where his art leaves off: "We however want to be the poets of our lives, and first of all in the smallest and most everyday way" (Ibid.).

As "the actual poets and authors of life," this poetizing would extend to a benediction of life, as it is, *amor fati*. Promising to bless life,

Nietzsche made this his own Saint January resolution of the great year of eternity: "I want to learn more and more how to see what is necessary in things as what is beautiful in them—thus I will be one of those who make things beautiful" (GS §276). This alliance of science (necessity) and art (creativity) is the art of living and it is the practical achievement of Nietzsche's joyful science.

## Chapter Four

1. This text was originally written in response to Keith Ansell-Pearson's invitation to write on the Chladni sound patterns in *The Gay Science* for the Blackwell *Companion to Nietzsche* (and I do address this theme: see pp. 61ff. and associated context). Beyond patterns in vibrating sand, the visual evidence or transference of sound, I here attend to the fundamental question of the role of the song tradition throughout Nietzsche's work, in particular, the literally "gay science" or poetic song craft of the troubadours.

2. The title plays off many things, most obviously Wagner's *Meistersinger*, and it alludes to Walther von der Vogelweide—Nietzsche had heard a course on his poetry during his student years in Bonn.

3. That one should take this "chaste" character rather lightly seems advisable. See Pierre Bec, *Le comte de Poitiers, premiers troubadour, à l'aube d'un verbe et d'une érotique* (Montpellier: Université Paul Valery "Collection lo gatros," 2003) as well as Arnaud de la Croix, *L'éroticisme au Moyen Âge: le corps le désir l'amour* (Paris: Tallandier, 1999). Nietzsche himself corroborates this erotic dimensionality in a note where he affirms the "Provençale" as a "highpoint" in European culture just because they were "not ashamed of their drives" (KSA 10, 256). Despite the appeal of identifying Nietzsche's "immortal beloved" with Lou (and the question of Nietzsche's love affair with Lou is something else again) or else for tracing his passions for the boys of southern Italy (as some have speculated), it is more likely that the addressee of the love songs of Nietzsche's "gay science" would have been Cosima Wagner. I say this last not because I am personally especially persuaded of Cosima's charms as such but because of the very nature of the gay science. The ambiguous coding of the troubadour's message was exoteric, specifically for public display: a love song in the direct presence of the beloved's husband, who, for good measure, would also be one's own patron. See for a study of this coding, Paul Zumthor, *Langue, texte, énigme* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975).

4. In Nietzsche's notes we find the variant titling: "Studies of every kind/to 'the gay science'/ *(la gaya scienza)*" (KSA 9, 681).

5. Goethe's *Singspiel* from 1784 was originally set to music by Goethe himself in collaboration with the composer Philipp Christoph Kayser in 1785 but never performed in Goethe's day. The title was suggested to Nietzsche by Paul Rée. Heinrich Köselitz, who had promised to dedicate any publication to Rée, finished a comic opera of the same name at the time of Nietzsche's own writing. Beyond Rée, the theme was quite popular. Thus although E. T. A. Hoffman wrote stage music for Goethe's *Singspiel* in 1799, I find it more significant that in 1858, Max Bruch had composed one of his first compositions, music for a comic opera with the same title, using Ludwig Bischoff's abridged version of Goethe. Wagner for his part, composed music for Goethe's *Faust* and this is perhaps relevant to (but hardly the reason for) Nietzsche's allusions to *Faust* in *The Gay Science* and elsewhere.

6. KSA 12, 150. See BGE, §260 and KSA 11, 547 and 551.

7. KSA 11, 547; cf. GS, *Songs of Prince Vogelfrei*; EH, *GS*.

8. For a discussion of this secrecy, see the discussion of *trobar clos* in Elizabeth Aubrey et al.,"Les troubadours," *Guide de la Musique du Moyen Âge*, dir., Françoise Ferrand (Paris: Fayard 1999), p. 263. For a Lacanian interpretation of this coding, see Alexandre Leupin, "L'événement littérature: note sur la poétique des troubadours," in *What is Literature?* eds. F. Cornilliat et al. (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1993), pp. 53–68.

9. Aubrey, "Les troubadours," p. 259. Due to its non-subjective quality, the same anti-lyrical (i.e., a-personal) lyricism absorbed Nietzsche's interest in *The Birth of Tragedy*. See BT §5.

10. The *tenso* is regarded as the model for scholastic reasoning. See Aubrey et al., "Les Formes" in Ferrand, *Guide de la Musique du Moyen Âge,* p. 335. Part of the justification for this association is Peter Abelard's compositions, compositions that Heloise recalls to him as seductively enchanting and that, as he himself tells us in his own reflections on his "calamities," were channeled into philosophy. Although Abelard's secular songs have been lost, apart from his own allusions and Heloise's recollection of them to us, his sacred songs have been transmitted.

11. The character of nobility is a primordial one for Nietzsche: as inventors of the ideal of love as "passion," Europe "almost" owes its very being (BGE §260) to these "knight-poets."

12. As listed in translation: "*Albas*—Morningsongs; *Serenas*—Evensong; *Tenzoni*—Battlesongs; *Sirventes*—Songs of praise and rebuke; *Sontas*—Songs of Joy; *Laïs*—Songs of Sorrow" (KSA 9, 574).

13. There was thus a medieval tradition of stylized joy (Monty Python gives as good a sense of this as any), and it may be compared to Nietzsche's characterization of Greek (and Germanic) cheerfulness in his notes. Invoking this medieval tradition as animating the art of the troubadour at least since the eleventh century, Roger Dragonetti defines "the spirit of '*jonglerie*' " as that "which makes poetic language into the magic instrument of all the mirrors reflecting its myth." For Dragonetti, the energy of the common people's tongue is expressed in this tradition: "the development of the common language, the flowering of which is accomplished by rhythm and music accompanied by a kind of gleefulness where laughter moves from bantering to sniggering, even including mockery without language ever losing its rights to the sovereignty of play and the pleasure that it secures." Dragonetti, *Le gai savoir dans la rhétorique courtoise*: *Flamenca et Joufroi de Poitiers* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982), p. 13. Dragonetti reads the "*gai savoir*" (the orthography of which he continuously varies in his text) via an association with Nietzsche, explicitly invoking Dionysian revelry: "It is absolutely clear that in the concept of *gay saber*, transported by the Dionysian basis of '*joy*,' the courtly poet celebrates in jubiliation and rapture [*ravissement*], assuming an consummately playful, facetious, and pleasing dimension, for which abundant proof may be found in courtly poetry. It has thus seemed necessary for us to insist on these aspects of the *gaya sciensa*, qualities which have for at least two centuries governed an entire rhetorical tradition of lyric as well as narrative literature, the language of which is essentially expressed by the rhythm of contradiction" (Ibid., 15). There is much to be explored here with regard to Nietzsche's conception of rhetoric and metaphor but also parodic form.

14. Marcel Decremps suggests this associative connection in his *De Herder et de Nietzsche à Mistral* (Toulon: L'astrado, 1974).

15. Joachim Köhler, among others, has made the case for this claim, but it is complicated because, as David B. Allison and Marc Weiner have also shown, another argument for a similarly shameful eroticism, namely autoeroticism, can also be made, indeed Nietzsche's couplet joke about the physiology of masculine life seems to allude to this (nor is it not irrelevant that tales of Kant's sex life play upon the same physiological fact of life): "Steh ich erst auf Einem Beine/Steh ich balde auch auf zweien" (KSA 9, 686). See Köhler, *Zarathustra's Secret: The Interior Life of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. Ronald Taylor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), Allison, *Reading the New Nietzsche* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2001), Weiner, "The Eyes of the Onanist or the Philosopher Who Masturbated" in *Wagner and the Anti-Semitic Imagination* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), pp. 335–347.

16. See for context, Allison, *Reading the New Nietzsche*, p. 154, citing Nietzsche's EH, *Z*, §7.

17. Nietzsche's letter to Overbeck: Christmas Day, 1882. See Allison, *Reading the New Nietzsche*, p. 115.

18. Despite Nietzsche's clear specification of the intrinsic desires and motivations of knowledge, it is hard to imagine a stronger denunciation of the usual financial motivations of research scholarship than Nietzsche's, although Weber and Heidegger come close. Gold in *The Gay Science*, lightly and *gaily* enough, turns out to be a metaphor for the sun: shining rippling gold on the water (GS §337; GS §339) but it also has other resonances for Nietzsche as we encounter it in the parodic and presaging image of Zarathustra's morning song, as an overflowing vessel: "Bless the cup that wants to overflow in order that the water may flow golden from it and everywhere carry the reflection of your bliss. Behold, this cup wants to become empty again" (GS §342). Readers intrigued by this imagery may wish to read Richard Perkins, "A Giant and Some Dwarves: Nietzsche's Unpublished Märchen on the Exception and the Rule," *Marvels and Fairy-Tales: Journal of Fairy Tale Studies,* 11/1–2 (1997): 61–73.

19. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Volume II*: *The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, trans. David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 20. Hereafter cited as N2 in the text. See the following for further discussion.

20. I use the term "grey science" for reasons of acoustic contrast. Nietzsche refers to the color grey, even silver grey, as one among his many declared preferred colors and in particular does so in the context of overextended (and limited) scholarship. Thus we hear him in BGE 14 as well as in his color of preference for the dawn of positivism. And he invokes the same color of almost Hegelian darkness or grey in order to challenge the limitations of neo-Kantianism with regard to the very limits of reason itself built upon the most superficial preconceptions, calling it a philosophy of grey conceptualizing. But Nietzsche can also invoke a grey of context and differentiation, what may be called a hermeneutic grey, as he remarks in an arch reference to Paul Rée in his preface to *On the Genealogy of Morals*, serves to outline "the whole, long hieroglyphic text, so difficult to decipher of humanity's moral past!" (GM §v). This grey of

shades and differentiations makes a pencil sketch or pen and ink drawing more precise than the most colorful photograph for scientists concerned with pragmatic details, as in a medical handbook.

21. Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* begins with a dawn song *(Albas)* exemplifying another of Nietzsche's master song cycles, in addition to the instantiation of, and ironic variation upon, the more typical troubadour's dawn song (which was traditionally more a song sung less to greet the new day than to mourn the close of the alliances of the night, as the hours steal into the claims of the day) in the *Songs of Prince Vogelfrei*, "Song of a Theocritical Goatherd."

22. "Anyone who recalls the immediate effects produced by this restlessly advancing spirit of science will recognize how myth was destroyed by it, and how this destruction drove poetry from its natural, ideal soil, so that it became homeless from that point onward" (BT §17).

23. "If we are correct in ascribing to music the power to give birth to myth once more, we must also expect to see the spirit of science advancing on a hostile course toward the myth-creating force of music" (Ibid.).

24. This refers to the *Leys d'Amor*—laws of love—a work compiled in Toulouse by seven troubadours who established the *Académie littéraire de Toulouse ou Consistoire du Gai Savoir*, a group that transmitted the poetic code of the *Gay Saber* (*gay saber/gai saber/gaia scienza*—the orthography varies as Dragonetti has illustrated in *le gai savoir dans la rhétorique courtoise*). See Olivier Cullen's entry in Ferrand, *La Musique du Moyen Âge*, p. 279. On the relation to law, see Peter Goodrich, "Gay Science and Law," in *Rhetoric and Law in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Victoria Kahn and L. Hutson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp 95–125.

25. See previously noted references regarding the troubadours as well as, more broadly, Leo Treitler, *With Voice and Pen: Coming to Know Medieval Song and How It Was Made* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). See too Elizabeth Aubrey, *The Music of the Troubadours* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996) and, for a discussion of the distinction between vocal and unaccompanied song in the context of the tradition of musical accompaniment, Christopher Page, *Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), as well as, again, Zumthor, *Langue, texte, énigme*.

26. Eugen Fink, *Nietzsche's Philosophy*, trans. Goetz Richter (Athlone: Aldershot, 2003) offers one overview of Nietzsche's "artist's metaphysics." See for further discussion in English as well as additional references, Babich, "Nietzsche's 'Artist's Metaphysics' and Fink's Ontological 'World-Play,' " *International Journal of Philosophy*. In press.

27. Nietzsche attempts several articulations of this, for example, where he writes one variation upon the same expression in *The Birth of Tragedy*. "Logic as artistic conception: biting itself in its own tail thus it opens a portal to the world of myth. Mechanism, the way science turns into art 1: at the periphery of knowledge, 2: beyond the pale of logic" (KSA 7, 224; cf. BT §15).

28. Nietzsche reflects on the ancient and the churchly consilience—to use E. O. Wilson's insulating term—of the thought of science or knowledge as a mere means. The idea of science (or knowledge) as an intrinsic good is, Nietzsche writes, very specific to modernity. See on this point, GS §123.

29. Nietzsche continues to explain this passion as the passion of one "who steadfastly lives, must live, in the thundercloud of the highest problems and the weightiest responsibilities (and thus in no way an observer, outside, indifferent, secure, objective . . . )" (GS §351). The passion of this quite Nietzschean vocational ideal influenced not only Max Weber, who is usually associated with it, but Martin Heidegger as well.

30. Heidegger emphasizes that Nietzsche's "gay science" is not casually "gay," but a passionately cheerful knowing, "invigorated" rather than destroyed by the most "questionable matters" (N2, 22). Heidegger thus reads the thought of the eternal return as Nietzsche's most terrifying or questionable thought, placing it at the heart of *The Gay Science*.

31. And thus numerous commentators tell us that Nietzsche was a fan of "real" science, even if, as they also hasten to inform us, he was ignorant of much of it, an ignorance commentators take to be standard. New research, especially Robin Small's *Nietzsche in Context* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), should change this assessment. See too the contributions featured in Gregory Moore and Thomas Brobjer, eds., *Nietzsche and the Sciences* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

32. See Aubrey et al., "Les Troubadours," pp. 277–279.

33. See Deborah Steiner, *The Crown of Song: Metaphor in Pindar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 35–36ff.

34. The *planh* is the troubadour song sung to lament the death of the singer's "master" or protector (see Ferrand, *La Musique du Moyen Âge*, pp. 351–352 for a definition of this song and an account of its usually political, and satirical, transformations). In this way, although the setting of Nietzsche's Venice poem in his *Ecce Homo*, "On the Bridge . . ." is twilight and thus would seem to be a plain evening song, it may also be regarded as a lament for Wagner, who died in 1883. The 1886 poem, "My Happiness" [*Mein Gluck!*], included in the *Songs of Prince Vogelfrei* would also seem to make reference to this death. The poem begins, citing Kaufmann's translation here: "The pigeons of San Marco I descry / Again: Calm is the square, still signs of dew. / It's mild and cool, Like swarms of pigeons, I / Send up my songs into the blue—. . ." and concludes "Begone, O Music! Give the shadows time / To grow into a brown, mild night and doze! / It is too early in the day to chime: / The golden ornaments have not turned rose, / The day is not holding back: Still time to prowl, talk to oneself, and rhyme—My happiness! My luck!" I offer a further discussion of Nietzsche's Venice poem in chapter 7, including its association with Wagner and internal to the context of Nietzsche's recollection of Hölderlin.

35. An interest in the science of the "future" likewise constituted Nietzsche's abiding concern throughout his creative life.

36. As noted previously, R. Kevin Hill has rightly called attention to the presentist confidence that speaks in all speculation upon Nietzsche's reading of Kant. See Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques: The Kantian Foundations of His Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). As Hill notes, such claims depend upon the coincidence of Nietzsche's reading with the critic's own. Hill does not develop this point further and this author wishes that he had. For the assumption that Nietzsche was familiar with Kant's critical philosophy turns out to be no less

grounded than the assumption, as I have emphasized this, that he "could not have been" so acquainted. The present author remains convinced that such familiarity on Nietzsche's part would have been no less taxing than, say, his reading of Schopenhauer or Diogenes Laertius, or, for that matter, Heraclitus. Once more: one does not need to claim that Nietzsche could not possibly have read Kant just because he does not come to the same conclusions as, for example, Jerry Schneewind. If I myself do not agree with the things Schneewind says about Kant, my disagreement does not give me license, although it may tempt me to do so, to conclude that Schneewind could not have read Kant nor even that Schneewind fails to understand him. By instructive contast, David B. Allison addresses the substantive issues common to both Nietzsche and Kant while steering clear of speculation on whether Nietzsche read or did not read Kant. See Allison, "Nietzsche Knows No Noumenon," in *Why Nietzsche Now? Boundary Two*, ed. Daniel O'Hara (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 294–310.

37. These critical roots, derived from Kant, are the very critical spirit of critical theory especially as found in the work of Adorno and Horkheimer but also Slavoj Žižek. See too, in connection with Paul Reé, Robin Small, *Nietzsche and Reé: A Star Friendship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

38. For Nietzsche, Kant's critical philosophy, conceiving "space, time and causality as entirely unconditioned laws of the most universal validity," demonstrated that these same concepts "really served only to elevate the mere phenomenon . . . to the position of the sole and highest reality, as if it were the true essence of things" (BT §18).

39. See for a further elaboration of this thematic discussion, Babich, "Nietzsche's Critique of Scientific Reason and Scientific Culture: On 'Science as a Problem' and 'Nature as Chaos' " in Moore and Brobjer, eds., *Nietzsche and Science*, pp. 133–153. See also Babich, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Science*.

40. See Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste" in *Hume's Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 231–255.

41. The collective or systematic dimension of *Wissenschaft* distinguishes it from science in English usage.

42. And still further from the collective ideal of a unified coordinate science of everything as Heidegger invoked it and as German ears can hear it, we note, at least in English but increasingly in all languages, the singularizing paradigm, as it were, of the natural sciences, particularly physics, as prototypical for the meaning of "science" as such.

43. Nietzsche argues that "the sole causality of which we are conscious is that between willing and doing—we transfer this to all things and signify for ourselves the relationship of two alterations that always happen simultaneously. The *noun* is the resultant of the intention or will, the *verb* of the doing. The animal as the creature that wills—that is its essence." (KSA 7, 482). See also GS §112.

44. Digitalization, the engineering of a digital musical reproduction, would have been endlessly fascinating to Nietzsche's Helmholtzian sensibilities, as perhaps still more so would be the new marketing techniques and the engineering design field of "sonic branding." For the latter, see Daniel Jackson, ed., *Sonic*

*Branding* (London: Macmillan, 2004) and, for the former, Freeman Dyson, "When is the Ear Pierced," in *Immersed in Technology*, eds. Mary Anne Moser and Douglas MacLeod (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 73–101.

45. Like the problem of the "music" of ancient tragedy (as argued in chapters 2 and 3 above, this is Nietzsche's ruling problem throughout his life), the problem of the "gay science" thus turns out to be the problem of the "music" of the troubadours' songs. The performative parallel to the Homeric problem is clear. There are thousands of preserved songs—and this is only part of the originally greater song tradition, recorded centuries after its heyday—and only a fraction of these preserved songs have written indications of musical melodies. An intriguing application of digital analysis offers some support for Nietzsche's own conviction that the words themselves constitute the "music." See Ineke Hardy and Elizabeth Brodovitch, "Tracking the Anagram: Preparing a Phonetic Blueprint of Troubadour Poetry," in *The Court Reconvenes: Courtly Literature Across the Disciplines*, eds. Barbara A. Altman and Carleton W. Carroll (D. S. Brewer, 2003), pp. 199–211. The authors use the computer's capacity for phonetic analysis not by relying on transcription into modern linguistic phonetic conventions but invoke instead Robert Taylor's observation that "Old Occitan is largely phonetic; that is, in most cases, the spelling reflects the actual pronunciation" (in T. J. McGee et al., eds., *Singing Early Music: The Pronunciation of European Languages in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996], pp. 103–118, here p. 105). The literally phonetic quality of Provençal (as opposed to modern French) makes it possible to teach computers "to 'hear.' " Note that Nietzsche's usage in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Prologue 5 inverts Aristotle's reference to the use of proportional metaphor in his *Rhetoric* for helping one's hearers "see" (Rhet. B III: 10, 11).

46. Nietzsche's sensibility here is intriguingly in accord with Paul Feyerabend's reflection on Galileo and his historical context. See Feyerabend, "Galileo and the Tyranny of Truth," in *A Farewell to Reason* (London: Verso, 1987), pp. 247–264.

47. For this etymology, see pp. 12–13 in Paul Zumthor, "Why the Troubadours?" in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, eds. F. R. P. Akehurst and J. Davis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 11–18.

48. See also Nietzsche's early *Nachlaß* note: "We speak as if there were *existent things* and our science speaks only of such things. But an existing thing exists only in terms of the *human perspective*: which we cannot dispense with. Something becoming, movement as such, is *utterly* incomprehensible for us. We move *only existent things*—out of this our worldview is formed in the mirror. If we think the things away, the movement goes too. A moved force makes no sense—for us" (KSA 9, 309; cf. GS §110).

49. "The body is a great reason, a multiplicity with one sense, a war and a peace" (KSA 4, p. 39). Thomas Common uses "sagacity" to render *Vernunft*, R. J. Hollingdale has "intelligence" and Walter Kaufmann, perfectly correctly in this case, translates *Vernunft* as "reason" in its exactly philosophical sense, where Nietzsche continues: "The tool of your body is also your little reason, my brother,

which you call 'spirit,' a little tool and play toy of your great reason." With even more Kantian clarity, we hear: "There is more reason in your body than in your reason" (KSA 10, 4[240]). Nietzsche thus sets the body in contrast to the intellect, our "four-square little human reason" [*viereckigen kleinen Menschenvernunft*] in the materialist context of empirical science (GS §373).

50. Thus and exactly where Nietzsche speaks of a joyful science he is also careful to avoid the simple opposition between science and art, by insisting on a new kind of art: "another kind of art—a mocking, light, fleeting, divinely untroubled, divinely artificial art, that like a bright flame, blazes into an unclouded sky! Above all: an art for artists, only for artists!" (GS §iv).

## Chapter Five

1. This chapter takes up but also departs from (as a tribute to the suggestive force of) Alexander's Nehamas's "How One Becomes What One Is," *The Philosophical Review* 92/3 (July 1983): 385–417. For Nehamas, his own essay also developed beyond its original contours into his pathbreaking and highly influential *Life as Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985). This essay was originally conceived as a lecture given at a meeting of the Friedrich Nietzsche Society in Great Britain. For an earlier version of this essay, foregrounding translation in addition to ethical questions, see "Nietzsche's Imperative as a Friend's Encomium: On Becoming the One You Are, Ethics, and Blessing," *Nietzsche-Studien* 33 (2003): 29–58.

2. Pindar, *Olympian Odes; Pythian Odes*, ed. and trans. William H. Race (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

3. See Glenn Most, *The Measures of Praise: Structure and Function in Pindar's Second Pythian and Seventh Nemean Odes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985) but see also any other discussion of Nietzsche and Pindar. Subsequent reviews seem to follow Most's interpretation (whether directly or coincidentally is unclear to me) but it is important to add that in this text, Most, for his own part, has almost nothing to do with Nietzsche.

4. There is in fact more than one elision that one might worry about and on more than one level. Thus scholars have noted (and I mention it only in passing, as it cannot be here addressed), a second and separate problem regarding the rendering of γένοιο as *become*. In the drama of elision it is thus relevant that this very phrase is missing from Michael Theunissen's study of Pindar and time—this in a book of 989 pages. Theunissen includes a footnote suggesting that the omission was intended to deflect the history and the literature that has centered around this one, detached phrase at more than one contextual remove. See Theunissen, *Pindar* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2000), p. 12, note 13. This anxiety would seem to be due to those who read Pindar in Foucault's voice as a command to realize one's fullest potentiality for the self (if not, of course, for being): expressed in literary terms as the art of living, the art of life itself. See Wilhelm Schmid, *Philosophie der Lebenskunst* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998) and for the classical roots of this ideal, Pierre Hadot,