

Friedrich Nietzsche's *Grand Style*
Towards the definition of an aesthetic category

vorgelegt von

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„(...) der große Stil will einen starken Grundwillen und verabscheut am meisten die Zerfahrenheit.“

Friedrich Nietzsche.

“(...) Style is the fashioning of Power.”

Alfred North Whitehead.

„Das Wesenhafte und Große will gesungen werden (...)“

Walter F. Otto.

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Abstract

After 120 years from his death, Nietzsche's philosophy remains more topical than ever. His "hermeneutics of suspicion" has been regarded as the cornerstone of the incredulity towards metanarratives that constitutes the essence of our postmodern condition. But Nietzsche's "philosophy of the hammer" was not just a deconstructive weapon; it was also a constructive tool used for the creation of new values. The subject of the present investigation is one of these values: Nietzsche's concept of Grand Style. Formulated in a late stage of his philosophical production (1884-1889), it is a dialectical synthesis of his earlier concepts of the Apollonian and Dionysian and constitutes for him a normative criterion of excellence in the ambit of artistic creation, specifically in architecture. Despite its aphoristic and non-systematic way of formulation, the concept of Grand Style exhibits a multi-layered degree of complexity in which ontological, aesthetic, and stylistic reflections converge simultaneously. The investigation is focused on underlining and tracing the connections between these three layers of meaning, with the aim of recognizing in Grand Style the germ of a proper aesthetic category, which was not fully developed by the philosopher due to his mental collapse of 1889. In congruence with this hypothesis, the investigation has as an implicit programmatic goal making of Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy not just a passive object of scientific-documentary research, but an active tool for critical thinking, which can be applied as a model of interpretation in different fields and contexts of artistic production.

Zusammenfassung

Auch 120 Jahre nach seinem Tod ist Nietzsches Philosophie aktueller denn je. Seine „Hermeneutik des Verdachts“ gilt als Grundstein für die Ungläubigkeit gegenüber Metanarrativen, die das Wesen unseres postmodernen Zustands ausmacht. Doch Nietzsches „Philosophie des Hammers“ war nicht nur eine dekonstruktive Waffe, sondern auch ein konstruktives Werkzeug zur Schaffung neuer Werte. Der Gegenstand der vorliegenden Untersuchung ist einer dieser Werte: Nietzsches Konzept des Großen Stils. In einer späten Phase seines philosophischen Schaffens formuliert (1884-1889), ist er eine dialektische Synthese seiner früheren Konzepte des Apollinischen und Dionysischen und stellt für ihn ein normatives Kriterium der Exzellenz im Bereich des künstlerischen Schaffens, insbesondere der Architektur, dar. Trotz seiner aphoristischen und unsystematischen Formulierung weist der Begriff des Großen Stils einen vielschichtigen Komplexitätsgrad auf, in dem ontologische, ästhetische und stilistische Überlegungen gleichzeitig zusammenlaufen. Die Untersuchung konzentriert sich darauf, die Verbindungen zwischen diesen drei Bedeutungsebenen herauszuarbeiten und nachzuzeichnen, mit dem Ziel, im Großen Stil den Keim einer eigenen ästhetischen Kategorie zu erkennen, die der Philosoph aufgrund seines geistigen Zusammenbruchs von 1889 nicht vollständig entwickelt hat. In Übereinstimmung mit dieser Hypothese hat die Untersuchung als implizites programmatisches Ziel, Nietzsches ästhetische Philosophie nicht nur zu einem passiven Objekt wissenschaftlich-dokumentarischer Forschung zu machen, sondern zu einem aktiven Werkzeug für kritisches Denken, das als Interpretationsmodell in verschiedenen Bereichen und Kontexten der künstlerischen Produktion angewendet werden kann.

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<Author>.

II. List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| DW | <i>The Dionysian Worldview</i> (1870). |
| PTAG | <i>Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks</i> (1871). |
| BT | <i>The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music</i> (1872). |
| UM | <i>Untimely Meditations</i> (1873–6). |
| HH | <i>Human, All-too-human: a Book for Free Spirits</i> (Vol. I, 1878; Vol. II, 1879–80). |
| D | <i>Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality</i> (1881). |
| GS | <i>The Gay Science</i> (1st ed. 1882, 2nd ed. 1887). |
| Z | <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> (1883–5). |
| BGE | <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> (1886). |
| GM | <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i> (1887). |
| TI | <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> (1888). |
| CW | <i>The Wagner Case</i> (1888). |
| NCW | <i>Nietzsche Contra Wagner</i> (1888). |
| A | <i>The Antichrist</i> (1895). |
| EH | <i>Ecce Homo</i> (1908). |

These abbreviations have been defined following the standard stylesheet used in the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*¹. Citations from Nietzsche's *Nachlass* are taken from the *Digitale Kritische Gesamtausgabe*² (digital version of the German critical edition of the complete works of Nietzsche edited by Giorgio Colli andazzino Montinari - www.nietzschesource.org), abbreviated in the footnotes as eKGWB/NF. They are followed by their correspondence with the standard numeration of fragments used in Walter Kaufmann's edition of *The Will to Power* (WP), when applicable.³ The *Digitale Kritische Gesamtausgabe* has also been the source for the citations taken from Nietzsche's letters, abbreviated in the footnotes as eKGWB/BVN. Original author's quotations are indicated in italics, with double quotation marks. Emphasis in my text is indicated in italics or simple quotation marks. Bibliographical sources are referred using MLA format.

1 See "Abbreviations and Citations of Friedrich Nietzsche's Works." *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, vol. 45 no. 2, 2014, pp. iv-v. Available in: Project MUSE <<http://muse.jhu.edu/article/549087>>. Accessed 10.11.19.

2 See D'lorio, Paolo. "The Digital Critical Edition of the Works and Letters of Nietzsche." *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, no. 40, 2010, pp. 70–80. Available in: JSTOR, <www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/jnietstud.1.40.0070>. Accessed 10.11.19.

3 See [Anon.]. "KONKORDANZ" in: *Nietzsche-Studien*, vol. 9, n° 1, 1980, pp. 446-490. <<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110244298.446>>. Accessed 10.08.21.

III. Introduction

“A certain emperor always kept in mind the transiency of all things, in order not to take them too much to heart and to remain tranquil in their midst. To me, the contrary, everything seems much too valuable to be allowed on to be so fleeting: I seek an eternity for everything. Ought one to pour the most costly unguents and wines into the sea? My consolation is that everything that was is eternal: the sea spews it forth again.”⁴

The concept of Grand Style is inscribed within the last stage of development of Nietzsche’s philosophical production. Formulated initially during spring 1884, it corresponds to a dialectical synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories, which were originally developed by him in his book *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music, 1872). In stylistic terms, it appears closely related to the notion of the Classic, and as such, in direct opposition to Romanticism and specifically to Wagner’s music: “(...) *farthest removed from the Grand Style is Wagner: the dissipative character and heroic swagger of his artistic means are altogether opposed to the Grand Style*”.⁵

Nevertheless, the philosopher does not develop the concept systematically and extensively in terms of its potential aesthetic-formal interpretations. He rather unfolds it through his distinctive aphoristic discursive strategy, oscillating between statements with a normative-ontological character, aesthetic formulas based on physiological considerations, and punctual exemplifications taken from music and specifically from architecture. But what does it actually mean? The term itself gives us a direct clue: it refers to an ideal aesthetic state in which *grandness*, as pure Dionysian power, and *style*,

4 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[94].

5 eKGWB/NF-1885,41[2]. Cf. eKGWB/NF-1887,11[312] (WP § 849): “*The sensibility of romantic-Wagnerian music: antithesis of classical sensibility*”.

as an Apollonian will of measure and control, are brought into equilibrium. The architecture in Grand Style is, therefore, that which is able to communicate a state of plenitude of power and self-sufficiency, but without effort, 'in silence', avoiding an excess of *pathos* or theatrical-narrative gestures: "(...) *The highest feeling of power and sureness finds expression in a Grand Style. The power which no longer needs any proof (...) which lives oblivious of all opposition to it, which reposes within itself, fatalistically, a law among laws — that speaks of itself as a Grand Style*".⁶ Order, clarity, logical and geometrical simplification, are consequently some of its main formal premises. In this sense, following Tilmann Buddensieg's analysis, the formulation of the concept constitutes an early reference for the later consolidation of the language of abstraction in the architecture of the Modern Movement.⁷ In turn, seen from the perspective of the successive stages of development of Nietzsche's philosophical corpus, the formulation of Grand Style can be understood as an unfinished sketch of the philosopher's self-imposed task of creating a final synthesis of his aesthetic philosophy, which would be crystallized in his projected work "*The Will to Power. Attempt at a Revaluation of all Values*", never accomplished during his lifetime.

Taking into consideration this theoretical and documentary background, the fundamental objective of this thesis is to propose a critical re-reading of the notion of Grand Style, recognizing it as a concept which deserves a higher degree of visibility within the existing academic research on Nietzsche's legacy, and has the potential to be considered as an aesthetic category on its own which can be applied as a critical tool of analysis both in the field of arts in general, as in architecture in particular. The implicit hypothesis that informs this objective is the notion that, just as in the case of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories, the meaning of the concept is not confined to the boundaries of its particular context of philosophical and historical production, mainly

6 TI § 11.

7 See Buddensieg, Tilmann. "Architecture as empty form", in: Kostka, Alexandre (ed.). *Nietzsche and "an architecture of our minds"* Los Angeles: Getty Research Inst. for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999.

due to its underlying metaphysical-ontological character. This largely exceeds its apparent primary function as a theoretical device exclusively oriented to establish an effective form of cultural critique directed against the romantics, and specifically against Wagner. Against this reductive perspective, the specific distinctive character of this investigation can be recognized as the will of expanding the horizon of the concept's interpretation in a double direction: both in terms of the underlining of its ontological roots, as in terms of its potential application as a tool for aesthetic analysis in different contexts of artistic production. Consequently, in methodological terms, the investigation has been conceived as a gradual approach, from the analysis of the ontological foundations of the concept, towards the specificity of its verification in concrete case studies. In turn, this implies a transition from documentary research towards a more interpretative-propositional framework. This strategy has been articulated in four sequential stages, which respectively constitute the four chapters of the thesis.

The first one is oriented to the study of the theoretical framework from which the notion of Grand Style arises, particularly the Apollonian-Dionysian relationship as a fundamental matrix of Nietzsche's aesthetics. Following this introductory approach, the second part is focused on the analysis of the specific definition of the concept, articulating its ontological and aesthetic-formal aspects taking as a primary reference the original citations of the philosopher on the subject, with the aim of outlining its essential characteristics as a proper aesthetic category. The third part of the thesis is oriented to propose a reading of Grand Style from the specific perspective of its relationship with architecture theory and the concept of Will to Power, establishing a link with the concepts of *monumentality*, *tectonics*, *presence*, and *perfection*, followed by the last chapter which is focused on the verification of the proposed interpretation in different case-studies taken not just from the field of architecture, but also from other artistic disciplines in search of a wider, trans-disciplinary approach.

The main objectives of the investigation can be summarized in the following points:

- To position the notion of Grand Style as a theoretical reference and as an aesthetic category within the specific field of architecture theory.
- To reinforce the importance of the existing link between Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy, architecture, and the arts.
- To provide a theoretically grounded interpretation of Nietzsche's aesthetics, based on Heidegger's ontological approach on the subject, that can operate as a counterpoint to its prevalent post-structuralist interpretative framework.

IV. Theoretical framework and pertinence of the investigation

Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy constitutes an unavoidable point of reference in the conformation of postmodern critical thinking applied to arts and architectural theory, with vast theoretical resonances. His radical affirmation about the "death of God" has become the distinctive sign of Nihilism as a determining characteristic of our *Zeitgeist* and, by extension, the cornerstone of the relativist and multifocal plurality that characterizes contemporary art's critical theory and production. This is the most common and functional use of Nietzsche's philosophical legacy: its role as a highly malleable theoretical framework for validating a plurality of non-convergent forms of meaning, derailed from any transcendental-metaphysical sense. Derrida's interpretation, as carried out in his book *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles* (1978) constitutes a major contribution to this particular form of analysis. It corresponds to an inductive approach which, following the thread of Nietzsche's multiple interpretations of 'woman' (as a metaphor of truth, as the un-cognoscible, as falsehood, etc.) concludes that his writings present an irreducible polysemic, fragmented and contradictory nature, that excludes the possibility of any hermeneutical approach in a traditional sense.⁸ This, in

⁸ See Derrida, Jacques. *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979., p.60.

direct opposition to Heidegger's own interpretation, developed in his *Nietzsche* (1961) which is sustained in the will of retaining the Nietzschean enterprise within the fundamental question about Being, understood as a principle of consistency and continuity within the discourse, which is the main premise for his deductive analysis. *"Where Heidegger places Nietzsche within the metaphysics of presence, Derrida insists that "reading, and therefore writing the text were for Nietzsche 'originary' operations," (Derrida 1974 [1967], 19), and this puts him at the closure of metaphysics (not the end), a closure that liberates writing from the traditional logos, which takes writing to be a sign (a visible mark) for another sign (speech), whose 'signified' is a fully present meaning."*⁹ The 'destroyer of metaphysics' and the 'last metaphysician of the West' appear respectively as two possible portraits of Nietzsche as a philosopher.

But each one of the main subjects that constitute his philosophical corpus demand a specific strategy of interpretation. These subjects (or *tropos*, in a stylistic sense), range from his multiple and often contradictory interpretations of nihilism, decadence, Jews, or woman, to more ontologically determined topics such as the notions of Will to Power, Eternal Return or the *Übermensch*. In this sense, any attempt of over-generalization, either in the deconstructive way pursued by the French post-structuralists or the ontological path followed by Heidegger, would fail to recognize this fundamental distinction. *"(...) the deconstructive reading, in its fondness for indeterminacy and undecidability, appears to more traditional interpreters to exhibit a relativistic tendency toward 'underdetermining' that same text (...) While there is clearly much of value in these deconstructive readings, in their opening up new terrain in the Nietzschean text by focusing as they do on the questions of language, style, and rhetoric, there is no less danger of losing Nietzsche's text beneath these disseminating, transformational interpretations than there was of losing the text within the Heideggerian project of*

⁹ Aylesworth, Gary, "Postmodernism", in: Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2015 Edition), <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/postmodernism/>>. Accessed 10.08.2018.

overcoming the metaphysical oblivion of Being".¹⁰ Using an architectural metaphor, the analysis of Nietzsche's writings resembles entering a hall of mirrors, in which one concept is reflected simultaneously and exhaustively from multiple points of view, even in inverted or apparently distorted forms.¹¹ But we must always try to recognize their original source, the *Ur-Bild*, in order to avoid getting lost in the hermeneutical path, obnubilated with the myriad of glittering reflections. Woman? *The Un-cognoscible*, unfolded and mirrored in multiple brilliant aphorisms.¹² It is possible to affirm that the weakness of the French postmodern interpreters lays in their excessive emphasis on Nietzsche's perspectivism, denying his normativism. They get lost in the labyrinth, wandering in tautological circles. Quoting Ken Gemes, "*the postmodern rejection of all authority, all principle of order among the competing modes of representation, presents the very Nihilism that Nietzsche predicts, and warns against, as a natural result of the defeat of dogmatism. For Nietzsche there is still room for an immanent authority, an authority that comes from within.*"¹³ From the labyrinth's center, we might add, which from a Heideggerian perspective has one-and-single name: Will to Power.

In this sense, the documental evidence gathered in the course of this investigation allows to affirm that the concept of Grand Style belongs to Nietzsche's normative formulations. It is inscribed within the philosopher's late aesthetic discourse, which presents with a low degree of malleability that does not fit into the French polysemic interpretation. In these writings, it is possible to recognize in him not the 'deconstructivist-nihilist', but the

10 Schrift, Alan. *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation. Between hermeneutics and deconstruction*. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 1990, p.120. Besides Derrida, Schrift's analysis of the 'French Nietzschean scene' includes Deleuze, Foucault, Jean Granier, Maurice Blanchot, Pierre Klossowski, Sarah Kofman and Paul Valadier, among others.

11 "I now have the skill and knowledge to invert perspectives: first reason for a «revaluation of all values» is possible for me alone." EH § 1.

12 A specific aphorism which synthesizes Nietzsche's perspective on woman in this sense can be found in TI §27: "Women are considered deep - why? Because you never get to the bottom of them. Women aren't even shallow". A systematic development of the subject is carried out in BGE § 232-239.

13 Gemes, Ken. "Postmodern's Use and Abuse of Nietzsche", in: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Vol. 62, No. 2. (Mar. 2001), p.342.

constructor of new values, centered in the notion of Will to Power as a formative principle. As it will be seen in Chapter II, Nietzsche's 'physiological aesthetics' is an aesthetics of power, objectified in categories of value expressed in unequivocal statements, among which the notion of Grand Style occupies a prominent place. He clearly proposes it as a *positive aesthetic quality*, that corresponds basically to a reevaluation of the notion of the classical, formulated as a radical counterpoint to the dominant romantic-eclectic taste in the artistic production of the last third of 19th century. "(...) *The highest type: the classical ideal – as the expression of the well-constitutedness of all chief instincts. Therein the highest style: the Grand Style. Expression of the will to power itself (...).*"¹⁴ Among the philosophers, it is Heidegger who was able to grasp this decisive character of Nietzsche's thought about the arts in general and of Grand Style in particular. The present investigation follows his line of interpretation, which is mainly focused on Nietzsche's late period, and includes the concept of Grand Style in a relevant position¹⁵, also establishing a relationship with the notions of Will to Power and Eternal Return as the centers of gravity of the Nietzschean discourse at that time.

Nietzsche's reevaluation of the classical in the form of Grand Style sought to confront its purely historical-formalistic reading as developed by Winckelmann¹⁶, aiming to formulate a reinterpretation in which ontological, aesthetic, and historical aspects converge simultaneously in search of its comprehension as a particular and distinctive way of being in the world. Regarding this qualitative sense of rank, it is important to point out the fact that the prefix *Grand* conveys a-priori an explicit judgment of value. It doesn't mean *anything*. What does *grandness* mean for Nietzsche in stylistic terms? Is it

14 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[138] (WP § 341).

15 See M. Heidegger 'Nietzsche' Vol.I, pp. 124-137.

16 "(...) Nietzsche must be credited with expanding Europe's notions of 'the classical' to include the powerful Dionysian phenomenon, which went far beyond the formulaic understanding of Greek art made famous by Winckelmann". Del Caro, Adrian, "The Birth of Tragedy", in: *A companion to Friedrich Nietzsche: life and works* / edited by Paul Bishop. NY, Camden House, 2012, p.71.

just a particular form of monumentality in classical fashion? Before any attempt of interpretation, it is necessary to recognize this implicit normative character, which traces limits and consequently defines a specific sphere of belonging and exclusion, which is congruent with the essential self-imposed task of overcoming the tide of nihilism through the creation of new values. In the face of nihilism, the art in Grand Style is the one which can constitute an effective countermovement to its inherent dissolutive force, and thus it primarily opposes *“the chaotic jumbling of styles”*¹⁷ and the lack of a sense of unity which was already clearly recognizable in the decadent and exhausted forms of late 19th century’s artistic production.

Nevertheless, as it will be seen in the course of the investigation, the formulation of the concept is not exclusively limited to its function as a contextual aesthetic counter-paradigm to romanticism, but rather presents a degree of complexity that in strict sense summarizes the whole corpus of the philosopher’s meditation about the role of art as a fundamental dimension of the human experience. Quoting Heidegger: *“At first glance, Nietzsche’s thinking concerning art is aesthetic; according to its innermost will, it is metaphysical, which means it is a definition of the Being of beings”*.¹⁸

This explicit will to blend an aesthetic concept with the realm of life, from a unifying, embodied perspective that blurs the limits between these categories in search of a convergent and unitary vision of totality, constitutes one of the most distinctive features of Nietzsche’s aesthetics, and in turn is one of the aspects underlined by the present investigation. Following Jörg Gleiter’s analysis, *“Friedrich Nietzsche would remain misunderstood if one wanted to withdraw the impulse to directly influence life from his philosophizing. Nietzsche is the philosopher who (...) attempted to abolish the boundaries*

17 UM I §1; cf. UM II §4.

18 M. Heidegger, *‘Nietzsche’*, Vol. I, p.131.

between philosophy, science, and art".¹⁹ For Nietzsche, there is no real separation between art and life, because life itself is an artistic exercise, and "*only has justification as an aesthetic phenomenon*".²⁰ By extension, and from a more specific perspective, architecture (as art) and life present the same degree of mutual embeddedness, as long as the former is understood not just as a mental, abstract practice, but rather as the way in which our vital experience of being in the world acquires concrete form, measure and orientation.

V. About the position and role of Grand Style within Nietzsche's aesthetics

Nietzsche's aesthetic standpoint is undoubtedly influenced by the context of philosophical production of his time, which shows an interesting articulation between the inherited tradition of Kantian transcendental idealism, metaphysical thinking and the new contributions coming from the field of physiology and psychology. It is the context of the *Lebensphilosophie* of 19th century. Within it, and in a prominent position, it is Nietzsche who *recovers the body*, understood as a determining element of the vital experience of being in the world, giving a turn from the speculative abstraction of Kantian heritage to vitalism and later phenomenology as forms of thought in which sensitive experience regains a privileged status as a defining framework of the modes of apprehension and interpretation of reality. "*Our body is something higher, finer, more complete and moral than any form of human relationships or communities (...)*".²¹ This turn is clearly reflected in the aesthetic concepts formulated by the philosopher, among which the notion of Grand Style has a particularly relevant connotation. It constitutes a final synthesis of his reflections in the field of philosophical aesthetics, and is crossed by

¹⁹ Gleiter, Jörg. *Der Philosophische Flaneur: Nietzsche Und Die Architektur*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, p. 16. Translation mine.

²⁰ BT § 5.

²¹ eKGWB/NF-1883,7[133].

references directly linked to the field of the physiology of perception, the notion of Will to Power understood as 'affirmation of life' and formative force, all representative concepts of vitalism as a current of thought characteristic of its time. *"The «totality» as health and highest activity; the straight line which rediscovers grand style in action; the most powerful instinct which affirms life itself, the will to power."*²²

The concept appears mainly mentioned in the posthumous fragments dated after 1884, linked to aesthetic considerations on music and architecture and, contextually, to his well-known confrontation with Wagner. Due to the fragmented and aphoristic nature of these writings, it is complex to attempt an *a priori* interpretation of the concept in the manner of a clear and defined aesthetic category, but it is possible by tracing its associations with other concepts through which the philosopher constructs its theoretical framework. In this sense, the Grand Style appears directly linked to the idea of the *Classic*, in opposition to the *Romantic* taste, embodied in the dramatic style of the Wagnerian opera, aimed at the exacerbation of emotions and an excess of technical resources.²³ Both categories, classic as opposed to romantic, are interpreted by Nietzsche not as definite historical styles, but rather as *affections* or spiritual-psychological dispositions, which have the potential to express themselves through specific stylistic orders.²⁴ From his point of view, the classic represents the balance between an Apollonian sense of order, simplicity and unity, and its underlying Dionysian substratum, from which form emerges as an affirmative act of pure will *"(...) The classical style is essentially a representation of this calm, simplification, abbreviation, concentration-the highest feeling of power is concentrated in the classical type. To react*

22 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[5].

23 *"(...) What is the point of extending the means of expression if that which expresses, art itself, has lost the law of its being! (...)"* eKGWB/NF-1888,16[29] (WP § 838).

24 For an extensive analysis of the classic-romantic distinction, see eKGWB/NF-1888,14[119]; NF-1886,7[16]; NF-1885,2[112]; NF-1885,2[114]; NF-1887,9[112]; NF-1887,9[166]; NF-1887,11[312] (WP § 843 to § 849).

slowly; a great consciousness; no feeling of struggle."²⁵ On the contrary, romantic affection is related to the lack of such will, representing the mere flow of emotions and their effects, not subject to a rule, which expresses the absence of a formative principle, translating into *chaos* and *disorder*.²⁶ From Nietzsche's point of view, a clear symptom of *decadence* and, in a broader sense, the embodiment of nihilism in its negative and passive form understood as a historical *fatum* that was contextually expressed in 19th century's Romanticism as a form of reactionary renunciation, in its rhetoric putting in value of an idealized past. In his own words: "A romantic is an artist whose great dissatisfaction with himself makes him creative--who looks away, looks back from himself and from his world".²⁷ But this critical attitude towards romanticism had some illustrious predecessors. Following the analysis made by Adrian del Caro, "Goethe's formulation of Romanticism as illness, and Classicism as health, introduced a polarity to German letters that still resonated in Nietzsche's time. Nietzsche adopted Goethe's view and enhanced it. He also identified with Goethe's statement that the fate of Romantics is «to choke on the rumination of religious and moral absurdities»".²⁸

The synthesis of Apollo and Dionysos, of the will of order and the primordial chaos, constitutes the *metaphysical core* of the definition of Grand Style, and it is formulated in the broader scope of the arts:

"The greatness of an artist is not measured by the beautiful sentiments that he arouses (...) but by the degree to which he approaches the grand style. This has in common with great passion the disdain of pleasure; he forgets to persuade,

25 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[46] (WP § 799).

26 See eKGWB/NF-1870,5[45].

27 eKGWB/NF-1885,2[112] (WP § 844).

28 Del Caro, Adrian. "Dionysian Classicism, or Nietzsche's Appropriation of an Aesthetic Norm". In: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 1989), University of Pennsylvania Press.

he wills ... To make himself master of the chaos that one is, to force his own chaos to become form, mathematics, law - that is the grand ambition here (...).²⁹

However, besides some punctual examples, the philosopher does not delve extensively into a further and more comprehensive interpretation of the concept in stylistic and historical terms. Grand Style's formulation remains basically as the germ of an unfinished project (akin to a *sketch* in the field of architectural design processes), and this is the reason why it can be found mostly mentioned in the *Nachlass*, which is the philosopher's own 'sketchbook'. At this point, it is important to note that the validity of these unpublished texts, and in particular their selection known as The Will to Power as sources for academic research constitutes a division line within the field of Nietzsche's studies. Authors who consider their status as unproblematic and in equivalence with the published works include Heidegger, Jaspers, Danto, Schacht, Deleuze, Müller-Lauter, Richardson, and more recently, Doyle, while the ones who establish a sharp distinction include Schlechta, Alderman, Hollingdale, Strong, Montinari and Magnus. The rather dismissive attitude that has prevailed among the latter towards The Will to Power has several reasons, the main one being that it was not edited and published by Nietzsche himself. It is a selection of the *Nachlass* (first published in 1901) which, based on a thematic manuscript of his authorship dated 17.03.1887, was arranged by his sister, Elizabeth Foerster-Nietzsche, and Heinrich Köselitz - the former being "persona non grata" in the academic establishment due to her well-known ties with the National Socialist regime. This led to the consolidation of an overall negative view, mainly promoted by Schlechta in his essay *Le cas Nietzsche* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), and also because the book was praised as the "magnum opus of Nietzsche's philosophy" by the National Socialist theorist Alfred Bäumler.³⁰ Since the concept of Grand Style can be found mainly in The Will to Power and in the letters, it becomes unavoidable and necessary to use them as main sources for the development of this investigation.

29 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[61] (WP § 842).

30 See his *Nachwort* to the Kroner's *Taschenausgabe* Edition, vol. 78, 1930, p.699.

Concerning the debate on the status of *The Will to Power* as a valid source of research, Tsarina Doyle comments:

*“Bernd Magnus, for example, has gone to considerable lengths to convince us that the collection of notes posthumously published as *The Will to Power* is not a book Nietzsche had intended for publication. Magnus provides evidence for his claim that whilst Nietzsche had seriously considered publishing a book with this title, he had by September 1888 abandoned the project altogether. Magnus thus argues that we are not justified in formulating an understanding of Nietzsche’s thought on the basis of the posthumously published notes. Magnus’s argument obviously proves problematic for any study of Nietzsche’s epistemological and metaphysical views. For Nietzsche’s thoughts on these issues are given greater attention in the posthumous material. As Richard Schacht notes, the ‘unpublished writings . . . contain much more of [Nietzsche’s] expressed thinking on certain important matters than do his finished works’ (...) Arguing that the notebooks were the workshop for Nietzsche’s published writings, Schacht suggests the notes provide some clue to what would have been Nietzsche’s future compositions (...) Thus Nietzsche’s writings as a whole are a workshop for his interpreters, which, as Karl Jaspers points out, engage his readers in a creative and constructive fashion by encouraging them to philosophise themselves.”³¹*

Due to its status of being a theoretical ‘sketch’, the formulation of Grand Style makes it differ from what was earlier achieved by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. In this book, the Apollonian-Dionysian binomial was systematically developed, from its initial sketching phase until achieving the status of a theoretically grounded artistic-metaphysical principle that was concretely verified in the specific context of the Greek Attic tragedy. In analogous terms, would it be possible to pose a historical interpretation of the Grand Style, in an attempt to bring the ‘sketch’ forth into the ambit of concreteness? Tracing a link to the notion of “*unity of style*” proposed by the philosopher

31 Doyle, Tsarina. *Nietzsche on epistemology and metaphysics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009, pp. 15-16.

in his *Untimely Considerations I*, in which modern decadence is conceived as the antithesis of the “unity of artistic style in all the vital expressions of a people” (“*Einheit des künstlerischen Stiles Lebensäusserungen eines Volkes*”)³², Grand Style could be interpreted as an ideal historical state of coherence and equilibrium, in which the vital and primordial impulse of a given culture has reached its own forms of historical manifestation within the framework of a clear and defined stylistic form, giving a sense of unity to the totality of its cultural production and, in particular, to its artistic manifestations, transfixed by a sense of serenity, clarity, and absence of struggle. Although such interpretation of Grand Style was not formulated by Nietzsche in an explicit form, it could constitute a hypothesis on its relationship with the classical, understood as a defined historical and stylistic category (which in the eyes of nineteenth-century currents of thought still was referred to the Greek “Golden Age” as its most exemplary form). But, in the context of this investigation, this possible idealist-historical interpretation will be examined and confronted from a critical perspective, since the plain assimilation between historical classicism - in any of its forms - and Grand Style appears as schematic and reductive. As it will be analyzed in Chapters II and III, both concepts operate in different levels of manifestation, not configuring a relationship of identity, but rather of implication. As explained by Heidegger, Grand Style appears as an aesthetic category with a primarily ontological character, which definitely transcends its potential historical interpretations:

“In contrast to classicism, the classical is nothing that can be immediately divined from a particular past period of art. It is instead a basic structure of Dasein, which itself first creates the conditions for any such period and must first open itself and devote itself to those conditions. But the fundamental condition is an equally original freedom with regard to the extreme opposites, chaos and law; not the mere subjection of chaos to a form, but that mastery which enables the primal wilderness of chaos and the primordially of law to advance under the same yoke, invariably

32 UM I §1, cf. UM II §4.

*bound to one another with equal necessity. Such mastery is unconstrained disposition over that yoke, which is as equally removed from the paralysis of form in what is dogmatic and formalistic as from sheer rapturous tumult. Wherever unconstrained disposition over that yoke is an event's self-imposed law, there is the grand style.”*³³

VI. Existing contributions in the field of investigation

Within the existing corpus of Nietzsche studies, the concept of Grand Style has not had the visibility of other better-known concepts such as the Eternal Return, the *Übermensch*, Will to Power and Nihilism, among others, also including the Apollonian and Dionysian as aesthetic categories. One of the main reasons for this lack of presence lays in the fact that, as previously stated, the concept was not extensively included in Nietzsche's published works, but can be mostly found in the *Nachlass*, and also in his letters. From a total of thirty-seven citations in the whole *Digitale Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, the ones included in the published works are just five (HAH II §WS-96, CW §2, TI §11, A §59, EH §4). Therefore, main commentators like Kaufmann do not pay attention to the topic. Nevertheless, it has been recognised as a valuable subject of analysis by other authors. From the field of philosophy, most prominently by Martin Heidegger in his "Nietzsche" (1961), and more recently by German architectural theorists such as Markus Breitschmid (Der bauende Geist, 2001), Fritz Neumeyer (Der Klang der Steine, 2001), Tilmann Buddensieg (Nietzsches Italien. Städte, Garten und Palaste, 2002) and Jörg Gleiter (Der Philosophische Flaneur, 2009). Besides them, it has also been analysed by Theo Meyer (Nietzsche und die Kunst, 1983), and in paper publications (Akiyama 1974, Mengaldo 2012). In what follows, the standpoints of Heidegger, Breitschmid, Neumeyer and Gleiter on the concept of Grand Style will be analysed in order to provide a theoretical framework for situating the interpretation proposed in this investigation.

³³ M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. I, p.128. Emphasis mine.

i. Martin Heidegger's "Nietzsche": Grand style as an expression of Will to Power

Between the years 1936 and 1940, Heidegger delivered a series of lectures on Nietzsche at University of Freiburg-im-Breisgau. These lectures were later compiled and published in a revised edition in 1961, complemented with further notes on the subject written by him between 1940 and 1946. His main argument is that Nietzsche's philosophy is the consummation of Western metaphysics. Quoting the editor of the English translation, David Farrell Krell, "*Such metaphysics rests on the guiding projection of the beingness of beings as permanence of presencing (Beständigkeit des Anwesens). The doctrines of will to power and eternal return converge as the final fundamental metaphysical position.*"³⁴ According to Heidegger, despite Nietzsche's grandiose attempt to overcome metaphysics, he remained a metaphysician, albeit an "inverted one" via his reversal of Platonism.³⁵ His formulation of Will to Power and Eternal Return does not question the essence of Being-as-such. "*The expression 'will to power' designates the basic character of beings; any being which is, insofar as it is, is will to power. The expression stipulates the character that beings have as beings. But that is not at all an answer to the first question of philosophy, its proper question; rather, it answers only the final preliminary question. For anyone who at the end of Western philosophy can and must still question philosophically, the decisive question is no longer merely 'What basic character do beings manifest?' but 'What is this Being itself?' The decisive question is that of 'the meaning of Being', not merely that of the Being of beings*".³⁶ For Heidegger, Nietzsche's abundant considerations about values, ethics and psychology are rooted in this metaphysics of the Will to Power, as we can find exemplified in this unpublished note from 1887: "*The point*

34 M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. III, p.259.

35 "My philosophy reversed Platonism: the farther away from what is true, the purer, more beautiful, and better it is. Life in appearance as a goal." eKGWB/NF-1870,7[156].

36 M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. I, p.18.

of view of 'value' is the point of view constituting the preservation-enhancement conditions with respect to complex forms of relative duration of life within becoming.”³⁷

One of the most important aspects of the Heideggerian interpretation is the grounding of Nietzsche as a proper philosopher inscribed within the continuity of the Western philosophical tradition, thus countering his portrait as a poet-philosopher. “(...) *for a long time it has been declaimed from chairs of philosophy in Germany that Nietzsche is not a rigorous thinker but a 'poet- philosopher'. Nietzsche does not belong among the philosophers, who think only about abstract, shadowy affairs, far removed from life. (...) These common judgments about Nietzsche are in error. The error will be recognized only when a confrontation with him is at the same time conjoined to a confrontation in the realm of the grounding question of philosophy.*”³⁸ Besides this interpretative turn, Heidegger’s emphasis put in the *Nachlass* as a valid source for the hermeneutical exegesis of Nietzschean thought is also a distinctive aspect of his analysis. Based on Nietzsche’s own remarks about the incommunicability of his philosophy in written form, Heidegger asserts that is in the unpublished notes where his most decisive thoughts can be found. “*Nietzsche's philosophy proper, the fundamental position on the basis of which he speaks in these and in all the writings he himself published, did not assume a final form and was not itself published in any book, neither in the decade between 1879 and 1889 nor during the years preceding. What Nietzsche himself published during his creative life was always foreground (...) His philosophy proper was left behind as posthumous, unpublished work.*”³⁹ This radical statement puts him at odds with more orthodox commenters like Karl Schlechta, who affirms that there is nothing to be found in the *Nachlass* that adds to the ideas expressed in the published books.⁴⁰ Following

37 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[73] (WP § 715).

38 Ibid., p.5.

39 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

40 See Schlechta, Karl. *Friedrich Nietzsche, Werke in Drei Banden* vol. III, p.1433.

Heidegger's, Schlechta's position is untenable, especially taking into consideration the abundant reflections done by Nietzsche in these unpublished notes about the Eternal Return and Will to Power in a metaphysical (and even cosmological) sense, which cannot be found in his books. For Heidegger, the fact that these notes were not published does not necessarily imply that they are not valid in terms of content and meaning (a position that, as already stated, has been shared also by main commentators such as Jaspers, Danto, Schacht, Deleuze and Müller-Lauter). For him, these notes remained as a "*project for the future*"⁴¹, not accomplished due to Nietzsche's mental breakdown.

Heidegger's analysis is divided in four topics, that correspond to the four volumes in which his book was divided: The will to power as art (Vol. I), The eternal recurrence of the same (Vol. II), The will to power as knowledge and metaphysics (Vol. III), and nihilism (Vol. IV). The specific analysis of Grand Style can be found in Vol. I, pp. 124-138. In congruence with the title of the volume, the interpretation given by Heidegger asserts that the concept cannot simply be equated to an aesthetic formula. It is inscribed within his hermeneutical claims about Nietzsche's conception of the arts and its broader metaphysical implications. They can be summarized in the following assertions:

1) *"At first glance, Nietzsche's thinking concerning art is aesthetic; according to its innermost will, it is metaphysical, which means it is a definition of the Being of beings."*⁴²

2) *"Nietzsche interprets the Being of beings as will to power. Art he considers the supreme configuration of will to power. The proper essence of art is exemplified in the grand style."*⁴³

41 Ibid., p.132.

42 Ibid., p.131.

43 Ibid., pp.135-136.

3) *“What Nietzsche calls the grand style is most closely approximated by the rigorous style, the classical style.”*⁴⁴

Claims 1 and 2 situate Nietzsche’s reflection about art as an expression of his metaphysics of the Will to Power. It is in the form of Grand Style where Will to Power-as-art acquires its highest form of expression, bounded to a qualitative sense of rank and distinction. According to claim 3, it is in the classic, rigorous style where the concept becomes reflected in stylistic terms. The interpretation of Grand Style as a superlative aesthetic expression of the Will to Power is the central argument here, and in order to understand it properly, it is necessary to clarify Heidegger’s interpretation of Will to Power as such: *“Art as will to semblance is the supreme configuration of will to power. But the latter, as the basic character of beings, as the essence of reality, is in itself that Being which wills itself by willing to be Becoming. In that way through the will to power Nietzsche attempts to think the original unity of the ancient opposition of Being and Becoming.”*⁴⁵ Grand style is the way in which this original unity between being and becoming can be expressed in aesthetic terms, which means *“an equally original freedom with regard to the extreme opposites, chaos and law; not the mere subjection of chaos to a form, but that mastery which enables the primal wilderness of chaos and the primordially of law to advance under the same yoke, invariably bound to one another with equal necessity (...) as equally removed from the paralysis of form in what is dogmatic and formalistic as from sheer rapturous tumult.”*⁴⁶ Grand style is then a form of synthesis of opposites: being and becoming, active and reactive, law and chaos, an attribute that is reflected in the classic as a privileged form for its manifestation.

Based on the analysis of Nietzsche’s aphorisms n°846 and n° 847 of The Will to Power, Heidegger further elaborates on the potential distinction between the classic and Grand

44 Ibid., p.125.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid., p.128.

Style. He concludes that the former is posed mainly as a means of exemplification of the latter, *“with the intention of making the grand style visible by means of what is most akin to it.”*⁴⁷ Both are formulated in a sense of identification: *“(…) the essence of the grand style is initially given in the foreground description of the classical. Nietzsche never expresses himself about it in another way. For every great thinker always thinks one jump more originally than he directly speaks. Our interpretation must therefore try to say what is unsaid by him (…)* We may formulate it in the following way: *the grand style prevails wherever abundance restrains itself in simplicity. But in a certain sense that is also true of the rigorous style. And even if we clarify the greatness of the grand style by saying it is that superiority which compels everything strong to be teamed with its strongest antithesis under one yoke, that too applies also to the classical type.”*⁴⁸

The shared attributes between Grand Style and the classic are therefore “abundance restrained in simplicity” and “synthesis of opposites under one yoke”. Following Heidegger’s argumentation, they are used by Nietzsche indistinctively, as affirmative and active forms of artistic creation. In this sense, they are altogether opposed to the romantic, exemplified in Wagner’s ‘dramatic’ style. Further elaboration on this opposition between the classic and the romantic is provided in Chapter II of this investigation, following Heidegger’s standpoint.

A distinctive aspect of Heidegger’s reading is the will of understanding Nietzsche’s thinking about the essence of art through a multi-layered and at the same time unitary perspective. In his interpretation, metaphysics, aesthetics, and style are not conceived by the philosopher as autonomous fields of theoretical reflection, but as interdependent dimensions which are mutually reflected. Nevertheless, with its strong emphasis on Will to Power and Eternal Return as the central tenets of Nietzsche’s philosophy, Heidegger’s

47 Ibid., p.134.

48 Ibid.

interpretation has been regarded as controversial and “dogmatic” by authors like Maurice Blanchot⁴⁹, Gianni Vattimo⁵⁰, Alan Schrift⁵¹ and Maudemarie Clark⁵², among others. They argue that Nietzsche’s philosophy cannot be reduced as a whole to its metaphysical determinations in a unitary and systematic way. But the evidence gathered in the present investigation allows us to affirm that Heidegger’s specific interpretation of Grand Style appears to be correctly grounded, considering that the concept exhibits a marked normative-ontological character, which is congruent with his hermeneutical strategy. Noteworthy is the fact that architecture is not included within his analysis of the concept. This is by no means an indeliberate omission. It can be rather understood as a consequence of the will of retaining his analysis in an essential, metaphysical level, subsumed within the broader subject “Nietzsche and the arts”. This is the standpoint followed in the present investigation.

ii. Nietzsche, architectural theory and Grand Style

The relationship between Nietzsche’s philosophy and architecture remains a relatively unexplored field of investigation. Taking as an example the topics of research carried out during the last 20 years by fellows in residence at Kolleg Nietzsche in Weimar, from a total of 80 investigations, only two deal with the subject (Gleiter 2003-2008, Fischer 2018).⁵³ The publication of the volume “*Nietzsche and an architecture of our minds*” (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999), edited by Irving Wohlfarth and Alexandre Kostka, which comprises essays by different authors

49 See Blanchot, Maurice. “La escritura fragmentaria” in: *La ausencia del libro*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Caldeón, 1973, pp. 41-66.

50 See Vattimo, Gianni. *Introducción a Nietzsche*. Barcelona: Península, 2001, pp. 47-48.

51 See Schrift, Alan D. *Nietzsche and the question of interpretation. Between hermeneutics and deconstruction*. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 1990, §1.

52 See Clark, Maudemarie. *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 7-10.

53 Source: <<https://www.klassik-stiftung.de/forschung/forschungsaktivitaeten/kolleg-friedrich-nietzsche/fellowships/fellows-in-residence/>>. Accessed 02.12.2018.

on the subject, constitutes an important bibliographical apportion both because of the theoretical level of the contributions and the diversity of their conceptual standpoints. The current 'state of the art' of the academic research on the subject is mainly represented by the contributions made by German scholars: Markus Breitschmid, Fritz Neumeyer, and Jörg Gleiter. Despite their different conceptual approaches, the shared objective of these authors (all of them, architects) appears to be the vindication of the relationship between Nietzsche's philosophy and architecture in a comprehensive and exhaustive way, with strong emphasis on documentary sources. Within their interpretation, Grand Style is one of the keywords that constitute this relationship, but the relevance and interpretation given to it differs in each of their respective standpoints.

Markus Breitschmid's book *„Der bauende Geist“* is a revised and edited version of his doctoral thesis *„Der Baugedanke bei Friedrich Nietzsche“* (TU Berlin, 2000). As the title of the book indicates, his central argument is based on Nietzsche's concept of the *„bauende Geist“*: „...man muss das künstlerische Grundphänomen verstehen, welches Leben heisst – den bauenden Geist, der unter den ungünstigen Umständen baut.“⁵⁴ The author states that 'building' constitutes a recurrent metaphor in Nietzsche's philosophy. *„Der Baugedanke bestimmt die Welt bei Nietzsche grundlegend.“*⁵⁵ It is a grounding principle, which as such, precedes and transcends the references to architecture within his discourse. Moreover, Nietzsche provides no systematically articulated theory of architecture, in the manner of Hegel or Schopenhauer. Therefore, according to Breitschmid, any form of scientific research on the field must acknowledge this fact, thus demanding a hermeneutical strategy that cannot be accomplished with the exclusive means of architectural theory or history. It must necessarily engage with Nietzsche's

54 eKGWB/NF-1884,25[438]

55 Breitschmid, Markus. *Der bauende Geist: Friedrich Nietzsche und die Architektur; mit einem Textcorpus aus dem philosophischen Werk Friedrich Nietzsches zum Baugedanken*. Luzern: Quart-Verl., 2001, p. 11.

philosophy as a whole.⁵⁶ The concept of the *bauende Geist* is therefore understood by the author as an overarching principle that links this broader theoretical context and the specificity of Nietzsche's remarks on architecture.

What Nietzsche calls Grand Style finds in architecture its highest form of expression. „*Die Baukunst ist damit der äusserste Ausdruck eines organisierten und vollständig verweltlichten, einzelnen Ganzen und wird bei Nietzsche zu jener Kunstgattung, in welcher <grosser Stil> seinen höchsten Ausdruck findet.*“⁵⁷ It is a new conception of monumentality, which is essentially somatic and a-teleological. The somatic character is related by the author to Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics, which constitutes a paradigmatic shift from Kantian-based aesthetics of idealism. „*Nachdem der vorgegebene Sinn - durch die mechanischen Prinzipien der Teleologie und der Zweckmässigkeit – nicht mehr zur Erklärung beitragen muss, zeigt sich in und an der Form eines Bauwerkes kein verborgener Sinn, kein hintergründiges Sein oder irgendeine magische Intentionalität, sondern die heimisch bedingte Form des Bauenden.*“⁵⁸ In this absence of external meanings attached to it, and due to its own internal consistency as pure form, the architecture in Grand Style is a-teleological, self-reflective, and autonomous. This constitutes, in turn, a reference of the existential demands for a modernity devoid of transcendental narratives, devoid of God, in which man must rebuild an existential horizon of meaning by his own means.

In stylistic terms, Breitschmid affirms that Grand Style is closely related by Nietzsche to the classic. „*Wenn Nietzsche die Herkunft seines Ideals des <Grossen Stils> beschreibt, lässt er keine Zweifel was «der Höchste Typus» ist: das «heidnische Ideal...das klassische*

⁵⁶ See Ibid., p.14.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.13.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Ideal». ⁵⁹ This is congruent with Heidegger's analysis (although the author does not take him as part of his sources). In his view, this reference to the classic does not mean an exclusive Apollonian conception. In line with the interpretation provided in this investigation, the author stresses the fact that, through his formulation of Grand Style, Nietzsche wants to reintegrate the Apollonian and Dionysian as concurrent aspects of the aesthetic experience, thus recovering the original tragic conception of the classic among the Greeks. „Das Entscheidende dieses Gedankens ist, dass Apollo nicht mehr als ein eigenständiges, losgelöstes Wesen, eine transzendente Konstruktion verstanden wird, sondern als eine Sublimation (...) von der chthonischen Erde. Bei Nietzsche wird die Erdgestalt Dionysos nun auch zum Sonnengott (...) Nietzsche verneint nicht das Dasein Apollos, sondern seine los- gelöste Eigenständigkeit von Dionysos: Apollo ist immer zugleich Dionysos.“ ⁶⁰ The classic, reformulated as Grand Style, is a synthesis of opposites, and as such it counters the classicism of Goethe and Winckelmann, which was conceived in strict Apollonian terms. In synthesis, Breitschmid's „Der bauende Geist“ finds its strength in the fluid interplay and correlation between Nietzsche's broader philosophical framework and his specific statements on architecture, among which the concept of Grand Style is given a prominent and determining role.

The title of Fritz Neumeyer's book, „Der Klang der Steine“, summarizes his thesis on the subject “Nietzsche and architecture”. According to the author, it is not possible to understand the relationship between the philosopher and this discipline without referring to music, which was one of his central themes of interest. „Architektur und Musik in Nietzsches Denken, ganz in der Tradition der idealistischen Kunstphilosophie, als komplementäre Gattungen im Kosmos der Künste unmittelbar aufeinander bezogen sind und ein Gegensatzpaar bilden.“ ⁶¹ Despite being closely related, in a dialectical sense,

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.72.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.75.

⁶¹ Neumeyer, Fritz. *Der Klang der Steine: Nietzsches Architekturen*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann., 2001, p.8.

Neumeyer highlights the gradual shift of Nietzsche's interest towards architecture in his last stage of philosophical production. „*In Nietzsches Denken ist zudem eine Entwicklung zu verzeichnen, die sich auch als ein Prozeß der Emanzipation der Architektur vom »Geiste der Musik« beschreiben läßt.*“⁶² This process of emancipation is understood as the shift from an early Dionysian aesthetic, influenced by Wagner, to an Apollonian one. Architecture represents for Nietzsche a form of artistic expression more in line with his late aesthetic conception, which rejects the inwardness of feeling proper of music and tends to privilege the clear objectivity of the architectural form as a more adequate expression for his notion of the Will to Power. However, music continues to constitute an interpretive point of reference for the philosopher. Nietzsche wants to hear "the sound of the stone", and he understands architecture fundamentally from a musical perspective. „*Eine Betrachtung von Nietzsches Architekturen läßt sich daher nicht unabhängig von ihrem musikalischen Hintergrund vornehmen. Mehr noch, die Architektur selbst wird aus einer musikalisch-einfühlsamen Perspektive behandelt, denn Nietzsche belauscht auf seine Weise den Klang der Steine und betreibt auf diesem Wege Architekturpsychologie. Damit wird er zum Vorreiter einer modernen Architekturtheorie, wie sie von Adamy, Wölfflin, Göller und Schmarsow als den Begründern eines neuen Diskurses in der Folgezeit wissenschaftlich etabliert wird.*“⁶³ Along with highlighting the impact of Nietzschean aesthetics in the later developments of architectural theory, Neumeyer indicates Gottfried Semper as one of the early influences of the philosopher in his relationship with this discipline. The latter constitutes a distinctive documentary contribution of his research.

The interpretation of the concept of Grand Style given by the author is broadly aligned with that of Breitschmid. For both, it is intimately related to the classical, and constitutes for Nietzsche a *positive aesthetic quality*, thus opposed to the anti-values of modern

62 Ibid., p.9.

63 Ibid.

decadence. But in Neumeyer, the accent is not placed on its relationship with the Will to Power in an ontological sense, but rather is interpreted as an aesthetic concept formulated by Nietzsche based on 1) the idea of "greatness", taken from Burckhardt's remarks in his *Cicerone* about Renaissance architecture⁶⁴, and 2) the will to establish a counterpoint to the decadence of Wagnerian musical aesthetics and romanticism.⁶⁵ The Palazzo Pitti in Florence (also taken from Burckhardt) becomes for Nietzsche a paradigmatic example. *„Der Palazzo Pitti war für Nietzsche fortan ein paradigmatisches Objekt. Er verkörperte einen persönlichen Meilenstein der antiromantischen Selbstbehandlung um mit diesem Vorbild über den eigenen Schatten zu springen, und er wurde zum Prüfstein für den großen Stil, mit dem die Kunst gemessen wurde. Bis zuletzt zog Nietzsche sich auf diese feste Burg zurück, vorzüglich um von hier aus seinen Feldzug gegen die Dekadenz im reiche der Musik zu führen.“*⁶⁶ In the architecture in Grand Style of the Palazzo, the Apollonian-Dionysian confrontation is overcome in the form of a dialectical synthesis. *„Architektur ist hier die höchste Form der durch ein Individuum in einem körperlichen Objekt zur Anschauung gebrachten Bejahung des Daseins, und eben diese Höhe der Daseinsbejahung verleiht ihr den Anschein «Gesetzt unter Gesetzen» zu sein und rückt sie außerhalb des Dionysisch-Apollinischen.“*⁶⁷

Jörg Gleiter's book *„Der Philosophische Flaneur“* is the result of an investigation carried out by the author over a period of 10 years on the subject "Nietzsche and architecture". The work exhibits a strong documentary character, supported by his research done at the Nietzsche Kolleg in Weimar. Through the analysis of the experience of the philosopher during his last months of conscious life in Turin, the author highlights the biographical and documentary aspects that allow to recognize his appreciations on

64 See Ibid., pp. 224-225.

65 See Ibid., pp. 211-215.

66 Ibid., p.211.

67 Ibid., p.215.

architecture as a preferred artistic form during this last stage of his philosophical production. Like Breitschmid and Neumeyer, Gleiter emphasizes "the turn from music to architecture" as a fundamental theme, also establishing links at a theoretical level with Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics and his discourse on decadence as distinctive and concomitant aspects. This is one of the strongest points of the research, in terms of methodological and scientific consistency.

The concept of the flaneur is introduced by Gleiter as a way of characterizing both the concrete experience of the philosopher in the city, as well as his condition of "modern subject". The latter is one of the determining aspects of the interpretation provided by the author. Nietzsche's confrontation with modernity appears as a conflict that, although it presents ambiguities, is resolved in a form of appreciative and symbiotic assimilation. According to Gleiter, the positive experience in Turin, verified in the letters sent to his mother, Franz Overbeck and Georg Brandes, shows that the *cliché* of the wandering philosopher of mountains, the hermit of the peaks, is only a narrative construct.⁶⁸ However, the question of why the flaneur in Turin continued to write in his books as a hermit (and radical misanthrope) remains, in our view, open. "The Antichrist" was conceived by him while strolling along its colonnades and porticos, a work that is anything but an appraisal of modernity.⁶⁹

The analysis of the concept of Grand Style provided by Gleiter constitutes one of the aspects that radically differentiate him from the previously mentioned authors, including Heidegger. In his interpretation, Nietzsche formulates this concept as an obsolete ideal. *„Zu den ewigen Idealen, also den ewigen Götzen, die Nietzsche in ihrer Hohlheit zeigen wollte, gehörten die Philosophie, die Moral, die Religion und die Bildung, aber auch diejenige Macht, die keinen Widerspruch gegen sich duldet und keinen Beweis mehr nötig*

68 See Gleiter, Jörg. *Der Philosophische Flaneur: Nietzsche Und Die Architektur*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, p.18.

69 See A § 1,2,3,4,6.

zu haben glaubt: die Architektur der Macht-Beredtsamkeit in Formen (...) Nietzsche in *Götzen-Dämmerung* von der klassischen Architektur des großen Stils als von einem jener ewigen Götzen sprach.“⁷⁰ According to the author, the “hollowness” of this ideal is due to the fact that Nietzsche considers it to be a strictly Apollonian, superficial concept that only excites the power of vision. Therefore, it excludes the Dionysian element and its ability to stimulate the totality of our sensitive affects from a physiological point of view.⁷¹ „So ist der große Wille des Architekten auch kein dionysischer sondern ein apollinischer. Als Willensakt, der auf das «höchste Gefühl von Macht und Sicherheit» aus ist, «versichtbart» der Rausch des großen Stils den Willen zur Macht und erregt so «vor Allem das Auge», er steigert aber nicht, die «Erregbarkeit der ganzen Maschine», das heißt, das gesamte Affekt-System.“⁷²

Gleiter affirms that it is possible to draw a parallel between this critique of Nietzsche to his own concept of Grand Style and his opposition to Wagner's music, also under the premise of a physiological objection. „Nietzsches Vorbehalte gegen die Architektur des großen Stils, gegen die Architektur als Ausdruck des Willens zur Macht, galten demselben Phänomen, das er auch in der Musik Wagners kritisiert hatte: Es sind «physiologische Einwände».“⁷³ However, it is difficult to follow this line of argumentation, since Nietzsche himself affirms that Wagner's music constitutes precisely the opposite of his concept of Grand Style, in every sense.⁷⁴ The insistence that it is an Apollonian-idealizing construct, against which Nietzsche raises a critical standpoint, is reiterated by the author on p. 117: „(...) der große Stil gehört zum ontologisch ente der Ästhetik der Aufklärung und ihrem

70 Ibid., p.34.

71 Nevertheless, it is important to note that for the late Nietzsche, the Apollonian is also a form of physiological rapture, which differs from the Dionysian just in terms of its 'tempo': it is *slower*. See eKGWB/NF-1888,14[46] (WP § 799).

72 Ibid., p.35.

73 Ibid.

74 See eKGWB/NF-1885,41[2]; eKGWB/NF-1887,11[312] (WP § 849); eKGWB/NF-1888,14[7].

im Objekt bestimmten Schönheitsideal, der Stil entsteht, «wenn das Schöne den Sieg über das Ungeheuere davonträgt». In seiner Idealität ist der große Stil daher weit entfernt von Nietzsches Kunst als der dionysischen Einverleibtheit (...).⁷⁵ In general terms, the author seems to interpret the concept as a historical-stylistic category, associated by Nietzsche with Renaissance architecture and its subsequent reception in the context of Enlightenment and Neoclassical aesthetics. The philosophical flaneur ultimately appears as a character steeped in modernity, who in his role as critic of culture seeks to denounce this and other concepts as obsolete ideals through his will of “revaluation of all values”. Following Heidegger and Breitschmid, it could be counter-argued that, as the aesthetic objectivation of the Will to Power, Grand style has a primarily ontological character and not historical. But this depends on the hermeneutical strategy chosen, both in regards to Nietzsche's philosophy as a whole and his specific remarks on architecture. Gleiter follows the path of a non-literal reading: *„Bei einer kontextualisierten Lektüre (...) wird sichtbar, dass jede wörtliche Interpretation Nietzsches Intentionen zur Architektur verfehlen muss.”*⁷⁶ In the context of such theoretical standpoint, the interpretations can certainly become more open and fluid. Another key aspect implicit in the analytical strategy chosen by the author points to the necessity of establishing a distinction between the particular aspects of Nietzsche's biography and personality, and the content of his writings. Quoting Heidegger, *“Nietzsche transformed himself into an ambiguous figure, and, within his world and that of the present time, he had to do this. What we must do is to grasp the forward thrust and the uniqueness, what is decisive and ultimate, behind this ambiguity. The precondition for this is that we look away from the ‘man’ and also from the ‘work’ insofar as it is viewed as the expression of his humanity, that is, in the light of the man. For even the work as work closes itself off to us as long as*

75 Ibid., p.117.

76 Gleiter, Jörg. op. cit., p.33.

we squint somehow after the 'life' of the man who created the work instead of asking about Being and the world, which first ground the work.”⁷⁷

For methodological reasons, the present thesis does not aim to re-analyze the broad subject of 'Nietzsche and architecture', a task which has been already extensively developed in the aforementioned contributions. It is rather focused on Nietzsche's Grand Style as a specific object of analysis, and does not rely primarily on biographical-historical research, but is centered on the definition of a theoretical standpoint framed by an overall onto-phenomenological approach with Heideggerian basis.⁷⁸ This means, basically, to think about the essence (*Wesen*) from the perspective of its sensible appearance (*Schein*), in mutual correspondence and identification. An approach which is congruent with the Nietzschean vindication of sensory experience as a valid form of *episteme*, which lies at the core of his "physiological aesthetics", and consequently in his definition of Grand Style.

⁷⁷ M. Heidegger, '*Nietzsche*', Vol. III, p.4.

⁷⁸ For a further reference of the onto-phenomenological approach, see Heidegger, Martin – Fink, Eugen. *Heraclitus Seminar 1966/67*. Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979, p.50.

Chapter 1: The Veil of Dionysos

1.1 Life as an aesthetic phenomenon

*"(...) because only as an aesthetic phenomenon are existence and the world eternally justified."*⁷⁹

This quotation is taken from Nietzsche's "The Birth of Tragedy out of the spirit of Music", of 1872. In this work, the fundamental themes that articulate his philosophical perspective are already prefigured, within which the reference to morality as a discursive construct which lacks an objective ontological basis occupies an essential place. It is from this affirmation that arises his will to situate the aesthetic experience as a previous and fundamental dimension of existence, which transcends the conditioning of moral validation frameworks, always subject to the mutability of the systems of world comprehension from which they arise. *"Formerly one said of every morality: «By their fruits ye shall know them». I say of every morality: «It is a fruit by which I recognize the soil from which it sprang»."*⁸⁰ The understanding of the vital experience as an aesthetic phenomenon has for Nietzsche a double meaning: on the one hand, the recognition that the experience of becoming and existence as a whole is completely alien to any justifications of moral order⁸¹, including all possible teleological readings and/or dialectics of historical overcoming, and that the experience of being in the world means basically the way in which the human being confronts and assumes this fact, expressing it in a certain congruent *ethos*. In this sense, the articulation of a morality as a normative code is only a consequence *a posteriori* of the way in which this essential background of existence is assumed, being alternatively the form of negation (Platonism, Christianity),

⁷⁹ BT § 5.

⁸⁰ eKGWB/NF-1888,14[76] (WP § 257).

⁸¹ *"The benefit consists in the contemplation of nature's magnificent indifference to good and evil."* eKGWB/NF-1887,10[52] (WP § 850).

or a vital affirmation, a *yes* to life as a whole, assumed in the fullness of its immanent deployment (the Dionysian worldview).

It is in this sense that it is possible to understand more clearly Nietzsche's assertion regarding a certain *"aesthetic justification of existence"* (and its consequent and implicit vindication of the eidetic-phenomenological experience as a privileged form of knowledge), an assertion which has its original roots on his interpretation of pre-Socratic philosophy (mainly developed in his *"Philosophy in the tragic age of the Greeks"*, from 1873). In their search for the essences that sustain the vast and infinite unfolding of the sensible phenomena of the universe, the pre-Socratics of the Milesian and Ephesian schools (particularly Heraclitus)⁸² also recognized a certain *immanent* condition, completely alien to the notion of a moral or extra-mundane goal:

"This world-order -Kosmos-, the same for all beings, was not created by gods nor men, but it ever was, and is, and shall be, ever-living fire, in measures being kindled and in measures going out".⁸³

Heraclitus's laconic aphorism, deeply congruent with his own aristocratic-aesthetic disposition towards reality, is in turn further developed by Nietzsche in the following way:

82 *"Whereas Nietzsche is ambivalent regarding how we should value Socrates' contribution to philosophy, his positive estimation of Heraclitus persists from his earliest writings to his latest. In Heraclitus, Nietzsche finds a kindred spirit «in whose company [he feels] altogether warmer and better than anywhere else» (EH, BT3). Heraclitus exhibits, for Nietzsche, the tragic wisdom that he otherwise finds lacking in the history of philosophy. This tragic wisdom is the decisive move towards a Dionysian philosophy which affirms «passing-away and annihilating, [...] the yea-saying to contrariety and struggle, becoming, with a radical repudiation of the very concept 'Being'» (EH, BT3). Even the doctrine of the eternal recurrence «might in the end have been taught already by Heraclitus» (EH, BT3)." Schrift, Alan, op. cit., p.63.*

83 *"κόσμον τόνδε, τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπάντων, οὔτε τις θεῶν οὔτε ἀνθρώπων ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἦν ἀεὶ καὶ ἔστιν καὶ ἔσται πῦρ ἀεὶζῶν, ἀπτόμενον μέτρα καὶ ἀποσβεννύμενον μέτρα". Heraclitus, frag.30, extensively analysed in Heidegger, Martin – Fink, Eugen, op. cit., §V. See also Nietzsche's section on Heraclitus in PTAG § IV, 173-88; also § XIV, 109.*

*“In this world only play, the play of the artist and the child, exhibits coming-to-be and passing-away, building and destroying, without any moral attribution, in the innocence of the eternally same. And as the child and the artist play, so plays the eternally living fire, building and destroying in innocence – such is the game that the Aion plays with itself”.*⁸⁴

The search for a ‘meaning’ for existence, located at a point eccentric to its own center, is a post-Socratic narrative construct, which crystallizes historically in Christianity as its most decanted form.⁸⁵ For Nietzsche, such forms of metaphysical counseling are typical of weak and resentful individuals, all those who are not strong enough to assume reality, and thus condemn it as being ‘apparent’ and not ‘true’. *“It is a sign of one's feeling of power and well-being how far one can acknowledge the terrifying and questionable character of things; and whether one needs some sort of «solution» at the end.”*⁸⁶

On the contrary, for the genuinely noble and aristocratic soul, the extra-mundane search for meaning and the consequent opposition between apparent and true world is something completely opposed to its psychic-spiritual disposition. The world resolves into itself, without any teleological purpose, like a vast theater of lights and shadows, of Olympic peaks and unfathomable abysses, that draws men and gods alike into infinite folds and spatio-temporal recesses.⁸⁷ And it is the task of the superior man to situate himself simultaneously before and within this scenario with aplomb, dignity, and *style*. The construction of this style, understood as the vital affirmation of a particular character that inscribes itself in the world of forms as Will to Power made visible in acts and deeds,

84 PTAG § 7.

85 *“(…) To tell the truth, there is nothing which stands more in opposition to the purely aesthetic interpretation and justification of the world, as it was set out in this book, than Christian teaching, which is and will remain merely moralistic and which, with its absolute moral standards (for example, with its truthfulness of God), relegates art to the realm of lies—in other words, which denies art, condemns it, and passes sentence on it.”* BT - Attempt of self-criticism, § 5.

86 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[168] (WP § 852).

87 See eKGWB/NF-1885,38[12] (WP §1067).

is what gives life its essential condition of being an artistic exercise.⁸⁸ A vector traced on the canvas of life, with magnitude, direction and meaning not projected towards a point eccentric to it (the afterlife, the hope of a redemption), but as a trace that becomes circular by *excess of force*, unfolding around itself: *“Wie man wird, was man ist”* (how to become what one is).⁸⁹ Essentially, this is the heroic-tragic worldview characteristic of an ancient, pre-Christian ethos, which Nietzsche recovers at the end of 19th century as a proposal of an active countermovement to nihilism, understood as the dissolving force *par excellence* of the forms of a genuine high culture, whose seeds had already been planted more than 2000 years before by the deniers of existence - with Socrates as its first and most conspicuous representative.⁹⁰ *“For in the world of antiquity there reigned a different, more lordly morality than today; and the man of antiquity, raised in this morality, was a stronger and deeper man than the man of today (...)”*.⁹¹

However, it would be a mistake to think that this proposal consisted basically of recovering the forms of classicism through a plain aesthetic, stylistic approach. Both Goethe and Winckelmann, and certainly Hölderlin, among other distinguished German authors, had already projected their gaze on the horizon of Greece as a return to the original sources of Western thought, a return that implied, in turn, the possibility of renewing its foundational impetus.⁹² However, their gaze was tinged by the veil of a

88 (...) *“To «give style» to one's character: a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason...It will be the strong and domineering natures who enjoy their finest gaiety in such compulsion, in such constraint and perfection under a law of their own. (...)”* GS § 290.

89 Sub-title of Nietzsche's *“Ecce Homo”* written in 1888 and first published in 1908.

90 *“Socrates is further described as “the anti-mystic par excellence” (der spezifische NichtMystiker), a type of human being incapable of mysticism and therefore — considering the importance of myth, mysticism, instinct, and pathos to the existence of tragedy — the polar opposite of a Dionysian human being. He is described as wielding an instinct-disintegrating influence, clearly a parallel expression by Nietzsche for the famous Socratic tool of dialectic with which he disarmed and humiliated his opponents.”* Del Caro, Adrian, *“The Birth of Tragedy”*, in: *A companion to Friedrich Nietzsche: life and works* / edited by Paul Bishop. NY: Camden House, 2012, p.67.

91 eKGWB/NF-1885,37[8] (WP § 957).

92 *“The persistence of the romantic movement in Western culture has been due in significant measure to the German fascination with idealized Greek antiquity, part of what Nietzsche saw as the Teutonic yearning for the south. The*

certain romantic *Apollonian idealization* that excluded a priori the tragic-Dionysian element of existence. *“One would like to say that the term «classical» - as posed by Winckelmann and Goethe - not only did not explain that Dionysian element, but excluded it (...).”*⁹³ And it is precisely this element that, according to Nietzsche, was never banished or suppressed in the classical Greek worldview, prior to Socrates, always remaining present as a basal substrate that permeated its artistic manifestations.⁹⁴ It is in the form of the Attic Greek tragedy that both artistic states, the Apollonian and the Dionysian, converge in a synthesis never achieved again in the further developments of Western art. *“With those two gods of art, Apollo and Dionysos, we link our recognition that in the Greek world there exists a huge contrast, in origins and purposes, between visual (plastic) arts, the Apollonian, and the non-visual art of music, the Dionysian. Both very different drives go hand in hand, for the most part in open conflict with each other and simultaneously provoking each other all the time to new and more powerful offspring, in order to perpetuate for themselves the contest of opposites which the common word «Art» only seems to bridge, until they finally, through a marvellous metaphysical act, seem to pair up with each other and, as this pair, produce Attic tragedy, just as much a Dionysian as an Apollonian work of art.”*⁹⁵

This Apollonian-Dionysian binomial constitutes a cornerstone in the articulation of Nietzsche’s aesthetic discourse, and the following part of this investigation will propose

Germans, I should say, colored the first romantic wave through Winckelmann's and Goethe's Hellenism, the second through Nietzsche's Dionysian/Apollonian contrast, the third through Heidegger's concern for the pre-Socratic thought and mode of being” McFadden, George. *Discovering the Comic*. Princeton, 1982, p. 196.

93 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[35].

94 *“To the Apollonian Greeks the effect aroused by the Dionysian also seemed «Titanic» and «barbaric». But they could not, with that response, conceal that they themselves were, nonetheless, internally related and similar to those deposed Titans and heroes. Indeed, they must have felt even more that their entire existence, with all its beauty and moderation, rested on some hidden underground of suffering and knowledge which was reawakened through that very Dionysian. And look! Apollo could not live without Dionysus! The «Titanic» and the «barbaric» were, in the end, every bit as necessary as the Apollonian”* BT § 4.

95 BT, prologue to Richard Wagner, § 1.

an interpretative reading that leads from its original definition to its later synthesis in the concept of Grand Style.

1.2 About the Apollonian and Dionysian categories

“We will have achieved much for the study of aesthetics when we come, not merely to a logical understanding, but also to the immediately certain apprehension of the fact that the further development of art is bound up with the duality of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, just as reproduction depends upon the duality of the sexes, their continuing strife and only periodically occurring reconciliation.”⁹⁶

It is with this fundamental paragraph that Nietzsche begins his renowned work “The Birth of Tragedy”. It constitutes the structuring thesis of the book, and by extension the essential basis from which the whole of his early aesthetic philosophy further unfolds. In traditional terms, Apollo is the god of beauty, measure, and containment, while Dionysos represents its counterpart, associated with chaos, excess and the cathartic states proper of archaic naturalist-orgiastic cults. Nietzsche realizes an accurate study of the ways in which these two principles are manifested in the context of the classic Greek tragedy as a case of typological study, achieving an interpretation that in a very lucid and innovative way⁹⁷ shifts away from the historicist canons prevalent in the field of academic-

96 Ibid.

97 In academic circles, Nietzsche's interpretation was received not without qualms. It was harshly criticized by the philologist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in a series of writings entitled *"Philology of the future!" (Zukunftphilologie!*, Berlin, 1872-1873), for its apparent lack of scientific-methodological rigor, and for moving away from the interpretative framework of Hegelian base that prevailed in the philological studies of the time. For the whole debate concerning Nietzsche's interpretation of tragedy see W. M. Calder III, "The Wilamowitz-Nietzsche Struggle: New Documents and a Reappraisal", in: *Nietzsche-Studien*, 12 (1983), p. 214-5.

philological tradition characteristic of his time.⁹⁸ His analytical strategy operates by displacement and extrapolation: Apollo and Dionysos are not just an indirect reference, but rather the two fundamental principles that underlie not only tragedy as a specific genre, *but any artistic manifestation as such*. In general terms, their later interpretation as aesthetic categories has tended to privilege a restrictive formalistic meaning in which the Apollonian is associated with concepts of order, measurement and containment, while the Dionysian corresponds to the sense of dynamism, movement and change. However, the original formulation proposed by Nietzsche has a much broader interpretative richness in which metaphysical, aesthetic, and historical aspects are simultaneously addressed. In what follows, the main characteristics and the possible crossings between these three layers of meaning will be analyzed.

1.2.1 Metaphysical dimension

The first significant dimension of the Apollonian-Dionysian distinction is of purely metaphysical order. To clarify this aspect, it is necessary to recognize the strong influence exerted in the initial stages of Nietzsche's thought by Schopenhauer's work, specifically through his main opus, "The World as Will and Representation" (here, WWR), published in 1819, and first read by Nietzsche in 1865.⁹⁹ In the title of this book, it is possible to recognize the germ of the dualistic formulation that constitutes the nucleus of the Nietzschean thesis.¹⁰⁰ Schopenhauer affirms the Will as the essential substratum of the

98 "Scandalously for a work by a German academic, *The Birth of Tragedy* had lacked any scholarly apparatus and contained no footnotes; here, too, Nietzsche deliberately eschews what he considers to be the deadly dull writing style of standard German philosophy (...)" Duncan Lange, "Untimely Meditations", in: *A companion to Friedrich Nietzsche: life and works* / edited by Paul Bishop. NY: Camden House, 2012, p.84.

99 See EH, "Why I am so clever", § 1.

100 Following the analysis made by Walter Kaufmann in his "*Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*", the dualistic conception that frames Nietzsche's initial "metaphysics of the artist" gives way gradually to a monistic-dialectic perspective, characteristic of his later work. A monism that is consequently reflected in the notion of Grand Style understood as a synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories. The initial opposition between the states of dream and intoxication is later conceived as a difference of *tempo* between two forms of intoxication. See

phenomenal world in itself, in the manner of a primordial formative force that underlies all sensible manifestation, and that above all precedes and surpasses the mediation of the individual consciousness as a device of intellection and understanding of reality. This mediation through consciousness is what is called “representation”, understood as the way in which the world is captured, interpreted and *articulated as such* from the perspective of the subjective self. “(...) *Phenomenal existence is representation and nothing more. All representation, of whatever kind it may be, all object, is phenomenal existence, but the will alone is a thing in itself. As such, it is throughout not representation, but toto genere different from it; it is that of which all representation, all object, is the phenomenal appearance, the visibility, the objectification. It is the inmost nature, the kernel, of every particular thing, and also of the whole.*”¹⁰¹

In this conception, it is possible to recognize the Kantian distinction between thing-in-itself and phenomenon, respectively, a distinction that in turn forms the basis of Schopenhauer's formulation.¹⁰² Thus, it is possible to trace a conceptual axis that goes from Kantian-based transcendental idealism to Nietzsche's physiological vitalism, with Schopenhauer as the pivot that displaces the center of gravity from the valorization of ideality to the realm of sensible experience as a privileged form of knowledge “(...) *the body is the mediating element that makes possible the self-consciousness of the subject and at the same time shows its essential nature (...) In this way, and just as he broke with rationalism and modern optimism, Schopenhauer also breaks here with the modern tradition of the philosophy of consciousness. His vindication of the body represents a milestone in the history of thought and lays the foundations of a philosophy of corporality*

Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 1st edition, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974, p.235.

101 WWR § 21.

102 “(...) *As for Nietzsche, he claims in his first writing, The Birth of Tragedy, his affiliation with Schopenhauer and Kant - at least to a certain Kant, that of the opposition of the «thing in itself» and «phenomenon» - but he will then overtake and renege his Schopenhauerian and Kantian ties*”. Escoubas, Éliane. “La filosofía alemana del arte: Schelling, Hegel, Nietzsche”, p.1. Available at: <https://cef.pucp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Escoubas_lafilosofiaalem.pdf>. Accessed 27.01.16. Translation mine.

that will find important later developments. With it, the world of pure consciences is abandoned, the Cartesian «*res cogitans*» respects of which the body went from being a more or less annoying appendage, to enter into a new consideration that gives the body a central role in the constitution of subjectivity”.¹⁰³ However, the notion of will in Schopenhauer is deployed in the field of metaphysics as a reflection on the essences, being retained in that context. It is Nietzsche's merit to propose a re-reading of the concept through the notion of “Will to Power”, a notion that expands the metaphysical-ontological sense proposed by Schopenhauer towards the horizon of the facts of culture, morals, and the associated categories of aesthetic value proper of the field of Art as a form of realization of the creative power of the human being, with all its complex patterns of historical evolution.¹⁰⁴

In metaphysical terms, the Will to Power is the fundamental form of actualization of Power into Act, of Being into Becoming: “*To impose upon becoming the character of being-that is the supreme will to power*”¹⁰⁵, and just as the “Primordial One” unfolds in incessant forms of phenomenal manifestation (Nature, as *Physis*), the human being exercises his creative faculty as an articulator of meanings and modes of interpretation of reality. Although the notion of Will to Power was systematically developed from 1883 onwards,¹⁰⁶ an early, intuitive approach on the subject can be recognized in the “metaphysics of the artist” characteristic of the first period of Nietzschean philosophy (1872-1876),¹⁰⁷ which exerted great influence on a whole generation of artists in the late

103 López de Santa María, Pilar. Introducción a “*El Mundo como Voluntad y Representación*”, Arthur Schopenhauer. Madrid: Trotta, 2004, p.7. Translation mine.

104 A consistent and extensive analysis of the meaning of Nietzsche’s concept of Will to Power can be found in Abel, Günter. *Nietzsche. Die Dynamik der Willen zur Macht und die ewige Wiederkehr*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 1998.

105 eKGWB/NF-1886,7[54] (WP § 617).

106 The first mention of the concept can be found in Z § I, “*On the thousand and one goals*”.

107 Nietzsche’s philosophical production is commonly divided in three main periods (1872-1876; 1878-1882; 1883-1889). See Wicks, Robert, “Nietzsche's Life and Works”, in: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/nietzsche-life-works/>>. Accessed 13.11.19.

19th century and particularly in the discourse of the avant-gardes of the early 20th century. It is from this metaphysical foundation relative to the essence of the Will as the primordial force of existence that the Apollonian and the Dionysian are outlined as aesthetic categories, more precisely as *“artistic states”*, according to Nietzsche's own definition. The Apollonian refers to the ambit of representation, understood as a *veil of ideality* projected on the substrate of reality, while the Dionysian is the fundamental character of the substrate itself, not delimited by spatio-temporal categories. The Apollonian is, therefore, the sense of measure and containment inherent in the *Principium Individuationis*, sustained in the notion of limit and by extension in the will to imprint an order into chaos, making it intelligible from the perspective of the *Selbst*. Making intelligible means here: to trace a horizon of meaning, from one's own consciousness as an irreducible center:

“«As on the stormy sea which extends without limit on all sides, howling mountainous waves rise up and sink and a sailor sits in a rowboat, trusting the weak craft, so, in the midst of a world of torments, the solitary man sits peacefully, supported by and trusting in the ‘principium individuationis’ [the principle of individuation]» (World as Will and Representation, Vol. I, p. 416). Yes, we could say of Apollo that the imperturbable trust in that principle and the calm sitting still of the man conscious of it attained its loftiest expression in him, and we may even designate Apollo himself as the marvelous divine image of the principium individuationis, from whose gestures and gaze all the joy and wisdom of illusion, together with its beauty, speak to us.”¹⁰⁸

It is Nietzsche who quotes here Schopenhauer directly, in his intention to link the *Principium Individuationis* with his concept of the Apollonian.

108 BT, prologue to Richard Wagner, § 1.

We may here insert a clarifying, phenomenological example, taken from the sphere of our common daily experience. In the darkness of the deep night, we see the stars as weak luminous points that stand out against the unfathomable bottom of the heavens. The disposition of the stars appears in principle chaotic and formless; nevertheless, a careful and willful observation necessarily leads us to draw binding axes, meaningful traces. And so, figures appear, and with the figures, names of things that are known to us: *Eagle, Serpent, Bull*. The constellations are forms of making apprehensible and measurable on human scale what *by nature* tends to infinity, to chaos. Thus, with each trace, with each binding axis, we weave a veil of meaning over the primordial chaos. This veil is the face of Apollo, which like a mask is drawn upon the Dionysian background of existence: “(...) *briefly put, the Apollonian of the mask, necessary creations of a glimpse into the inner terror of nature, are like bright spots to heal us from the horrifying night of the disabled gaze.*”¹⁰⁹ This veil-mask is what transmutes Chaos into Cosmos, the Earth into World, the infinite into apprehensible finitude. The horror of emptiness and its correlate of non-sense is transmuted into measures, into regularities, into figures. All of them, projections of ideality, like *dreams*, according to Nietzsche's reference to the exercise of the Apollonian faculty, in contrast to the Dionysian drunkenness. “*Apollonian and Dionysian - There are two conditions in which art appears in man like a force of nature and disposes of him whether he will or not: as the compulsion to have visions and as a compulsion to an orgiastic state (...) both release artistic powers in us, but different ones: the dream those of vision, association, poetry; intoxication those of gesture, passion, song, dance.*”¹¹⁰ Dreaming is the exercise of the creative faculty in its purest state, understood as projection of forms, as incessant figuration traced on the sea of unconsciousness, while drunkenness implies the dissolution of the forces that retain individuality, seeking a state of ecstatic fusion with the whole, with the Primordial One. For in the ecstasy of orgiastic drunkenness, the

109 BT § IX.

110 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[36].

forces of cohesion are diluted, the *constellated figures* become amorphous and tend to vanish, aspiring essentially to recover the state of undivided unity from which they arose. It is the ecstasy of the destruction of the *Principium Individuationis*, the un-veiling of the veil that allows us to glimpse that primordial background: the face of Dionysos, as the reverse of Apollo's mask.

The phenomenal experience of being in the world is therefore determined as the permanent tension between these two principles, which manifest themselves both in the field of individual experience, as well as supra-personal forces of cosmological order. In this sense, the universe appears to us as the permanent dispute between the formative forces of individuation, crystallizing into recognizable singular entities with spatio-temporal extension, and the entropic forces that seek the dissolution of the singular in the realm of the universal, in the chaos understood as a primordial substrate of the amorphous matter, not subject to delimitation categories. Order and Chaos, limit and infinity, *coagula et solve* in alchemical terms, arranged in permanent agonistic tension, constitute the fundamental principles that articulate the formative dynamics of the cosmos. In this sense, we can understand the reference made by Nietzsche to the dispute between the sexes, *“among which the struggle is constant, and reconciliation is only made periodically”*, as a physiological interpretation of this dynamic in the field of sensitive phenomena at human scale. Life as a whole is a permanent confrontation on multiple resonant scales. In words of Heraclitus, *“War is the father of all and the king of all; and some it has made gods and some men, some slaves and some free.”*¹¹¹

Regarding this notion of confrontation, Adrian del Caro comments: *“Nietzsche remained a dualistic thinker, because he cherished the state of tension created by the clash of forces, reflecting his profound interest in the Greek concept of agon. His earliest writings*

111 “Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, χαί τοίς μὲν θεοῦς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους”. Heraclitus, Frag.53. In: Diels, Hermann. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1903, p.74.

were characterized by the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian, a model he applied not only to tragedy but to the whole of ancient Greek culture (...) I agree with those scholars who emphasize the constancy of Nietzsche's use of these conceptual opposites, which he used throughout his career in language very similar to that of The Birth of Tragedy, as well as those who underscore that later polarities such as Dionysos vs. Christ are not displacements of the earliest dichotomy but elaborations of further cultural differences rooted in the Apollo-Dionysos polarity.”¹¹²

In the ambit of individual existence, and from a phenomenological perspective, this notion of confrontation (πολεμος, *polemos*) can be primarily recognized in the body-consciousness binomial distinction. Consciousness is that exclusive human faculty that allows us to stand *before* the phenomena as spectators of reality, while the body is the way in which this consciousness acquires spatio-temporal presence and measure, remaining immersed *within* the plane of sensitive manifestation, seeking incessantly to establish relations of dominion and tangible appropriation by proximity. Consciousness is distance, body is closeness, and the phenomenal experience of Being as an indivisible psychosomatic complex is a permanent articulation between these two dimensions. Articulation that refers us naturally and respectively to the Apollonian-Dionysian distinction, understood from this perspective as an expression of the fundamental forces that sustain our experience as spectators and actors of reality.

112 Del Caro, Adrian. "The Birth of Tragedy", in: *A companion to Friedrich Nietzsche: life and works* / edited by Paul Bishop. NY: Camden House, 2012, p.58.

1.2.2 Apollo and Dionysos as forms of aesthetic experience

The eye is the organ of Apollo, the contemplative gaze its privileged act. *“Apollonian intoxication stimulates the eye above all, so that it gets the power of vision. Painters, sculptors, epic poets are visionaries par excellence.”*¹¹³ Consequently, the plastic arts have traditionally been associated with this principle, since in them the aesthetic experience is fundamentally sustained in the act of contemplation in distance and the projection of images. The performative arts represent their counterpart, the domain of Dionysos: music, dance and lyric poetry.¹¹⁴ They are closer to the Will in its purest state; they are pure temporal unfolding captured in trans-courses, ungraspable by the gaze, but rather experienceable in the totality of the corporeal as flow and mutation.¹¹⁵ In what follows, we will attempt to provide a phenomenological interpretative framework on this distinction, based on Nietzsche’s analysis of the subject.¹¹⁶

Music, as a sensitive phenomenon, has certainly an immaterial character, ‘without contours’. Its presence appears not as an occupation of space established from a limit of differentiation between fullness and emptiness, but rather as a time-course between a beginning and an end (with potential for resonant expansion to infinity). A course that acquires consistency as a flow articulated in pulses, in modulations that in a certain sense give time an ‘embodied’ and objectified character. But this embodiment does not crystallize with the consistency of the plastic fact, it does not assert itself in the field of tangible matter, but remains retained in the domain of time. Despite this condition, it

113 TI §10.

114 A condensed exposition of the difference between Apollonian and Dionysian forms of art can be found in DW § 2.

115 It is interesting to analyse the evolution of the traditional distinction between plastic and performative arts, from the avant-gardes of the early twentieth century to the present day. While from an ontological perspective this distinction is, *sensu strictu*, immutable, it is possible to recognize the contemporary effort to blur the limits between these categories through the expanded concept of “medial arts”, and its instrumental reduction in notions such as “interactivity”, “activation”, etc.

116 For an extensive analysis on this particular topic, see Fink, Eugene. *Nietzsches Philosophie*, § 3 “Kunstpsychologie und Kunst als Welterkenntnis”. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960, pp.20-27.

has a high capacity to trigger aesthetic states that involve the activation and putting-in-motion of the individual psycho-somatic complex as a whole. This is due to a certain 'absence of mediation' in the perceptual act: contrary to the visual fact, which requires an irreducible contemplative distance, music is immediately 'internalized' in the Self, and connects with the basic pulsating dimensions of the body establishing an empathic relation of totality by fusion and resonance. It is because of this condition that Schopenhauer affirms that music is the expression of the Will in its purest state, understood as an original force not mediated by consciousness. *"Therefore, unlike the other arts, music is in no way a copy of the Ideas; instead, it is a copy of the will itself, whose objecthood the Ideas are as well: this is precisely why the effect of music is so much more powerful and urgent than that of the other arts: the other arts speak only of shadows while music speaks of the essence."*¹¹⁷

Music, and rhythm as its primary form of modulation, are reflected in the basal functions that constitute the foundation of life as a somatic phenomenon: the beats, the pulsations, the alternation between inspiration and exhalation, etc., and in a broader sense, with all those forms that in the plane of the sensible phenomena make analogical reference to the sense of the 'musical'. The alternation between day and night, the cycles of the seasons, the movement of the celestial bodies and their periodic revolutions, etc. But these phenomena appear as densified crystallizations of an underlying *Principium*, a vibrant background of potential energy that is put-into-form primarily as sound, and then as matter.¹¹⁸ That 'vibrant background' is the face of Dionysos, which lets itself be glimpsed as music. Thus, it is possible to understand as characteristic manifestations of the Dionysian element all those experiences in which the body is 'carried away' by music until reaching the paroxysm of cathartic states, both individually and collectively (orgiastic states, possessions by 'external entities', etc.). In them, the consciousness of

117 WWR II § 52.

118 The "primordial sound" as the origin of the manifested universe in its material form is an archetype commonly found in traditional cosmogonies. See *Chandogya Upanishad* §1, 1.1,2,3.

individuality, of the *Selbst* as an autonomous unit, dissolves in the undifferentiated sea of elemental impulses, destroying the integrity of the *Principium Individuationis*. And this destruction, paradoxically, entails a form of pleasure, a joy detonated by the restitution of the original state of common-union of the individual with the *physis*, with nature, prior to the 'fall into consciousness'.¹¹⁹

On the obverse of this dimension, we find again Apollo expressed in the plastic fact and its innate reflection in all those forms of corporal expression in which the consciousness of the *Selbst* is not lost, but reaffirmed. The state of orgiastic catharsis is opposed here by the affirmation of the individuality retained in the fixedness of the conscious pose, the stability of the controlled form expressed through measured and modulated gestures. The will is here displaced from its interpretation as a flow of blind and raw force, towards its meaning as 'volitional action' channeled by consciousness.

The reference to this state can be understood as a form of objectification of the will in its highest degree, particularizing itself in the singularity of the individual.¹²⁰ Arising from the level of the *species*, as a general category, we elevate ourselves to the *individual* as crystallization in a differentiated, and in a certain sense, unrepeatable form. Following Schopenhauer, "*The lowest grades of the will's objectification are manifested by the universal forces of nature; the highest, in human individuality.*"¹²¹ From here it is also possible to understand with greater precision the notion of *character* (personification)

119 See BT § 16.

120 In the organic world, the lower forms of life are close to the schematic elementality of crystals and inorganic forms. That is, they present a lower degree of differentiation, and a greater tendency to conform homogeneous orders that unfold in extension or aggregation of simple units in isotropic configurations. Isotropy: primary objectification of the will in the phenomenal plane, its lowest degree. Then, the plants, the vegetable world. And at the other extreme, the individual human being: supreme degree of differentiation.

121 WWR I § 130-31.

as an expression of a particular *style* of unfolding of the Being in the phenomenal plane.¹²²

In the specific field of aesthetic experience, the Apollonian is expressed archetypally in the contemplation of the conclusiveness of the 'closed figure', be it the sculptural body or the pictorial canvas. Contrary to music, there is no reference here to time as a course of performative development or metabolic formative process. Rather, time appears as a coordinate suspended in the crystallization and fixity of the plastic form, and in the temporality of the act of contemplation in itself. *Space* is, therefore, the privileged dimension of the Apollonian element, and with it, the sensitive optical-perceptual complex of the observer. It is pertinent at this point to make a reflection on architecture as an intermediate artistic form, in which there is an effective convergence of the Apollonian will of aesthetic contemplation, and the performative dimension of the act of inhabiting itself, which is based on the dynamic interaction of the body with space through time as a coordinate materialized in its displacements. *Being* as the will to crystallize space in delimited forms and *Becoming* understood as the sensitive and dynamic experience of the body in-time, as event, unfold simultaneously in the architectural experience.

From the set of perceptive systems of the human being, vision is the faculty closest to volitional consciousness. The possibility of 'turning the gaze', of opening or closing the eyes at will, speaks to us of this condition, and by extension of the character of government and measure inherent in the Apollonian element. Along with this, the sense of *distance* as an irreducible dimension of the act of contemplation, as opposed to touch, that at the other end of the human perceptual range only has reality as a phenomenon in the pure proximity of the tangible. In a symbolic sense, it is possible to recognize this

122 *Style*, as *inscription (stylus)* is a higher level of form-manifestation. Crystals, cells and amoebas are *forms*, the possibility of *Style* is completely absent from this level, and it starts to manifest gradually in direct proportion to the degree of complexity and differentiation of the entities.

attribute in Apollo's bow and arrow as characteristic devices. The act of pointing and directing the arrow towards a target located in distance is the plenitude of the Apollonian *pathos*,¹²³ in a way analogous to the gaze, understood as a 'ray' or directional vector projected from the *Selbst* as a center towards the surrounding world.¹²⁴

1.2.3 Historical inscription of the Apollonian-Dionysian distinction: The Attic Tragedy

This set of preliminary observations concerning the nature of the Apollonian and Dionysian distinction, from a perspective that seeks to bring together its essential metaphysical interpretation with its manifestation as artistic states and forms of expression of being in the world, can also be recognized in the concreteness of historical patterns of cultural development and world-visions. In this sense, it is important to pick up the following fundamental observation made by Nietzsche: the entire history of Western thought, from Platonism later decanted into Christianity, is determined by the illusory perspective of a "moral-optical" order:

*"(...) The criteria which have been bestowed on the «true being» of things are the criteria of not-being, of naught, the «true world» has been constructed out of contradiction to the actual world: indeed an apparent world, insofar as it is merely a moral-optical illusion."*¹²⁵

That is to say, the Apollonian principle reduced as a discursive construct has gradually imposed itself on the dimension of the Dionysian, hardening itself like an opaque mask placed fallaciously over this essential background.¹²⁶ And that background is life itself,

123 „Der Bogen ist ein Symbol der Ferne“. Otto, Walter F. „Ursprung und Sinn der Apollinischen Musik“, in: *Theophania: Der Geist der altgriechischen Religion*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1956, p. 103.

124 For a further reflection on this topic, with a more vitalist orientation, see Spengler, Oswald. *Man and Technics: a contribution to a philosophy of life*. Budapest: Arktos Media, 2015, pp.35-37.

125 TI § VI.

126 "(...) Nietzsche was correct in his assessment that moderns have constructed a massive pyramid of knowledge and suffer from a surfeit of faith in knowledge as a panacea. Whether one calls the Dionysian the unconscious, instinct,

with all its burden of pain and contradiction. The whole set of the world's comprehension systems that have put in value the dimension of the supersensible as the 'true reality' have arisen from the inability to face the tragic dimension of existence, due either to weakness or renunciation.

"From this it appears that, broadly speaking, a preference for questionable and terrifying things is a symptom of strength; while a taste for the pretty and dainty belongs to the weak and delicate. Pleasure in tragedy characterizes strong ages and natures (...) It is the heroic spirits who say Yes to themselves in tragic cruelty: they are hard enough to experience suffering as a pleasure." ¹²⁷

Through the Attic Tragedy, the Greeks of the classical era were strong enough to 'represent themselves' that background, staging the drama of the inexorable imposition of fate upon the hero's individual will, without the need for moral justifications or narratives of meaning.¹²⁸ The dispute between freedom and the *Fatum* is the dispute between Apollo and Dionysos, who in the figure of the hero shake hands and together give him the gift of a *double face*: the face of life itself, assumed in all the fullness of its essentially tragic dimension, beyond good and evil, with no teleological purpose. The circular theater excavated in the mountain is a microcosm that reflects the macrocosm, the vast theater of the world, and the hero is each one of us, pierced by the tension between free will and an essentially indeterminable and unknowable destiny. The Attic tragedy, seen through Nietzsche's perspective, *"transforms what might otherwise be taken to be life at its worst into life at its best, endowing even suffering and destruction with aesthetic quality (...) as central elements of an aesthetically charged whole, into*

or the body, Nietzsche was responsible for elevating its role in relation to cognition." Del Caro, Adrian. "The Birth of Tragedy", in: *A companion to Friedrich Nietzsche: life and works* / edited by Paul Bishop. NY: Camden House, 2012, p.69.

127 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[168] (WP § 852).

128 The downfall of the Greek Attic Tragedy is marked by Euripides, who transformed it into a plebeian 'psychological drama', with moral-Socratic undertones. He *"brought the masses up onto the stage"*. See BT § 11.

*which are interwoven the tragic figure's life, circumstances, flaws, strivings, sufferings and destruction."*¹²⁹

Through this brief reflection on the Nietzschean categories of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, we have tried to delineate their different layers of meaning by tracing multiple lines of convergence: from the field of metaphysics to the nature of art in its plastic and performative-musical distinction, to the reflection of these essential forms in the phenomenal experience of being in the world and its possible historical inscriptions. This intention is sustained in the recognition that, in the Nietzschean perspective, these multiple dimensions appear as unified. What is above is below, what is inside is reflected in the visible forms of the outside, the distinction between soul and body, between art and life, is blurred. And, according to what has been already outlined in the general introduction to this research, it is interesting to recognize in this will of unity the reflection of a return to the original sources of Western philosophy with a pre-Socratic base (the search for origin, *Arkhé*). That which modernity tended to separate in 'watertight rooms' in particular specializations of knowledge (natural science, ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy), is returned through Nietzsche's perspective to a fundamental form of holistic convergence, being probably the last of the philosophers who sought to establish a model of comprehensive understanding of this magnitude in the continuity of the development of Western philosophy, despite its apparent un-systematic and fragmented approach. In his own words, "(...) *To convert in one single being the artist –the one who creates-, the saint –the one who loves- and the philosopher –the one who knows-: my practical goal! (...)*".¹³⁰

129 Schacht, Richard. *Nietzsche*. NY: Routledge, 1983, p.506.

130 eKGWB/NF-1883,16[11].

Chapter 2: About Grand Style as an aesthetic category

“Dies ist der Große Stil. Die kompakte statuarische Realität des Baukunstwerks ist weder Ausdruck der Dionysischen Natur, noch ist sie bloße ästhetischer Schein (...) sie ist die ästhetische Objektivierung des Willens zur Macht.”¹³¹

2.1 General introduction and origins of the concept

The previous chapter has been focused on the analysis of the premises and the context from which Nietzsche's aesthetic thinking arises, and its essential characteristics. Although this *corpus* is not monolithic, presenting stages of development ranging from the initial aesthetic meditation around the Apollonian-Dionysian binomial to the formulation of Grand Style as a ‘decantation concept’¹³², it is possible to affirm that there is an invariant dimension that underlies his whole standpoint about the essence of Art. This dimension corresponds to the level of depth, the ‘baseline’ reached by his reflection. A level that is clearly stated by Heidegger: *“At first glance, Nietzsche's thinking concerning art is aesthetic; according to its innermost will, it is metaphysical, which means it is a definition of the Being of beings.”*¹³³ It is this permanent will to project the level of reflection into a field of essential determinations that encompass existence as a

131 Meyer, Theo. *Nietzsche und die Kunst*. Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1993, p. 107.

132 A consistent analysis of the stages of evolution of Nietzsche's aesthetic thinking can be found in Richard Schacht's *Nietzsche*. New York: Routledge, 1983, Chapter VIII – “Art and Artists”.

133 M. Heidegger, '*Nietzsche*', Vol. I, p.131.

whole, which has allowed Nietzsche's thought about Art to possess the amplitude and depth of meaning that characterizes it. And this consideration should accompany the reflection that follows about the Grand Style as an aesthetic category. This is, fundamentally, the will to bring the question about the essence of Art into an ambit of *judgment and decision, into a value of rank*.

How does the concept of Grand Style emerge within Nietzsche's discourse on the arts, what is its essential meaning and what is its importance in the context of the totality of his philosophical production?¹³⁴ What has reached us are no more than 40 fragments, written mainly between the years 1884 and 1889¹³⁵, and that are almost entirely contained in his "*Posthumous fragments*", and specifically collected in "*The Will to Power*". After an isolated mention done in "*Human, all too Human*" II (1879)¹³⁶, a more consistent development can be traced beginning in the spring of the year 1884. Time of his writing of "*Thus spoke Zarathustra*", which marks the transition from his middle to his late phase of philosophical production (1883-1889). Therefore, time of decantation, of conceptual maturation, coinciding with the definitive displacement from his first aesthetic ontology illuminated by the metaphysical inquiries displayed in "*The Birth of Tragedy*", towards a marked 'physiological' standpoint, which incorporates the body as a determining element of the aesthetic experience. As pointed out by Jörg Gleiter in his "*Der Philosophische Flaneur*", Nietzsche's turn to physiology and his consequent discourse on *decadence* was directly influenced by his readings of the work of contemporary physiologists and experimental psychologists such as Charles Fèrè, Leo

134 In Nietzsche's definition of Grand Style, Fritz Neumeyer has pointed out the direct influence of Burckhardt's concept of "grandness" as exposed in his *Cicerone*. See Neumeyer, Fritz. *Der Klang der Steine: Nietzsches Architekturen*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann., 2001., pp. 179-180.

135 During this whole period, the expression "Style" occurs in 152 textual units, out of which the definition of "Grand Style" corresponds to 37 textual units. (Source: Digital Critical Edition (eKGWB), <www.nietzschesource.org>. Accessed 06.07.18).

136 "*Der grosse Stil. — Der grosse Stil entsteht, wenn das Schöne den Sieg über das Ungeheure davonträgt.*" eKGWB/WS-96 -18/12/1879.

Löwenfeld, and Alexandre Herzen, among others.¹³⁷ Nietzsche's personal library included also the works of Wilhelm Roux, Paul Bourget, Rudolf Virchow, Friedrich Albert Lange, and Karl Wilhelm von Nägeli (*Mechanisch-physiologische Theorie der Abstammungslehre*, Munich, 1884), from whom Nietzsche derived the anti-Darwinist standpoint underlying his formulation of the Will to Power. But his conception of physiological aesthetics cannot be equated with the systematic development which would be carried out by the German theorists on *Einfühlung* (Vider, Schmarsow, Wölfflin, Worringer, among others). Despite its apparent biologism, Nietzsche's conception of the 'body' was not strictly interpreted in mechanistic terms, but rather as a psychosomatic complex with inherent 'spiritual' dispositions. Nevertheless, isn't this conceptual turn towards the physiological a materialistic reduction that in a certain sense contradicts Heidegger's assertion about Nietzsche's commitment to a 'metaphysical thinking about the Being of beings', and, in a broader sense, a confirmation of the lack of any attempt of totalization within the Nietzschean discourse?¹³⁸ An easy and superficial reading could be retained in such an approach. However, the same 'physiologist' Nietzsche is the one who, starting with the *Gay Science* and soon after, with the inception of his *Zarathustra*¹³⁹, formulates fundamental concepts that reach the metaphysical such as the notion of Eternal Return, the Will to Power and its reflection in the figure of the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche's answer to the essence of Being is "Will to Power", and as long as he attempts to *give an answer*, he remains within the metaphysical tradition which he harshly criticized, but redirecting it

137 See Gleiter, Jörg, op. cit, p. 136. For further reference about the books read by Nietzsche on biology, physiology, and experimental psychology, see Brobjer, Thomas. "Nietzsche's Reading and Private Library, 1885-1889", in: *Journal of History of Ideas* 58 (4), 1997, pp. 663-680. Accessed via JSTOR on 05.12.2019.

138 We must distinguish here between 'will of systematization' and 'will of totality' in Nietzsche's discourse. The former is explicitly absent and openly criticized by him (see TI § 26) but the latter is implicitly recognizable in his final attempt to formulate a conception of reality as a whole sublimated in the notion of Will to Power. See BGE §36, eKGWB/NF-1885,38[12] (WP §1067).

139 „(...) Falls ich den Sommer nach Sils-Maria komme, so will ich eine Revision meiner *Metaphysica* und erkenntnistheoretischen Ansichten vornehmen. Ich muß jetzt Schritt für Schritt durch eine ganze Reihe von *Disciplinen* hindurch, denn ich habe mich nunmehr entschlossen, die nächsten fünf Jahre zur Ausarbeitung meiner *«Philosophie»* zu verwenden, für welche ich mir, durch meinen *Zarathustra*, eine Vorhalle gebaut habe.“ From a letter to Franz Overbeck, 07/04/1884. – eKGWB/BVN 1884-493, 504.

from transcendence to immanence, from the intangible constructs of Apollonian rationality to the richness of sensible phenomena, with its dynamic patterns of everlasting change. In this sense, his critical stance against metaphysics must be understood primarily as a critic towards its specific platonic-Christian interpretation.

“The will to accumulate force is special to the phenomena of life, to nourishment, procreation, inheritance – to society, state, custom, authority. Should we not be permitted to assume this will as a motive cause in chemistry, too? – and in the cosmic order? Not merely conservation of energy, but maximal economy in use, so the only reality is the will to grow stronger of every center of force – not self-preservation, but the will to appropriate, dominate, increase, grow stronger”¹⁴⁰

Here, Nietzsche reveals himself as a double-faced Janus. The metaphysician and the physiologist.¹⁴¹ A thinker of ‘maximum distances’ and ‘maximum proximities’, brought together in the unity of one single horizon: *Life*. We may speak of him as a “Metaphysiologist”, then. His distinctive will of ‘unification of opposites’¹⁴² can also be found in one of his strongest metaphors, which in a way resumes his whole philosophical enterprise: *“It is like with a tree: the more it wants to ascend in height and brightness, the stronger its roots strive for the opposite direction: its will goes inwards, downwards,*

140 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[81] (WP § 689).

141 This apparent dichotomy remains a critical point of discussion within the contemporary Nietzsche scholarship. The negation of a metaphysical ground for his formulation of the Will to Power has been held most prominently by Maudemarie Clark (1990), who based on her interpretation of BGE §36 attempts to understand the concept basically as a form of psychological drive, in a reductive sense. The vindication of a metaphysical reading has been promoted, among others, by Galen Strawson (2015) and recently by Tsarina Doyle (2018). My interpretation can be better described as “meta-physiological”, with the explicit aim of overcoming this dichotomy in a dialectical sense. A similar position has been held by Günter Abel, who affirms that Nietzsche understands the human being as a body organization whose complex function include phenomena of consciousness as well as interpretive and pictorial worlds, thus speaking of a false dichotomy between “*transcendent metaphysics and reductionist physicalism*”, which is rather conceived by him as form of “*dynamic continuity*”. See Abel, Günter. *Nietzsche. Die Dynamik der Willen zur Macht und die ewige Wiederkehr*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 1998, p.41.

142 For further references on this topic, expressed in poetic form, see Z III, “*The Wanderer*”; BGE “*From high mountains: Aftersong*”.

into darkness, depth, width (...)".¹⁴³ And it is precisely in an aesthetic concept like Grand Style in which it is possible to recognize this particular 'binding' feature, as a constant of his late philosophical discourse.¹⁴⁴

In what follows, the most relevant initial fragments on Grand Style will be analyzed from their original forms in German. They appear as an initial intuitive approach, which is progressively defined in stylistic terms, as a 'rough sketch' that gradually becomes less blurry and more delineated. The first of them, dated in the spring of 1884:

*"Der große Stil besteht in der Verachtung der kleinen und kurzen Schönheit, ist ein Sinn für Weniges und Langes."*¹⁴⁵

First of all, a demarcation will be recognized here, a radical and explicit judgement of value, because some things are clearly being despised, and this hammer-blow rotundity will accompany all of Nietzsche's late reflection about the nature of art and its expression through Grand Style as a 'superior form'. But after the 'rumble of the hammer', we must see its real marks in the forge of the concepts. How can we interpret the initial fragment? *Weniges* designates here a sense of scarcity, understood as the precision of that to which nothing is left or missing, but with full aesthetic performance in the prolonged, in the extensive. A definition that relates it to the notion of elegance in its physical-mathematical meaning (maximum performance with minimum means). All this in opposition to a "*small and short*" beauty. How to clarify this antithesis? In the small and short there is no germ of a higher scale or magnitude, it is something that is simply

143 eKGWB/NF-1882,3[1].

144 In his essay "*Architecture for the perceptive*", Markus Breitschmid underlines the same 'will of unity' as a defining aspect of Nietzsche's aesthetics: "(...) *Opposing such materialist and positivist interpretations, Nietzsche stands in the tradition that views the modern world as constituted by a transcendental unity. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe describes this unity with the Faustian 'Einsgefühl'.*" Breitschmid, Markus, "Nietzsche's 'Architecture for the Perceptive': From Sacred Space towards a Space for Reflection", in: *Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal*, nr. 4, Spring 2007, pp. 74-87.

145 "*The grand style consists in the contempt of small and short beauty, is a sense of the scarce and the prolonged*" eKGWB/NF-1884,25[321].

retained within its own limits, while in the scarce and at the same time prolonged the apparent contradiction of meanings implicitly contains its own improvement, its own over-flow¹⁴⁶. Limit and extension, order that modulates through accurate precision the will of an expansive force... Apollo and Dionysos? This sort of duality that 'overcomes itself' as dialectic is a constant in most of the fragments relating to the nature of Grand Style. Thus, in May 1885:

“(...)Was den großen Stil macht: Herr werden über sein Glück wie sein Unglück (...)”¹⁴⁷

Apparently, the duality put into play in this fragment goes beyond the field of aesthetics. However, we must remember that in the Nietzschean vision, ethics and aesthetics, like art and life, are two sides of the same coin insofar as it is coined by the same will - the tragic conception of the world¹⁴⁸ -. In German, *Glück* means joy, but also 'luck' understood as a dispensation of destiny. Thus, if my vision of the world is forged in the comprehension of the essentially tragic character of existence, I can assume destiny in any of its forms, “beyond good and evil,” by an overabundance of force, thus being able to say in propriety: *Amor Fati*.¹⁴⁹ And this, by dominion (*Herrschaft*), the control of one's own passions as an expression of the will to 'incarnate' Grand Style not just as an aesthetic disposition, but also in the form of a congruent *ethos*. In this way, in the ascension to a higher horizon of comprehension of existence and becoming, the

146 The *aphorism*, as the stylistic form preferred by Nietzsche, exhibits the same ability to convey an extensive meaning condensed in few words; it is in this sense the 'literary' expression of the Grand Style. For a further analysis on this relationship, see Mengaldo, Elisabetta. “Rechtschaffenheit des Kleinen. Nietzsches ästhetische Auffassung zwischen 'großem Stil' und kurzer Form”, in: *Nietzsche. Macht. Größe*. Hrsg. von Volker Caysa und Konstanze Schwarzwald. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2012 (Reihe «Nietzsche heute»), pp. 395-407.

147 “What the grand style makes: to become master of his joy as his misfortune (...)” eKGWB/NF-1885,35[74].

148 “The profundity of the tragic artist lies in this, that his aesthetic instinct surveys the more remote consequences, that he does not halt short-sightedly at what is closest at hand, that he affirms the large-scale economy which justifies the terrifying, the evil, the questionable-and more than merely justifies them”. eKGWB/NF-1887,10[168] (WP § 852).

149 “My formula for the greatness of a human being is amor fati: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity” EH § 2, 10.

antinomies are overcome, and the confused and indeterminate is subject to rule by the conscious exercise of the Will to Power:

*„(...) der große Stil will einen starken Grundwillen und verabscheut am meisten die Zerfahrenheit.“*¹⁵⁰

Zerfahrenheit refers to both the confused and the incoherent. Coherence then appears as a fundamental condition of possibility. Coherence as what is put to rule under a law of clear and unequivocal configuration that girds and gathers in a *figure, con-figuring*. It is at this point that a more precise formal interpretation of the concept of Grand Style begins to emerge, and the following selection of fragments (1886-1888) reveals that progressive delineation, associated with expressly physiological concepts and the language of the classical as a stylistic codification.

2.2. The Classic as the stylistic codification of Grand Style

*“(...) The «beautification» is a consequence of the increased power
Beautification as a necessary consequence of the increased power
Beautification as an expression of will of a victorious, increased coordination, a
harmonization of all strong desires, one infallible, perpendicular heavyweight
The logical and geometrical simplification is a consequence of the increase in power:
vice versa, the perception of such simplification increases the sense of power...
Apex of evolution: the Grand Style
The ugliness of a type means decadence, contradiction and lack of inner desires
coordination, means a decline in organizing power, of «will», physiologically
speaking...”*¹⁵¹

150 “(...) the grand style wants a strong fundamental will and most detests the incoherent.” eKGWB/NF-1884,25[332].

151 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[117] (WP § 800). In the last sentence, Kaufmann wrongly translates *physiologisch* as *psychologically*; this has been corrected in my version.

In this quotation, it is possible to recognize how in Nietzsche metaphysics finally reaches out to physiology, in search of a verification of aesthetic reflection in the field of the phenomenology of the living. The body becomes a determining factor of the aesthetic experience, since it is the vehicle of unequivocal objectifications: thus, health and sickness, strength and weakness, become part of his critical discourse around art as categories of value mutually exclusive and opposed.¹⁵² The interpretative margin narrows: Is there anything clearer than the distinction between a healthy body and a sick body? And if art is a reflection of life, understood as a territory of permanent friction between these categories, it is possible to establish radical and unequivocal judgments: it is good and beautiful what 'affirms life', the supreme fullness of an expansive Will to Power that 'says yes', active and self-affirmative.

*"What is good? Whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man. What is evil? Whatever springs from weakness. What is happiness? The feeling that power increases - that resistance is overcome (...)"*¹⁵³

*"I distinguish between a type of ascending life and another type of decay, disintegration, weakness. Is it credible that the question of the relative rank of these two types still needs to be posed?"*¹⁵⁴

Where does Nietzsche find such a conception embodied in a concrete stylistic-formal field? In the classic, but 'recovered' by him from its narrow formalistic-historical interpretation, in congruence with his intention of "revaluation of all values". In his view, the classic becomes one of those 'values' which must be reformulated. What is the essence, the *arkhé* of the classic? Before analyzing Nietzsche's own perspective on the

152 „Der Maßstab, an dem Kunstwerke gemessen werden, ist das in ihnen artikulierte Maß an Stärke, am Lebensstärke, oder an Schwäche, an Lebensschwäche“. Meyer, Theo. *Nietzsche und die Kunst*. Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1993, p. 85.

153 A § 2.

154 eKGWB/NF-1888,15[120] (WP § 857).

subject, we can find in its etymological root a guiding key, linked to the idea of separation or division into ranks.¹⁵⁵ Its subsequent derivation into the field of aesthetics makes the concept appear as the bearer of a series of associated meanings: distinction, hierarchy, order, clarity, serenity. Geometric simplification as the will to achieve the expression of an essence not veiled by unnecessary effects, by rhetorical-scenographic intentions.¹⁵⁶

This 'clarity' could be interpreted along the lines of Winckelmann's well-known definition of the classic, that "*noble simplicity and serene grandeur*".¹⁵⁷ However, Nietzsche's position on the subject transcends the boundaries of Winckelmann's definition, because with Heidegger we already know that his is a thinking oriented towards the determination of the Being of beings. And this determination has a unique name, which acts simultaneously as the center and perimeter of existence: *Will to Power*.

*"The classical style is essentially a representation of this calm, simplification, abbreviation, concentration-the highest feeling of power is concentrated in the classical type. To react slowly; a great consciousness; no feeling of struggle."*¹⁵⁸

Nietzsche's reevaluation of the classic is thus performed as a strategic displacement of its traditional semantic field, from 'harmony and beauty' to 'power'. In essential terms, this 'power' is the Dionysian substratum channeled and sublimated by the will of the Apollonian measure. In short, *freedom under law*. For Nietzsche, power is 'more power' as long as it appears *under control*. The Grand Style, as the *arkhé* of the classic, appears

155 The etymology of Classic (*Classicus*) has its roots in the word *classis*, which in its original roman context was associated with *calare* (to call publicly, to convoke), and as such was a word with a primary military connotation. The *classis* were the divisions generated in the army by reference to age and social origin.

156 „In psychologischer Hinsicht habe ich zwei Sinne: einmal: den Sinn für das Nackte sodann: den Willen zum großen Stil (wenige Hauptsätze, diese im strengsten Zusammenhang; kein esprit, keine Rhetorik)“. eKGWB/NF-1886,7[23].

157 See Winckelmann, Johann Joachim. *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, 1755.

158 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[46] (WP § 799).

as that desire for harmonization, for coordination of all “*strong desires*” in an “*infallible, perpendicular heavyweight*”, as a natural expression of a surplus of force. Consequently,

“(...) The greatness of an artist is not measured by the beautiful sentiments that he arouses (...) but by the degree to which he approaches the grand style. This has in common with great passion the disdain of pleasure; he forgets to persuade, he wills ... To make himself master of the chaos that one is, to force his own chaos to become form, mathematics, law - that is the grand ambition (...).”¹⁵⁹

From a formal point of view, how can we interpret this reference to the “*law*”? A straight line is ‘more demanding’ than a curved gesture, a spiral or an arabesque. It is the most demanding primordial law turned into ‘form’. Its own constitution as a *material fact* is a conquest, an imperative command over matter, which by its nature tends towards the dissolutive and amorphous. In the will of order and geometric simplification, we read an exercise of formative force, an intention to *con-figurate*, to put to measure, as an expression of domain and effective power over the chaos of the amorphous. And it is the forms of the classical the ones that express this will most clearly.

159 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[61] (WP § 842).

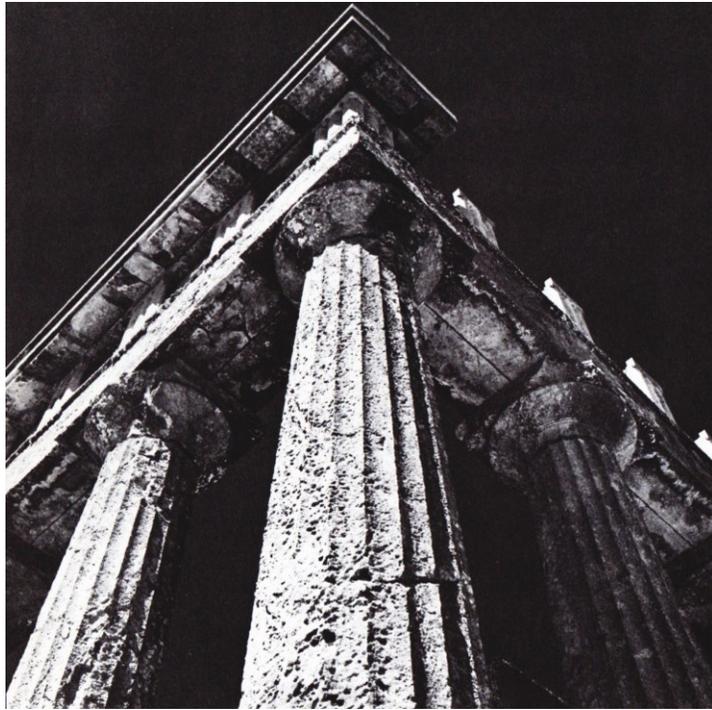


Fig. 1. Doric column, Temple of Aphaia, Aegina. 500 BC. (detail).

In order to exemplify these statements, we may take a ‘classical’ case of study from the field of architectural theory. A Doric column (fig.1), beyond its stylistic features, is essentially a territory of dispute between the formative forces of cohesion, stability, and integrity, and the dissolving forces of entropic gravity, which tend to the undifferentiated and formless. And this dispute is resolved *elegantly* in the honest integrity of a figure that harmonizes these opposites in a congruent and unitary expression.¹⁶⁰ In the Doric column, the primordial forces acquire visibility and presence, unfolding ‘on stage’, without artifices or veils - analogous to the personification of these forces in the context of the Attic tragedy. And, as will be seen later, this is Nietzsche's fundamental point of divergence regarding ‘the romantic’ because here the mask and the artifice are

¹⁶⁰ And, following Nietzsche, we can model ourselves with the clarity of a Doric column, “*rectangular in body and soul*”, (eKGWB/Za-I-Kind) through a tragic vision of existence. In it, the duality between chaos and order, between sensuality and rationality, between matter and spirit, is brought to a state of equilibrium through a conscious effort of the will. This is a way of understanding the meaning of the Grand Style, not only in terms of aesthetic category, but as a fundamental and original form of disposition of being in the world.

put to work in order to *hide* and *deny*.¹⁶¹ In the Classic, clarity in appearance is an affirmative form of *Aletheia*, unveiling¹⁶², while in the veil of the romantic we dive into the dark, misty waters of *Lethe*.

It is necessary here to emphasize that, in his attempt of inversion of Platonism, Nietzsche vindicates the sensible experience in opposition to a purely theoretical form of knowledge. That is, he privileges an *eidetic-phenomenological* approach to reality, and by extension, to the 'form' of entities in their own presence and appearance. "(...) *what I can say about any being except just the predicates of its appearance! (...) For me, appearance is what is active and living itself.*"¹⁶³ This is what leads him to affirm that the true artist "*does not give value to anything that does not know how to become form*"¹⁶⁴, and also, referring to the form-content relationship implicit in the artistic exercise, "*One is an artist at the price of feeling as content, as «the thing itself», what all non-artists call «form».*"¹⁶⁵ Now, the concept of *form* in itself has no particular determination, beyond its implicit principle of identity. The romantic also creates forms. However, it is in the language of the classical where this principle of identity appears as *accentuated* in perceptual terms by the sense of limit and measure inherent in its materialization. If we understand 'form' in its original Greek meaning, μορφή (*morphé*) "(...) *It is the enclosing limit and boundary, what brings and stations a being into that which it is, so that it stands in itself: its con-figuration. Whatever stands in this way is what the particular being shows*

161 "(...) *The most obvious sign of this disregard for appearances is the mask*" DW § 3.

162 But what is 'unveiled' here is not the truth in a Platonic sense, that idealized truth that is a construct located in the 'beyond' -and that in the end, *is itself a veil-*, but the tragic nature of existence, understood as an eternal game of forces that redeems itself in its own sensible appearance. The idealist-theoretic Platonist seeks the redemption of the game, escape from its inherent fatality, while the tragic-Dionysian artist assumes it in fullness, personifying in his incessant creative activity, beyond good and evil, that child of Heraclitus who "plays indolently with dices"(see Heraclitus fragments, Diels-Kranz ed., §52). And he can turn the game into an elegant celebration, through the most demanding of rules: that of the Grand Style.

163 GS & 54.

164 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[40] (WP § 817).

165 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[3] (WP § 818).

*itself to be, its outward appearance, eidos (εἶδος), through which and in which it emerges, stations itself there as publicly presents, scintillates, and achieves pure radiance.”*¹⁶⁶ It is in the line and the contour as privileged elements of the language of the classical where we recognize the will to achieve that clarity in which the entities ‘underline themselves’ in their own presence.¹⁶⁷ And the contour is a “yoke” that transmutes the forms into ‘figures of themselves’, a will of harmonization that is a fact-of-force:

*“To be classical, one must possess all the strong, seemingly contradictory gifts and desires-but in such a way that they go together beneath one yoke (...) not to be a reactive spirit, but an encompassing one, which guides forward, which says yes in all cases, even with hatred.”*¹⁶⁸

Does this conceptual shift to the ‘dynamics of force’ imply the suppression of the Apollonian principle within his discourse? No. Here we arrive at an interesting paradox, which must be clarified: why does Nietzsche seem to favour the classical, ‘Apollonian’ art, instead of the Baroque for example, which better conveys the notions of change and becoming which are proper to the Dionysian? Isn’t the classical an affirmation of ‘being’, through its inherent static expression? The philosopher who has questioned to the bone all metaphysical assumptions which put in value the fixedness of systems of belief, should consequently reject a form of aesthetic expression that is based precisely in the definition of fixed orders and ‘stable’ principles. But these Apollonian principles are also reformulated by him physiologically in terms of force; they are brought into the discourse of power as ‘laws’ which are able to put-into-form the multifarious, expansive character of the Dionysian. The harmonic articulation of both principles constitutes the essence of Grand Style, an articulation that is better conveyed by the tectonic character of the

166 M. Heidegger, *“Nietzsche”*, Vol.I, p. 119.

167 In a formal sense, it is pertinent to make reference to the distinction proposed by Wölfflin between the "tactile" and "optical" character of Renaissance and Baroque art, respectively. The tactile refers to the clarity of the contour that limits and gives-shape. See Wölfflin, Heinrich. *Renaissance and Baroque*. London, UK: Collins Ltd., 1964.

168 eKGWB/NF-1887,9[166] (WP § 848).

Classic, instead of the Baroque. *“To impose upon becoming the character of being-that is the supreme will to power.”*¹⁶⁹ In this statement we read the same will of overcoming the dichotomy Apollo-Dionysos, but formulated in an onto-metaphysical level: Grand Style is the ‘joint’ between these two fundamental principles of the artistic creation. *“For Nietzsche, to speak of an authentic concept of the classical is to reintegrate the excluded (destructive) Dionysian element with the (constructive) Apollonian one, thus re-creating a contradiction of incommensurables, a dynamic combining of incompatibles, an Ineinander or «entanglement» (KSA 7,7[196],213) of contrary values or tendencies that he situates at the core of the tragic world view in the Greek culture. It is this contradiction or interlacing of opposites, constituting the ground of pessimism, that Nietzsche deems worthy of designating as classical (...).”*¹⁷⁰

In short, Grand Style appears as a ‘matrix of meanings’ into which multiple aesthetic attributes converge: *“Logical, univocal, simple, mathematical, law”*, and also *“tranquility, simplification and abbreviation”* as an expression of *“absence of struggle”* for the presence of a sovereign power, a formative force that is capable of gather and overcome the antinomies. That which in the first fragments was only a preliminary intuition of synthesis of opposites becomes here a formal determination. The synthesis, as a binding yoke, acquires a concrete expression, understood as a set of normative attributes that trace a horizon of belonging, surpassing the mere definition of a stylistic classicism *à la* Winckelmann: it is a form of comprehension that girds and, at the same time, opens a wider field of interpretation applicable in multiple contexts of artistic production, and specifically in Architecture.

169 eKGWB/NF-1886,7[54] (WP § 617).

170 Ulfers, Friedrich – Cohen, Mark Daniel. “Nietzsche’s ontological roots in Goethe’s Classicism”. In: Bishop, Paul (ed.) *Nietzsche and Antiquity: His reaction and response to classical tradition*. NY: Camden House, 2004.

2.3. The criticism of Romanticism

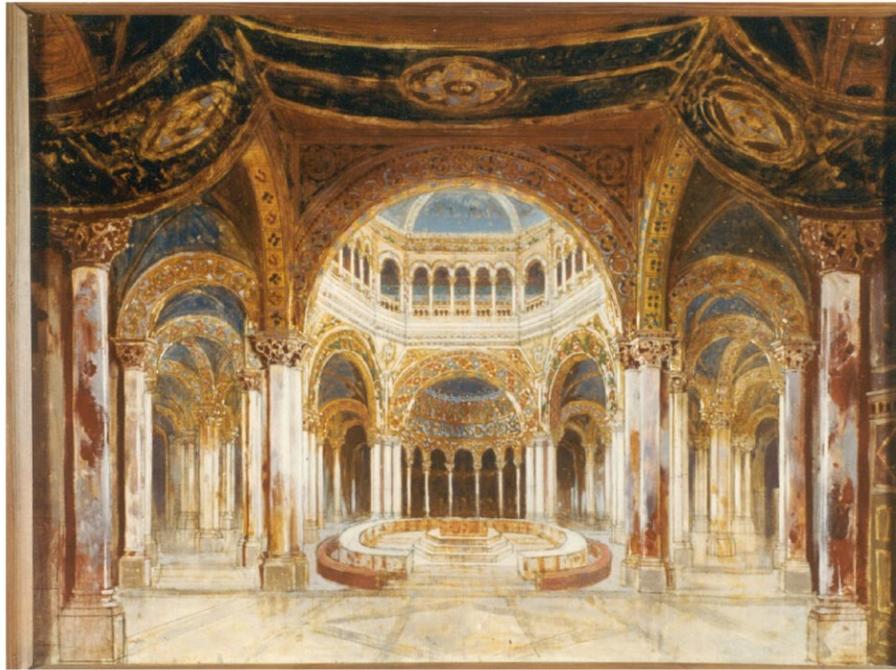


Fig. 2. Set design for the premiere of Richard Wagner's *Parsifal*. Paul von Joukowsky, 1882.

In the previous definitions, it is possible to grasp Nietzsche's implicit criticism of romanticism, understood as the absolute antithesis, the inversion of Grand Style. For him, romantic art (embodied contextually in the Wagnerian opera)¹⁷¹ (fig.2) is that art oriented to produce effects and reactions of emotional order in the observer, based on gimmicky resources that appeal basically to a 'stimulation of the senses'. An art for tired souls that need narcotic and / or stimulant effects:

"False «intensification»: 1. in romanticism: this constant Espressivo is no sign of strength but of a feeling of deficiency;

2. picturesque music, so-called dramatic music, is above all easier (as is the brutal colportage and the enumeration of «faits and traits» in the naturalistic novel);

171 See eKGWB/NF-1887,11[312] (WP § 849).

3. «passion» a matter of nerves and wearied souls; like the delight in high mountains, deserts, storms, orgies, and horrors in the bulky and massive (e.g., on the part of historians); there actually exists a cult of orgies of feeling (how does it happen that strong ages have an opposite need in art-a need for a realm beyond passion?)
4. preference for exciting material (erotica or socialistica or pathologica): all signs that show for whom one is working today: for the overworked and absent-minded or enfeebled. One has to tyrannize in order to produce any effect at all. (...)¹⁷²

Everything that appeals to excess, morbidity, eclecticism, exotism and *phantasie* (in a word: Wagner), with all its dramatic-narrative burden, is completely alien to a true classical sensibility.¹⁷³ And it historically corresponds with the notion of *decadence*: lost epochs, lacking a higher guiding principle, a goal set on the horizon of a collective destination, are favorable times for the emergence of the romantic-decadent *Weltanschauung*.¹⁷⁴ Thus, the last third of 19th century, a context in which the voice of Nietzsche emerges as a wake-up call, a counter-movement opposed to the ‘passive nihilism’ of the romantics. But, as already stated in the introduction of this investigation, it must be pointed out that Nietzsche’s critique was influenced by Goethe’s own critical standpoint on the subject, which was expressed in a very similar fashion: “*The classical is what I call the healthy, and the romantic the sickly... Most of what is new is not romantic because it is new, but because it is weak, sickly, and ill, and the old is not classical because it is old, but because it is strong, fresh, cheerful and healthy.*”¹⁷⁵

172 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[25].

173 “*The descriptive, the picturesque, as symptoms of nihilism (in the arts and in psychology)*” eKGWB/NF-1887,9[110].

174 Along these lines, the possibility of making a critical approach to the eventual “decadent” condition of our own postmodernity becomes apparent. This critical approach exceeds the limits of this investigation, but must be recognized as an implicit objective.

175 Goethe, quoted in Eckermann, Johann Peter. *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, 1848, p.253. Cf. CW § 3.

In Goethe's statement, it is interesting to recognize the same 'physiological' understanding of the classic-romantic distinction proposed by Nietzsche, implying a shared 'essentialist' conception. The physiological, understood in this sense as a form of ontology, transcends historical contexts and cultural frameworks. Thus, the distinction between "old" and "new" is overcome, transposed into the irreducible "health-sick" polarity, which has an implicit trans-historical meaning. In any given epoch, the romantic, "sick" art is basically the aesthetic objectivation of weakness, of a lack of formative force (whether at individual or collective levels), which is expressed in formal terms as the predilection for novelty, excitement, and sensory stimulation, within an overall 'reactive' *pathos*. In reference to the reactive character of the romantic formulated by Nietzsche, Heidegger comments: "(...) *The very creative here is dissatisfaction, the search for something totally different, desire and hunger. (...) The opposite possibility is that the creative is not the lack but the fullness, not the search but the total possession, not the desire but the giving, not the hunger but the abundance. The creation that comes from dissatisfaction only comes to 'action' separating and moving away from something; It is not active but always reactive, unlike what comes from itself and its fullness.*"¹⁷⁶ From an ontological perspective, we may bring this analysis beyond the boundaries of Nietzsche's physiological framework: in romanticism, *time* becomes a preferred subject of representation, in the form of restless longing (for the old or the new), and desire (for regression or radical innovation). And this is an accurate *index* of any process of historical decadence.

Consequently, we can affirm that Nietzsche's critique against romanticism is not only recognizable and valid within the specific context of production of his aesthetic philosophy, but can be extrapolated to the development of the history of Western art as a whole. The pulse that goes from the archaic forms to the classic, to later decant in the hybrid and decadent forms of the 'romantic', is an archetype that is repeated in a cyclical

176 M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. I, p. 132.

way in different historical epochs.¹⁷⁷ As a case of typological study, we can find its clearest expression in the development of Greek statuary (fig.3).



Fig. 3. Typological development of styles in Greek statuary (Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic).
Respectively, *Kroisos Kouros* (530 BC) – *Miron's Discobolus* (455 BC) – *Laocoon* (1st century AD).

From the characteristic forms of the archaic period, with their *Kouros* barely detached from the rigidity of their Egyptian referents, forms in which the symbolic dimension still has preeminence over the material substrate, we pass to the plenitude of the *Golden Age* and its artistic productions that constitute the maximum expression of what should be properly understood as 'classic'. In them, the material substrate and the content of ideality of the works appear as in a sort of balance by identification. Thus, for example, *Miron's Discobolus* participates simultaneously in two worlds: his body appears modeled in the comprehension of the dynamics of muscular effort, but the gaze remains retained in a sort of timeless serenity, effortless, alien to any form of 'struggle'. There is no pathetic expression, understood as a manifestation of overflowing emotion, but that government, measure, and temper that is a reflection of that will of mastering "*the chaos that one is, to force his own chaos to become form, mathematics, law*". The *Laocoon*,

177 In reference to the cyclical conception of history it is pertinent to cite Oswald Spengler's work "The Decline of the West" (*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, two volumes, Berlin, 1918 – see bibliography), which proposes an interesting bio-morphological model of historical evolution. Spengler in turn had Nietzsche among his most determining influences.

beyond all the mastery that it exhibits in terms of technical artistry, represents the triumph of the 'drama', in a Wagnerian sense: the narration imposes itself over pure presence, the descriptive and picturesque become a goal, for which the material substratum constitutes a subordinated medium.¹⁷⁸ It is from this perspective that it may be understood essentially as a romantic work of art, beyond the boundaries of its historical-stylistic codification as Hellenistic.

In reference to the categories of the Apollonian and the Dionysian and their metaphysical interpretation, the *Discobolus* exhibits a particular form of articulation between Being and Becoming, between the will for timeless eternalization, and the insertion in the field of phenomena with spatio-temporal dimension. The ensemble of both forces, embodied in consciousness and body respectively, is constitutive of our experience of being in the world, and it is likely that the excellence attributed to the classical form not only by Nietzsche but also by countless thinkers before and after his time, is fundamentally due to the fact that it is a clear reflection of this essential and distinctive feature of the human condition.

In this regard, it is pertinent to quote again Heidegger's reflection on the meaning of the classic and its relationship with Nietzsche's Grand Style:

"In contrast to classicism, the classical is nothing that can be immediately divined from a particular past period of art. It is instead a basic structure of Dasein, which itself first creates the conditions for any such period and must first open itself and devote itself to those conditions. But the fundamental condition is an equally original freedom with regard to the extreme opposites, chaos and law; not the mere subjection of chaos to a form, but that mastery which enables the primal wilderness of chaos and the primordially of law to advance under the same yoke, invariably

178 The Laocoon may not shout explicitly, but implicitly: behind its overwhelming material expression, there is a narrator speaking, an over passionate tale-teller. And this is the way in which any period of historical decadence starts to manifest itself within the realm of the arts: *Taletellers become masters*. Cf. GS § 5, 356.

bound to one another with equal necessity. Such mastery is unconstrained disposition over that yoke, which is as equally removed from the paralysis of form in what is dogmatic and formalistic as from sheer rapturous tumult. Wherever unconstrained disposition over that yoke is an event's self-imposed law, there is the grand style". ¹⁷⁹

Heidegger's clarifying synthesis is essential. Here, the notion of the classic, the binomial Apollo-Dionysos as an artistic-metaphysical substrate, the concept of Grand Style and the Arts are linked in an articulated and congruent whole. Moreover, there is an implicit proposal of establishing a relationship of identity between Grand Style and Art in its superlative degree. This radical qualification of value is undoubtedly risky in its unequivocal pretension, but it is interesting from the perspective of a theoretical foundation that allows establishing judgments with objective aesthetic value; therefore, it forms the basis for the interpretation of the Grand Style as an aesthetic category which can be extrapolated as a model and a tool of critical analysis into different contexts of artistic production. This is possible insofar as the exercise of art is understood from a perspective that recovers the horizon of ontological determinations, the ambit of a questioning from-and-about the essences. And this questioning requires radical affirmations, which allow us to synthesize what has already been stated, providing a vision of the whole, as an ordering axis: as human beings, we walk along the tightrope stretched between the will of individuation and the abyss of dissolution in the chaos of the formless, between the affirmation of the measure of the Apollonian law and the drive for the ecstasy of its destruction in the fullness of the Dionysian experience. These extremes configure the horizon of our experience of being in the world, understood as an artistic exercise. And this artistic-vital exercise can be executed with mastery and elegance, as long as both ends are brought together in a harmonic synthesis that, as such, celebrates the human condition in what is most proper of it: to be a dynamic

179 M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. I, p.128.

threshold between the consciousness of Being and the experience of Becoming. Art in its higher degree of expression is always a manifestation of the achievement of this transcendent synthesis. Mastery of the exercise of the will, embodied in forms that express this synthesis, knowing how to stay away from the extremes of the formalist doctrinal rigidification and the vortex of the mere incontinent sensual drive. Mastery of the government of the creative force, channeled in orders trespassed of the sense of the human in its fullest and loftiest form. Mastery that can occur both individually, as on a collective level, conforming distinctive epochs and historical movements. *“Such a cultural edifice in the single individual will have the greatest similarity to the cultural architecture of whole eras.... For wherever the great architecture of culture developed, it was its task to force opposing forces into harmony through an overwhelming aggregation of the remaining, less incompatible, powers, yet without suppressing or shackling them.”*

180

At this point, the possibility of an *ethical* reading of Grand Style becomes more patent. Its implicit ethos, ‘beyond good and evil’, can be assimilated to that sense of *excellence* which the Greeks called “*Areté*” (ἀρετή, excellence, nobility, virtue, following Werner Jaeger’s interpretation).¹⁸¹ It is in the form of such genuine nobility that a feeling of affirmative superiority based on an acceptance of the inherently tragic character of existence as a whole is cautioned. For the noble does not resign: he affirms and celebrates life, with all its burden of pain and contradiction. And just as the defeated gladiator in the circus arena assumes his inevitable death with a glacial coldness, because *the nobility of the gesture obliges*, a genuine character modeled in the tragic vision of the world is pleased to assume that destiny as a pure demonstration of strength, as government of the will. Nobility and dignity as ethical dispositions are thus transposed

180 HAH § 276.

181 See Jaeger, Werner. *Paideia. Die Formung des griechischen Menschen*, 3 Bde., Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973, Band 1, pp. 23-37.

in an aesthetic gesture. For it is said: „*Was den großen Stil macht: Herr werden über sein Glück wie sein Unglück.*“ ¹⁸²

2.4 Towards the definition of an aesthetic category

What has already been stated about the nature of Grand Style allows us to understand this concept as a matrix in which multiple layers of meaning converge: the sense of the classical, its *“geometric simplification”* as an expression of a controlled force, the harmonization between the exuberant overflowing of the Dionysian and the measure of the Apollonian. In short, *freedom under law*. And, in its antipodes, the decadent language of the romantic. All this configures a normative aesthetic paradigm that can be used as a measure and a judgment of value, in an axiological sense. Nietzsche applies it in concrete examples taken from the field of music and architecture, in a dialectical comparison:

“(…) All the arts know such aspirants to the grand style: why are they lacking in music? No musician has yet built as that architect did who created the Palazzo Pitti...here lies a problem. Does music perhaps belong to that culture in which the domain of men of force of all kinds has ceased? Does the concept grand style ultimately stand in contradiction to the soul of music—to the ‘woman’ in our music? (...) Beethoven the first great romantic, in the sense of the French conception of romanticism, as Wagner is the last great romantic...both instinctive opponents of classical taste, of severe style—to say nothing of ‘grand’ here...both”.¹⁸³

182 eKGWB/NF-1885,35[74].

183 „(...) Alle Künste kennen solche Ambitiöse des großen Stils: warum fehlen sie in der Musik? Noch niemals hat ein Musiker gebaut, wie jener Baumeister, der den Palazzo Pitti schuf?... Hier liegt ein Problem. Gehört die Musik vielleicht in jene Cultur, wo das Reich aller Art Gewaltmenschen schon zu Ende gieng? Widersprüche zuletzt der Begriff großer Stil schon der Seele der Musik, — dem ‚Weibe‘ in unserer Musik?... (...) Beethoven der erste große Romantiker, im Sinne des französischen Begriffs Romantik, wie Wagner der letzte große Romantiker ist... beides



Fig.4. F. Brunelleschi, L. Fancelli, *Palazzo Pitti* (1458). Façade.

One of the distinguishing features of the Palazzo Pitti (Arch. Luca Fancelli, based on an original scheme by Brunelleschi, Florence, 1458) (fig. 4) is the presence of an interesting articulation between the rectilinear austerity of its volumetric form, and the expressiveness of the stone masonry that conforms its walls. It is a severe, imposing, and monumental work, fully inscribed in the classic Italian Renaissance style but with certain reminiscences “*all'antica*”, evoking the expression of the ancient Roman aqueducts. Based on the description made by Burckhardt in his *Cicerone*¹⁸⁴, Nietzsche recognizes here a form congruent with his definition of Grand Style, because in broad terms it expresses that ‘univocal, simple and mathematical’ condition that is characteristic to it. But his is not just a statement made at an aesthetic-formal level, because there is also implicit here -between lines- a vindication of the ‘meridional spirit’ and the historical context from which the work emerges, that is to say, the appraisal of the “*bold and*

instinktive Widersacher des klassischen Geschmacks, des strengen Stils, — um vom ‚großen‘ hier nicht zu reden... beides” eKGWB/NF-1888,14[61] (WP § 842) – “*Music and Grand Style*”.

184 See Neumeyer, Fritz, op. cit., pp 179-180; Buddensieg, Tilmann, op. cit., p. 270.

autocratic” men of Renaissance and their self-projection in works and deeds.¹⁸⁵ Beyond this implicit reference, we must recognize the fundamental fact that this example is given in direct opposition to music, specifically to the romantic music of a Beethoven or a Wagner.”(...) *Decadent style is furthest of all from one thing, and that is the grand style: which the Palazzo Pitti has, for example, but not the Ninth symphony.*”¹⁸⁶ Without concessions to any form of relativization, decadent style and Grand Style are conceived here as antonyms. The example of Palazzo Pitti offers then a double opposition to music, both at the level of materiality (the stone as ‘true’, as unequivocal and concrete affirmation v/s the sound enchantments of music and its intrinsic ‘femininity’, ungraspable), as at the level of its formal attributes. The palace is rotund in the clarity of its spatial configuration, ‘demanding’ in its imposing and unequivocal presence, without any ornamental concessions. It does not stray in effects or baroque distortions, nor does it represent something external to itself through operations of mimesis or evocation. It does not seek to please or enchant, but rather to communicate a feeling of self-sufficient power, which rests on itself. However, this feeling of power expressed in form *can be pleasant*, to the extent that an essential requirement is met: that the observer possesses that condition *in himself*.

*“(...) The firm, powerful, solid, the life that reposes broad and majestic and conceals its strength-that is what «pleases»; i.e., that corresponds to what one thinks of oneself.”*¹⁸⁷

185 See GS § 291.

186 “(...) *wovon ein Decadenz-Geschmack am entferntesten ist, das ist der große Stil: zu dem zum Beispiel der Palazzo Pitti gehört, aber nicht die neunte Symphonie.*” eKGWB/BVN-1886,688.

187 eKGWB/NF-1886,7[7] (WP § 819). An interesting indirect reference to the notion of *Einfühlung*, as it would later be developed by Wölfflin and Worringer. But Nietzsche’s perceiving subject does not appear as a universal construct based on a generic conception of the self as a mere ‘body’, in a strict physiological-reductive sense. Nietzsche’s perceiving subject presupposes an a-priori favourable ‘spiritual’ disposition towards “*the broad and majestic*”. In this sense, his conception of what would be later called *Einfühlung* is highly selective, in congruence with his inner aristocratic-elitist *ethos*.

A model of aesthetic analysis based on Grand Style should therefore be deployed in two simultaneous dimensions: that of the analysis of the work in its concrete formal expression and materiality, and that which refers to the necessary pre-conditions for its reception. According to Nietzsche's "metaphysics of the artist", the 'state of the creator' should also be a fundamental component of the analytical model. But in congruence with the notion of 'projection' or identification between author and work implicit in his aesthetics, we can assimilate this variable to the formal character of the work itself: if it is the objective expression of a feeling of power that unfolds as the harmonization between the overflowing exuberance of the Dionysian and the measure of the Apollonian, we can infer that the will manifested through that work, the essential character of its creator, his 'temper' (*Stimmung*), is of the same nature.¹⁸⁸ And we will recognize the work as its reflection, qualifying it definitively as *beauty*, insofar as our own temper is determined by the same essential character.¹⁸⁹ Because "*It is a question of strength (of an individual or of a people), whether and where the judgment 'beautiful' is applied.*"¹⁹⁰ And this strength is not a relative concept or a 'discursive-rhetorical construct', because it possesses the unequivocal transparency of the determinations proper to the physiological, being able to objectify itself in the artistic exercise.

Nietzsche's aesthetic ontology in its final form appears as the intention to establish a figure of convergent articulation between creator, work and recipient, a figure that is closed by a single binding line: the will to Grand Style as a superior form of artistic expression. And in this sense, the concept can be understood as an attempt of an aesthetic formalization of the aristocratic-elitist *ethos* that characterizes the

188 "«Beauty» is for the artist something outside all orders of rank, because in beauty opposites are tamed; the highest sign of power, namely power over opposites; moreover, without tension: -that violence is no longer needed; that everything follows, obeys, so easily and so pleasantly-that is what delights the artist's Will to Power." eKGWB/NF-1886,7[3] (WP § 803).

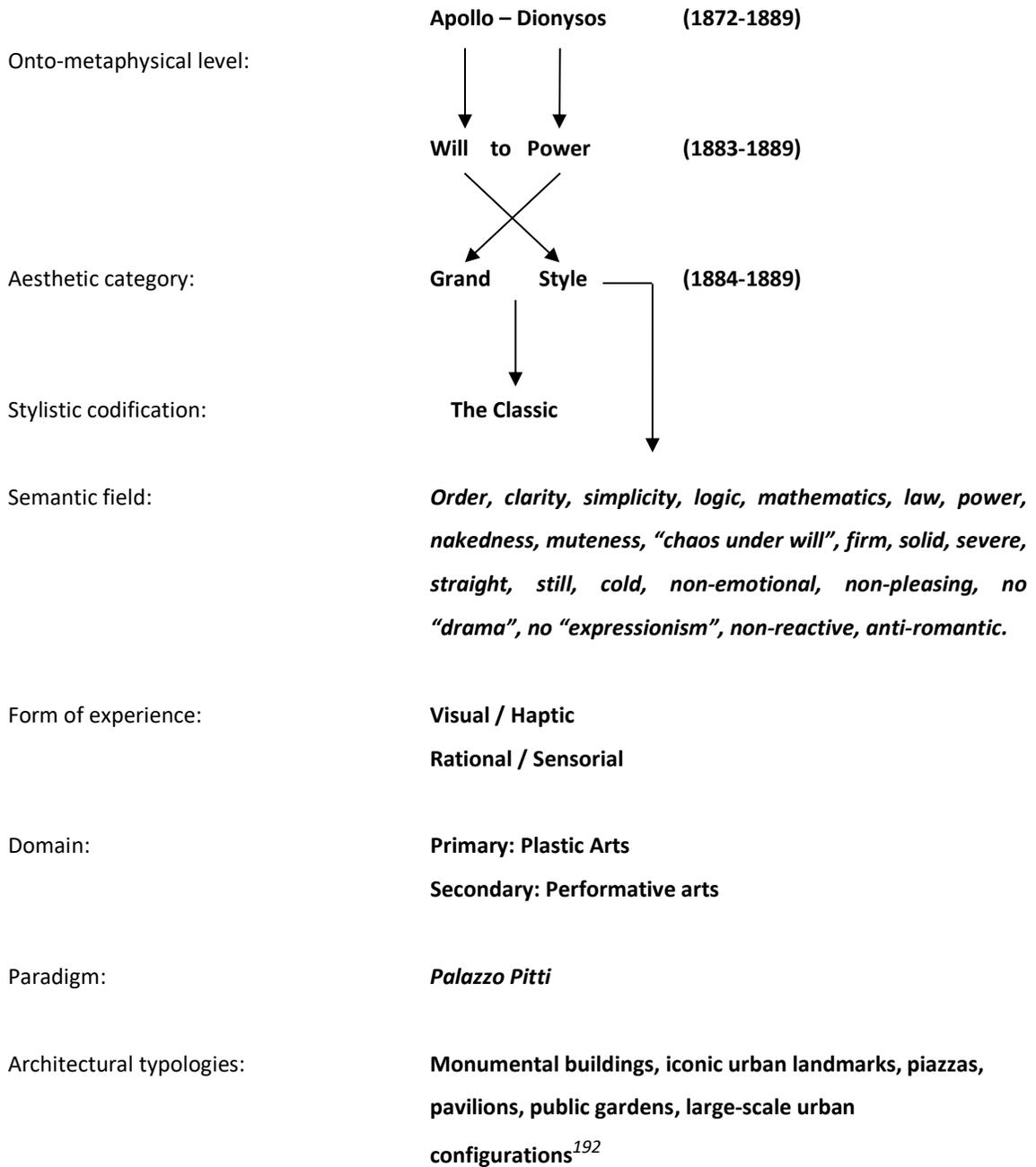
189 "We call then 'beautiful' what corresponds to what we demand from us. This requirement is measured, in turn, according to what we consider ourselves, with what we think we are capable of and dare as the extreme we can still endure" M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', vol. 1 p. 112.

190 eKGWB/NF-1887,10[168] (WP § 852).

philosopher's late philosophical production. An *ethos* that was early recognized by Georg Brandes, labelled by him as "aristocratic radicalism". A label which was praised by Nietzsche himself as an accurate synthesis of his own philosophical standpoint: "*The expression 'aristocratic radicalism', which you employ, is very good. It is, permit me to say, the cleverest thing I have yet read about myself.*" ¹⁹¹

191 eKGWB/BVN-1887,960. See Brandes, George. *Friedrich Nietzsche, an essay on aristocratic radicalism*. New York: Macmillan, 1915, p.64.

2.5 Diagram of synthesis: The 'genealogy' of Grand Style

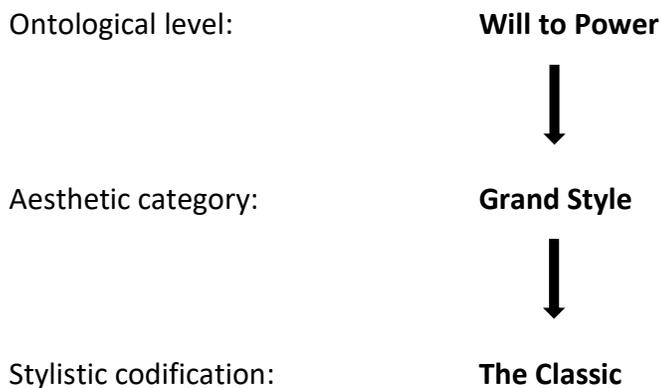


192 These architectural typologies are here proposed 'by inference', taking into consideration the main aspects that have been defined as pertaining to the definition of Grand Style as an aesthetic category.

Chapter 3: Architecture, Will to Power and Grand Style

3.1 Introduction: Will to Power as the *arkhé* of Grand Style

How can we bring the precedent discussion about the concept of Grand Style, from the domain of philosophical-aesthetical inquiry into the specific field of architectural theory? This is the purpose of this part of the investigation, which must be understood as an attempt of *refinement* and *deepening* of the semantic field already clarified in the precedent chapter. Following Nietzsche's own genealogical strategy, this goal will be pursued by means of assuming an inverse perspective: going even deeper into the essential foundations of the concept, its *arkhé*. At this level, we will find in Nietzsche's concept of Will to Power the common ground out of which his conception of Grand Style, the Classic and architecture as its privileged field of expression arise. A schematic attempt of bringing this genealogy into form would read:



If we remain within the scope of the textual definitions given by Nietzsche, Grand Style appears as the aesthetic codification of the Will to Power¹⁹³, while the Classic appears respectively as the primary stylistic codification of Grand Style. These three terms are

193 In his "Nietzsche und die Kunst", Theo Meyer refers to this relationship in analogous terms: "Dies ist der Große Stil. Die kompakte statuarische Realität des Baukunstwerks ist weder Ausdruck der Dionysischen Natur, noch ist sie bloße ästhetischer Schein (...) sie ist die ästhetische Objektivation des Willens zur Macht.". Meyer, Theo. *Nietzsche und die Kunst*. Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1993, p. 107.

formulated by him indistinctively, almost as synonyms: “(...) *The highest type: the classical ideal – as the expression of the well-constitutedness of all chief instincts. Therein the highest style: the Grand Style. Expression of the will to power itself (...)*”.¹⁹⁴ But in order to establish a correctly grounded analytical approach, we must distinguish them in their own specificity and semantic level. In terms of the amplitude of their respective fields of meaning, they configure a ‘zoom-in’ sequence, with increasing levels of focus and specificity. Within this sequence, Grand Style is the necessary bridge tended by the philosopher between the level of ontological reflection (broad) and the level of stylistic codification (narrow), thus effectively filling a ‘theoretical gap’ into his discourse. Grand Style is then a ‘mediation concept’, a ‘joint’, in architectural terms. But our implicit hypothesis is that, although it appears closely related to the Classic, and formulated almost in a relationship of identity, its condition of being an aesthetic category on its own allows us to go *beyond* the boundaries of the Classic as its primary form of stylistic expression.¹⁹⁵ In order to prove this assertion, the following part of this investigation proposes an analytical strategy that operates by displacement: the guiding question will not be posed directly in terms of ‘what does *Grand Style* mean in architecture’, but rather ‘what does *Will to Power* mean in architecture’, in order to tackle the subject from its roots. Consequently, this chapter is focused directly on the analysis of this relationship, addressed from an onto-phenomenological perspective, and unfolded through four proposed keywords: *monumentality*, *presence*, *tectonics*, and *perfection*, thus including but at the same time surpassing the boundaries of the Classic as a specific style.

194 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[138] (WP § 341).

195 “Indeed, it first seems as though the ‘classical style’ and the ‘grand style’ simply coincide with one another. Nevertheless, we would be thinking too cursorily were we to explain the state of affairs in this customary way. True, the immediate sense of Nietzsche’s statements seems to speak for such an equation. By proceeding in that way, however, we do not heed the decisive thought. Precisely because the grand style is a bountiful and affirmative willing toward Being, its essence reveals itself only when a decision is made, indeed by means of the grand style itself, about the meaning of the Being of beings. Only on that basis is the yoke defined by which the antitheses are teamed and harnessed. But the essence of the grand style is initially given in the foreground description of the classical. Nietzsche never expresses himself about it in another way. For every great thinker always thinks one jump more originally than he directly speaks. Our interpretation must therefore try to say what is unsaid by him.” M. Heidegger, ‘Nietzsche’, vol. I, p. 134.

As a preliminary introduction, in order to better understand the privileged role that architecture plays within Nietzsche's late philosophical production, it becomes necessary to comprehend it within the scope of the main objective of his whole philosophical enterprise: in his own words, the "*revaluation of all values*". Although this self-imposed task was primarily focused on establishing a critical approach to the notion of morality, trying to unveil its true genealogy, it also reflects in the field of aesthetics, in a normative sense. In this particular field, the Nietzschean hammer becomes not just a tool for 'destruction', but also a creative, 'constructive' tool.

Extrapolated into the problem of aesthetic judgment, the revaluation of all values sought by Nietzsche can be recognized in his will of critically confronting the role of all inherited 'inscriptions' and aesthetic criteria of value based on historical references –whether in the form of the use of styles in an ornamental fashion, "Classicism" *à la* Winckelmann, religious meanings, etc.-. This will can be clearly recognized in his radical statement: "*Aesthetics is nothing more than applied physiology*"¹⁹⁶, which in strict sense can be interpreted as a particular form of phenomenological reduction with physiological basis. Within this theoretical framework, true *grandeur* and monumentality are a matter of physiological aesthetics, of the concrete presence of the material object measured through the body as an irreducible factor of the aesthetic experience, and should not be mediated by any over-imposed system of values or discursive constructs. As he already states in *The Gay Science*:

"Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearance, to believe in forms, tones, words, in the whole Olympus of appearance. Those Greeks were

196 NCW, "Where I offer objections".

superficial-out of profundity. (...) Are we not, precisely in this respect, Greeks? Adorers of forms, of tones, of words? And therefore-artists?" ¹⁹⁷

A further development of this initial reflection, translated into the specific language of power and physiological aesthetics, and formulated almost in terms of programmatic intentionality, can be found in the following unpublished fragment from 1887:

"A period where the old masquerade and moral finery of the affects arouses repugnance: nature stripped bare, where the qualities of power are simply accepted as decisive (as determining rank), where the grand style makes a new appearance, as a consequence of grand passion." ¹⁹⁸

Finally, from a deeper, ontological perspective, both statements (and in strict sense, the whole of Nietzsche's philosophical enterprise) are resumed in the following aphorism, taken from his *Twilight of the Idols*:

"The «apparent» world is the only world: the «true world» is just a lie added on to it" ¹⁹⁹

Consequently, in this *reductio ad soma*, in this appraisal of appearance, notions like power, force, and grandness, become the keywords of the aesthetic experience. Through his physiological aesthetics, Nietzsche lays the foundations of a phenomenological approach to the comprehension of 'meaning' in architecture, implicating a conceptual shift from the semiotic, historicist-stylistic approach still prevalent in the last half of XIX century, and paving the way for the radical reevaluation of the function and meaning of architecture later sought by the Modern Movement by means of *abstraction*. Following Tilmann Buddensieg's analysis, this implicitly leads to a conception of architecture as

197 GS § 4, cf. NCW, "Epilogue" § 2.

198 eKGWB/NF-1887,9[75].

199 TI § 2.

*'empty form': "When Nietzsche reduces architecture to its elementary forms, he does so not in support of a (still nonexistent) Modernism but in defiance of a despised historicism. A contemporary building to his own taste, one that «has no name» and is «suggestive of nothing», one in which to find himself and think his own thoughts, is something that he was to find only at the very end of his conscious life in the shape of the Mole Antonelliana in Turin."*²⁰⁰

More than any other form of art, and specifically compared to music, architecture 'fits' into Nietzsche's physiological conception of the aesthetic experience. If *"a true artist is the one who understands as 'content' all that which non-artists consider as 'form'"*, his late predilection for architecture becomes even clearer, due precisely for its non-representational character. Through Wagner's narrative style, music had been definitely perverted, becoming just a subordinated medium for external contents (the *"drama"*)²⁰¹, being even labeled by the philosopher as mere *"literature"*.²⁰² But architecture cannot be simply equated to music, in terms of its potential subordination to such externalities. *It is a less 'plastic-malleable' form of art.* Although it can also be intentionally reduced to the status of a medium of expression, in a theatrical-narrative sense, its primary meaning is ontologically founded in its own means of presence: matter, mass, scale, function. This distinctive self-reflective character of architecture was already pointed out by Schopenhauer, for whom its function should be focused primarily on the expression of the means of articulation of loads and supports. *"Architecture aims at finding a visually ideal solution to the conflict between gravity and rigidity; it looks for the «exactly appropriate» relationship between load and support. Since only the shortest and most natural way should be used to represent it, the conflict between gravity and rigidity must necessarily become manifest in whichever architectonic style would present*

200 Buddensieg, Tilmann. "Architecture as empty form", in: Kostka, Alexandre (ed.). *Nietzsche and "an architecture of our minds"* Los Angeles: Getty Research Inst. for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999, p.266.

201 See eKGWB/NF-1888,16[29] (WP § 838).

202 eKGWB/NF-1888,16[34] (WP § 829).

it in that particular way".²⁰³ For him, this leaves architecture in a low degree of objectivation of the will, meaning that its representational capabilities are fatalistically limited to such primary tasks, which are ruled by necessity, in a deterministic sense. But that which for Schopenhauer appears as a limitation is for Nietzsche a gain: the "*victory over gravity*" and the most eloquent expression of the Will to Power as such.²⁰⁴ It is from this conception that architecture appears to Nietzsche as a privileged reference for his normative view on the true function of the arts, and by extension, the most adequate medium for the incarnation of Grand Style.²⁰⁵

In semiotic terms, due to its inherent non-representational character, architecture constitutes primarily a self-reflective ambit of material conformation, to which layers of meaning are attached in a gradual historical process of sedimentation. Seen from the perspective of Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics, the search for the 'true meaning' of architecture would then imply to dig across these layers, like an archeologist, in order to find its essential substratum, the irreducible 'zero level' of the architectural aesthetic experience.²⁰⁶ Carved in the primordial matter of this bottom layer, the archeologist-genealogist Nietzsche finds a clear inscription: *Will to Power*.

"(...) The architect represents neither a Dionysian nor an Apollonian state: here it is the great act of will, the will that moves mountains, the frenzy of the great will which

203 Korab-Karpowicz, Julian W. "Schopenhauer's Theory of Architecture" in: *A Companion to Schopenhauer*, ed. Bart Vandenabeele, Blackwell Companions to Philosophy, Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 178-192.

204 Here it is possible to recognize another point of departure of Nietzsche from Schopenhauer's conception of the will, which is now conceived in volitional and individualized terms, detached from its interpretation as a blind, impersonal force.

205 "*Der statische Charakter der Architektur ist aus seinen natürlichen Konditionen heraus für den 'Großen Stil' geeignet. Es ist die Absenz von diesem direkten, emotionalen Inhalt in einer gefestigten, ausgedehnten architektonischen Figur, die eine der hervortretenden Charaktereigenschaften des Wesens der Architektur darstellt. Es sei genau diese Absenz von manchem dieser Werte direkter emotionaler Natur und ihre Darstellung in dauerhafter Form, welche der Architektur diesen Sinn der ruhigen Gelassenheit, Erhöhung, Vornehmheit, steifer Feierlichkeit und Autonomie gibt, die Nietzsche als herausragend befindet, Form unserer unwiderrufflichen Gesetze zu werden*" Breitschmid, Markus, op. cit., p.66.

206 Cf. BT § 3: "*In order to grasp this point, we must dismantle that artistic structure of Apollonian culture, as it were, stone by stone, until we see the foundations on which it is built (...)*".

aspires to art. The most powerful human beings have always inspired architects; the architect has always been under the spell of power. His buildings are supposed to render pride visible, and the victory over gravity, the will to power. Architecture is a kind of eloquence of power in forms — now persuading, even flattering, now only commanding. The highest feeling of power and sureness finds expression in a grand style. The power which no longer needs any proof, which spurns pleasing, which does not answer lightly, which feels no witness near, which lives oblivious of all opposition to it, which reposes within itself, fatalistically, a law among laws — that speaks of itself as a Grand Style.”²⁰⁷

Although within the Nietzschean conception the notion of Will to Power is in strict sense a causal-essentialist principle that permeates and underlays reality as a whole²⁰⁸, it is in the specific domain of architecture where it finds a particular and suitable medium of expression. It becomes ‘visible’, as a sensible phenomenon, with a distinctive *agonistic* character: the building stands against gravity and decay, it must endure the passage of time, and keep-in-form not just its own material presence, but also give-form to the experiences and ways of living of its inhabitants. Any form of architecture, beyond its function, scale and context, constitutes *a world within the world*, a center of force, which affirms itself as an act of pure will, a *command*. And this will is also the crystallization of the architect’s own creative powers, as a Demiurge who gives form to space, time, matter, and life. “*Come semidei*”, in words of Cesariano.²⁰⁹

207 TI § 11.

208 “(...) the Will to Power is a causal essentialist thesis, which operates at the level of human, non-human, organic and inorganic nature, and is, for Nietzsche, an explanatory account of the metaphysical continuity of the self with nature.” Doyle, Tsarina. *Nietzsche’s Metaphysics of the Will to Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, p.144.

209 “*quilli Architecti che sano produrre li sollerti effecti pareno come semidei perche cercano che larte si asimiglia & supplisca a la natura*” Cesariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de Architectura, etc.*, Como 1521, lib. I, fol ii v. Quoted in Wittkower, Rudolf. *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*. New York: W.W Norton, 1971., p.14.

From an onto-phenomenological perspective, Will to Power can then be understood as an underlying principle behind any form of architectural expression. But this attribute can acquire different levels of manifestation, and it is at this point where the notion of Grand Style, as a *distinctive form* of the Will to Power, reveals itself through its inherent qualitative dimension. *“The highest feeling of power and sureness finds expression in a Grand Style”*. That is to say: Grand Style is the highest and most transparent form of the Will to Power. But what does specifically “Will to Power” mean within the particular domain of architecture? Here it becomes necessary to bring the philosopher’s discourse farther and deeper into the specificity of the means which are proper to architecture, to its own language.

3.2 The language of the Will to Power in Nietzsche’s physiological aesthetics: four ways of architectural interpretation

A painting can be ‘powerful’ because of the contents it represents. We think here of the dramatic gestures of Caravaggio’s characters, or the muscular tension of Michelangelo’s titanic bodies. We can also extend this notion to the intensity conveyed by particular strategies of material conformation, as those which can be found in modern artists like Jackson Pollock, in which the plastic gesture is a direct expression of a bodily-driven ‘force’. But painting provides a form of Apollonian aesthetic experience, which as such is retained in an irreducible distance between object and subject. In this sense, music appears as a form of artistic expression in which this distance tends to be suppressed. In music, power may become a true internalized experience, without mediation, closer to the ‘Dionysian absoluteness’. This distinction brings us consequently to the classic differentiation between plastic and performative arts. What about architecture? A question posed by Nietzsche himself.²¹⁰ The well-known metaphor by Goethe, *“architecture is frozen music”*, speaks of this inherent ‘ontological ambiguity’. Its hybrid position between both forms of aesthetic experience constitutes its distinctive richness

210 „6. Frage: wohin die Architektur gehört“. eKGWB/NF-1888,17[9].

and potential, as a specific form of artistic expression in which Apollo and Dionysos may establish a fruitful alliance. Buildings are experienced simultaneously as objects of contemplation and territories for sensory exploration, and a good piece of architecture is, in general terms, the one in which these two dimensions are brought to a certain state of equilibrium. But what about 'power'? A primary translation would read: *In architecture, power means monumentality*. In order to decode this proposed relationship within the ambit of Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics, the following part of this investigation starts by giving 'one step back', with the aim of understanding monumentality from its primary semiotic interpretation. This strategy will allow us to realize that Nietzsche's non-discursive, 'naked' and 'mute' conception of the monumental in the form of Grand Style is basically a form of phenomenological reduction in which the notion of value is displaced from the *signified* (the inscription) to the *signifier* (the material irreducible substratum). The privileged role of the signifier will lead in turn to the concept of *presence*, shifting definitely from semiotics to phenomenology. Presence will be addressed as an un-mediated form of relationship between subject and object, in which power becomes *transparent* – "it no longer needs any proof". In terms of formal codification, this transparency will be related to the concept of *tectonics*, as a form in which the gesture of joint and articulation becomes the concrete and most eloquent expression of the "victory over gravity". Finally, the will of *perfection*, which is also a form of 'power', will be analyzed as the mastery of the relationships that underlay and give unity to the multiple parts that constitute the material substratum of the architectural body. The invisible diagram that regulates these relationships is a *command*, "a law among laws", a spell cast on matter, space, and time, which embodies and crystallizes itself in the building. In synthesis, Will to Power, understood as the *arkhé* of Nietzsche's concept of Grand Style, will be analyzed in the following part of this investigation as the fourfold architectural expression of monumentality, presence, tectonics and perfection, thus providing a form of interpretation which includes but at the same time transcends the boundaries of the classical as its primary stylistic codification.

It is important to note that these four concepts are proposed as keywords that can provide an interpretation for Nietzsche's dictum "*Architecture is a kind of eloquence of power in forms*".²¹¹ His statement is formulated at an ontological level, and therefore it is not bounded to any form of historical contextualization. The philosopher is not affirming 'Nineteenth century architecture is...', or 'Doric architecture is...': he refers to architecture in an all-encompassing and atemporal way. Therefore, the analytical strategy is developed in an essential, onto-phenomenological level, and does not rely in the relationship between Nietzsche's own historical context and the possible links with the prevalent discourses on architectural theory at his time. Moreover, the analysis should also not be understood in the form of a sort of 'heuristic' method, but rather it has the open character of a theoretical *excursus* following an implicit Heideggerian hermeneutical strategy. The guiding principle is the question for 'das Ding-an-sich': how does power manifest itself as a *sensible phenomenon* in architecture, according to Nietzsche's physiological standpoint.

211 TI § 11.

3.2.1 Will to Power as Monumentality

*“Monumentality in Architecture may be defined as a quality, a spiritual quality inherent in a structure which conveys the feeling of its eternity (...)”*²¹²

Kahn’s definition of monumentality points to an essentialist conception. For him, it is an inherent quality of certain built structures, that allows them to attain a status of atemporality, “conveying a feeling of eternity”. Monumentality is, in this sense, power over time achieved by permanence and duration. Certainly, in the case of intentional monuments, as defined by Riegl, the will of standing against the flow of time and “keeping single human deeds (...) alive in the minds of future generations”²¹³ constitutes a main driving purpose, regardless of their specific historical contexts. But what are the inherent qualities that allow a built structure to achieve this goal? In his “*Vers une Architecture*”, Le Corbusier elaborates on the subject, based on his observations done at the Acropolis in Athens: “*We are in the inexorable realm of the mechanical. There are no symbols attached to these forms: they provoke definite sensations, there is no need of a key to understand them. Brutality, intensity, the utmost sweetness, delicacy and great strength*”²¹⁴, “*there is nothing more than pure forms in precise relationships*”.²¹⁵ This evokes Nietzsche’s own statement: “*Architecture is a kind of eloquence of power in forms — now persuading, even flattering, now only commanding*”²¹⁶, but translated into the language of an architect and contextualized in a specific case of study. In Le Corbusier’s formulation (just as in Nietzsche’s), *history plays no role*. For him, the Parthenon is

212 Taken from Kahn, Louis. “*Monumentality*” originally published in Paul Zucker (ed.), “*New Architecture and City Planning: A Symposium*”. New York: Philosophical Library, 1944 pp.77-78.

213 Riegl, Alois "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Foster and Diane Ghirardo, in: *Oppositions*, n. 25 (Fall 1982), 21-51, here p.21.

214 Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*. NY: Dover Publications, 1986, p.211

215 Ibid., p.220.

216 TI § 11.

monumental not because of its historical, cultural or symbolic connotations, but rather because of the “definite sensations” it conveys, in a physiological sense, thus becoming *timeless*. This is congruent with Nietzsche’s concept of Grand Style, which according to Markus Breitschmid, corresponds to a form of monumentality that is somatic and a-teleological. In what follows, it will be argued that Nietzsche’s reformulation of monumentality corresponds to a displacement from a semiotic to a phenomenological model of interpretation, intimately related to his concept of Will to Power and framed by his physiological aesthetics.

Analyzed from a semiotic perspective, any monument as such constitutes an architectural typology which deploys itself in two simultaneous mediums: that of its concrete material presence, and that of its ‘inscriptions’, that is to say, the added layers of meaning normally constituted by signs in written form. This last dimension can be extended to include stylistic features, as long as they can be interpreted as ornamental additions. The ‘inscription’ can also have an immaterial character (as in the case of unintentional monuments, following Riegl’s definition).²¹⁷ The archetypical form of an intentional monument is the *tomb*. Following Saussure’s basic semiotic model, the tomb can be understood as a distinctive form of an architectural sign, as long as it unfolds in this dyadic dimension of a *signifier* (the material substratum), and the *signified* (the attached meaning). From a wider perspective, this dyadic relationship can also be interpreted in this case as a certain form of dialectics between presence and absence²¹⁸, which in strict sense refers in turn to an ontological substratum: the duality of Being and Time.

217 Riegl, Alois op. cit., p.23.

218 Absence as *memory*, which is the etymological origin of “monument” - Latin *monumentum* (from the Indo-European root *men-3. For the specific entry in Pokorny’s *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, see <<https://indoeuropean.info/pokorny-etymological-dictionary/men-3.htm>>. Accessed 25.11.19).

Evidently, conventional elements such as doors and windows can also be interpreted as architectural signs, but in this case, they do not refer to an absent content that transcends their material presence, but rather they 'refer to themselves', in a circular, self-reflective relationship rooted in the form-function paradigm.²¹⁹ In this kind of primary signs, (and interestingly, because of the physiology of perception and the relationship with the body as the basic substratum for the apprehension and interpretation of built space), *signifier* and *signified* tend to converge in an indissoluble alliance, which can be also reinforced by inherited patterns of cultural behavior. In this level, architectural signs tend to be particularly 'transparent' in terms of the clearness of their forms of interpretation²²⁰, constituting units of meaning equivalent to *onomatopoeias* in the field of language.

It is possible to affirm that, in the case of the classical conception of what a monument is, this transparency always constituted a programmatic and explicit form of intentionality. Its form, scale, and presence were conceived as necessarily congruent with the importance of the inscription, in a direct-proportion ratio, in order to ensure its effectiveness as a cultural mnemotechnic dispositive. But what remains when we suppress the inscription?²²¹ Or, making a conceptual extrapolation from the Nietzschean critique on morals: is there anything left when the value of the inscription is revealed as inherently false? Going even beyond: in the absence of God, the 'highest inscription'...what is left? Nihilism, as nothingness? This is the implicit question that underlays Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics, which at this point can be better

219 Following Peirce's triadic semiotic model, the self-reflective condition leaves these kind of signs in the category of "icons".

220 It is against this 'transparency of the architectural signs' that all the efforts of the deconstructive movement were aimed. To sever the bondage between *signifier* and *signified*, 'liberating' architecture from these inherited patterns of interpretation (the *folies* of Tschumi & Derrida are a concrete example). But such effort reveals itself as a rather difficult enterprise, as long as we understand that these patterns aren't primarily culturally-determined, nor they have a discursive character ('texts') but rather rooted in an a-priori physiological status of projection (*Einfühlung*) between body and built-space.

221 A question which would be later replicated in Husserl's phenomenological reduction, and his "bracketing", trying to go back to "things themselves".

understood as a theoretical framework that allows him to validate, within the domain of aesthetics, his main purpose in the domain of morals and cultural critique: the reevaluation of all values. And this means *nakedness*, pure presence, detached from any form of superimposed system of values. *“Psychologically, I have two senses: first: the sense of the naked, then: the will to the grand style (few main sentences, these in the strictest coordination; no esprit, no rhetoric).”*²²² Consequently, Nietzsche’s ‘naked’ approach implies the possibility of a detachment of signifier and signified, which means the possibility of thinking of monumentality as an aesthetic attribute not mediated by convention, and not bounded to the monument as a specific typology. And what does this monumentality mean? The un-mediated experience of power through form - beyond the inscription. For Nietzsche, monumentality in architecture is then the *iconicity of power*. Palazzo Pitti is not a ‘symbol of power’, it does not ‘represent’ it, but rather it is the embodiment of power itself. It needs no proof, no text, because it is eloquent by its own means. Here, the stone becomes *transparent*. Its derived symbolic function is a consequence of its naked material presence: *the ‘text’ (if any) is a footnote*. Following this analytical perspective, power can be conceived as an attribute which isn’t primarily determined by cultural patterns of interpretation, but rather something that ‘speaks for itself’, in silence, and through ‘empty forms’: this is the ground zero of the Nietzschean aesthetics of power. Consequently, the appraisal given by the philosopher to the Mole Antonelliana in Turin, its *“absolute instinct of height”*, is an appraisal directed not to its potential symbolic meanings, but rather to the fullness of its own self-sufficient presence. The Mole Antonelliana constitutes the paradox of a monumental building which is not a monument of anything external to it, but of its own self.

“(…) Earlier I walked past the mole Antonelliana, the most ingenious building that might ever have been built - strangely, it doesn't have a name yet - from an absolute

222 eKGWB/NF-1886,7[23].

*height drive, - reminds of nothing but my Zarathustra. I baptized it Ecce homo and in my mind I put an enormous free space around it (...)"*²²³



Fig. 5. *Mole Antonelliana*, Turin. Arq. Alessandro Antonelli (1889).

Originally conceived as a synagogue, the “Mole Antonelliana” in Turin (1889, Arq. Alessandro Antonelli) (fig.5) became at the time of its completion the highest building of masonry in the world, with a height of 168 mts. As it is extensively documented in Jörg Gleiter’s *Der philosophische Flaneur*, the building made a powerful impression in Nietzsche, leading even to a form of self-projection and identification with the work and its architect.²²⁴

Certainly, seen from a strict stylistic perspective, the building is a highly eclectic piece of work, and presents the undefinition which is characteristic of all those late stylistic orders

223 eKGWB/BVN-1888,1227 — Brief an Heinrich Köselitz: 30/12/1888.

224 See Gleiter, Jörg, op. cit., pp.47-59.

that constitute 'forms of transition', in historical terms. "In multiple transfigurations from a synagogue over a Hellenic temple and its profane revival in the Palladian villa type, the Mole does not end as a Gothic pinnacle, but through the motif of the circular balcony in the filigree of a minaret".²²⁵ But this undefinition, which could have been straight labelled by the philosopher as a fine example of 19th century's decadence, is paradoxically recognized by him, between the lines, as the 'condition of possibility' of the building's mute, nameless 'nakedness'. In such absence of pre-determined meanings, what is then recognized as its absolute value is the "absolute instinct of height", (which is another way of naming Zarathustra's "pathos of distance"), giving a turn from a semiotic to a phenomenological comprehension of power, expressed in a distinctive form of 'mute monumentality'. In a deeper sense, it is possible to affirm that, seen through the eyes of the philosopher, this remarkable building evokes the possibility of turning the 'passive nihilism' of decadence into the 'active nihilism' of the Promethean will of modernity, which after the death of God and by the word of Zarathustra is given the chance of laying again its foundations, from a radical *tabula rasa*. A new tower of Babel, challenging God and history, with just one-and-first name: *Ecce Homo*.

Now, would the Mole Antonelliana constitute such a reference for Nietzsche if it was just a regular-sized building, without the connotation given by its remarkable height? We must concede that it probably would not be the case. So, an implicit and unavoidable question arises: does this Nietzschean conception of monumentality means, basically, 'size', in a direct-proportion relationship? The example favours this assumption. Moreover, from a strictly physiological perspective, the correlation power-size appears as perfectly valid. In order to clarify this point, it becomes necessary to analyse Nietzsche's conception of monumentality and grandness from a broader perspective, going beyond the immediate context of his remarks on the Mole Antonelliana. Referring to the architecture of the Greeks, he writes in *Daybreak* (1881):

225 Gleiter, Jörg, op. cit., p.51. Translation mine.

“The Hellenic very foreign to us. - Oriental or modern, Asiatic or European: in contrast to the Hellenic, all these have in common the employment of massiveness and pleasure in great quantity as the language of the sublime; while in Paestum, Pompeii and Athens, and with the whole of Greek architecture, one stands astonished at the smallness of the masses by means of which the Greeks know how to express and love to express the sublime.”²²⁶

Monumentality, as a specific form of the sublime, can be achieved then not just by means of quantity and massiveness, but also through ‘smallness’. Isn’t this in direct contradiction with the very essence of the sublime, understood in Kantian terms as that form of aesthetic experience in which rational comprehensibility is overwhelmed by the colossal and endless? How can something ‘small’ be sublime? Through *perfection*, which is the Apollonian counterpart of the Dionysian dissolution into the oversized and endless.

“Concept of ‘perfecting’: not only greater complexity, but greater power (--does not have to be merely greater mass-)”.²²⁷

“The word Apollonian means: the urge to perfect self-sufficiency (...) to all that simplifies, distinguishes, makes strong, clear, unambiguous, typical: freedom under the law (...) Plenitude of power and moderation, the highest form of self-affirmation in a cold, noble, severe beauty: the Apollonianism of the Hellenic will.”²²⁸

The distance between the Greeks and the Modern spirit is then the distance between two forms of attaining the monumentality of the sublime, but both coexist and merge within Nietzsche’s aesthetics: Grand Style is the form in which ‘grandness’, as a

226 D III § 169.

227 eKGWB/NF-1885,2[76] (WP § 660).

228 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[14] (WP § 1050).

Dionysian principle, and 'style', as an Apollonian will of measure, are brought into a state of equilibrium – which is the highest expression of the Will to Power itself: Power under control. Broadly speaking, the Mole Antonelliana can be assimilated to the 'Dionysian pole' of this aesthetic equation, while the Greek temples represent its Apollonian counterpart.

But, in the case of the Mole, something is added: "*A vast surrounding empty space*". The detachment from inscriptions is mentally echoed in an ideal detachment from context, leaving the building as its own unit of measure, without scale, in a self-reflective form of isolation. Why? This question leads us to the analysis of the second proposed aspect of the Will to Power in architecture: *Presence*.

3.2.2 Will to Power as Presence

*"(...) and among them went King Agamemnon (...) As some great bull that lords it over the herds upon the plain, even so did Zeus make the son of Atreus stand peerless among the multitude of heroes."*²²⁹

Anything which is recognized as powerful appears as wrapped in an aura of self-distinction. There is no power in the un-definition of the common, the indistinct, or the ambiguous. So, entering the battlefield, Agamemnon "*stands peerless among the multitude of heroes*", in Homer's words. In the original Greek version: *ἐκπρεπέ' ἐν πολλοῖσι καὶ ἔξοχον ἠρώεσσιν*. *ἐκπρεπέ'* is better translated as "being distinguished", while *ἔξοχον* refers to "stand" in terms of prominent "appearance" (*vorscheinen*), including the root *ὄχα* (by far).²³⁰ The etymological analysis allows us to define with better precision the way in which power manifests itself: as something distinguished, by presence and in distance.²³¹ There is no power *in absentia*. This is the first irreducible aspect to be considered as constitutive of the notion of power, from a phenomenological perspective. Powerful individuals always impose themselves just by presence, without words.²³² To have 'presence' becomes in this sense a synonym of 'being distinctively powerful'. And, in analogue terms, buildings can communicate the same feeling of self-sufficient power, through their own material presence - as long as they are enough 'eloquent'. But, within the Nietzschean conception, as it has already been stated, this

229 *Illiad*. II, 483.

230 Taken from the digital edition of *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*.
<<http://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB?lemma=vorscheinen>>, accessed 05.10.19. See also
<<https://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/sol/sol-entries/omicron/1028>>, accessed 06.10.19.

231 The Latin form of presence, as *praesentia*, (being-in-front) also carries implicit the notion of distance.

232 "(...) *The powerful natures dominate, it is a necessity, they need not lift one finger. Even if, during their lifetime, they bury themselves in a garden house!*". eKGWB/NF-1880,6[206].

eloquence of power by presence is achieved just if it does not become a subject of representation, in a theatrical, over-expressive sense. Such will of 're-presentation-of-presence' (a hyperbole) would imply the abolition of the aura of distance, leading to a 'tyrannical imposition' in which narration and drama are placed in the foreground of the aesthetic experience. Nietzsche's aesthetics of power does not shout, but rather whispers, almost in silence: this is an important aspect to be considered in the definition of Grand Style as an aesthetic category, in order to avoid common misinterpretations derived from his initial appraisal of Wagner's aesthetics. As it is clearly stated by Fritz Neumeyer in his "Der Klang der Steine",

*"To the «grand style» belongs also a psychology of sound: Whoever seeks, tries to convince himself and others of his goals; he wants and must communicate, if necessary, also in loud tones. Whoever has, he does not have to persuade, he can speak in soft tones or be elegantly silent. From this perspective, Nietzsche enjoys the silent sound of the stones as an art of great calm, in the face of the tormenting unredeemableness and the romantic-bizarre unfathomableness, especially Wagnerian music."*²³³

At this point, the "vast, surrounding space" which the philosopher pictures around the Mole Antonelliana can be better understood. It is the aura of power, the empty distance necessary to bring the "absolute instinct of height" into the plenitude of its own self-sufficient presence, so that it can also be appreciated from an adequate perspective. It is the invisible field of power that naturally radiates from any "center of force", virtually expanding its limits. The Mole becomes in this sense a tangible expression of the concept of Will to Power itself: "(...) Not merely conservation of energy, but maximal economy in use, so the only reality is the will to grow stronger of every center of force-not self-preservation, but the will to appropriate, dominate, increase, grow stronger".²³⁴

233 Neumeyer, Fritz, op.cit, p.180. Translation mine.

234 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[81] (WP § 689).

A second form of interpretation of the notion of presence and its relationship with power can be achieved from a deeper, ontological perspective. Presence can be understood as the will of overcoming any form of teleological purpose, in accordance with the notion of Eternal Return. The immanence of here-and-now becomes the existential horizon in which life contains itself, as long as it is conceived as a self-sufficient ambit of realization which excludes any form of a transcendental promise of redemption. Architecture can give us an interesting example of how this conception can be expressed through the concreteness of its own means.



Fig.6. Cologne Cathedral (1248-1880). Drawing by M. H. Fuchs, 1809.

A gothic cathedral is trespassed by the *pathos* of an accomplishment. Time is embedded in its form, through the implicit will of de-materialization that characterizes its upward vertical tension (fig.6). A will which is, in turn, the expression of a teleological purpose: the projection into a transcendental realm, beyond *physis*, the overcoming of the limitations imposed by nature, with the aim of dissolving the consistency of matter into the absolute realm of the divine, into light. *Absence* is then the invisible center of gravity which pulls the stone upwards, to the sky, and beyond. The tele-theological promise of

a redemption is in this way crystallized into form. The transition of force from the pillars through the vault's ribs until reaching the pinnacles is the unfolding of a 'restless' formative process—the vault's pinnacle is a point, without dimension, an absolute value, like a vanishing point projected into infinity.

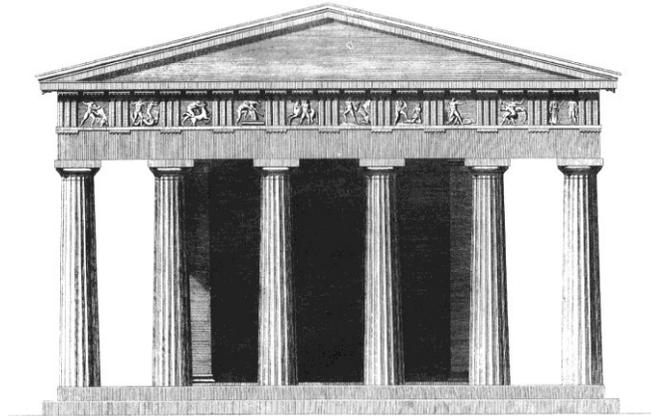


Fig.7. Temple of Hephaistos, Athens (415 BC). Drawing by Stuart and Revett, 1795.

On the contrary, a Greek temple appears as self-consistent, retained into the immanency of its own material presence (fig.7). There is no 'pathos', nor 'telos', understood as a will of accomplishment projected in time. It communicates a sense of a-temporal conclusiveness, through the consistency of its clear tectonic relationships, with "*no feelings of struggle*". The upward force of the pillars is counter-balanced by the weight of the roof structure, thus achieving a state of equilibrium. It has no 'vanishing points'. The temple is the threshold between the domain of the mortals and the domain of the divine, between the earth and the sky, but all of them converge into a single unity which is present 'at hand'. Distance is here shifted in a horizontal direction: from the contemplation of the luminous radiance of the building from outside, through the experience of trespassing its colonnades and porticos in between, until reaching the sacred precinct of the God/Goddess in the darkness of the *cella*, inside. All this process unfolds into an existential plane of manifestation which, despite being intrinsically

hierarchical, is 'shared' between gods and men²³⁵. Both immortals and mortals, 'present' themselves naked, in their own distinctive essence, assuming their specific roles in the vast theatre of the world, for which the temple becomes a privileged stage.²³⁶

At this point, we can understand the Nietzschean conception of physiological aesthetics as intimately bounded with the notion of presence. The bracketing from any form of inscription, of any over-imposed system of values, allows the aesthetic experience to unfold as an un-mediated form of *Einfühlung* between subject and object. Presence is that bi-directional state of projection and mutual identification that can take place as long as this state of nakedness is achieved, bringing the aesthetic experience into a form of comprehensibility which includes, but at the same time surpasses the domain of mere rational understanding. It becomes an *event* in which the Self, as a whole, acts as the embodied mirror of the world. What do we need to achieve such a state? What are the concrete means through which this form of aesthetic *Einfühlung* can be performed?

“Architecture for the perceptive. There is and probably will be a need to perceive what our great cities lack above all: still, wide, extensive places for reflection; places with tall, spacious, lengthy colonnades for inclement or unduly sunny weather where no traffic noise or street cries can penetrate, and where a finer sensibility

235 „So ist den Griechen die Botschaft vom Göttlichen gekommen, so haben sie es erfahren dürfen: nicht als kategorische Forderung oder als diesseitiges und jenseitiges Heil, sondern als das Ewige und Selige, das nicht durch Verheißungen, sondern dadurch tröstet und beglückt, daß es ist.“ Otto, Walter F., *Theophania: Der Geist der altgriechischen Religion*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1956, p. 32.

236 This notion of presence in the Greek sense, as opposed to the Christian “pathos”, is described by Nietzsche in the following terms: “*The un-Hellenic in Christianity. - The Greeks did not see the Homeric gods as set above them as masters, or themselves set beneath the gods as servants, as the Jews did. They saw as it were only the reflection of the most successful exemplars of their own caste, that is to say an ideal, not an antithesis of their own nature. They felt inter-related with them, there existed a mutual interest, a kind of symmetry. Man thinks of himself as noble when he bestows upon himself such gods, and places himself in a relationship to them such as exists between the lower aristocracy and the higher (...) Christianity, on the other hand, crushed and shattered man completely and buried him as though in mud: into a feeling of total depravity it then suddenly shone a beam of divine mercy, so that, surprised and stupefied by this act of grace, man gave vent to a cry of rapture and for a moment believed he bore all heaven within him. It is upon this pathological excess of feeling, upon the profound corruption of head and heart that was required for it, that all the psychological sensations of Christianity operate: it desires to destroy, shatter, stupefy, intoxicate, the one thing it does not desire is measure: and that is why it is in the profoundest sense barbaric, Asiatic, ignoble, un-Hellenic.*“ HAH I § 114.

*would forbid even a priest to pray aloud: buildings and places that express as a whole the sublimity of stepping aside to take thought for oneself. The time is past when the Church possessed the monopoly of reflection; when the *vita contemplativa* primarily had to be a *vita religiosa*; and yet that is the idea expressed in everything the Church has built. I do not know how we could ever content ourselves with its buildings, even stripped of their ecclesiastical function; they speak far too emotive and too constrained a language, as the houses of God and as the showplaces of intercourse with another world, for us as godless people to think our thoughts in them. We want to have ourselves translated into stones and plants; we want to have ourselves to stroll in, when we take a turn in those porticoes and gardens”²³⁷*

Among all the references given by Nietzsche about architecture, this is probably one of the most explicit ones, constituting even a form of programmatic intentionality for a modernity devoid of the presence of God. The absence of the divine implies the absence of the meta-narrative that historically sustained the meaning of religious architecture, leaving it as an “*empty shell*” which is not anymore able to perform its original function as a “*showplace of intercourse with another world*”. But is it possible to detach the narrative from its own forms of presence, from its concrete material means? No. Even stripped from their ecclesiastical function, these buildings continue to speak loudly, in a language which appears “*far too constrained*” and “*emotional*”, that is to say, they are trespassed by the pathos of the “*vita religiosa*”, understood from a Christian perspective as the true form of the “*vita contemplativa*”. Their inherent emotional expressiveness does not provide the silent emptiness which is required for achieving a state of reflection born out of real, unconstrained freedom. When human reflection is not anymore projected and re-directed into the realm of transcendence, it must find new means in accordance with the immanence of its true existential state. Architecture can provide such means through a set of concrete formal attributes: “*still, wide, extensive places for reflection; places with tall, spacious, lengthy colonnades (...) where no traffic noise or*

237 GS § 280.

street cries can penetrate (...) buildings and places that express as a whole the sublimity of stepping aside to take thought for oneself (...)."

Silence and distance appear here as the necessary pre-conditions for any form of effective reflection. Silence, both in formal and experiential terms, and distance, understood as amplitude and perspective. In the absence of God, the vanishing point of life is contained within itself, so new perspectives must be created. With silence, amplitude and distance, we are able to reconfigure our *Lebenswelt* and assume it as what it really is: the eternal recurrence of an endless play of forces projected from multiple centers, which unfold in the same existential plane.²³⁸ From these centers, the self's own subjectivity becomes an irreducible point of reference which essentially aspires to view and re-configure the whole world, not as an image of God, but as its own image, projected into things: "*We want to have ourselves translated into stones and plants; we want to have ourselves to stroll in, when we take a turn in those porticoes and gardens.*"

The concept of "reflection" acquires here a double meaning. In a God-less era, the spaces for reflection are those in which man can find himself reflected in his own essence, in mutual correspondence and projection. But do modern, big cities provide such a form of experience? No. They *lack* the spaces for reflection. Here we must recognize an undeniable fact: Nietzsche's conception is not 'democratic', it contains an implicit principle of selective differentiation, aligned with his aristocratic disdain of modernity.²³⁹ The man for whom he is speaking is not the man of the herd. The mass, as the way in which the modern loss of individuality crystallizes as a sign of the *Zeitgeist*, is *the loss of distance expressed in form*. In the modern city, the pathos of closeness replaces the

238 This, in line with Wolfgang Müller-Lauter's analysis of Nietzsche's concept of Will to Power. See Müller-Lauter, Wolfgang, and Drew E. Griffin. "Nietzsche's teaching of the Will to Power." In: *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, no. 4/5, 1992, pp. 37–101. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20717572. Accessed 09 Jan. 2020.

239 See BGE, 'The free spirit' § 44; BGE, 'On the natural history of morals' § 202-203; BGE, 'Our virtues' § 222, 223; GM I § 4, 5, 11, 12; GM II § 12; GM III § 19; TI § 37, 39; EH, 'Beyond Good and Evil' § 1; A § 1,2,3,4,6; eKGWB/NF-1888,16[53]

pathos of distance. Thus, the man of the herd does not need *“still, wide, extensive places for reflection; places with tall, spacious, lengthy colonnades”*, because they do not reflect his/her own essence, which is better expressed in markets and noisy streets. And in such context, loud gestures and shouts are the only way for becoming distinct and attain some degree of recognition (whether in the case of individuals or buildings). But this is the closure of reflection, and consequently the negation of any possibility of experiencing *“the sublimity of stepping aside to take thought for oneself”*. Five years after the redaction of this noted aphorism, Nietzsche makes an analogous statement in his *“Genealogy of Morals”*:

“When Heraclitus withdrew into the courts and colonnades of the immense Temple of Artemis, I admit that this ‘desert’ was more dignified: why do we lack temples of that sort? (maybe they are not lacking: I am just thinking of my nicest study, Piazza di San Marco, spring, of course, and in the morning, the time between ten and twelve). But what Heraclitus was trying to avoid is the same that we try to get away from: the noise and democratic tittle-tattle of the Ephesians, their politics, news of the ‘Empire’ (Persia, you understand), their market affairs of ‘today’, because we philosophers need a rest from one thing above all: anything to do with ‘today’. We appreciate peace, coldness, nobility, distance, the past, more or less everything at the sight of which the soul is not forced to defend itself and button-up [zuschnüren], – something you can talk to without speaking loudly.”²⁴⁰

240 eKGWB/GM-III-8.



Fig. 8. Palazzo Berlendis in Venice, Nietzsche's temporary residence in 1880.

Here, his initial reflection becomes an embodied experience. His study *"in spring, of course, and in the morning, the time between ten and twelve"* appears as the concrete materialization of what a true space for reflection could be. But this is a 'private temple', a retreat, and as such, it implies a certain bracketing from the flux of public daily life, from 'time' in its ordinary sense. The critique of the modern city remains implicit, along with the contempt for its *"market affairs"*. Such contempt would probably be turned into admiration, as long as these cities were able to provide still, wide spaces for reflection, articulated by sober architectures which do not 'shout', but rather are able to constitute a 'silent frame for the canvas of life', just by presence. In Peter Zumthor's words,

*"To me, buildings can have a beautiful silence that I associate with attributes such as composure, self-evidence, durability, **presence**, and integrity, and with warmth and sensuousness as well; a building that is being itself, being a building, **not representing anything, just being.**"*²⁴¹

241 Source: <<https://www.archdaily.com/452513/peter-zumthor-seven-personal-observations-on-presence-in-architecture>>. Accessed 20.08.21. Emphasis mine.

3.2.3 Will to Power as Tectonics

"(...) the architect has always been under the spell of power. His buildings are supposed to render pride visible, and the victory over gravity, the will to power. Architecture is a kind of eloquence of power in forms — now persuading, even flattering, now only commanding. The highest feeling of power and sureness finds expression in a grand style (...)"²⁴²

How can this *"eloquence of power"* be translated into an architectural form, in the context of Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics? We have explored two preliminary ways, Monumentality and Presence. Going deeper into the subject, we will find in the concept of Tectonics a distinctive attribute that can be understood as one of the clearest and direct forms of rendering power through the concreteness of architecture's own material means.

In etymological terms, Tectonics derives from the Indo-European root *teǵb-* (to weave), the same for *Tekne* and *Tekton*.²⁴³ Architecture, as *Arkhé-Tekne*, contains in its own definition the image of weaving, of joining, which is reinforced by the root *Ar* (to join, fit), which is present in *Arkhé* (origin). The will of 'putting things together', arranging them in an articulated whole, belongs to the very essence of architecture, in an ontological sense. But in the root *teǵb*, is also contained the image of the child, of *birth*. From a Heideggerian perspective, we can think of Tectonics as that ambit of realisation in which form is brought to presence as *un-veiling*, (*Aletheia*) not just of its own self-radiance as a finished and distinctive entity, but also of the forces that constitute its

242 TI § 11.

243 Source: <<https://indo-european.info/pokorny-etymological-dictionary/teǵb.htm>>. Accessed 03.09.19.

generative principles, in a dynamic, process-oriented way. The tectonic form allows us to recognise the seeds of its own processes of conformation (fig.9).²⁴⁴

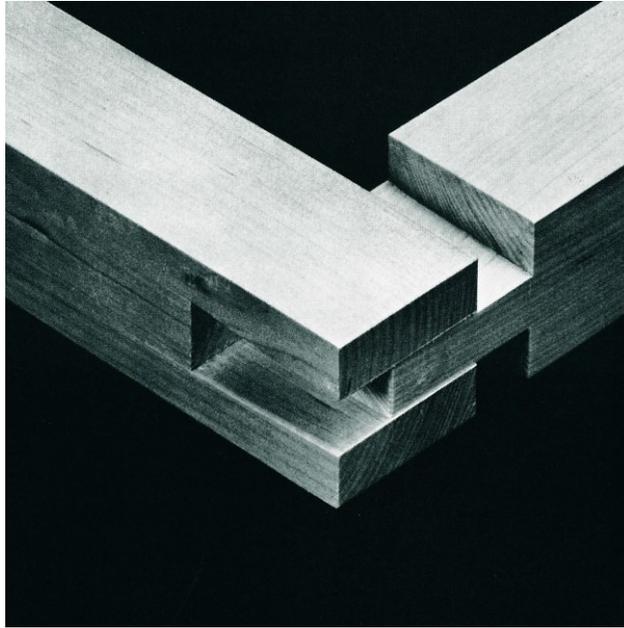


Fig.9. Wooden joint (from Seike, Kiyosi. *The Art of Japanese Joinery*. New York / Tokyo: Weatherhill-Tankosha, 1977).

Any form of tectonic 'joint' presupposes an a-priori differentiation, a discontinuity between its constitutive elements. There is no possible joint in the undifferentiation of the homogenous. In a hypothetical universe made up by one single, continuous form of matter, (that is to say, in a full entropic state), there would be no place nor need for joints. So, the primordial creative gesture that can be found in any cosmological myth is the division of Chaos into regions: the sky, the earth, the waters, etc. The God-Architect gives form to the *Ur-Stoff* by division, by cutting and joining. And with the regions appear the limits between them, which constitute their respective joints: the horizon, the shores. The joint is basically the primary form of articulation between continuity and

²⁴⁴ The original Greek meaning of *Tekton* is not restricted to carpentry and wood as a specific material, but rather to the act of building through "cuts and joints", thus including other materials such as metal and stone - and the respective needed skills for their material configuration. See Karvouni, Maria. "Tectonics of the human body and architectural embodiments", in: *Proceedings of the ACSA European Conference, Copenhagen, 1996: Construction of Tectonics for the post-industrial world*, pp.79-84.

differentiation, the re-union of convergence and divergence. As such, it is the most basic gesture through which Chaos is put into Order (*Kosmos*), and from a metaphysical perspective, it is consequently the form in which Being resolves itself into Becoming. But, within our Nietzschean theoretical framework, Being is Will to Power, so it is possible to affirm that the joint constitutes the primordial way through which Will to Power manifests itself as form, with spatio-temporal dimension and presence. In the joint, force is individualized and concentrated as *momentum*, and becomes visible as a node of articulation from which form arises and unfolds.²⁴⁵

This preliminary onto-phenomenological reflection on the essential meaning of joint and tectonics allows us to understand in a clearer way the prominent role of the classic within Nietzsche's late aesthetic thought, and its assumption as the primary stylistic codification of Grand Style.²⁴⁶ Within architecture, and in a very broad sense, the classic is essentially expressed as an articulation of parts, in order to configure a coherent whole made up of distinctive elements joined together. The Doric order, with its upward sequence of stylobate, shaft, echinus, abacus, architrave, frieze, and cornice is the archetypical expression of this distinctive feature (fig.10). Seen from a stylistic perspective, it constitutes a canon, a formal system of elements governed by strict relationships of form, size, proportion, and function. In turn, following Vitruvius and Alberti, it can also be understood as the expression of the human body's own constitution, as a sum of parts clearly distinguished by form and function, within an overall harmonic conception of equilibrium and correspondence between part and whole.

245 Within Semper's conception of the tectonic, as developed in his *"Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten, oder praktische Aesthetik"* (1860-3), the joint occupies a prominent place, understood also as a generative and irreducible principle of the architectural form. Following Frampton's analysis, *"Semper's emphasis on the joint implies that a fundamental syntactical transition is expressed as one passes from the stereotomic base of a building to its tectonic frame, and that such transitions are the very essence of architecture"*. Frampton, Kenneth. "Bötticher, Semper and the Tectonic: Core Form and Art Form", in: Ballantyne, Andrew (ed.). *What is Architecture?* London: Routledge, 2002, p.146.

246 The following section complements the analysis of the relationship Grand Style-Classic done in Chapter II of the present investigation.

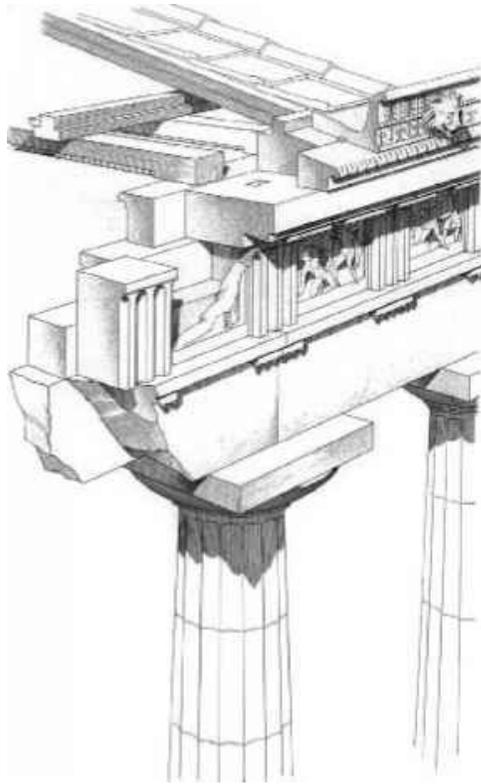


Fig.10. Doric entablature (constructive detail).

But if we shift our analytical perspective, from this prevalent formal-stylistic interpretation towards the field of Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics, the Doric order means something else than just canons of proportions and harmonic ratios: it is the clearest form of the "victory over gravity", as an expression of the human "Bauende Geist".²⁴⁷ This physiological turn implies the displacement of the Apollonian conception of beauty as *Concinnitas*, as developed by Alberti, towards a Dionysian conception based on force and power as the *causa prima* of the architectural form. This theoretical displacement must be understood as congruent with Nietzsche's revaluation of all values: if the world is not anymore conceived as an 'image of God', it is rather an eternal play of immanent forces, which configure an endogenous, closed system which unfolds as a rhythmic pulse of creation and destruction. This play of forces finds in architecture a privileged ambit of expression: the confrontation with gravity as an entropic,

247 eKGWB/NF-1884,25[438].

dissolutive principle, is one of its most distinctive forms. The same agonistic confrontation can be found in our own bodily constitution: the stand-up vertical position is a form of victory over gravity as well, a victory which is, in turn, the most eminent expression of the evolution of organic forms in general. This evolution implies a progressive differentiation of parts with specific functions. Following Wölfflin's analysis in his "Prolegomena to a psychology of architecture",

*"Architecture reaches its apogee at the point where, from the undifferentiated mass, individual organs detach themselves and each part appears to function in accordance with its own purpose alone, and without affecting the entire body or being obstructed by it. The same objective is pursued by Nature in its organic structures. The lowest beings form an unarticulated whole (...) The highest beings, on the other hand, display a system of differentiated parts that are able to function independently of one another."*²⁴⁸

This state of 'unity in diversity', the harmonic articulation of differentiated parts within a regime of continuity, is the essence of the Tectonic, and it is a common attribute to be found both in the well-constituted human body and architecture *"in its apogee"*. Nietzsche's physiological aesthetics finds in Wölfflin's analysis a consistent development within the domain of architectural theory, the latter constituting a link between the level of aesthetic-philosophical reflection and the phenomenological discourse on *Einfühlung*. Both positions share as a common theoretical ground the displacement towards the notions of will and force, understood physiologically as determinant aspects of the aesthetic experience:

"And so I hold that all the axioms of formal aesthetics concerning beautiful forms are nothing other than the prerequisites of organic life. Form-Force (Formkraft),

248 Wölfflin, Heinrich. *Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture*. Colorado: KeepAhead Books, 2017, p.21.

*accordingly is not only the antithesis of gravity, a force that works vertically, but that which brings forth life, a vis plastica (...)"*²⁴⁹

*"We feel a similar formative force in all architectural creations, except that it does not come from outside but from within as formative Will that generates its own body. The objective is not the destruction of Matter but only the organic construction of it, a condition that we perceive is self-willed, not the result of external force; self-determination is the prerequisite of all beauty. That the weight of Matter has been overcome, that in the most powerful masses a Will that is intelligible to us has been able to fulfill itself: this is the fundamental essence of the architectural impression."*²⁵⁰

Wölfflin's concept of formative force, *Formkraft*, appears here as a direct translation of Nietzsche's Will to Power into the ambit of architectural theory. An immanent principle, not imposed from outside (God's will), but self-determined, 'from inside'. The intelligibility of this formative force becomes apparent in the tectonic expression, as a 'victory' over the formless state of undifferentiation of matter, not subjected to rule. By contrast, the stereotomic form appears as embedded and retained in the domain of gravity: it presupposes a regime of pure continuity by compression in which force does not reach a state of individualization: it is merely *reactive*. On the contrary, the tectonic form is a crystallized diagram of its own generative forces, animated by an *active* principle of self-conformation. It brings into the domain of the visible, into light, the internal dynamics of its structural constitution, materialized in singular elements: pillars, beams, nodes, and joints. But this bringing-into-visibility does not occur in terms of 'representation', but of *un-mediated presence*, within a scopic regime of nakedness and legibility.²⁵¹ Force becomes a subject of representation, an 'artistic motif', not in the

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 19.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 20.

²⁵¹ This condition of 'making force visible' belongs to the very definition of Will to Power given by Nietzsche: „*Der siegreiche Begriff, Kraft, mit dem unsere Physiker Gott aus der Welt geschafft haben, bedarf noch einer Ergänzung:*

tectonic, but in the plastic modelling of masses, in a sculptural-expressionist sense. In this case, force operates as an exogenous agent that is forcibly imprinted in matter, 'from outside'. We can find this operation transposed as an archetypical symbol in the field of traditional cosmogonies: the creation of man by the Gods, as a figure modelled in mud or clay which is then 'animated' with the divine halitus, is always an exogenous process, which implicitly conveys the notion of subordination of matter to spirit. The endogenous self-determination of the tectonic is then an inversion of terms, in a Promethean-titanic sense. And this is congruent with the paradigmatic shift implicit in the Nietzschean "revaluation of all values", and its inversion of Platonism.

The diagrammatic legibility of force implicit in the tectonic form brings it necessarily within the domain of intelligibility, both by means of physiological empathy and rational comprehensibility. Form is thus interpreted not as the result of the action of an invisible force with unknown origin, as a miraculous epiphany, but rather as the clear and logical consequence of its own organic process of self-construction. Does this regime of intelligibility imply the diminishing of the experience of the sublime? In simple terms: is the tectonic form, in a broad sense, more 'prone' to beauty than to the sublime? A preliminary logical conclusion should be affirmative. How can the tectonic form convey the notion of the sublime? By means of *perfection*, which, understood as an overarching principle of self-consummation, is the entelechy of *Formkraft*, and in a deeper sense, of Will to Power itself.

es muß ihm eine innere Welt zugesprochen werden, welche ich bezeichne als ‚Willen zur Macht‘, d.h. als unersättliches Verlangen nach Bezeugung der Macht; oder Verwendung, Ausübung der Macht, als schöpferischen Trieb usw.“ eKGWB/NF-1885,36[31].

3.2.4 Will to Power as Perfection

“My heavy heart wants to rest in the hiding places and abysses of perfection (...).”²⁵²

Nietzsche’s confessed desire appears to be particularly meaningful for us, architects. Our creative path has been always illuminated by the cold light that emanates from the deep abysses of perfection, and our hearts find rest when we get our designs to shine with the same light, as if it was reflected in the crystal-clear surface of a mirror. Certainly, an architectural project is always an abyss of complexities, a deep labyrinth of decision-making, a battlefield of ‘yes’ and ‘no’, and the golden thread that leads us through its internal paths is this permanent quest for perfection, from the general conception of its location, form, and presence, to its smallest details. But what does this will to perfection mean? Is it just *“will to power, and nothing else”*?²⁵³

Within the Western philosophical tradition, we find in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Book V § 16 an initial definition of perfection, interpreted in terms of *completeness (teleion)*:

“What is called 'complete' is (1) that outside which it is not possible to find any, even one, of its parts (...) (2) That which in respect of excellence and goodness cannot be excelled in its kind; e.g. we have a complete doctor or a complete flute-player, when they lack nothing in respect of the form of their proper excellence (...) And excellence is a completion; for each thing is complete and every substance is complete, when in respect of the form of its proper excellence it lacks no part of its natural magnitude (3) The things which have attained their end, this being good, are called complete; for things are complete in virtue of having attained their end. (...)”

²⁵² GS § 368.

²⁵³ eKGWB/NF-1885,38[12] (WP § 1067).

A three-folded definition, which appears as subsumed in the following excerpt from his *Physics*, Book III §6, related to the concept of *wholeness*:

“‘Whole’ and ‘complete’ are either quite identical or closely akin. Nothing is complete (teleion) which has no end (telos), and the end is a limit.”

Following Aristotle’s definitions, perfection appears as a multi-layered concept which comprises simultaneously the notions of completeness, excellence, wholeness and ‘brought to an end’, as finished.²⁵⁴ Although in strict sense this initial definition does not have metaphysical implications, its interpretation within the domain of Nietzsche’s ontology of power poses an interesting challenge in terms of its consistency and applicability. In a world devoid of any teleological purpose, in which Being is understood as Will to Power, eternally unfolded as pure Becoming, the notion of perfection understood as a final state of ‘completeness’ appears as an ideal pertaining to the domain of platonic ideas. As such, it should be excluded, when understood as a metaphysical *telos* for creation as a whole:

“If the world had a goal, it must have been reached. If there were for it some unintended final state, this also must have been reached. If it were in any way capable of a pausing and becoming fixed, of ‘being’, if in the whole course of its becoming it possessed even for a moment this capability of ‘being’, then all becoming would long since have come to an end (...)”²⁵⁵

254 *“That is perfect (consistently with the etymology and the earliest sense of the word) which is finished, brought to an end, hence complete, which nothing may be added to nor, by the same token, subtracted from. That is the proper sense of perfection, which should be borne in mind when we say of it: perfect =finished=complete. (...) This formula for perfection was particularly widespread and was oft-repeated particularly by the Scholastics (especially by Thomas Aquinas) and by the Renaissance Humanists (including Daniele Barbaro).”* Tatkiewicz, Władysław. "Perfection: the Term and the Concept" in: *Dialectics and Humanism*, vol. VI, no. 4 (autumn 1979), p. 8.

255 eKGWB/NF-1885,36[15] (WP § 1062).

Does this mean that perfection-as-completeness has no place in the world, and is consequently an unattainable goal, which finds its accomplishment just in 'heaven', following St. Jerome's words: *perfectio vera in coelestibus?*²⁵⁶ As long as we conceive it in Platonic terms, as a transcendental state 'beyond physis', beyond the imperfect domain of appearances, it would be effectively so. But, as it has already been exposed, Nietzsche's inversion of Platonism implies the overcoming of the opposition between apparent world and real world: the world of appearances is the only real world, and as such, it is perfect-in-itself and incorporates imperfection as part of its innermost essence:

*"Suppose our usual conception of the world was a misunderstanding: could a form of perfection be conceived within which even such misunderstandings would receive their sanction? Conception of a new perfection: that which does not correspond to our logic, our 'beautiful', our 'good', our 'true', could be perfect in a higher sense than even our ideal."*²⁵⁷

*"To attain a height and bird's eye view, so one grasps how everything actually happens as it ought to happen; how every kind of 'imperfection' and the suffering to which it gives rise are part of the highest desirability."*²⁵⁸

*"'The world is perfect'--so prompts the instinct of the intellectual, the instinct of the man who says yes to life. Imperfection, whatever is inferior to us, distance, the pathos of distance, even the Chandala themselves are parts of this perfection."*²⁵⁹

This conceptual shift, from transcendence to immanence, 'from heaven to earth', implies, in turn, the overcoming of the dichotomy between perfection and imperfection. A paradigmatic shift that is consequent with Nietzsche's reintegration of the Dionysian

256 Quoted in Tatkiewicz, Władysław, op. cit, p.10.

257 eKGWB/NF-1886,7[36] (WP § 1010).

258 eKGWB/NF-1887,11[30] (WP § 1004).

259 A § 57.

principle within the historically prevailing Apollonian *Weltanschauung*. In his conception, Becoming exhibits the character of an everlasting process which is not teleologically directed as a linear path towards a transcendental goal of final closure (the divine state, God), but which unfolds as a circle traced around an immanent principle of self-development. Perfection, understood as such principle, is then the *entelechy of power*²⁶⁰: the center of gravity around which the wheel of Becoming traces itself, the 'driving force within the force', its imperative pathos of accomplishment.

*"Greater complexity, sharp differentiation, the contiguity of developed organs and functions with the disappearance of the intermediate members-if that is perfection, then there is a will to power in the organic process by virtue of which dominant, shaping, commanding forces continually extend the bounds of their power and continually simplify within these bounds: the imperative grows."*²⁶¹

*"Perfection: in these states (in the case of sexual love especially) there is naively revealed what the deepest instinct recognizes as higher, more desirable, more valuable in general, the upward movement of its type; also toward what status it really aspires. Perfection: that is the extraordinary expansion of its feeling of power, riches, necessary overflowing of all limits."*²⁶²

How does this process unfold in phenomenological terms? Nature, as *physis*, appears to us as that ambit of autonomous form-production which manifests as an incessant process of creation and destruction, of 'rising to light' in distinctive and individualized forms, back to the dissolution of these forms in the state of primordial un-differentiation from which they arose (the Earth, as *bosom* that retains and nurtures). This cyclic process of unfolding-and-folding is crystallized not as a homogeneous, isotropic form of 'pure

²⁶⁰ Following the interpretation of the Aristotelian notion of entelechy done by Sachs (2005), as "*Being-to-an-end*".

²⁶¹ eKGWB/NF-1886,7[9] (WP § 644).

²⁶² eKGWB/NF-1887,9[102] (WP § 801).

material extension', but rather as a vast heterogeneous and hierarchical arrangement of entities that populate the phenomenological plane of spatio-temporal manifestation, disposed in multiple orders, categories, and species, each of them with their own *tempo* of existence. Following Nietzsche's ontology, this multiplicity is, in turn, the expression of Will to Power, which incessantly aspires to a state of consummation and self-realisation through form. Within the cyclic conception of time implicit in his notion of Eternal Return, this process is not linear, but circular: Becoming, as the force put into motion (*energeia*), unfolds in an incessant quest for overpowering, complexification and expansive 'overflowing of all limits', but within the bounds imposed by Being (*dynamis*), understood as the centripetal commanding force that retains this process in-form and shape, from its own center. Perfection is this center, the "*form of the proper excellence*" (Aristotle), the internal highest law of accomplishment of any given entity: the *entelechy of power*, in an onto-metaphysical sense.

But, for the sake of eternity, the circle remains open. Achieving a final state of absolute perfection, a *non plus ultra*, would mean the *closure* of this everlasting process of form-manifestation, the end of the battle that lays at the core of the universe's eternal process of material conformation: *the extinguishing of the fire that fuels the wheel of Eternal Return*. Any entity with spatio-temporal presence, from an ephemeral snowflake to a distant giant star, is in this sense a center of force, a site of resistance, a dynamic *process* in which *Ordo* and *Chaos* are permanently disposed in an agonal relationship of confrontation. Certainly, a snowflake is not simply a naive expression of 'natural beauty'. *It is a battlefield*. If we analyse it in zoom, we will recognize a clear pattern of geometric configuration: a hexagon. But is it perfectly symmetric and regular? No. It *tends to perfection*, but never reaches it.



Fig.11. Wilson Bentley, Plate XIX of "Studies among the Snow Crystals" (1902). Detail.

There seems to be a certain 'gap' between the ideal geometric pattern, and its concrete material conformation (fig.11). The pattern, like the 'plan' in the case of an architectural design, is the shaping-commanding force that puts and retains matter into form. The tension between the formative principle of order incarnated in the plan, and the dissolutive character of matter not subjected to rule, is the way in which this 'everlasting battle' manifests itself, not as a state of imperfection that permeates the whole *Kosmos* and that as such should be overcome or negated in search for a final state of redemption, but as a creative principle behind the evolution of natural forms, "beyond good and evil".²⁶³

This onto-metaphysical reflection about the concept of perfection, and its relationship with the notion of Will to Power, constitutes a preliminary theoretical foundation that will allow us to better understand how these concepts manifest themselves in the specific domain of architecture's theory and praxis. Certainly, the notion of perfection has always had a privileged role within the ambit of architecture. In comparison to 'beauty', which constitutes an aesthetic category of value highly determined by the specificity of the paradigmatic theoretical frameworks from which it arises, perfection

²⁶³ "The benefit consists in the contemplation of nature's magnificent indifference to good and evil. No justice in history, no goodness in nature: that is why the pessimist, if he is an artist, goes 'in historicis' to those places where the absence of justice itself is revealed with splendid naivete, where perfection comes into view-and also in nature, to those places where her evil and indifferent character is not disguised, where she exhibits the character of perfection- (...)" eKGWB/NF-1887,10[52] (WP § 850).

exhibits a more objective character, related to notions of internal consistency, coherence, and completeness. The will of articulating a whole, by means of the definition of a certain law of configuration that imprints an order to matter and space, is a meta-principle of architectural design that transcends styles, cultural contexts, and epochs. The overarching character of this meta-principle is rooted in physiological aesthetics: the perception of integrity, the pulsion towards visual coherence in any given system composed by differentiated parts, is the projection of an ideal state of plenitude that arises from the body's natural organic pulsion towards integrity. The maximum degree of perfection corresponds to the achievement of the maximum degree of complexification within the bounds of integrity and correspondence between part and whole. "*Perfectio est consensus in varietate*".²⁶⁴ This *consensus* is a *command*, which in the case of architecture finds its clearest expression in the *plan view*, which is not a mere representational device, but an imperative sign of correspondence; a decree not written in words, but traced in axes, lines, and measurements.²⁶⁵ The mastery in the definition of these relationships is the measure of the excellence of an architect, a mastery that evokes demiurgic undertones. Playing the role of 'semi-gods', giving form to our projects as consistent (micro)cosmos, is certainly a driving purpose behind our architectural endeavours, whether confessed or not.²⁶⁶ In words of Cesariano, "*quilli Architetti che sano produrre li sollerti effecti pareno come semidei perche cercano che larte si asimiglia & supplisca a la natura.*"²⁶⁷

264 Wolff, *Ontologia*, §503, p. 390.

265 It may be argued that the importance given here to the plan view is a consequence of the historical persistence of an orthogonal conception of space, unfolded in plan, sections and side-views; and that this conception has somehow lost its validity in the current ambit of digital representation in 3D. But from an ontological perspective, the hierarchy of the plan view is related to its condition of being a condensed sign, a clear diagrammatic synthesis of the laws of configuration of the architectural work, which can be seen from an absolute vantage-point in simultaneity. The eye of God projected over the world is thus "mirrored" in the eye of the architect projected over the plan. And this is a timeless, archetypical expression of the Will to Power.

266 This, despite certain postmodern claims about the "dissolution of the author", which from a Nietzschean perspective can be understood as an even deeper and concealed form of Will to Power.

267 Cesariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de Architectura, etc., Como 1521*, lib. I, fol ii v. Quoted in Wittkower, Rudolf. op. cit., p. 14.

But nature gives us different examples of that perfection which we, architects, strive to emulate or even surpass. Snowflakes and crystals speak the language of geometrical perfection, which is the Apollonian language of eternity, and as such, is closely akin to the inherent 'static' character of architecture. But the sublime vision of an eagle chasing down its prey, in a timed sequence which is as beautiful as tragic in its purity, can also be interpreted as a form of natural perfection. What is the difference? Their respective potential of representation through architecture's own means. Because of their underlying geometrical patterns of conformation, snowflakes and crystals may constitute efficient abstract models for architectural typologies, from military fortresses to complete cities, while a flying eagle (as a dynamic process-in-time) falls necessarily within the category of an 'artistic motif', and as such, it can only be a subject of *imitatio*²⁶⁸, of theatrical representation into stone *via expressionismus*. And any form of *imitatio* implies an *emulation effort*, which in the case of architecture is particularly complex: in general, stones do not fly, they are static and gravitational, so when we try to 'give them wings', we may dangerously evoke "(...) *this peculiar presumption found in the concept of 'opera' (which) reminds me of that ridiculous man who tries to lift himself up in the air with his own arms: what this fool, and what the opera is trying to do with that concept, are pure impossibilities.*"²⁶⁹ Certainly, buildings may imitate birds, whales, open books or even cabaret dancers in some contemporary varieties (fig. 12), but at the cost of tyrannizing matter (and inhabitants) for the sake of creating such operatic 'affects and effects'.

268 The core issue: the will of making of *time* a subject of plastic-spatial representation by mimesis, through a medium (architecture) which is ontologically 'prone' to fixedness.

269 eKGWB/NF-1870,7[127].



Fig.12. Frank Gehry, Vlado Milunić, *Dancing House*, Prague (1996).

This leads us to a fundamental distinction pointed out by Tatarkiewicz in his aforementioned study on perfection. He distinguishes “perfection” from “expression”, as artistic goals that characterize complete historical epochs.²⁷⁰ In broad terms, perfection has been the leitmotiv of the classic Greek antiquity, of Renaissance and Neo-Classicism, while expression has been the aim of Mannerism, Baroque and Romanticism. The difference between both lies, respectively, in the presence or absence of a conscious ‘limitation’: the arts of perfection strive for achieving the maximum degree of excellence within the bounds of strict principles or laws (harmony, coherence, unity), while the arts of expression are mainly focused on novelty, innovation, and *phantasie*. With Nietzsche, we now understand that the highest forms of artistic manifestation can be found in the former case. For him, true ‘creativity’ is not simply a matter of unbounded self-

²⁷⁰ See Tatarkiewicz, op.cit., p.152.

expression, of wild, emotionally driven rapture, without measure and temperance. On the contrary, it is the ability of being creative under the rule of a self-imposed set of constraints, which is, in turn, a proof of true mastery, of 'power' modulated through a conscious effort of the 'will'. And this the essential meaning of Grand Style. In Goethe's words,

*“Wer Großes will, muß sich zusammenraffen;
In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister,
Und das Gesetz nur kann uns Freiheit geben.”²⁷¹*

²⁷¹ Goethe, „Natur und Kunst“, 1800 (excerpt).

Chapter 4: Nietzsche's Grand Style - Case Studies

Having already established the main premises that characterize Nietzsche's Grand Style as an aesthetic category, this part of the present investigation is focused on the analysis of different case studies, which provide a 'testing ground' for its applicability as a tool for aesthetic analysis. The cases have been chosen following two convergent criteria of selection. The first of them is *diversity*, both in terms of the artistic disciplines involved, as in their epochs of production. This methodological decision is congruent with the main premise of the investigation: if Grand Style constitutes an aesthetic category on its own (like the Sublime in Kant), it may describe a wider set of phenomena, not necessarily restricted to their original context of formulation in historical terms, neither to architecture as a specific discipline. In reference to the latter, Nietzsche's own words are clear: "*The greatness of **an artist** is not measured by the beautiful sentiments that he arouses (...) but by the degree to which he approaches the grand style*".²⁷² Second, in congruence with this initial criterion, the selection does not assume the documented influence of Nietzsche's aesthetic thinking as a *sine qua non* precondition. This is present in a number of the cases, in different levels of manifestation, but some of them were explicitly chosen 'out of the boundaries' of such historical-documental form of verification, in order to test the limits of the concept's domain of applicability from a wider and more inclusive perspective.

The chosen case studies are:

- 4.1. Johann Sebastian Bach's *Musical Offering* (1747)
- 4.2. Giorgio de Chirico's *Metaphysical paintings* (1911-1914)
- 4.3. Georg Kolbe's *Zarathustra* (1937)
- 4.4. Mies van der Rohe's *Neue Nationalgalerie* (1969)
- 4.5. David Chipperfield's *James Simon Galerie* (2019)

²⁷² eKGWB/NF-1888,14[61] (WP § 842). Emphasis mine.

While all these cases share the interpretation of Grand Style as a synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories, both from an ontological and stylistic-formal perspective as outlined in Chapter II, the architectural cases 4.4 and 4.5 complement this interpretation with references to the categories elaborated in Chapter III (monumentality, presence, tectonics, and perfection), in different degrees. In terms of the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy on their authors, cases 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 provide documental evidence.

In synthesis, the aim of including these case studies has been basically to bring Nietzsche's aesthetics out of the boundaries of its historical context of formulation, making of it an active theoretical framework of critical analysis for past, present, and (implicitly) future artistic practices. And this is congruent with the Nietzschean enterprise itself, which, in the words of the philosopher, was not meant to be meaningful just for his own time, but rather had an implicit 'trans-historical' programmatic intentionality.²⁷³ Finally, although all of them are interrelated by the theoretical subject of analysis, each case has been stylistically developed as an independent 'piece' which can be read as an autonomous and self-sufficient fragment from the whole.

273 See TI, "The Birth of Tragedy" § 4.

4.1 'Apollo plays Dionysos': The *Musical Offering* of Johann Sebastian Bach

"The greatness of a musician, in a word, is measured by his ability for the grand style", states Nietzsche in one of his late aphorisms.²⁷⁴ Clearly enough, the concept does not apply just for architecture and architects. But who are these musicians? He left no definite clue. We just know that Wagner is not one of them, and that his music represents the opposite. *"(...) farthest removed from the grand style is Wagner: the dissipative character and heroic swagger of his artistic means are altogether opposed to the grand style".*²⁷⁵ Wagner's music is further described by Nietzsche with a series of complementary adjectives: *"dramatic", "rhetoric", "picturesque", "sentimental", "restless", "pompous", "war-like", "romantic", "espressivo", "theatrical", "massive", "tyrannical",* and last but not least, *"modern".*²⁷⁶ Therefore, if we want to engage in the task of finding a musician, or at least a specific musical composition that corresponds with his concept of Grand Style, this would imply the need for a complete 'inversion of terms'. Maybe, if such musician also composes like an architect, making of the sound a constructive material, using it for 'building' structures under the rule of *"form, mathematics, law",* we would be closer to our goal. Our proposal: the "Musical Offering" of Johann Sebastian Bach. For the purpose of this analysis, the story behind the composition of this work is in strict sense *irrelevant*, just as the fact that Nietzsche was born almost 100 years after Bach's death. Following Heidegger's interpretation, as an aesthetic category with an ontological basis, Grand Style is not historically bounded. Nevertheless, the 'story' will be mentioned briefly, in order to provide a minimum degree of contextualization.

274 eKGWB/NF-1888,16[49].

275 eKGWB/NF-1885,41[2]. Cf. eKGWB/NF-1887,11[312] (WP § 849): *"The sensibility of romantic-Wagnerian music: antithesis of classical sensibility"*.

276 See eKGWB/NF-1887,11[321]; eKGWB/NF-1887,11[322]; eKGWB/BVN-1888,1000; eKGWB/NF-1888,14[7]; eKGWB/NF-1888,15[6]; NCW, "Wagner as danger" § 1; CW § 2; CW § 5.



Fig.13. The first page of the manuscript of the "Ricercar a 6" from Bach's "Musikalisches Opfer".

Written in 1747, when the composer was already 62 years old, the "Musical Offering" (*Musikalisches Opfer*, BWV 1079, fig.13) is a compositional exercise which consists of one three-part fugue, one six-part fugue, ten canons, and a trio sonata. The origin of the work is certainly anecdotic: taking advantage of the presence of Bach in his palace in Potsdam, King Frederick the Great wanted to test the renowned improvisation ability of the master, making him listen to a brief composition of his authorship. To the amazement of those present, Bach managed to improvise from that simple tune a complete fugue in three voices in one of the king's new *pianofortes*. Upon his return to Leipzig, the composer dedicated himself to further develop the same composition in multiple variations, which together would form the "Musical Offering" that he would then deliver to the king as a gift.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ See Gaines, James R. *Evening in the Palace of Reason: Bach meets Frederick the Great in the Age of Enlightenment*. Harper Perennial, 2006, pp. 9–11.

The architectonic character of this, as well as other late works by Bach, can be recognized in the description of his compositional strategy given by David and Mendel in *"The Bach Reader"*. A description that resembles that of a building, via the extensive use of a spatial vocabulary: *"His form in general was based on relations between separate sections. These relations ranged from complete identity of passages on the one hand to the return of a single principle of elaboration or a mere thematic allusion on the other. The resulting patterns were often symmetrical, but by no means necessarily so. Sometimes the relations between the various sections make up a maze of interwoven threads (...) Usually, however, a few dominant features afford proper orientation at first sight or hearing, and while in the course of study one may discover unending subtleties, one is never at a loss to grasp the unity that holds together every single creation by Bach."*²⁷⁸

In the specific case of the Musical Offering, these "relations between separate sections" which create patterns united by a "few dominant features" mainly correspond to the specific form of the *canon*, a term which also has architectonic implications. *"The idea of a canon is that one single theme is played against itself. This is done by having 'copies' of the theme played by the various participating voices (...) every type of 'copy' preserves all the information in the original theme, in the sense that the theme is fully recoverable from any of the copies. Such an information-preserving transformation is often called an isomorphism (...) Each of the canons in the Musical Offering has for its theme a different variant of the King's Theme."*²⁷⁹

What we have done so far is a description of a musical composition, that resembles an architectonic structure because of its formal attributes (as a tectonic *assemblage* of parts), and that despite exhibiting a high degree of complexity is at the same time

²⁷⁸ Quoted in: Hofstadter, Douglas R. *Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid*. New York: Basic Books, 1999, p. 28.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.8.

'simple' because it can be reduced to a few generative components or 'building blocks'. How does this relate to Nietzsche's concept of Grand Style?

The first point of convergence can be found in Heidegger's definition: "*the grand style prevails wherever abundance restrains itself in simplicity*"²⁸⁰ (which in turn derives from Nietzsche's own statement, "*The grand style (...) is a sense of the scarce and the prolonged*").²⁸¹ This is certainly a broad assertion, but within our analytical strategy it constitutes an irreducible condition of possibility. And the Musical Offering verifies it. In this work, "simplicity" can be understood as the recursive reference to the King's theme, while "abundance" corresponds to its manifold canonical variations. The former constitutes an Apollonian principle of unity and formal consistency, while the latter corresponds to a Dionysian principle of expansion, diversity, and multiplication. As a whole, the composition is then a "synthesis of opposites under one yoke" (the law of the isomorphism), which is a mathematical principle of identity operating simultaneously at different scales²⁸². In a deeper, ontological sense, this "*points to an original, concrecive unity of the active and reactive, of Being and Becoming*"²⁸³ - which is Heidegger's definition of Will to Power as such.

A second form of interpretation can be asserted if we analyse the 'character' or expression of the work, its '*Stimmung*'. The Musical Offering is an abstract, mathematically based composition. It can be understood as an exercise in mathematical combinatorics taken to an extreme degree of perfection and refinement. However,

280 M. Heidegger, 'Nietzsche', Vol. I, p.134.

281 eKGWB/NF-1884,25[321].

282 "*The word 'isomorphism' applies when two complex structures can be mapped onto each other, in such a way that to each part of one structure there is a corresponding part in the other structure, where 'corresponding' means that the two parts play similar roles in their respective structures. This usage of the word 'isomorphism' is derived from a more precise notion in mathematics (...) The perception of an isomorphism between two known structures is a significant advance in knowledge-and I claim that it is such perceptions of isomorphism which create meanings in the minds of people*". Hofstadter, Douglas R. op. cit., pp.49-50.

283 M. Heidegger, op. cit, pp.135-136.

despite its complexity, it does not fall into 'baroqueism' or unnecessary effects. The melodic lines are perfectly recognizable, the predominance of the rhythmic structure and the unmistakable presence of the King's theme in each of the variations, acting in the manner of a structuring axis or 'master beam', gives the whole a sense of undeniable compositional unity. According to Nietzsche, the antithesis to this predominance of the rhythmic structure within a regime of unity would be the Wagnerian "endless melody":

*"The 'endless melody' - wants to break up all evenness of tempo and force and sometimes even to mock it; and it is abundantly inventive in what, to the ear of **earlier times**, sounds like rhythmic paradoxes and blasphemies. Imitating, mastering a taste like this would involve music in the greatest danger conceivable - the complete degeneration of the feeling for rhythm, chaos in place of rhythm (...) uninfluenced and uncontrolled by any rule of plastic art, and wants nothing other than effects . . . Espressivo at any price and music in the service of, enslaved to, gesture - that is the end . . .".*²⁸⁴

On the contrary, Bach's compositional strategy achieves a form of "*consensus in varietate*". The composition exhibits the 'complex simplicity' of a tree, which from the trunk unfolds in the variations of the *chiaroscuro* of its foliage, or with the clarity of the trail of a ship in quiet waters, which multiplies into infinitesimal folds and vortices at different scales. But these are derived images, like echoes that may emerge in the post-listening experience. *For the work itself does not imitate anything*. It does not operate by mimesis, it does not exemplify, it does not 'tell stories' or paint landscapes. The 'drama', understood as "*a composition presenting in dialogue a course of human action, the description of a story converted into the action of a play*"²⁸⁵ is completely absent. The composition only refers to itself. And in this absence of figurative content, in this

284 NCW, "Wagner as danger" § 1. Emphasis mine.

285 Source: <<https://www.etymonline.com/word/drama>>. Accessed 03.09.2021.

austere abstraction devoid of external representations, we recognize the master's willingness to give form to the sound-matter through a display of shaping-power, of pure formative force aimed at a single objective: *its own self-representation*. Making an architectural analogy, this evokes Le Corbusier's analysis of the Parthenon in "*Vers une Architecture*": "*We are in the inexorable realm of the mechanical. There are no symbols attached to these forms: they provoke definite sensations, there is no need of a key to understand them*",²⁸⁶ "*there is nothing more than pure forms in precise relationships.*"²⁸⁷ Just like the Parthenon, the Musical Offering constitutes a formal system which is physiologically perceived as consistent in its self-referentiality, "somatic" and "a-teleological". And it appears with the elegance of a gesture that is by no means forced or tyrannical. There is no expressive *pathos*, no sentimental tropes, no rhetoric, in a Wagnerian sense. *Only the calm of what is imposed in form and presence, by its own internal consistency*. It is then, essentially, a display of creative power, but not 'vulgar' or obvious. The composer's hand is retained in the will to measure, to modulate the sound, which flows in convergent and divergent patterns, unfolding the King's theme up to the limit of its internal consistency as a figure, and then returning to it in consequent folds. All this refers us again to the idea of that "abundance retained in simplicity", exempt from struggle, that balance between freedom and law that is the essence of the Grand Style - expressed not as the 'sound of the stone', *but as the sound itself*. Through his magnificent "Musical Offering", Bach makes Apollo the interpreter of Dionysos.

286 Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*. NY: Dover Publications, 1986, p.211.

287 *Ibid.*, p.220.

4.2 Giorgio de Chirico: Metaphysics of immanence, in Grand Style

"(...) I do not see anything dark in the word 'metaphysics'; it is the same tranquility and senseless beauty of matter that appears to me to be 'metaphysical', and all the more metaphysical to me those objects which for clarity of color and exactness of measures are at the antipodes of any confusion and nebulosity." ²⁸⁸

The interpretation given by de Chirico for the word "metaphysics" tends to contradict our common understanding of this concept. It even seems paradoxical. Why should "clarity of color" and "exactness of measures" be attributes of something labeled as "metaphysical"? Isn't it quite the opposite? Following the original Greek meaning of the concept, metaphysics refers to a state beyond physical reality, consequently, it is usually associated with notions like illusion, the unreal, and by extension, "confusion" and "nebulosity". But the painter himself, who chose the concept as the distinctive signature of his art, is offering here an *opposite* interpretation. In what follows, we will attempt to shed some light on his particular standpoint on the subject, and the way in which it was reflected through his artistic production. A standpoint that, interestingly enough, was directly influenced by his readings on Nietzsche, the 'destroyer of metaphysics'... a 'double paradox', then, which must be clarified. ²⁸⁹

Born in 1888, Giorgio de Chirico constitutes a particular case within the context of the Avantgardes of the early 20th century. A privileged actor and witness of a time of radical paradigmatic changes, who managed to open an individual, solitary path, in the vortex

288 de Chirico, Giorgio. "We Metaphysicians". In: *"Cronache d'attualità"*, Rome, February 15, 1919; reprinted in *Giorgio de Chirico, The Mechanism of Thought*, edited by M. Fagiolo Dell'Arco, Turin: Einaudi, 1985, pp. 66-71.

289 It must be pointed out that the works of Nietzsche read by de Chirico were "The Birth of Tragedy" and "Also spoke Zarathustra", both in the period of 1909-1910. This explains the emphasis given by him to specific subjects of his philosophy, inscribed within the early theoretical framework of the "metaphysics of the artist".

of such complex historical threshold. Certainly, he is conscious of the strong demands of the *Zeitgeist*: *“What is needed above all is to rid art of all that has been its familiar content until now; all subject, all idea, all thought, all symbol must be put aside”*.²⁹⁰ But his response to this common call of his generation does not follow the radical path opened by the language of cubist abstraction, the technical innovations sought by the French impressionists, nor the nihilistic dissolution into nothingness proposed by the Dadaists, all of which he explicitly rejects. Referring to the art prior to 19th and 20th centuries, he comments: *“As for ourselves, we feel a greater affinity with this art; our spirit relates to it more readily; it identifies better with these works than with Freudian introspections, descends into the unconscious, imitations of prehistoric, Byzantine or Negro art that they want to pose as modern art.”*²⁹¹ His is a *classical* spirit, confronted with the demands of a new time, but at the same time keeping faithful to the continuity of the great Western pictorial tradition by means of figuration, with a certain conservative *Stimmung*. A double-faced Janus, then, looking simultaneously into the past and into the future, from the solitary tower of his own soul. But in this vantage-point, he is not alone. He has a companion: Nietzsche. *“(…) during a trip I made to Rome in October, after reading the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, I became aware that there is a host of strange and unknown solitary things which can be translated into painting. I meditated a long time. Then I began to have my first revelations.”*²⁹²

290 De Chirico, Giorgio. “Éluard-Picasso Manuscripts (1911-1915)”. In: *Metaphysical Art, The de Chirico Journals – Fondazione Giorgio e Isa De Chirico*, n.17/18. Imola: Maretti Editore, 2018, p.44.

291 De Chirico, Giorgio. “E.G Benito. On the subject of painting” In: op. cit, p.78.

292 Ibid., p.43.



Fig.14. Giorgio de Chirico. *The enigma of the arrival and the afternoon* (1912).

These “*revelations*” are well known to us. Desolate urban landscapes, wandering figures at dusk, faceless mannequins, lonely statues of unknown gods, and wall-clocks showing the time of eternity. Beyond their pretended symbolic or ‘subconscious-Freudian’ content²⁹³, all these are basically ‘things’ that we can easily comprehend and recognize as individual objects. They remain in the domain of rational intelligibility. What appears to be *radically new* is the way in which they are settled-up, arranged as enigmatic scenes trespassed by an atmosphere of melancholy and loneliness. *Emptiness*, in the end. They configure a system of signs devoid of content, freed from inscriptions and pre-existing meanings. “*To live in the world as if in an immense museum of strangeness, full of curious multi-colored toys which changed their appearance; which, like little children, we sometimes break to see how they are made*

293 The “*reductio ad Freud*”, a common theoretical device used by art critics and theorists with latent psychoanalytical tendencies, may be useful in the case of Surrealism (particularly with Max Ernst, Magritte, Dali, etc). But it is absolutely misplaced in the case of de Chirico, who explicitly denied any relationship with such regressive-reductive forms of analysis.

*on the inside, and disappointed realize they are empty.”*²⁹⁴ In the allegory of the child, we recognize the presence of Nietzsche himself, and his main task: the revaluation of all values, and the un-masking of truth and morals as *“hollow idols”*²⁹⁵, narrative constructs attached to reality, which in the end constitute a veil that impede us to confront and assume its essential *meaninglessness*. Among them, God, as the ‘supreme idol’. When the world is stripped away from these artificial constructs, it is un-veiled as pure phenomena, redeemed as appearance. *“(…) to see everything, even man, in its quality of ‘thing’. This is the Nietzschean method. Applied to painting, it might produce extraordinary results. This is what I try to demonstrate in my pictures.”*²⁹⁶

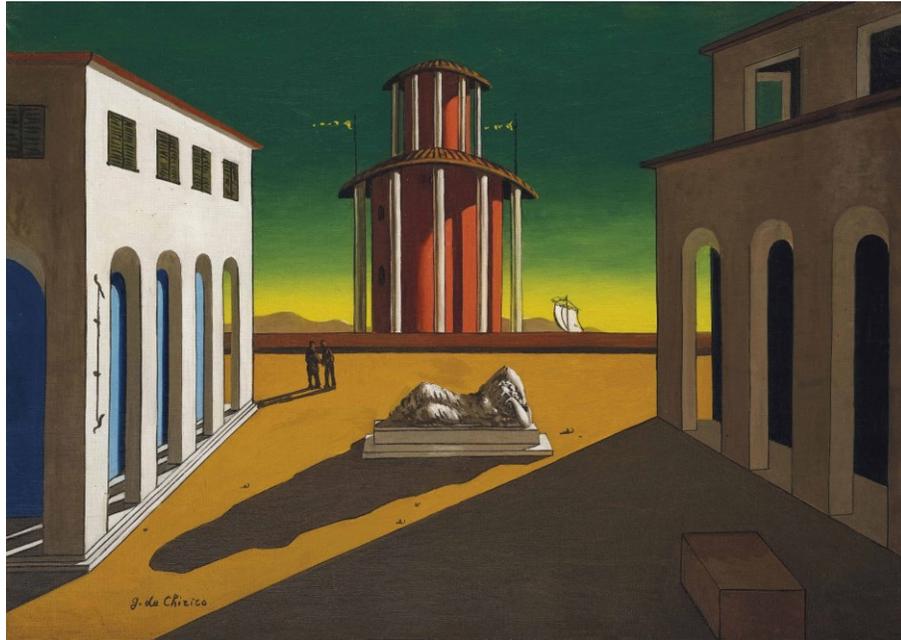


Fig.15. Giorgio de Chirico, *Piazza d'Italia* (1913).

294 Ibid., p.43.

295 TI, Preface. Cf. EH, “Twilight of the Idols” § 1.

296 De Chirico, Giorgio. “Paulhan Manuscripts”. In: op. cit., p.53.

At this point, it is possible to better understand the particular interpretation given by de Chirico to the notion of metaphysics. Just like in Nietzsche, *his is not a metaphysics of transcendence, but of immanence*. Translated into the language of painting, it consequently demands to be retained in the ambit of figuration, avoiding the path followed by Mondrian for example, in which the search of the absolute and universal by means of radical abstraction is basically a form of ‘metaphysical transcendence’, with Platonic undertones. This is the path of an ascetic renunciation, proper of saints and hermits. On the contrary, with de Chirico (a more ‘sensual’ man, *from the south*), *we remain on earth*, but it is an earth transfigured by the disclosure of its essential lack of teleological purpose - which is one of the main teachings of Zarathustra. Certainly, seen in this way for the first time, it appears as an immense “*museum of strangeness*”, *un-heimlich* to our eyes, tamed by the inherited tendency to seek causes, reasons and transcendental justifications in everything. But, in a way, *this museum of strangeness is the real world*, devoid of purpose, a vast theater of lights and shadows, life and death, of fleeting appearances and ephemeral epiphanies of beauty. Pure *presence*, then. In this sense, de Chirico’s strategy can be understood as a form of phenomenological reduction (going back to “things themselves”-Husserl-), expressed by pictorial means, which basically operates by de-contextualization (indirectly related to the modern strategy of the *collage*). In his scenographic depictions, a tower is ‘more tower’, a shadow is ‘more shadow’, an arcade is ‘more arcade’, underlined in their naked, singular presence. Their silent and mute character, which does not make any reference to specific historical styles, reinforces their pristine nakedness. And here, we recognize the echo of Nietzsche’s words, once again: “*The stone is more stone than before*”²⁹⁷, without the magic veil of transcendental meanings and narrative inscriptions.

297 “The stone is more stone than before. *In general, we no longer understand architecture, at least by far not in the way we understand music. We have outgrown the symbolism of lines and figures, as we have grown unaccustomed to the tonal effects of rhetoric (...)* Originally everything about a Greek or Christian building meant something, and in reference to a higher order of things. This atmosphere of inexhaustible meaningfulness hung about the building like a magic veil. Beauty entered the system only secondarily, impairing the basic feeling of uncanny sublimity, of sanctification by magic or the gods’ nearness. At the most, beauty tempered the dread —but this dread was the prerequisite everywhere. What does the beauty of a building mean to us now? The same as the beautiful face of a mindless woman: something masklike.” HAH § IV, 218.

Clearly, this is a harsh, 'cold' artistic path to knowledge. Basically, de Chirico invites us to confront our essential state of existential solitude. Consequently, his work does not convey any promise of redemption, or the naive-messianic optimism so characteristic of other trends of the Avantgardes of his time. We might speak of a form of 'tragic pessimism', in the purest Nietzschean sense. And the calm, melancholic atmosphere that characterizes his compositions is the natural consequence of such a standpoint. It is the melancholy of an existential *voyeur*, who contemplates a world devoid of meaning with a mixture of curiosity and strangeness, nuanced by some touches of admiration: "There are many more enigmas in the shadow of a man walking under the sun than in all past, present, and future religions".²⁹⁸ But, in congruence with our Nietzschean perspective, we need to go *deeper*. Behind (rather: *in front, through* and *within*) the silent façades, the imposing towers, and the faceless mannequins, we can recognize the presence of a certain dichotomy that, in a way, constitutes an underlying subject for the artist: *Being* and *Time*.

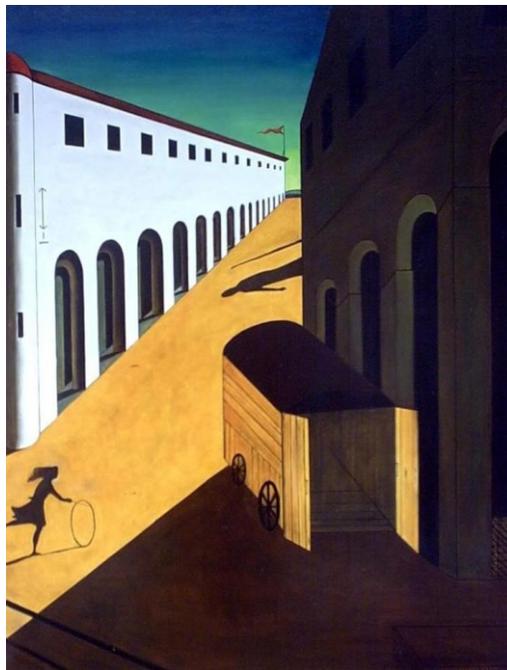


Fig.16. Giorgio de Chirico. *Mystery and melancholy of a street* (1914).

298 De Chirico, Giorgio. "Éluard-Picasso Manuscripts (1911-1915)". In: op. cit., p.40.

This dichotomy appears as a common denominator which, with subtle eyes, can be recognized in most of his paintings (fig.14-18). It is expressed as a delicate *contrapunctus*²⁹⁹ between the a-temporal stillness of the silent architectures that configure his urban landscapes, and the presence of certain signs of movement: a waving flag in the top of a tower, an emerging shadow at dusk, a clock, the steam of a locomotive...and also, sometimes, silent wanderers through empty streets or solitary arcades. The preference for the light of dawns and sunsets, those moments of the day in which the flux of time becomes more patent as a material phenomenon, speaks of the same intentionality. All of them, *indexes* of time, of transformation, underlined in their ephemeral transience by their contraposition with the solid and fixed character of their architectural settings and their “*clarity of contour*”.

In this *contrapunctus*, we recognize not just a simple pictorial motif, but rather the most radical conclusion of the process of phenomenological reduction carried out by the artist. After the death of God, and without any narratives and inscriptions of meaning, only few certainties remain: the experience of *Being*, projected in *Time*, framed by the horizon of *Death*. As human beings, we are basically the ‘living threshold’ in which these dimensions converge simultaneously, incarnated as Existence (*Dasein*). An existence that, in the absence of promises of teleological redemption, is not conceived in linear terms, but is sublimated into the circular path of the Eternal Return. In this sense, the metaphysical scenarios of de Chirico can be interpreted as ‘existential landscapes’, projections of our Self, in which all these basic constitutive aspects of *Dasein* understood from a Nietzschean perspective become *visible*.

In their function as tools for attaining such (tragic) knowledge, these existential landscapes appear in turn as pictorial representations of those ‘spaces for reflection’

²⁹⁹ Contrapunctus: „*The technique of combining two or more melodic lines in such a way that they establish a harmonic relationship while retaining their linear individuality*”. The very definition of the concept reinforces the instrumental meaning proposed in the context of our analysis. (Source: *American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company).

proposed by Nietzsche for our modern cities, coincidentally conceived by him as a form of overcoming the 'metaphysics of transcendence' proper of religious architecture: *"still, wide, extensive places for reflection; places with tall, spacious, lengthy colonnades (...) where a finer sensibility would forbid even a priest to pray aloud: buildings and places that express as a whole the sublimity of stepping aside to take thought for oneself. The time is past when the Church possessed the monopoly of reflection; when the vita contemplativa primarily had to be a vita religiosa; and yet that is the idea expressed in everything the Church has built. I do not know how we could ever content ourselves with its buildings, even stripped of their ecclesiastical function; they speak far too emotive and too constrained a language, as the houses of God and as the showplaces of intercourse with another world, for us as godless people to think our thoughts in them. We want to have ourselves translated into stones and plants; we want to have ourselves to stroll in, when we take a turn in those porticoes and gardens"*

300



Fig.17. Giorgio de Chirico. *The enigma of the hour* (1911).

300 GS § 280. A specific analysis of this aphorism and its relationship with the concept of *presence* can be found in pp.107-111 of the present investigation.

A painter-architect then, projecting Nietzschean ‘spaces for reflection’ in canvas, for a godless era. But what about Grand Style? The fact of being a ‘Nietzschean artist’ does not necessarily imply a proper understanding of this particular aspect of his aesthetic philosophy, as several examples may prove (Van de Velde, Behrens, among other representatives of the early Avantgardes who were directly influenced by his works)³⁰¹. In the case of de Chirico, there is no available documentation that may confirm his knowledge on this specific subject. But, following our precedent analysis, we can infer that he may perfectly have been able to develop an *intuitive* understanding of the concept, arriving at its basic premises by means of his refined artistic sensibility.



Fig.18. Giorgio de Chirico. *Nostalgia of the infinite* (1911-13).

³⁰¹ For the particular case of Behrens, see section 4.4 of the present chapter.

Our interpretation of de Chirico as a painter in Grand Style is primarily based on his relationship with the classic. *“To be classical, one must possess all the strong, seemingly contradictory gifts and desires-but in such a way that they go together beneath one yoke”*.³⁰² These “desires” are in his case tradition and modernity. His metaphysical paintings are a synthesis of these seemingly contradictory forces, *put together under the yoke of timelessness*. In this sense, de Chirico is not an Apollonian, reactionary “classicist”, neither a purely Dionysian avant-gardist painter. He stands above time, in the gateway where these paths come together and do not contradict each other anymore, listening to the words of Zarathustra:

*“See this gateway, dwarf!” I continued. “It has two faces. Two paths come together here; no one has yet walked them to the end. This long lane back: it lasts an eternity. And that long lane outward – that is another eternity. They contradict each other, these paths; they blatantly offend each other – and here at this gateway is where they come together. The name of the gateway is inscribed at the top: ‘Moment.’ But whoever were to walk one of them further – and ever further and ever on: do you believe, dwarf, that these paths contradict each other eternally?”*³⁰³

As a true classical painter in a Nietzschean sense, de Chirico explicitly rejects any form of romanticism, both in terms of subjects and pictorial technique. This is a second aspect of our interpretation of him as an artist following the path of Grand Style: *“The truly profound work will be drawn up by the artist from the innermost depths of his being. There is no murmur of brooks, no song of birds, no rustle of leaves. The gothic and romantic disappear, and in their stead appear measurements, lines, forms of eternity and infinity”*.³⁰⁴ These words are in turn a direct reference to his inherent classical *Stimmung*. And they reveal a comprehension of the classic that transcends the

302 eKGWB/NF-1887,9[166] (WP § 848).

303 Z III, “On the Vision and the Riddle”, § 2.

304 De Chirico, Giorgio. “Éluard-Picasso Manuscripts (1911-1915)”, in: op. cit., p.42.

boundaries of a mere stylistic-historical approach, pointing to an essential understanding of the concept, aligned with Nietzsche's own re-interpretation. The sober temperance of his pictorial style, in which the mathematical "*exactness of measures*" and the warm expressiveness of colour, light, and shadow appear as articulated in a serene alliance, can also be understood as an expression of one of the aspects of Grand Style's definition, related to the synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories - addressed from a formal-stylistic perspective. And, last but not least, the complete absence of *monstrosities* as subjects of depiction, so characteristic of some specific trends of Surrealism. He seems to know that "*The grand style arises when the beautiful triumphs over the monstrous*".³⁰⁵ Regretting such predilection for the monstrous in the Surrealists, the painter comments, in poetic form: "*No longer Apollo nor Pan / to guide the spirit / but the Minotaur / and the Serpent / and the Moon (...)*".³⁰⁶

But we can go further. De Chirico is an artist who consciously stood away from the anxiety and artistic hunger of his contemporaries, radically despising their unrestrained search of new means of expression, 'innovation at any cost' or plain nihilistic renunciation into the absurd. And, certainly, this demands *strength*. His solitary path is the path of a truly noble, aristocratic soul, facing the demands of his time, but at the same time trespassed by the *pathos of distance* and the consciousness of wider and deeper horizons, "*with the form of eternity*". And it is probably in this spiritual disposition where we can definitely find the *grandness of his style*.

305 eKGWB/WS-96.

306 De Chirico, Giorgio. "E.G Benito. On the subject of painting", in: op. cit., p.87.

4.3 Georg Kolbe's *Zarathustra*: "Der Sieg über das Ungeheure"

*"No ideal of beauty is valid, no epoch is imitated, no anatomy record is set. Form has the sole right. It is shaped into language to depict life".*³⁰⁷

Germany, 1930s. New forces loom over the horizon, foreshadowing large-scale transformations in political, social and cultural terms. And Art is not a foreign medium to these processes. With particular intensity, the *Zeitgeist* imprints its marks on the canvas of artistic creation, creating a complex pattern of multi-directional traces, nuanced with various shades of grey. The Bauhaus is already constituted as a cornerstone and reference of the Modern Movement, through the functional and pure forms of an objective rationality that seeks to consolidate itself as a model of theory and praxis with universal pretension. However, along with this vector of force, others of different nature coexist. Some openly reactionary, represented in the 'hard-line' driven by National Socialist theorists such as Alfred Rosenberg and his support of *Völkisch* art³⁰⁸, and others in a more independent position, which can be better described as a particular form of 'conservative modernism'. Through the subtle use of elements taken from the language of abstraction, but being retained simultaneously in the field of traditional figuration, the late work of the sculptor Georg Kolbe (1877-1947) can be roughly inscribed within this orientation.

Initially influenced by Rodin, Kolbe managed to develop a plastic language that although can be ascribed to German Expressionism and the currents derived from the

307 Kolbe, Georg. "Moderne Plastik: Zu einer Ausstellung in der Kunsthalle Mannheim", 1912, p.9. Quoted in: Martin, Sylvia; Wallner, Julia (eds.). *Lehmbruck-Kolbe-Mies van der Rohe: Künstliche Biotopie / Artificial Biotopes*. Munich: Hirmer, 2021, p.76.

308 The rejection of modernity in the arts was by no means a monolithic standpoint in the early stages of consolidation of the National Socialist regime, creating some tensions between those in charge of the definition of its cultural policies (particularly between Goebbels, who was in favour of assuming Expressionism as a legitimate form of German art, and Rosenberg, who supported the *Völkisch* trend). See Barron, Stephanie. "Modern Art and Politics in Prewar Germany" in: Barron (ed.), *Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1991, pp. 9-23.

Berliner Secession, had its own distinctive features that gave it a particular character. His was the paradox of being an expressionist with a strong classical imprint. But there was something else: Kolbe read Nietzsche and wanted his work to be a faithful aesthetic expression of his philosophical legacy. Given the available documentary sources, it is not possible to determine at what extent he was aware of the specific aspects of Nietzschean aesthetics, namely the notion of Grand Style, although at the time the “Will to Power” was available in various editions.³⁰⁹ A fragment from a postcard sent to a friend, dated 1927, is revealing: “*Dionysos ist eben der Andere. Er ist das 'Sein'. Zarathustra ist das 'Wollen', der Wille zur Macht. So ist mein Empfinden, mein Erlösen!*”.³¹⁰ The terminology used here allows us to infer that his involvement with Nietzsche was above the average, and that it was not restricted just to the early period of the “Birth of Tragedy” and its “metaphysics of the artist”, but that it also included the works of his last period of philosophical production, after 1883.



Fig.19. Georg Kolbe, *Tänzerin* (1912).

309 Besides the original editions from 1901 and 1906, it is noteworthy the *Taschenausgabe* Edition, vol. 78, Leipzig: Kroner, 1930, with a *Nachwort* by Alfred Bäumler.

310 Quoted in Daniels, Corinna. “*Georg Kolbe, ein Leben wie Zarathustra*”. Article written on the occasion of the exhibition “*Zarathustra und Dionysos – Georg Kolbe zu Nietzsche*”, held at GK Museum, Berlin, 27. August - 29. Oktober 2000. Available at: <<https://www.welt.de/print-welt/article530234/Georg-Kolbe-Ein-Leben-wie-Zarathustra.html>>. Accessed 05.10.19.

By the mid-1920s, Kolbe had already gained reputation as one of the most successful sculptors in Germany. His “Tänzerin” (1912, fig.19) was widely acclaimed because of its naturalness and gracile expression. But his fame would be consolidated through his collaboration with Mies van der Rohe for the Barcelona Pavilion, in 1929. His sculpture “Morgen” (1925, fig.20), originally conceived for the Ceciliengärten in Berlin Schöneberg, constituted a well-balanced *contrapunctus* to the strict geometric spatial layout. The result: “*best complementation – i.e mutual enrichment.*”³¹¹ “Morgen” marked the transition to his late phase of artistic production, in which he begins to develop a more content, sober and tempered style. This was congruent with his reflections about the ideal relationship between sculpture and architecture: “*I knew that I had to pursue more the idea of the spatial, that I had to “build” my sculptures more. (...) I have come closer to the essence of the sculptural; I can give more expression to the form itself. My sculptures have become more architectural.*”³¹²

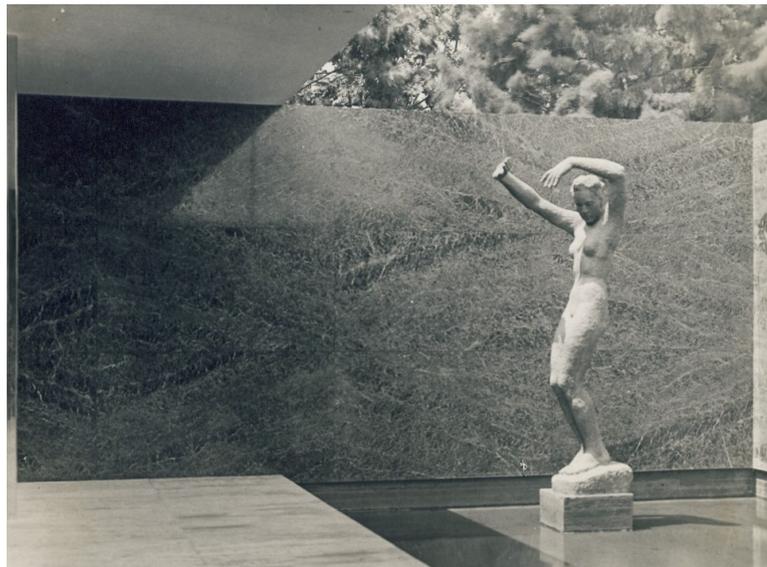


Fig.20. Georg Kolbe, *Morgen* (1925), as exhibited in Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona Pavilion (1929).

311 Kolbe, Georg. “Neues Bauen gegen Plastik?”, in: *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* n°8, 1932. Quoted in: Martin, Sylvia; Wallner, Julia (eds.), op. cit, p.80.

312 Kolbe, Georg. “Begleitwort”, in: *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 53, 1924, pp.195-202. Quoted in: Martin, Sylvia; Wallner, Julia (eds.), op. cit, p.80.

These late sculptures appear to be 'built' *from within*, in the same spatial sense of Mies's pavilion. The external form is a result of the internal dynamics of constructive-formative forces. Their gestures become 'internalized' and more serene, in the manner of a force that does not manifest externally as dynamic movement, but is rather contained, as pure potential energy. In turn, the texture of their surfaces becomes rough and unpolished, leaving behind the soft, "glazed idealism" of his earlier sculptures. Raw matter and will to form reach a state of equilibrium, under the yoke of the 'clarity of contours'. In terms of their expression, these late works exhibit a complete absence of theatrical-narrative gestures. No 'pathos' nor 'drama', in a Wagnerian sense. And this is what differentiates them from the pompous and epic style of sculptors like Josef Thorak and Arno Breker - those favoured by the National Socialists. Kolbe still receives commissions, although keeping a certain distance and independence from the new powerholders in terms of his own a-political standpoint and the orientation of his artistic praxis. A distance that would be ratified in a specific event: in 1940, his proposal of a Zarathustra statue for the projected Nietzsche monument in Weimar was rejected by the Führer himself.³¹³ Was it not enough 'heroic-epic', thus not fulfilling the propagandistic goals of the regime?

From a wide historical perspective, the exercise of power and authority has always been indissolubly related to the instrumental need for *visibility*. Symbolic representation is an irreducible principle for the instauration of any effective form of political power, mostly in the case of totalitarian regimes. National Socialism, as a strict modern phenomenon, appears in this sense as a particularly interesting case of study: the 'total mobilization' implicit in its programmatic goals found in the modern technologies of mass-media and communication a fertile soil for this all-encompassing

313 Ursul Berger, former director of Georg Kolbe Museum in Berlin, has provided consistent research on the particular topic of the sculptor's standpoint during NS regime. With wide documentary evidence, she manages to prove the independency of Kolbe and thus debunks any hints of ideological and/or stylistic alignment. See Berger, Ursul. "Georg Kolbe in der NS-Zeit. Tatsachen und Interpretationen". Available at: <<http://www.georg-kolbe-museum.de/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Georg-Kolbe-in-der-NS-Zeit.pdf>>. Accessed 27.09.2019. I must thank Frau Berger for the valuable documentary information she personally gave me on this topic.

will of self-affirmation through visible forms of symbolic representation, in multiple scales. And within this scheme of things, art played naturally a main role, as an efficient medium for the consolidation of the particular National Socialist *Weltanschauung* within the cultural domain. Consequently, In the work of Thorak and Breker, the form operates primarily as a subordinated vehicle for an external meaning of ideological order. Despite their undeniable technical mastery, their sculptures are ‘pamphlets made of marble’, full of ‘inscriptions’: the depiction of an idealized form of racial purity, the topics (*Kameradschaft*, family, soldiers, victory, etc.), all trespassed by an explicit teleological *pathos* translated in formal terms as ‘forwardness’ (the gaze projected into a horizon of realization, into *future*, within an overall reactive attitude) (fig.21,22).



Fig.21. Arno Breker, *Der Rächer* (1942).

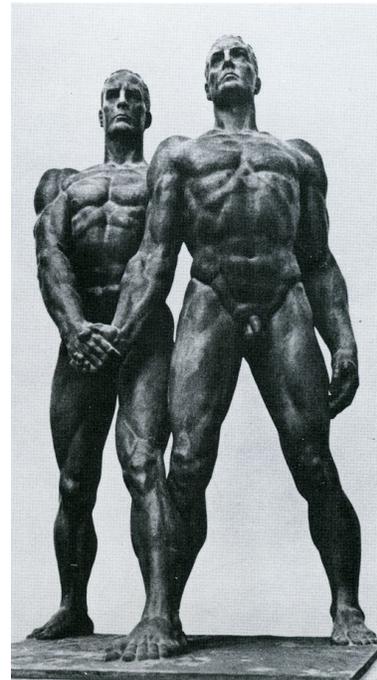


Fig.22. Josef Thorak, *Kameradschaft* (1937).

Through their explicit narrative-communicational intentionality, these works become disproportionate, ‘titanic’ both in scale and in gesture. Such titanism corresponds essentially to a form of *hubris*, of unrestrained power without measure, reaching the sphere of what Nietzsche himself named “*Das Ungeheure*” - as opposed to beauty, and by extension, to Grand Style. “*Der grosse Stil entsteht, wenn das Schöne den Sieg über*

das Ungeheure davonträgt".³¹⁴ Breker and Thorak's prideful 'titanism of the monstrous' is far from the Olympic, serene and measured style of Kolbe (despite multiple attempts to understand his late work as a form of alignment with Nazi aesthetics).³¹⁵ His "Frauenstatue III" (1933) is a clear example of this distinction (fig.23).

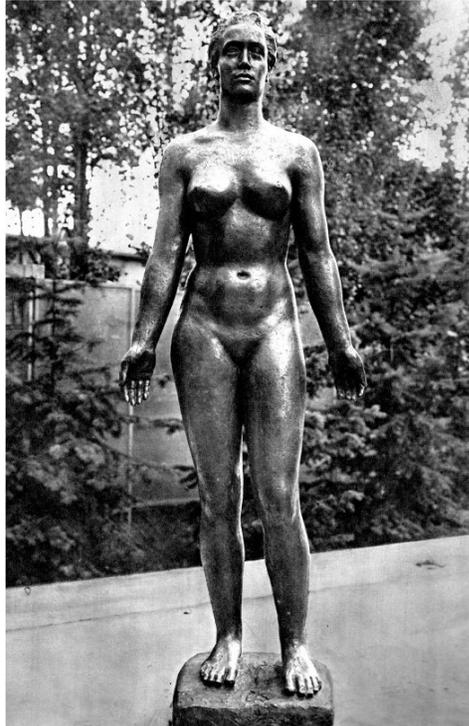


Fig.23. Georg Kolbe, *Frauenstatue III* (1933).

Evidently, the range of possible expressive forms of the body and its modes of representation tends to be infinite. From the containment of silent grief or sorrow, to the catharsis of unrestrained joy, pain, or pleasure, the palette of human affections is rather broad. Therefore, for any sculptor who operates in the field of figuration, the choice of a specific posture or gesture to be materialized always implies a challenge, a calculation, a careful decision-making. This is the first aspect to highlight in this sculpture. Very subtly, Kolbe chooses a pose in which the body appears as 'presenting itself' in a sort of pristine integrity. This self-presentation translates into a certain

314 eKGWB/WS-96.

315 See Berger, Ursul. op. cit.

condition of frontality, almost symmetrical, but does not fall into the hieratic stiffness characteristic of symbolic statuary, since slight hints of movement reveal the whole as trespassed by a vital principle, which can be appreciated through subtle intentional asymmetries. It could be said that it is almost an 'animated sign': the abstraction that tends to the type, to the general case, acquires singularity and concretion through the volitional gesture. And for an artist who works in the field of figuration, knowing how to retain him or herself on that threshold of balance is certainly a delicate exercise.

The hands underline this condition. They appear as disposed in a 'liminal state' that does not fully correspond to a mere receptive gesture (the open hand as a sign of peace or greeting), nor to the retention in containment (the clenched fist), not least at the extremes of the mere lax abandonment, *rigor mortis*, or the tense gestures characteristic of cathartic or dissolutive states. This 'liminal state' is the form of pure presence, of the self-affirmation of what is sustained in itself, on the verge of the intentional gesture, without becoming a vehicle of overflowing emotions or abandoning itself to the neutrality of the merely 'bodily'. Its antithesis could be the "Ecstasy of Saint Therese" by Bernini (fig.24).



Fig.24. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *The ecstasy of Saint Therese* (1647-1651) (detail).

Her body is represented as a vehicle of an external force, submitted by an eccentric vector to itself, dislocated and pathetic in its theatrical over-expressiveness. Here there

is no distance or option, only pure closeness in the full being-pierced and transfigured by the absence of will, and therefore, of freedom. Coincidentally, “Berninismus” was a self-coined term by Nietzsche, used to describe Wagner’s decadent style and its “nervous sensuality” as the opposite to his conception of the Grand Style. “(...) *décadence und Berninismus im Stil W.’s. (...) seine nervöse Sinnlichkeit.*”³¹⁶

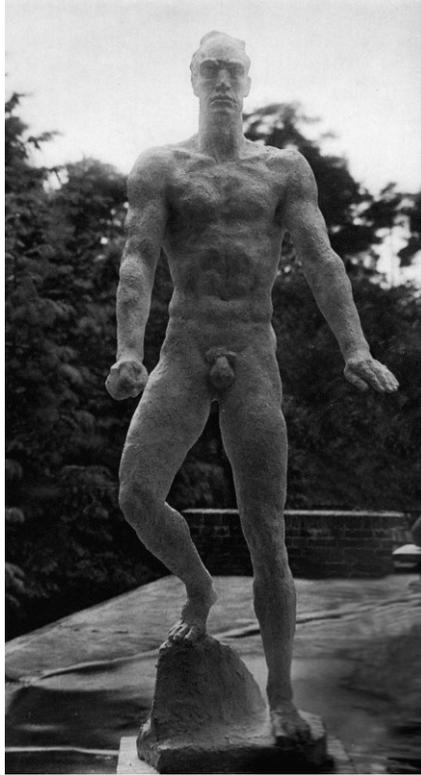


Fig.25. Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustra* (plaster model) (1937).

For Kolbe, his “Zarathustra” (1937, fig.25) was the possibility of achieving a synthesis between his Nietzschean background and his artistic work. How should it be represented? Certainly, it must have constituted a major challenge. But he knew that “*Zarathustra ist das ‘Wollen’, der Wille zur Macht.*” So, the challenge was, essentially, not the representation of a character as an ‘idol’, but rather *how to bring this Will to*

316. eKGWB/BVN-1888,1184 — Brief an Ferdinand Avenarius: 10/12/1888.

Power into form. Just as in the case of his “Frauenstatue”, the sculpture appears as wrapped in the serene aura of pure presence, without the pathos of a ‘mission’ in messianic terms. In this sense, it is truly ‘naked’, not just in a literal way. “*Oh my soul, I washed the petty bashfulness and the nook-virtue from you and persuaded you to stand naked before the eyes of the sun*”, says Zarathustra.³¹⁷ The figure is therefore somatic and a-teleological. It does not represent something external to its own self. The abundance of force, as Dionysian will-of-becoming is restrained in the simplicity of a ‘fixed’ gesture, as Apollonian will-of-being. “*To impose upon becoming the character of being-that is the supreme will to power*”.³¹⁸ A synthesis of opposites made visible in the body’s posture, which is retained in a paradoxical threshold between stiff rigidity and dynamic movement projected towards the observer. A duality that is somehow reinforced by the disposition of its hands, which as in the case of the “Frauenstatue” also play a main role in the definition of its *Stimmung*: the right one is fisted, while the left one is open. We may read this polarity not just in formal terms, but as the expression of a content of deeper significance: *the fist is ‘power’, while the open hand is ‘will’*. A metaphysical *contraposto* expressed in form, in which the echo of a final alliance between Dionysus and Apollo can also be recognized. Such alliance is the offering that Zarathustra brings us from the highest peaks, without impositions or violence, just in the supreme calmness of that which rests on itself, as in the eye of the storm. And so, this silent figure made of plaster, which looks straight ahead, without masks or artifices, now seems to come alive, and softly whisper: “*Calm is my soul, and clear, like the mountains in the morning*.”³¹⁹ Through his ‘classical expressionism’, and in a historical moment of particular tension, Kolbe manages to give form to one of the most decisive aspects of what Nietzsche called “Grand Style” - in the figure of Zarathustra himself.

³¹⁷ Z § 3 – *The great longing*.

³¹⁸ eKGWB/NF-1886,7[54] (WP § 617).

³¹⁹ Z § 5.

4.4 “Fulfil the law to gain freedom”: Mies van der Rohe’s *Neue Nationalgalerie*

*“A biologist might tell you that orcas are, like any other creature, the product of DNA mutation coupled with natural selection, as if that explained everything about the evocative thing right there in front of our eyes. In that world view, the orca is simultaneously reduced to an outcome of interactions of atomic units and of enormous ecological systems. In a theoretical and popular world obsessed with networks, flows and processes, it seems like the orca must also be a network or a flow or a process (...) But this denies the specificity and discreteness of the orca: the depth of its slick black rubbery skin, the alien figuration of its white patches, its toy-like scalelessness. Rather than undermining the orca by attempting to justify or generalize it, why not instead embrace its specificity as an object, with all of its mysterious, irreducible character and inclinations?”*³²⁰

In the vein of a biologist, an architectural theorist might tell us very confidently that a building, just like an orca, is the product of certain material conditions of production (its “DNA”), coupled with a determined historical configuration of forces of political, social and cultural order (its “ecosystem”). Given the status of Mies van der Rohe’s *Neue Nationalgalerie*, as an iconic product of the late Modern Movement, such historical-materialistic approach would probably end up as a dense and extensive cartography of documental references, flavoured with endless quotations, basically putting in value the conditions of production and the ‘narratives’ that surround the conception of the architectural work. But this strategy, although valid in methodological terms, would probably impede us to *“embrace its specificity as an object, with all of its mysterious, irreducible character and inclinations”*. In congruence with the onto-phenomenological approach displayed in the context of this investigation, the latter will be the path to follow in this remarkable case of study. A path that will be, in turn, illuminated by the semantic field of meaning defined in our interpretation of Nietzsche’s notion of Grand Style.

³²⁰ Taken from Wiscombe, Tom. “Discreteness, or towards a Flat Ontology of Architecture”, in: *A Journal of Architecture*, Issue 3, Spring 2014.

*“Even though no direct references to Nietzsche can be found in Mies’s writing, his shadowy influence is nevertheless discernible in the background”*³²¹ states Fritz Neumeyer in his book *“The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the building art”*. Such influence appears to be exerted mainly through his acquaintance with the philosopher of religion Romano Guardini, who devoted himself to develop a comprehension of Nietzsche’s philosophy as a renewed form of ‘religious attitude’ towards the world, a thought that would become central to Mies after 1928.³²² But, already in the early stages of his career, this “shadowy influence” had begun to take place by means of his working relationship with Peter Behrens, who explicitly involved himself in the task of interpreting the word of Zarathustra through his architectural practice. Behrens’s approach on the subject, just as that of most of the architects and artists influenced by Nietzsche in the early stages of the 20th century, exhibits a form of comprehension of his aesthetic philosophy that can be defined as a free and unbounded ‘will to form’. This is a lyrical, poetic approach, in which the metaphor of the *Übermensch* is translated spatially in an overall formalistic sense: the will of “ascending to the heights” is interpreted as a form of monumentality in which the material means are entirely subordinated to the artistic will. This unsolved dichotomy between the logic of construction and the artistic goals, in which the former appears as an ancillary medium for the latter, constitutes the main critic that the pupil Mies would direct against his former master.³²³ For Mies, this emphasis on *Kunst*, without putting in value the importance of *Bau*, led Behrens to follow the path of “formal cheating”. For the purist and ascetic Mies, the logic of construction and the inherent vocation of materials should be main aspects to be considered in any process of architectural design. This

321 Neumeyer, Fritz. *The artless word: Mies van der Rohe on the building art*. Cambridge: Mass. MIT Press, 1991, p. 60. For the specific relationship between Mies and Nietzsche’s philosophy, see Chapters II §3, and Chapter III.

322 Neumeyer, Fritz. op. cit., p.60.

323 “«Will», as a category of the subjective, remained suspicious to Mies, who searched for the «intrinsic» and the objective. In his first manifesto Mies laconically countered van Doesburg, who was also influenced by Nietzsche’s «will to style», with: «Even the will to style is formalism. We have other worries»”. Neumeyer, Fritz, op. cit., p.57.

permanent search for 'truth' and 'essence', excluding any form of 'artistic license', would become consequently the distinctive character of his whole architectural practice, apparently making of him not a disciple of Nietzsche, but of Plato. And we say 'apparently', because although in strict sense this search for 'truth' by means of universal, objective laws determined by the logic of construction and the spirit of the epoch can be understood as an eminently Platonic standpoint, it would in the end lead him to develop a formal language that, paradoxically, would be more faithful to the 'naked', strict and severe character of *true* Nietzschean aesthetics – that is to say, to the notion of Grand Style. A 'Nietzschean Platonist', then? In terms of the character and expression of his mature work, and specifically in his *Neue Nationalgalerie*, such *coincidentia oppositorum* is perfectly recognizable - although Mies never described himself explicitly in such terms. But sometimes, the works speak more of the inner character and inclinations of their authors than themselves.



Fig.26. Mies van der Rohe, *Neue Nationalgalerie* (1968).

The *Neue Nationalgalerie* (1968) is a building in which the Miesian trilogy of “*simplicity of construction, clarity of tectonic means, and purity of material*”³²⁴ reaches a final ‘peak’, articulated in a clear and consistent unity (fig.26). This articulation conveys in turn a sense of perfection-as-completeness, in which nothing appears as superfluous or missing, giving the building a certain ‘fixed’ and ‘tight’ character with a low margin of tolerance in terms of its potential modifications. The complexities faced by David Chipperfield in his task of updating the building to our current eco-standards of thermal insulation, are a clear proof of this inherent status of low tolerance to any form of modification, adaptation, etc. In this sense, it exhibits the sharp and cold hardness of a diamond, sculpted ‘from and for eternity’, standing against the flow of time. So, this singular ‘orca’ made of steel and glass is anything but a dynamic “*network, a flow or a process*”: it is primarily a temple of Being, that is to say, a modern temple for Apollo, who *apparently* sits alone in an invisible throne at its very center. But what about Dionysos?

If we think that “Dionysian” means the expressive dynamism of sculptural forms, the unbounded freedom of artistic means, the theatrical virtuosity of striking visual and spatial effects, we can be sure that Apollo reigns *alone* in this silent temple. But, in congruence with what has been already exposed in this investigation, we should be able to understand that within Nietzsche’s aesthetics, the Dionysian has nothing to do with such Wagnerian affects and effects: it corresponds basically to his notion of *power*. And this power is ‘more power’ as long as it is ‘coupled’ with the sense of measure and control proper of the Apollonian will, thus excluding any form of theatrical over-representation in an expressionist sense. “*The logical and geometrical simplification is a consequence of the increase in power: vice versa, the perception of such simplification increases the sense of power*”.³²⁵ At this point, the possibility of

324 Quoted in Neumeyer, Fritz, op. cit., p.47.

325 eKGWB/NF-1888,14[117] (WP § 800).

disclosing the real nature of our 'solitary Apollo', as a 'masked Dionysos', becomes more patent. Behind the formal attributes of order, clarity, and unity that characterize the *Neue Nationalgalerie*, we read, essentially, a refined exercise of Will to Power. Following the analysis developed in Chapter III, this means basically the fourfold articulation of *monumentality, presence, tectonics, and perfection*.

The monumental character of the work could be obviously interpreted from the perspective of its historical relevance, as a fine example of a distinctive achievement of the modern *ethos* and its programmatic goals. But, following Nietzsche, this would be an interpretation of monumentality proper of antiquarians.³²⁶ In a deeper sense, congruent with our analytical strategy, it would correspond to the assignment of a value of meaning, an aura of validation attached to the building 'from outside', as label and inscription. Certainly, from an urbanistic perspective, it could also be tackled in reference to its strategic location in Potsdamer Platz, which underlines the monumental-iconic character of the intervention. But, with Kahn, we already know that monumentality "may be defined as a quality, a spiritual quality inherent in a structure which conveys the feeling of its eternity (...)".³²⁷ What is then this "inherent quality" that gives this building its monumental character? Certainly, this is not a matter of size, but rather of spatial configuration. And in this sense, its pedestal plays a fundamental role. Since antiquity, pedestals have constituted a recurring form of enhancing the presence, scale, and importance of an urban intervention, whether in the case of buildings, sculptures, or iconic landmarks. The pedestal is the primary form of expression of power and hierarchy, understood in spatial terms: the will of attaining distinction by means of configuring a raised platform which separates the ordinary from the extraordinary, the profane from the sacred, is an archetype that transcends

326 „Kampf gegen das Grosse und Seltene und gegen das Monumentale durch die Antiquare. Alles Gewesene interessant, vernünftig: lähmender Einfluss der Antiquare auf die historische Thatkraft.“ eKGWB/NF-1873,29[38].

327 Taken from Kahn, Louis: "Monumentality", originally published in Paul Zucker (ed.). *New Architecture and CityPlanning: A Symposium*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1944, pp.77-78.

the boundaries of styles, epochs and cultural contexts. In the case of Mies, the intentional use of this spatial strategy can be traced back to his first designs (as in the case of House Riehl), and particularly in the case of his Barcelona Pavilion.³²⁸

In this respect, and from a more symbolic perspective, the use of the pedestal in Mies *“conveys the belief in an ideal past rooted in the eternal”*, complemented by the lightness of the tectonic structures placed onto it, which *“announce faith in an ideal future in which all opportunities stand open”*, as stated by Neumeyer. Thus, past and future ‘merge’ in the building, creating an a-temporal state of equilibrium. Both forces, the rootedness of the pedestal and the openness of the light structures on top create in turn an ‘articulation of opposites’ which echoes the definition given by Simmel: *“Architecture is the only art that settles with authentic peace, the grand contest between the will of the spirit and the necessities of nature, in which are resolved in an exact equilibrium, the adjustment of accounts between the soul which tends to the above and the gravity which pulls towards the below.”*³²⁹

Intimately bounded with monumentality, the concept of presence appears as the second distinctive attribute of this building. Following the definition already exposed in Chapter III of this investigation, presence can be understood as a form of self-reflective spatial configuration, in which the singularity of the building is reinforced by its intentioned isolation, as an object which irradiates an aura of uniqueness and conclusiveness.³³⁰ Although the transparency of its upper section tends to integrate it with its surroundings, it is ‘retained in its own distance’, as a jewel exposed onto a

328 See Neumeyer, Fritz, op. cit., p.214.

329 Taken from Simmel, Georg. *“The Ruin”*, in: *“Two Essays.”* The Hudson Review, vol. 11, no. 3, 1958, pp. 371–385.

330 Such state of self-reflective isolation is adequate for religious buildings, as recommended by Alberti in *De re aedificatoria* VII §3-5. *“A church should not only stand on elevated ground, free on all sides, in a beautiful square, but it should also be isolated by a substructure, a high base, from the everyday life that surrounds it”* (quoted in Wittkower, Rudolf, op. cit., p.8). This constitutes an indirect reference of the ‘religious’ character that has been recognized as a distinctive feature of this ‘modern temple’.

plinth, reinforcing its own limits. “*The temple and its precinct, do not fade away into the indefinite (...)*”³³¹, affirms Heidegger in his analysis of a Greek temple, and these words appear as a pertinent statement for this building as well. ‘Fading away’ would mean an unrestrained form of merging with its context, the loss of the aforementioned state of self-reflectiveness. But we already know that presence can also be understood as the will of overcoming any form of teleological *pathos*, which in spatial terms means the avoidance of the representation of time as a ‘dynamic process’. Consequently, here there is no spatial ‘hunger’, expressed as intentioned dislocations or theatrical effects of hide-and-seek, that might demand a perceptual effort from the observer in order to mentally ‘complete’ the spatial configuration: the building is given and complete, like an open hand or a naked body, self-presented in its pristine conclusiveness. And this is also achieved by means of the clear tectonic relationships that articulate the different constructive elements that give form to the architectural work, disposed in logical relationships of cause and effect.

This ‘tectonic consistency’ constitutes the third aspect to be underlined in this case of study as an embodiment of the notion of Will to Power. It must be understood as a formative principle that governs all the constructive relationships established by the architect between the diverse elements that give form to the building, and that can be particularly recognized in the articulation between the pillars and the grid of beams that configure the suspended roof. This articulation is constituted by a joint piece which, in the manner of a modern capitel, creates an intentioned discontinuity between the pillars and the contour beam of the roof plate (fig.27).

331 Taken from Heidegger, Martin. *Basic Writings - "On the Origin of the Work of Art."* 1st Harper Perennial Modern Thought Edition., ed. David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperCollins, 2008, p. 143.

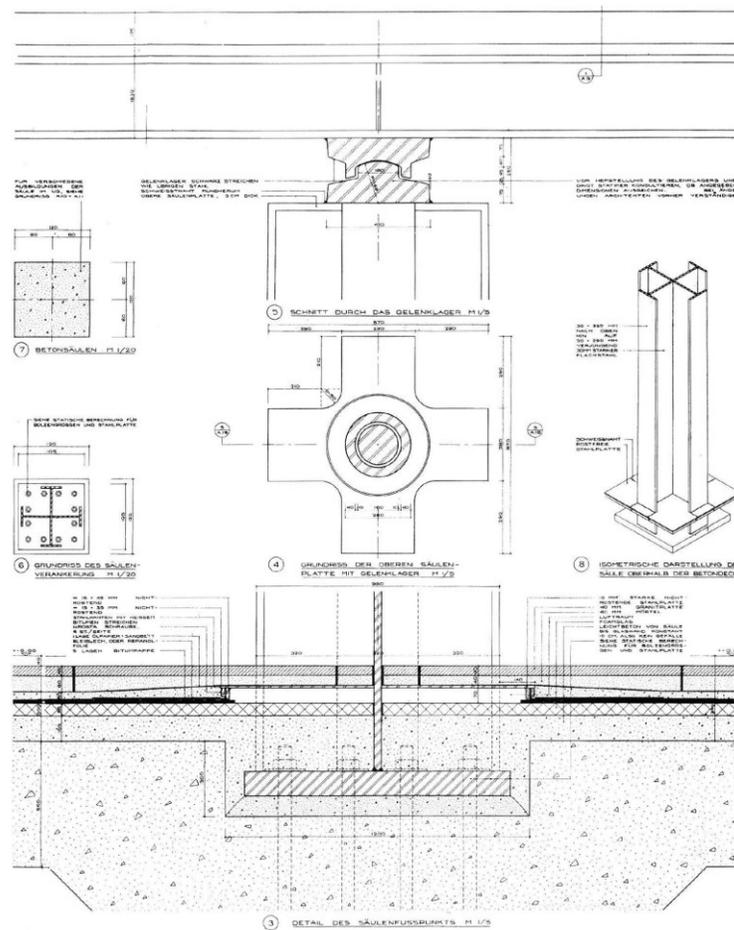


Fig.27. Mies van der Rohe, *Neue Nationalgalerie*. Original detail plans.

This joint, just like an elbow or a knee, allows to distinguish both elements in their singularity, but at the same time connecting them. It is a node of force, which underlines the distinctive structural properties of these elements, bringing into visibility the building's static dynamics as an active principle of structural configuration. Interestingly enough, the pillars have no basement: they appear to rest directly on the floor plate, just like in the Doric order. The atemporal principles of the Tectonic expression are consistently translated into the modern language of steel, without falling into any form of *imitatio*. They are brought into presence by means of a precisely calculated degree of typological abstraction. As an interesting point of comparison, we might cite the recent intervention made by David Chipperfield in

Berlin's Museuminsel: the *James Simon Galerie* (2019). This is a case of post-monumental *soft tectonics*, in which the high degree of abstraction of the relationship between the pillars and the roof nullifies the reading of 'force': this is pure diagrammatic Apollonianism (fig.28). The absence of joints leaves the façade as a sort of continuous bidimensional plane articulated just as an alternance of fills and voids, thus suppressing the logic of tectonics, in an ambivalent state of undefinition.³³²



Fig.28. David Chipperfield, *James Simon Galerie* (2019). South-West façade (detail).

In order to validate our assumption of the Neue Nationalgalerie as being a consistent 'modern' example of Grand Style, and in congruence with our model of interpretation, the attributes of monumentality, presence, and tectonics need to be brought together and completed by an overarching principle of organization, an internal law that creates an order of correspondence and interdependence between all the elements that give form to the architectonic corpus. This is *perfection*: the entelechy of power, its internal law of accomplishment. An attribute that lays at the root of the conception of the building, expressed in the use of a regular grid that governs the disposition of all its spatial and constructive elements.

332 For a further development on this case of study, see section 4.5 of the present chapter.

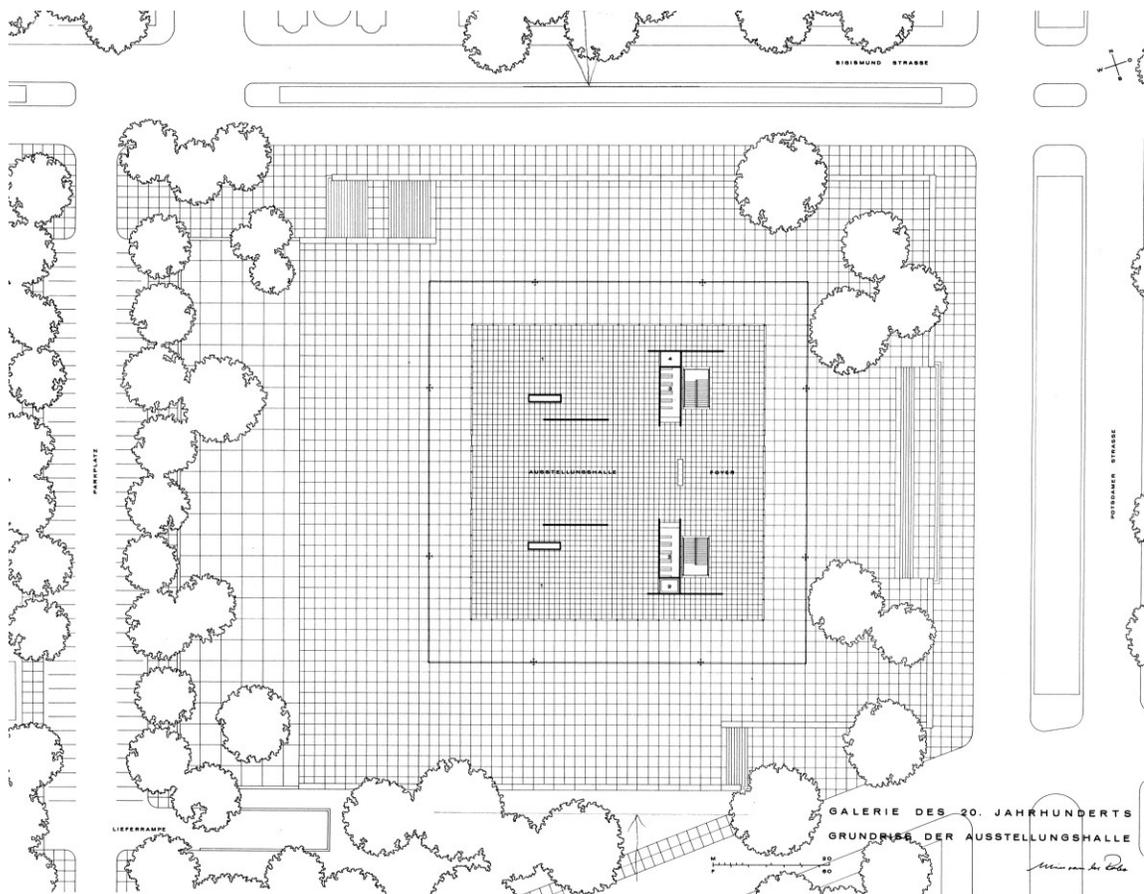


Fig.29. Mies van der Rohe, *Neue Nationalgalerie*. 1st floor plan.

For Mies, just as in the case of all his mature works, this *dispositif* acts as a road map, a cartography which does not simply describe, but rather prescribes these relationships. It is a decree, written not in words, but in lines, axes, and regular measures. In the case of this building, the distance between the decree and its material concretion is rather short: it is basically a three-dimensional spatialization of the ruling grid (fig.29). From the dimensioning and position of the floor tiles, to the location of the walls, pillars and the modulation of the beams, all speaks the language of continuity and correspondence between part and whole. Does this level of strictness lead to a state of cold, stiff rigidity? No, as long as we understand the building as a 'container of life'. We must not restrict the analysis to the object's internal laws of material configuration, but rather expand it to its performative dimension, trying to understand

how these apparently rigid precepts of design have incidence in the experience of inhabiting, from a phenomenological perspective. We can designate this experience as a form of open and flexible ‘enframing’: the building acts basically as a ‘silent frame for the canvas of life’. The bodies wander freely along the open plate, underlined in the singularity of their positions and gestures by the neutrality of the spatial configuration. The spatial frame does not intervene in the life-canvas, it just delineates and enhances its content, creating essentially a well-tempered *contrapunctus* between Being and Time, between Apollo and Dionysos. And this is what architecture, from an ontological perspective, should always be able to provide: the possibility of becoming conscious of our own temporality as human beings. The *tempo* of stone and steel, and the *tempo* of life, are not the same, and as long as this ontological difference is cautioned and respected, such consciousness can be ensured. We pass, architecture stays, self-sufficient in its ‘Olympic indifference’. And this temporal *contrapunctus* is somehow reinforced in this remarkable case of study. The building does not seek to mimic or over-engage into the dynamics proper of human existence. It gives one step back, allowing life to flourish, without any narrative prescriptions, pedagogic intentions or teleological purposes³³³, besides being a faithful expression of the spirit of its time: it is thus retained in the sphere of what Heidegger designates as *Gelassenheit* (serenity).³³⁴ *Lassen*, in this context, means to leave things appear in their distinctive fullness and essence, without force or violence. This is another way of understanding freedom, our highest possession as human beings...fulfilled in this case, by the strictest of all laws: that of Grand Style.

333 As a counterexample, an architecture with explicit narrative-pedagogic intentionality can be found in contemporary examples such as the Jewish Museum in Berlin by Daniel Libeskind.

334 The term was originally proposed by Heidegger in the context of his critical analysis of modern technology developed in the mid-50s, and the challenge that its unrestrained and forceful implementation (*Ge-stell*) poses to the limits of human freedom. See Heidegger, Martin. *Gelassenheit*. Pfullingen: Verlag Günther Neske, 1959.

4.5 David Chipperfield's *James Simon Galerie*: Post monumentality and "soft-tectonics"

Certainly, this is a rather recent case of study (2019). So, it has to its benefit the absence of a thick layer of pre-existing interpretations. There is no need to 'dig through' a hard, fossilized terrain of preestablished theoretical assumptions. The object is there, and we can access it more directly. So, why should we attempt to examine it under the cold spotlight of Nietzsche's Grand Style? We might invert the question, and say...*why not?* Maybe, precisely because of its naked, novel status, it is more receptive to a broader spectrum of critical standpoints. But there are some hints that make of our proposal not just a sort of arbitrary *excursus*, but a pertinent and theoretically justified enterprise. These hints are keywords: *monumentality...tectonics...presence...and, last but not least, power.* Before any attempt of theoretical analysis, we can intuitively recognize the unavoidable role that these concepts needed to play in the definition of the form and function of the building in its urban context, and also in regard to the strong historical inheritance it had to deal with.



Fig. 30. David Chipperfield, *James Simon Galerie*. View of the main entrance.

On a first impression, the building appears as a well-tempered and measured intervention, in a context fully charged with historical meanings and stylistic influences (fig.30). The obvious extremes of a radical contrast (*à la* Gehry³³⁵ or Libeskind), or a plain assimilation by mimesis and replication of the existing orders, are not the subject of Chipperfield. He is enough elegant for such scenographic strategies. An elegance that has been previously demonstrated by the precise interventions done by him in the same area (the rebuilding of the Neues Museum -2009-, and the Gallery building Am Kupfergraben -2007-) and in general, through all his late practice.³³⁶ But this particular case was clearly a more complex challenge. It demanded a higher level of compromise with the urban context, not just in terms of scale and function, but mostly, in terms of *expression*. What should be the 'language' to use in the James Simon Galerie, surrounded by the strong voices of Schinkel and Stüler? A priori, it should be monumental, in order to be congruent with such preexistences. How to give form to this unavoidable parameter of design? *Integrity* appears to be the primary spatial answer. The building "does not fade away into the indefinite", by fragmentation, dislocation, or atomization. It affirms itself as a clear figure, consistent and delineated in its individuality as an urban piece. A piece that appears as heightened by the use of a pediment, which solves the encounter with the street level through a monumental staircase, creating also a continuous profile towards the adjacent Spree river.

335 Gehry took his chance in the design competition for the Galerie (1994), winning the fourth place with a rather 'restless' and over-enthusiastic proposal.

336 This has certainly been a process of maturation: his original proposal for the design competition (1994) exhibits a somehow *lesser degree* of refinement. It obtained the second place.



Fig. 31. David Chipperfield, *James Simon Galerie*. View of the access staircase.

The staircase plays a central role in the expression of the whole (fig.31), reminding of old typologies (the access to the Acropolis in Athens – the *Propylaeum*), giving it a certain ‘processional’ character, which can also be found in the neighboring Alte Nationalgalerie. The whole architectural complex of the Museuminsel, as a cultural landmark, shares this particular feature. Colonnades, staircases, porticos, and statues disposed in between these ‘temples of culture’ create an architectural scenario in which the visitors appear as transfigured into the performers of a pilgrimage ritual. And the James Simon Galerie adequately inserts itself within this cinematographic score: it reinforces the notion of cultural experience as a form of ‘secular religiosity’.



Fig. 32. David Chipperfield, *James Simon Galerie*. South-West Façade.

But, although these primary goals of insertion and dialogue with its context are certainly achieved, there are some aspects related to its material configuration that somehow tend to establish a certain 'distance'. And here, the concept of tectonics plays a critical role. The high degree of abstraction used in the formal definition of the pillars and their encounter with the roof plate tends to nullify their reading as supporting elements, appearing rather as the remnants of an operation of subtraction effectuated in the façade plane (fig.32). This leaves the pillars in a sort of perceptual undefinition regarding their implicit static function, an undefinition which is reinforced by the inevitable comparison with the pre-existing pillars that conform the neighboring colonnades of Stüler. So, Chipperfield's façade is not an articulation of constructive elements joined together by addition, but rather a continuous plane of alternance between fills and voids created by subtraction. The slenderness and modulation of the 'pillars-fills' reinforce this perceptual reading. And all this means, basically, the suppression of the legibility of 'force' from the overall expression of the building. We might speak of a form of *soft-tectonics*, overly Apollonian and diagrammatic, in which the Dionysian element is rather absent. This absence is palpable also in the materiality chosen for the finishing of the surfaces, which, in the wide spectrum that goes from

the pure abstraction of 'flat whiteness' to the corporeal, tactile expressiveness of natural raw stone, clearly situates itself closer to the former. Apollo rules, then. And his domain is not limited just to the exterior appearance of the building, but also extends to its internal spatiality and material configuration. This is overly 'flat', neutral, and aseptic. After more than 30 years of 'minimalism', the use of polished concrete surfaces as a form of conveying a diffuse notion of contemporaneity is rather exhausted, becoming a sort of predictable commonplace (fig.33).

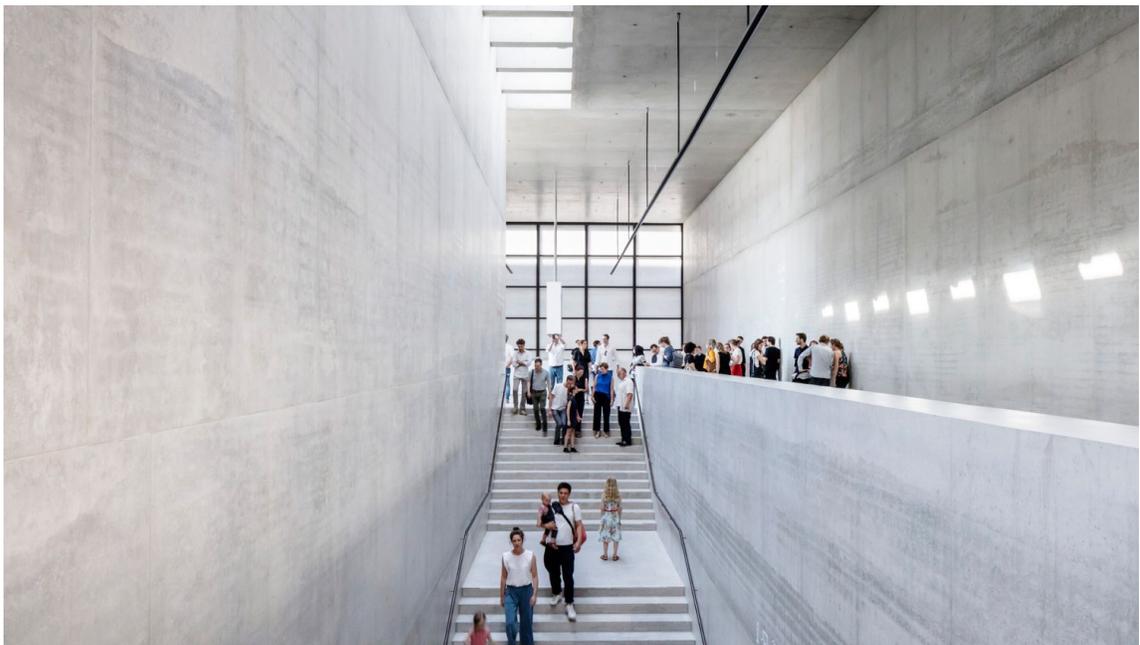


Fig. 33. David Chipperfield, *James Simon Galerie*. Interior view.

But this rule of Apollo, and the consequent 'exile' of Dionysos, appear as congruent with the current conception of what monumentality *should be*. A 'distilled' conception, which clearly avoids any reference to force, and by extension, to power, labeling it as 'problematic'. The recent polemics surrounding the case of Walter Benjamin Platz in Berlin Charlottenburg (arch. Hans Kollhoff, 2000), which apparently does not comply with these current *post-monumental* standards, are quite revealing in this sense. It is

too radical, severe, and 'strict'.³³⁷ Can the un-mediated, phenomenological experience of power be stripped away from the notion of monumentality? Isn't it a constitutive, irreducible factor of the monumental, almost in an ontological sense? From the perspective of Nietzsche's Grand Style, such stripping-away is not possible: both terms are intimately bounded together, following the premises of his 'physiological aesthetics'. But we are living in times in which narratives and inscriptions, as floating signs, seem to have preeminence over the pure and naked experience of space and its un-mediated perceptual attributes. Monumentality is today a 'narrative construct', avoiding the explicit rendering of power and hierarchy, diluted into notions of free accessibility, institutional transparency, and 'democratic openness'. *The 'pathos of distance' is replaced by the 'pathos of closeness' and the consequent dissolution of boundaries and limits.* Even so, Chipperfield's James Simon Galerie, with its sober and elegant presence, devoid of theatrical gestures, might be an approximate example of what Nietzsche's Grand Style *could mean* in the first quarter of 21st century.

337 And it also includes some written inscriptions in its floor tiles, which apparently reinforce the 'problematic' label. For further information on this topic, see the editor's text of ARCH+ n°235 (29.05.2019). Available at <<https://www.archplus.net/home/archiv/artikel/46,5052,1,0.html>>. Accessed 24.12.19.

Conclusions – on Nietzsche’s Grand Style as an aesthetic category

“(...)I throw a spear into the darkness. That is intuition. Then I must send an army into the darkness to find the spear. That is intellect.”³³⁸

This quotation by Bergman summarizes the analytical strategy that has been followed in the present investigation. With Nietzsche, relying on pure intuition as a method of analysis is certainly tempting, due to the aphoristic and non-systematic style of his writings, but it would imply to jump into the ‘dark abyss’ of baseless speculation. Conversely, a merely ‘intellectual’ approach would leave us in the predictable ‘safe zone’ of mere historical-documental research, *fossilized in the dry soil of the archive*. Therefore, the purpose has been to overcome this reductive distinction, with the aim of making of his philosophical legacy an active, creative and propositional field of knowledge production, but, at the same time, grounded in verifiable and objective facts. And this will is congruent with the subject of study. Nietzsche’s creative style is precisely based on a particular balance between intuition and rationality. His concepts are ‘spears thrown into darkness’, led primarily by his penetrant intuition, and intellect follows in the form of the multiple ‘army of interpretations’ given for the same concepts through his distinctive aphoristic-metaphorical strategy.

The documental evidence gathered in the course of this investigation allows us to locate the notion of Grand Style within the broader scope of Nietzsche’s late philosophical production (1884-1889). The main keywords that articulate his discourse at that time can be roughly organized in a four-pole diagram which, by no means exhaustive or deterministic, can serve as a conceptual map of ‘panoptic synthesis’ (fig.34):

338 Bergman, Ingmar. Quoted in “Ingmar Bergman confides in students”. Article in *NY Times* May.8, 1981, section C, page 7. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/1981/05/08/movies/ingmar-bergman-confides-in-students.html>>. Accessed 28.12.19.

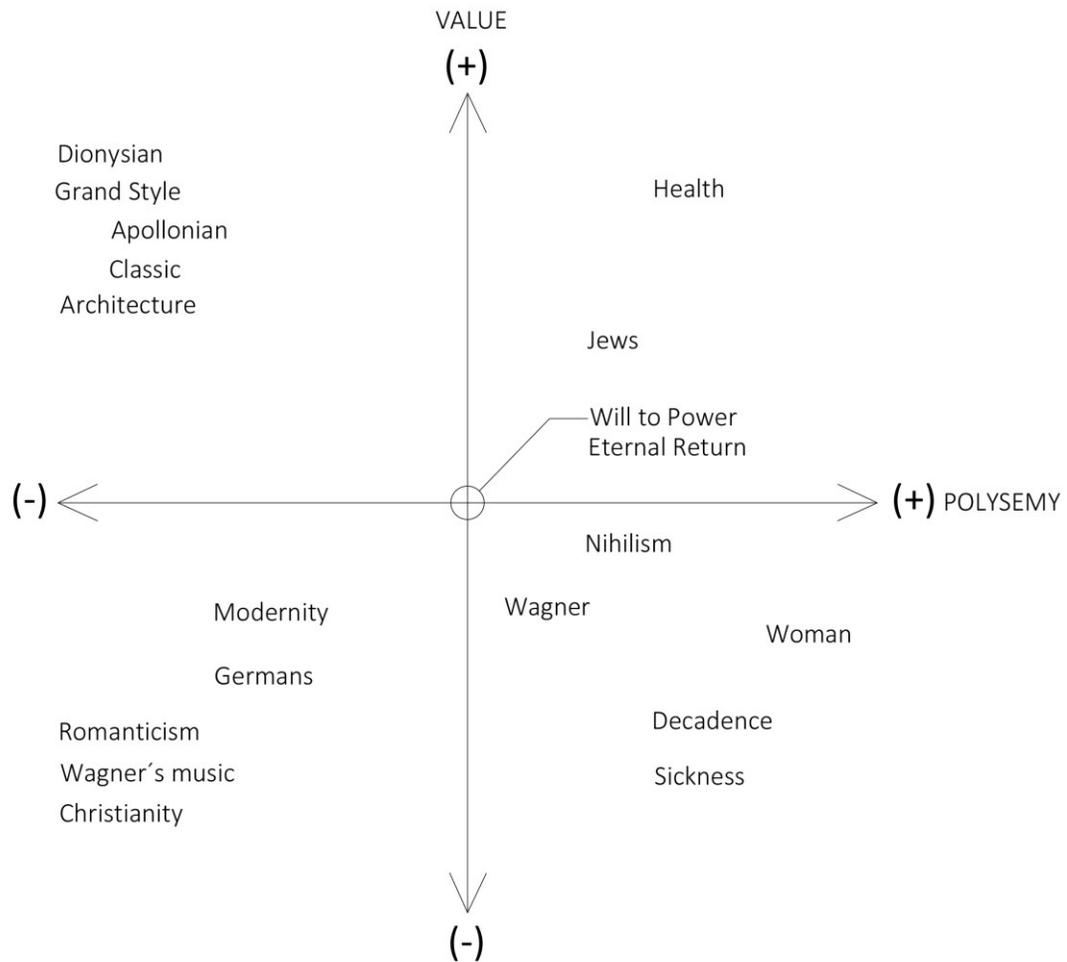


Fig.34. Conceptual map of Nietzsche's late philosophical production. (Source: author).

The horizontal axis corresponds to the degree of polysemy of the concept's definitions, while the vertical axis indicates their respective assignment of value, in an axiological sense. The diagram exhibits a widely distributed configuration, which is an index of the complexity of Nietzsche's late discursive strategy. The concepts or subjects located at the right side of the diagram show a high degree of polysemy and ambivalence in their definitions (meaning that they can 'shift', from negative to positive valuation, and vice versa)³³⁹, while those on the left are developed in a less ambivalent and more

339 One of the most characteristic examples of such ambivalence can be found in Nietzsche's analysis of the "health-sick" polarity, as exposed in EH, "Why I am so wise" §1-2. In the case of Wagner, it is necessary to distinguish

normative way. Among these, the notion of Grand Style constitutes an extreme case: as exposed in Chapter II, it appears to be formulated without any degree of *contradictio*, as a *positive aesthetic value*, coupled with an associated set of concepts which configure an articulated semantic field of correspondence (Dionysian, Apollonian, Classic, Architecture). In the center of the diagram, we can locate those concepts which transcend the axiological-semantic complex: Will to Power and Eternal Return, which are ontological notions, “beyond good and evil”. The figure of Zarathustra himself and the *Übermensch* can also be located in this point of articulation, as a synthesis of the Nietzschean semantic field, and by extension, of the whole of his philosophical enterprise. The proposed diagram allows us to clarify our critical stance against the prevalent postmodern reading of Nietzsche’s philosophy, which assumes that most, if not all of his statements, are located on the right side of the spectrum. That is to say, they are understood as having an irreducible polysemic character, which consequently demands to read always ‘between the lines’, assuming *a priori* that his affirmations have concealed or even inverted meanings.³⁴⁰ In this conception, the role and influence of the French post-structuralist’s reception of Nietzsche cannot be underestimated (see pp. 13-16). It springs out from an

between the ‘man’ and his ‘music’, a distinction which is also recognizable in EH, “The Wagner case” § 1. In the same section we can find a long and consistent critique on Germans, expressed in a less ambivalent fashion. Jews are treated mostly in fair and positive terms, but some negative remarks can be specifically found in A §17, §24-27, §44. On woman, which is one of the Nietzschean topics which constitutes an extreme case of polysemy, see BGE § 232-239. Political concepts like democracy, socialism, anarchism, and nationalism have not been included in the scheme, since they definitely exceed the boundaries of this investigation.

340 This points in turn to a certain line of conflict in the contemporary Nietzsche scholarship, referred to an ‘exoteric’ and an ‘esoteric’ way of reading his late philosophical production. The ‘exoteric Nietzsche’ is the one who basically says what he means, while the ‘esoteric Nietzsche’ is the one who plays riddles with the reader, the ‘meaning-trickster’ (see GS §381). Although the latter is recognizable at some extent in many of his late statements, particularly those dealing with subjects as nihilism or decadence (see EH, “Why I am so wise”, §2), my position is that no traces of such ‘esoteric riddles’ can be found in his formulation of Grand Style, as it has been exposed in the present investigation. For a further analysis on the exo-esoteric topic, see Leiter, Brian, “On the ‘Esoteric’ Reading of Nietzsche” (May 14, 2014). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2437228>; Clark, Maudemarie and David Dudrick, “In Defense of an ‘Esoteric’ Nietzsche.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 52 no. 2, 2014, p. 353-369; Heit, Helmut, “Angloamerikanische Antworten Auf Grundfragen der Nietzsche-Forschung.” *Nietzsche-Studien* 45 (2016), p.217.

overemphasis on the perspectivist side of his philosophy, making of it a malleable set of 'floating signs' which can be easily misinterpreted.³⁴¹

Nevertheless, the documental evidence gathered in the course of this investigation allows us to establish a critical counterpoint to this reductive form of interpretation: some of his statements exhibit a clear, unambivalent and normative character, among which the notion of Grand Style constitutes a relevant example. Nietzsche himself gives us a clear advice on how to approach his writings: "(...) *one needs the most delicate fingers as well as the bravest fists in order to master them*".³⁴² Delicate fingers are needed to carefully 'decode' the meaning of his polysemic statements, while brave fists are required to confront his more radical and explicit affirmations, daring to read them 'exoterically' - which means, *literally*. And we must be able to distinguish them from this perspective, in order to choose their proper hermeneutical strategy of analysis, and thus correctly assess their position, role, and value within the whole of his philosophical corpus.

In specific terms, the main hypothesis of this research was triggered by an intuitive pre-assumption, based on the initial readings on the subject of study: Grand Style could be understood not as a simple rhetorical trope, but rather as the germ of a proper aesthetic category, which was not fully developed by Nietzsche due to his premature mental collapse of 1889. A "spear" which appeared to be thrown towards a specific target: the translation of his nascent concept of Will to Power into the language of aesthetic theory. The documental evidence gathered in the course of the investigation

341 A characteristic example of such misinterpretation can be found in some contemporary scholarly attempts of redeeming Nietzsche as a sort of 'early advocate of postmodern feminism'. The (typical) logic of argumentation goes as follows: "*Nietzsche redefines 'truth' as a 'mobile army of metaphors'; if he is right about the status of truth, then his attempt to construct a new representation or metaphor of woman can be viewed as the beginning of a radical new feminism*". Call, Lewis. "Woman as Will and Representation: Nietzsche's Contribution to Postmodern Feminism." In: *Women in German Yearbook*, vol. 11, 1995, pp. 113–129. Available in JSTOR, <www.jstor.org/stable/20688820>. Accessed 05.01.20.

342 EH, "Why I write such good books" § 3.

validates this hypothesis: both concepts were formulated almost simultaneously (Will to Power in 1883³⁴³, and Grand Style in 1884³⁴⁴), exhibiting a parallel and gradual process of inter-related theoretical delineation (see Chapter II). Now, the same documental evidence indicates that the relationship between the concept and architecture was formulated by Nietzsche a very late phase.³⁴⁵ All his previous statements on the meaning of Grand Style are mainly focused on its relationship with the classic and the notion of Will to Power, exposed with a normative-ontological character, and framed by his conception of physiological aesthetics. This fact supports the main hypothesis of this investigation: Grand Style can be effectively conceived as the unfinished sketch of a proper aesthetic category (the aesthetic objectivation of his notion of Will to Power, as a synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories) which finds in architecture a privileged ambit of expression just in the last year of Nietzsche's philosophical production, and therefore is not necessarily restricted to it as a specific domain of applicability.³⁴⁶ In this sense, it is noteworthy to mention the fact that his brief remarks on Mole Antonelliana³⁴⁷ do not mention the concept: the building is rendered as pure "*instinct of height*", which is a Dionysian principle...too modern and eclectic, maybe? In any case, it clearly lacks the Apollonian will of measure, so the omission is consistent and by no means contradictory. On the other hand, it must be pointed out that there is no single passage in which an *explicit* relationship between Grand Style and the antic-Doric classical style can be found. The only concrete example given is Palazzo Pitti, (see pp. 81-83) which is neither 'classical'

343 Z § I, "*On the thousand and one goals*".

344 eKGWB/NF-1884,25[321].

345 1888. See WP §842 and TI §11.

346 This aspect constitutes a critical counterpoint to the existing contributions to the field of research made by Gleiter, Neumeyer and Breitschmid (see pp.16-17). In these authors (all of them, architects), the vindication of the discipline, trying to underline its importance within Nietzsche's aesthetic philosophy, appears broadly as a *leit-motiv* that permeates their whole theoretical standpoints, despite their different conceptual approaches.

347 eKGWB/BVN-1888, see pp. 100-102.

in this sense, nor 'modern-eclectic', but rather a perfect example of the blending of the Apollonian and Dionysian categories, thus transcending the boundaries of styles and epochs – which is another main aspect of the hypothesis. What can be affirmed with no shadow of a doubt is that the concept is formulated in opposition to modern-romantic music in the form of Wagner's 'dramatic' style. This is absolutely explicit in his statements (eKGWB/NF-1885,41[2] and eKGWB/NF-1888,14[61] (WP §842), see p.10 and p.81 respectively), without concessions to any form of perspectival relativization. All this documental evidence reinforces the hypothesis that has constituted the driving force behind this investigation and validates the methodological choice of expanding the field of meaning and applicability of the concept in different fields of artistic production. The 'Heideggerian path' chosen as an implicit theoretical framework of analysis is congruent with this purpose. Heidegger is not an architect, but a philosopher, so his remarkable analysis of Grand Style (see pp.25-30) is not tainted with the will of subsuming it to architecture in exclusivist terms, being retained in a higher, ontological perspective, which allows an effective expansion of the interpretative horizon in different artistic domains (see Chapter IV). Beyond the boundaries of this particular choice, I have tried to approach the complex domain of Nietzsche studies following a clear, synthetic and somehow innovative strategy, trying to open a path with 'brave fists and delicate fingers' through the dense foliage of existing interpretations, in order to reach the trunk of his aesthetic philosophy and make it visible in its original power and strength. Certainly, this is a tall, robust tree, which despite being already more than 120 years old shows no signs of decay, and which still blossoms in the cold, highest peaks of Western philosophy.

*Gewiß, so liebt ein Freund den Freund
Wie ich dich liebe, Rätselleben--
Ob ich in Dir gejauchzt, geweint,
Ob du mir Glück, ob Schmerz gegeben.*

*Ich liebe Dich samt deinem Harme,
Und wenn du mich vernichten mußt,
Entreiß mich Deinem Arme,
Wie Freund sich reißt von Freundesbrust.*

*Mit ganzer Kraft umfaß ich Dich!
Laß Deine Flammen mich entzünden,
Laß noch in Glut des Kampfes mich
Dein Rätsel tiefer nur ergründen.*

*Jahrtausende zu sein! zu denken!
Schließ mich in beide Arme ein:
Hast Du kein Glück mehr mir zu schenken --
Wohlan -- noch hast Du Deine Pein.*

Lou Andreas Salome, "Lebensgebet" (1882).

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