Epistemic Pessimism In Nietzsche

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"Epistemic pessimism" is a label for a kind of thinking in Nietzsche that I find interesting and promising. It is the realization that what we have been trying to do, as we have sought to know the world, cannot be done. This is a way that someone might read Nietzsche, and I find it a good way to interpret him. But it is not the most popular reading. An alternative interpretation focuses upon what I will be calling the "Zarathustran hope," the expectation that life and reality, though negative and disappointing in many ways, can be overcome and turned to good by a strong and artistic person. In this paper I will be comparing these two ways of reading Nietzsche and asking if we have any basis for choosing between them.

Nietzsche's genius was to see the *motives* in human thinking, to get us asking, "what are we trying to do when we function as rational beings in the way the western world has?" He saw that to know the world is to have it *handled*, but did he think it could be handled? He saw that theoretical thought and religion seek mastery through duplicity, bowing to and bargaining with "transcendent powers" that are, unknown to us, our own constructions. But did he think our will to power, once made honest and disentangled from the pretense of submission, could prevail? Or did he preach a message of impotence?

I think his main message is that reality is unmanageable, uncontrollable, intractable. Epistemic pessimism is the realization that one cannot make the universe go his or her way. But Nietzsche also taught a way to overcome, an aesthetic overcoming of the intractable world through the tragic affirmation of it *as it is*, in its very intransigence. Zarathustra's solution is to see the truth about what cannot be done and then say, "Thus I willed it." Given that both epistemic pessimism and the Zarathustran hope exist in Nietzsche's thought, to which of these should we be paying the most attention?

I. The Real Nietzsche?:

To ask how one ought to read Nietzsche is to raise a preliminary question about interpretation, especially of Nietzsche, because of his views on interpretation and his non-realism. Is there a *right* way to read him? Is there a *real* Nietzsche? In the process of looking at this preliminary question I will also be introducing the epistemic pessimism in Nietzsche.

A. "So much the better!": Non-Realism

The popular non-realist view is supported by Nietzsche's words from *Beyond Good and Evil* 22. He tells us there that everything is an interpretation, implying there is no basis for choosing a better interpretation. Note, though, that this is not his main point in this passage, for it speaks mainly of a lawless world, one which cannot be known and handled. He writes:

> But as said above, ["nature's conformity to law," of which you physicists talk so proudly,] is interpretation, not text; and somebody might come along who, with opposite intentions and modes of interpretation, could read out of the same "nature," and with regard to the same phenomena, rather the tyrannically inconsiderate and relentless enforcement of claims of power – an interpreter who would picture the unexceptional and unconditional aspects of all "will to power" so vividly that almost every word, even the word "tyranny" itself, would eventually seem unsuitable, or a weakening and attenuating metaphor – being too human – but he might, nevertheless, end by asserting the same about this world as you do, namely that it has a "necessary" and "calculable" course, *not* because laws obtain in it, but because they are absolutely *lacking*, and every power draws its ultimate consequence at every moment. Supposing that this also is only interpretation – and you will be eager enough to make this objection? – well, so much the better.[1]

When asked, regarding the view he presents, isn't *that* an interpretation, Nietzsche agrees and says, "So much the better!" He encourages us to be open about interpretations, to not think there is a privileged one. Yet he does speak in the same passage about "bad modes of interpretation," namely the ones in which the world is seen as lawful. So Nietzsche is not exactly justifying a free-for-all with interpretations of the world; he has a point to make about it. We might say the one thing he *knows* about the world is that it is not knowable in the way we normally try to know it.

If a world-view, seeing the world as lawful or its opposite, is an interpretation, what about interpreting the writings of a person? Nietzsche wrote in *The Will to Power* 767, "Ultimately the individual ... has to interpret in a quite individual way even the words he has inherited. His interpretation of a formula at least is personal, even if he does not create a formula: as an interpreter he is still creative."[2]

B. "Have I Been Understood?": Realism

In spite of the prominent non-realist view of interpretation in Nietzsche, there are ways we might compare interpretations. First, we can ask how Nietzsche would

probably respond to various interpretations of him, if he were here. I see conservative interpretations of his epistemology that I think Nietzsche would find to be missing the point, trying to *handle* him in a way that is alien to his intentions. And I see radical views that are more in touch and yet might strike him as focusing too cheerfully on the playful, anything-goes side of his works. Nietzsche may have wanted to make a more serious point.

In his closing words in *Ecce Homo*, his closing words to the world, he asked, "Have I been understood?" He made it clear that he wanted to be known, or heard, or read in a particular way, as opposed to Christianity, if nothing else. But that does not tell us whether he would rather be remembered for epistemic pessimism or for the Zarathustran hope.

Nietzsche would probably disagree with this paper and say we should not downplay his hope of mastering the world through aesthetic or tragic affirmation. After all, this was his *solution*, what he offered to the world to deal with the fact that reality cannot be handled.

Yet, since both these messages are in Nietzsche, and since a writer might manifest or somehow convey something that transcends his own official message, I suggest two additional ways we might compare interpretations and possibly even choose one that Nietzsche, if he were here, would not favor.

We might ask how Nietzsche really *felt* about life, not only what he thought about the dishonest and double-minded attempts to master reality through subterfuge, for we know he hated that, but how he felt about his own solution. Nietzsche developed a criticism for theoretical thought and religion and morality, but he did not apply it to his own aestheticism, to art. Yet he was an honest and acute individual; did he really *feel* that this solution worked? Or did the pessimism that exists elsewhere in his work enter his Zarathustran solution, too, psychologically and emotionally? I can only suggest that there could be a study of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* that asks whether Nietzsche really did trust this alter-ego of his. Perhaps one would find there a hidden distrust, Nietzsche's unacknowledged recognition of the fact that no one can be strong enough to actually create a universe around himself, which is what genuine mastery requires.

A third way we might compare interpretations of Nietzsche is to make a pragmatic choice: what would be a good way for the world to read Nietzsche? This depends upon one's view of where the world is going and what is good for it. In my case, I bring out the epistemic pessimism in Nietzsche because it supports a biblical anthropology and assessment of the human condition. In this view, fallen humanity is trying to do what cannot be done: take over the universe. Pessimism is appropriate, and it is spiritually healthy for humankind to know that it attempts the impossible. The Zarathustran hope, on the other hand, is a last-ditch attempt to salvage the project, to do in the subtlest way what Nietzsche has been telling us

elsewhere cannot be done.

Now that you know where I am coming from when I recommend the epistemic pessimism in Nietzsche, let me look more closely at what I think is the most important message in Nietzsche.

II. Epistemic Pessimism:

"Epistemic pessimism" is not skepticism. Nietzsche is not pessimistic about whether or not his ideas correspond to the real world or cohere well with all the other ideas that exist. The first kind of problem presupposes a metaphysical view he does not hold: object realism. For him, objects and all the other ways of ordering experience – theoretical thought, morality, religion, etc. – are constructs of the will to power. They are not "out there," independently of the subject, needing to be known by the subject. Nor does he expect all the ideas of all subjects to fit together into some great Unity. Epistemology in the modern era has been preoccupied with the "how" of knowledge: how do we ascertain that we have knowledge? But Nietzsche sets aside this technical task and looks at the motives operating in it.[3]

Epistemic pessimism is about these motives, about what we are trying to do. Nietzsche understands knowledge as an attempted power-relationship with the world, a way of trying to handle it. And he concludes that nothing can be done with it, except for a possible aesthetic mastery. Let me show some examples.

The clearest statements of this view come from the early, unpublished works, but consider first the passage already seen from *Beyond Good and Evil* 22, where Nietzsche writes: "[A new interpreter] might, nevertheless, end by asserting the same about this world as you do, namely that it has a 'necessary' and 'calculable' course, *not* because laws obtain in it, but because they are absolutely *lacking*, and every power draws its ultimate consequence at every moment."

If the universe lacks laws, then one does not know how to interact successfully with it. Nietzsche knew, of course, that technology is a successful interaction with a lawful world, but he is not enthralled with this ability. His pessimism keeps sight of the fact that in the long run technology does not solve the human problem. It cannot overcome death of either the individual or the species. We can do limited things, but ultimately science does not make sense of the world. The last clause in the quoted sentence is obscure, but it suggests that we should not look in some "beyond" for explanations and purposes: what you see is what you get, and it has no order into which we can successfully fit our human lives.

Consider the following passage, which appears with slight variations in three places in the early *Nachlass*, including essays called "On the Pathos of Truth" and the better known "On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense":

> "In a remote corner of the universe there was once a star on which clever animals discovered *knowledge*. It was the proudest and most deceptive minute of world history, but only a minute. After nature had taken only a few breaths the star began to grow cold and the clever animals were forced to die. And it was time, for while they were priding themselves on having discovered so much, they finally discovered, to their consternation, that all their knowledge had been wrong. They died and cursed truth as they died.[4]

This pessimism about knowledge is based partly on the fact that technology's successes are temporary. In this respect, Nietzsche has a strange bedfellow in Bertrand Russell. He begins his 1903 essay, "A Free Man's Worship," with a story, as told by Mephistopheles to Dr. Faustus, that is remarkably like the short account of failed knowledge above. It is the story of a heartless creator who performs a pointless drama of human existence and then says, "It was a good play; I will have it performed again." It is as if Russell were writing his own version of Nietzsche's eternal return. After this story, Russell preaches an existentialist message:

> Such, in outline, but even more purposeless, more void of meaning, is the world which Science presents for our belief. Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals must henceforward find a home. That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built ... [5]

Russell expressed these sentiments early in his career and shortly after Nietzsche's death, without allying himself with Nietzsche or expressing any appreciation of his import. And, of course, Russell did not enter into the great distrust of rationality that Nietzsche was bringing into the twentieth century. Nevertheless, when he says that "all the noonday brightness of human genius [is] destined to

extinction in the vast death of the solar system," he sees the power of knowledge reduced in the long run to impotence. He also agrees with Nietzsche's pessimism when he says that "man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving," and that "his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms." If our ideas are the product of accident, how likely is it that they can successfully get a grip on this world and turn it to human advantage?

The person who most directly interprets Nietzsche in this epistemically pessimistic way is Heidegger. He does this through the way he understands Nietzsche's doctrine of "eternal return" or "eternal recurrence of the same." In Heidegger's eyes, this doctrine presents the world as one *with which we can do nothing*. It is the "most abysmal thought," the "greatest burden" It shows us that "The collective character of the world ... into all eternity is chaos."[6] It is a chaos that lacks order but not necessity – the same point made above in *Beyond Good and Evil*: it is a "necessitous chaos." Furthermore, the world as presented through the eternal return is "the necessitous chaos of perpetual becoming."[7] Now, since rationality as understood Socratically has always sought to contact and interact with *that which does not change*, a lawless force having necessity without order and consisting of perpetual change is the total opposite of a knowable, manipulable world. Heidegger understands Nietzsche as bringing to its consummation the long experiment of metaphysics, with its technological agenda, that began with Socrates. If this is so, then the end state of the attempt to technologically grasp the world is awareness of its un-graspability.

Oddly, Heidegger shows the total impotence suggested by this view of life, but he does not see it as a failure of knowledge. He says that "the world as a whole becomes something we fundamentally cannot address, something ineffable – an *arreton*." Yet he says also that Nietzsche speaks in the manner of a "negative theology, which tries to grasp the Absolute as purely as possible by holding at a distance all 'relative' determinations." Thus he calls this "the very opposite of despair concerning the possibility of knowledge."[8] It is, however, the end of the experiment in which knowing the world and gaining control over it were thought to be the same thing. Heidegger's point only makes sense if the absolute unknowability of the world somehow leads into, or *back to*, a more genuine kind of knowledge that was supplanted by the move into technological thinking.[9]

Heidegger has more of a quasi-religious expectation about the result of facing the unknowability of the world than does Nietzsche, but they are alike in claiming there was a higher form of genuine knowledge before Socratic or technological thought began to take over the world, and both think this can be sought again. In my final section I will look at this other kind of knowledge to which both Nietzsche

and Heidegger aspire. But the immediate point is that one could not hope to return to the former and higher consciousness without first becoming dreadfully aware of the impotence in the historical attempt to transform the world.

Consider, finally, Nietzsche's most famous statement of epistemic pessimism in *The Birth of Tragedy* 15. In his critique of Socratism and western rationality he gives us a memorable phrase, "a profound illusion," as a way of understanding what we have been trying to do. He writes:

> ... Lessing, the most honest theoretical man, dared to announce that he cared more for the search after truth than for truth itself – and thus revealed the fundamental secret of science, to the astonishment, and indeed the anger, of the scientific community. Beside this isolated insight, born of an excess of honesty if not of exuberance, there is, to be sure, a profound *illusion* that first saw the light of the world in the person of Socrates: the unshakable faith that thought, using the thread of causality, can penetrate the deepest abysses of being, and that thought is capable not only of knowing being but even of *correcting it*. This sublime metaphysical illusion accompanies science as an instinct and leads science again and again to its limits at which it must turn into *art – which is really the aim of this mechanism*.[10]

Science discovers its limits. It cannot get to the bottom of things, making sense of life. Nor can it *correct* being, making it good. Nietzsche looks back at Socrates as "the prototype of the theoretical optimist who, with his faith that the nature of things can be fathomed, ascribes to knowledge and insight the power of a panacea." Later in the section Nietzsche writes:

> But Science, spurred by its powerful illusion, speeds irresistibly toward its limits where its optimism, concealed in the essence of logic, suffers shipwreck. For the periphery of the circle of science has an infinite number of points; and while there is no telling how this circle could ever be surveyed completely, noble and gifted men nevertheless reach, e'er half their time, and inevitably, such boundary points on the periphery from which one gazes into what defies illumination. When they see to their horror how logic coils up at these boundaries and finally bites its own tail – suddenly the new form of insight breaks through, *tragic insight* which, merely to be endured, needs art as a protection and a remedy.

Art and tragic insight, then, are the remedy for the realization that we could

never have done what we set out to do. Tragic insight replaces the profound illusion, and art makes the tragic insight bearable. These are Zarathustra's tools in trade, his method for dealing with a reality with which nothing can be done. In my final section I will look briefly at this Zarathustran hope.

III. The Zarathustran Hope:

To discuss Nietzsche's solution to life's unknowability requires making a distinction between technological and spiritual knowledge. This distinction exists for theists and Platonists, since we hold that there is a Reality *who* can be known in addition to a material reality that we might try to control. Likewise, the Nietzsche-Heideggerian critique of rationality is aimed at technological or controlling knowledge and leaves open the possibility that there is another realm of knowledge, not to be deconstructed by their critique.

The genius of Nietzsche, for me as a theist, is that his critique of rationality shows the error in the religious and moral attempts at control that Christianity understands as idolatry or legalism or human religion. It does not touch genuine spiritual knowledge as understood in Christian-Platonism. But for Nietzsche this "genuine spiritual knowledge" does not exist; experience that I would separate out from genuine Christian experience, Nietzsche would identify as Christianity *itself.* Be that as it may, he has his own version of spiritual knowledge, which I call aestheticism.

Consider this passage from "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense." Here the word "intuitive" is used in contrast to "rational" and stands in for what I mean by "spiritual":

> There are ages in which the rational man and the intuitive man stand side by side, the one in fear of intuition, the other with scorn for abstraction. The latter is just as irrational as the former is inartistic. They both desire to rule over life: the former, by knowing how to meet his principle needs by means of foresight, prudence, and regularity; the latter, by disregarding these needs and, as an "overjoyed hero," counting as real only that life which has been disguised as illusion and beauty. Whenever, as was perhaps the case in ancient Greece, the intuitive man handles his weapons more authoritatively and victoriously than his opponent, then, under favorable circumstances, a culture can take shape and art's mastery over life can be established. All the manifestations of such a life will be accompanied by this dissimulation, this disavowal of indigence, this glitter of metaphorical intuitions, and, in general, this immediacy of deception; neither the house, nor the gait, nor the clothes, nor the clay jugs give evidence of having been invented because of a pressing need. It seems as

> if they were all intended to express an exalted happiness, an Olympian cloudlessness, and, as it were, a playing with seriousness.[11]

The alternative kind of knowing shown so beautifully here has three important features. First, it requires abandoning the need to stay alive. One must *disregard* the needs that govern the rational person. This is true of spiritual knowledge in theism, too, for "one who loses his life will save it." To know God is to have at least begun to escape preoccupation with earthly survival and associated psychological defenses. Aestheticism, too, is liberation from overtly technological concerns.

But the second feature of this picture brings a contrast to theism, for this aesthetic consciousness is "controlling." "They both desire to rule over life." Nietzsche would say that religion, too, is controlling, and he is generally right, but genuine Christianity as I understand it, which Nietzsche thinks does not exist, is not controlling. It is accepting, trusting, yielding, asking, receiving. That is the heart of Christianity that Nietzsche never saw.

Nietzsche criticized rationality as controlling, and Heidegger saw Nietzsche as still expressing the end state of metaphysics, the alienation from Being which began with Socratism. But I think the same criticism applies to both Nietzsche and Heidegger: aestheticism, also, is the end state of a controlling, technological frame of mind. It is such a state *almost* aware of what it is doing and the impossibility of it, but still in its spell. The aesthete does not try to control reality in the fullest sense, but he still protects himself against Reality. Aestheticism preserves the autonomy and pride of the soul in a way that theism's spiritual knowledge does not.

In aestheticism the subject stops expecting Reality to do things for him. But he remains in control, at least of himself and his immediate experience. Nietzsche objected to the practices in which people bow before their idols with an obsequious insincerity, which were exercises in autonomy with the pretense of submission. What Nietzsche recommends is still an exercise in autonomy, but with dignity. Pretense is abandoned. False hopes are extinguished, their ashes carried to the mountain. The subject is alone, and he knows he is alone. From this lonely place he justifies existence by seeing it as beautiful.

While theism would have humanity yielding to God, this aesthetic approach to life is a "standoff," a kind of "knowledge of the Good *at a distance.*" In Kantian aesthetic theory, the beautiful object is one viewed "without interest." Nietzsche challenged Kant on that (*The Genealogy of Morals* III, 6), but he would probably agree that the aesthetic object is not an *instrument* for the beholder; he does not incorporate it into his purposes as one does other objects. Even the word "behold" suggests that the art object is of interest to the beholder specifically because of its independence of any purposes he or she may be pursuing. Its beauty is linked to a

unity, sufficiency, and in-itself-ness that it has.[12] In non-aesthetic, instrumental knowledge the world is stripped of value when we see it as material to be manipulated by us. Or we have passions toward objects we can use but later see through reflection that they have value only because of our purposes, which may lose their reality for us. But in aesthetic experience the object does not get its value from our purposes. It has an attractive aura of self-sufficiency. Art is a way to behold unity, sufficiency, fullness, order, grace, and the like. But one beholds it *at a distance*. I cannot control it, and it does not override my will. I keep my distance and get a taste of the divine.

The question that remains is, does aestheticism work? Does it satisfy the need that motivates it? Or is it, also, deconstructed by Nietzsche's own principles, because it attempts the impossible and does not know its motives? Can aesthetic experience be a viable alternative to rationality while still being another form of the drive for autonomy?

One clue to this question is in the third feature of the aesthetic alternative, that its view of the world is *not truthful*. The passage above uses words like "disguised," "illusion," "dissimulation," "disavowal," and "glitter," and it speaks directly of "this immediacy of deception." A peculiar feature of Nietzsche's thought is that he never dismissed the question of truth as a contemporary relativist might, but wrote often of the *falseness* of our view of life, implying that there is truth. He sees deception at the heart of both rationality and aesthetic experience. Both make a bad reality look good, although rationality's optimism is reprehensible, while art's cheerfulness is not. In "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," Nietzsche writes, "Art treats *illusion as illusion*; therefore it does not wish to deceive; it *is true*."[13] Art is false, but honest about its falseness.

There is a metaphor in *The Birth of Tragedy* 9 that makes the aesthetic experience literally a *shallow* thing: "The artist's delight in what becomes, the cheerfulness of artistic creation that defies all misfortune, is merely a bright image of clouds and sky mirrored in a black lake of sadness." Note the "merely": aesthetic cheerfulness lacks truth value, the sadness is the truth of the matter. Earlier in section 9 he makes a similar statement: "the bright image projections of the Sophoclean hero ... are necessary effects of a glance into the inside and terrors of nature; as it were, luminous spots to cure eyes damaged by gruesome night."

Nietzsche never stopped extolling art and giving it a clean bill of health. But neither did he stop seeing reality as profoundly negative, impervious to our attempt to control it through rational knowledge. Art, too, is only a fragile veneer on the surface of a very dark pool. It can put its image on the surface, thus perhaps doing what it intends, making life beautiful. But if it cannot make life good, then even art does not overcome Nietzsche's statement about what cannot be done.

Notes

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, sec. 22. In Walter Kaufmann, trans. & ed. *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Random House), 1968.

2. See Alasdair MacÎntyre's "Genealogical Subversions," in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1990), 36-7. He comments: "And it is not just that all interpretation is creative, but also that all commentary is interpretation; Nietzsche held of utterances what he held of things: 'That things possess a constitution in themselves quite apart from interpretation and subjectivity is quite an idle hypothesis' (WP 560)" MacIntyre adds: "From this point of view to comment upon Nietzsche's texts is ... to rewrite and to extend Nietzsche's texts as texts of one's own. This creative action ... is not freed from the constraints required by accuracy in reproducing Nietzsche's or anyone else's words ... But within the constraints imposed by such accuracy each interpretation brings to bear its own metaphors. For metaphors are the currency of interpretation just as they are of the texts interpreted. The notion that we can escape from metaphor to some other conceptual mode – especially to the idiom of ontology – is a mistake ..."

3. People in the modern world have wanted to ascertain through a *method* that they know the world correctly, because we moderns feel secure when we know *how* to do something. Clearly, then, control or power is important to what we are doing. But we do not acknowledge how our seeking power gives the world its character. Instead, we ontologize a "real world" and ascribe to it an independent reality. This is a manifestation of the trust we place in it, of our bargaining with a transcendent "other" that is, for Nietzsche, illusory. This is his basic critique of rationality, and it sets aside the kind of skepticism known in "Descartes's Problem."

4. This version of the story is from *Five Prefaces to Five Unwritten Books*, 1, a Christmas present to Cosima Wagner, found in *Nietzsche, Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* III/2 (Berlin, 1967-). It is quoted in Anton Uhl, "Suffering from God and Man: Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky" in Claude Geffré, Jean-Pierre Jossua, eds., *Nietzsche and Christianity* (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1981), p. 36. The translator is Francis McDonagh. For English translations of the similar passages, see Daniel Breazeale, trans. & ed., *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), pp. 65 & 79.

5. Bertrand Russell, "A Free Man's Worship," in *Mysticism and Logic* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1917), 47.

6. See Heidegger's *Nietzsche Volume II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, David Farrell Krell, trans. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984), pp. 19, 28, 95. The statement about chaos is from *The Gay Science*, sec. 109.

7. Ibid., 129.

8. Ibid., 94-5. A note in the text says that *arreton* means "what is unspoken, inexpressible, unutterable, shameful, not to be divulged."

9. At the end of chapter 17, Heidegger faces the possibility that this view of reality "harnesses us to the self-propelling, necessitous course of an eternal cycle, opening up all avenues at once to lawlessness and sheer contingency." But in the next chapter he refers to "the fact that the semblance of its utter opposite dwells right alongside the proper truth of the thought," and he keeps alive the prospect of a

better kind of knowing. (pp. 132-33).

10. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The birth of Tragedy* 15, in Kaufmann, *Basic Writings of Nietzsche.*

11. Breazeale, 90.

12. I owe this concept to John F. Crosby, "Are Being and Good Really Convertible: a Phenomenological Inquiry," *The New Scholasticism* 57, 4, Autumn 1983: 465-500. This is also reminiscent of the idea, Schopenhaur's, I believe, that the beautiful is a window on the noumenal world.

13. Breazeale, 96.