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Pillars of Salt

Possibility and the Temporal Chains of Understanding

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The undersigned recommend to
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“Pillars of Salt – Possibility and the Temporal Chains of Understanding”

submitted by Jonathan J. Weisman, B.A.(Hons.)
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Abstract

Our ability to determine the nature of our future and ourselves is limited by the temporality [nature of time] which forms a part of the understanding whereby we approach the world. When objectification is employed as an integral component of our approach to understanding the world, its alliance with a spatial understanding of time imposes our historic understanding on our futures, rather than allowing it to serve as the groundwork for advances or changes in understanding. Understanding the challenge posed by this problem, Nietzsche conceived of a solution – a new approach to understanding – which can be seen in his work: *Also Sprach Zarathustra*.

Acknowledgements

It is unlikely that any work, however minor, which one undertakes is free from the full scope of influences which we accumulate through life. The need to point to a few among them should not end by discounting the others.

Among those clearest few, I must thank my adviser, Tom Darby, the force of whose own work lent much fire to my own. Dr. Nadia Khalaf of Queens' University introduced me to the work of Henri Bergson, and for that I will be grateful long after this document is forgotten.

In conclusion, I must thank my parents, without whom nothing I do would be possible.

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Virtue, Vice, and Venture

At the very base of the world, in the Jordan valley, there lies a body of water which, but for the occasional cry of the ubiquitous tourist, is as still, quiet and unchanged today as it may have been more than three thousand years ago. Into it constantly pour the waters of the Jordan river, ceaselessly bringing with them the scant traces of salt accumulated along its course; but there, at the lowest point on the earth's surface, the water cannot flow outward as easily. So the heat of the sun offers the only escape for the former river's liquid; and whatever sand, silt, and salt it brought with it remains behind. These concentrated solutes make the waters uninhabitable. This aquatic cul-de-sac is known as the Dead Sea.

Not far from its shores, there may once have stood the biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed in divine punishment for their sinful ways. No trace of these cities remains to the naked eye; but amid their obliteration, a single testament to their tale was created: a pillar of salt. Man-sized columns of salt dot this barren landscape, and there is more than one that bears a name; but one in particular is connected with the biblical tale of this destruction: the pillar of salt known as Lot's wife.

Lot, a nephew of the patriarch Abraham, was singled out among his fellow Sodomites for salvation; and so, he and his family were guided, by an angelic messenger, safely from the city and up into the hills which still surround the area. In return for this divine benefice, the family was issued by that same messenger

with a single warning, "...look not behind thee...lest thou be swept away."¹ Lot, his wife, and his daughters fled the town, as the messenger told them to; but his wife, unable to restrain herself, looked back at the city which had been so long her home, and was turned, where she stood, into a pillar of salt².

Unlike her home, she was not obliterated by her actions. Those who look at the column still imagined to be her final state can venture to make out her huddled form, robes drawn over her rearward-turned head and tightly about her frozen form to protect her from the heat of the sun and from the horrors of her vision. She remains, but not as a living, breathing, human being. Instead, she has taken on the qualities of her final resting-place. She joins the nearby sea, the mountains, and the flat, stale plain in a fixed state: unchanging, unmoving, and seemingly unaffected by the passage of time; and all on account of a single mistake: that she looked behind herself to know what had happened to her city and the past life which was there.

It is an interesting story for the biblical scholar, and one that might be taken to illustrate the folly of disobeying a divine commandment; but if obedience is the only lesson to be drawn from the plight of Lot's wife, then the lesson is redundant and the story far less interesting. The Bible abounds with tales of those unfortunates who dare to oppose the will of God and surely these, from Saul to

¹Genesis, XIX, 17

²Ibid., XIX, 26

the Sodomites themselves, would be sufficient to make that point. The messenger's warning is not the presentation of an arbitrary rule. There is another lesson to be drawn from this incident – one that has particular importance for our present-day lives; and one which has been touched upon by many of our greatest thinkers.

The fate which befalls Lot's wife is tinged with the same sense of divine will as are the fates of others who go against divine advice. God indicates that he will send ten plagues against the Egyptians, and that he will bring the flood to destroy the world of sinners. Yet the plagues will come regardless of Pharaoh's natural inclination³, and the victims-in-waiting of the flood are given no opportunity to forestall their fate. In both of these incidents, God is determined to proceed with his plan, irrespective of the actions which the forewarned might take.

In the case of Lot's wife, God is not so stubborn. As in Adam and Eve's decision to eat from the tree of the fruit of knowledge, the warning is a prelude to free choice. The decision to turn around rests entirely in Lot's wife's hands, as surely as the fruit had still to be plucked by human hands. In this parallel lies the first clue to the nature of her error. Like the mistake which led to Adam and Eve's fall, her actions have everything to do with the quest for knowledge.

Lot's wife looks back in order to see what was taking place behind her. The scene is easy to describe, though difficult to appreciate: her neighbours' screams

³"I will harden Pharaoh's heart... Pharaoh will not hearken unto you ...", Exodus, VII,3-4.

echoing through the dry air; the sound of buildings crumbling to the ground; and the sudden fluctuating shadows ahead of her, signs of the flashes of light that must accompany a rain of fire and brimstone.

Just as we imagine what must have surrounded her, we can try to picture the extent to which her imagination may have taken her. The more the noise and light dizzied the woman struggling over an uneven terrain, the more her curiosity must have torn at her, until, at last, she could not bear to remain ignorant of what was befalling her friends and relations, and she looked back to see. To see, to perceive, to know – which knowledge may have returned her to some small sense of control in a situation which was now far enough beyond that to terrify anyone. Greater than anything else was this desire to know what she did not – a desire to look upon the other.

Looking back in order to know – here we have the root of her transgression, in *mens* and in *res*. This look was the deed by which she ignored the warning given to her. It transformed her into a frozen state and fixed her viewpoint forever upon that other. Yet the looking itself was merely a *causa efficiens*, not of concern in itself but in its context. It was ultimately against the effective fate that Lot and his family were warned. The challenge, therefore, for those of us who wish to learn from the example set forth is to understand the context in which this cause and effect must obtain.

The most obvious obstacle to understanding is the contrast between the loci of these two phenomena. Looking back, the cause, distinguishes itself from the

alternative [looking ahead] in spatial orientation – the direction in which the gaze is directed. The transformation, the effect, distinguishes itself from the alternative [continued life] by temporal orientation – rather than continuing to change, to grow, and perhaps, to live, the observer is frozen and becomes immobile, as though stopped in time relative to her surroundings. The contrast between cause and effect, therefore, is the juxtaposition of space and time – a genuine conundrum: how can a cause which relates to one have an effect which relates to the other?

The answer lies in extension. Looking back is an act which takes place in space; but by extended meaning, it can be said to take place in time. In truth, Lot's wife is looking back at more than what lies behind her spatially. The city of Sodom, her home, and even her life as it has thus far been are "behind" her temporally. We can, therefore, now restate the situation: by looking back to her past, Lot's wife prevented herself from ever moving forward – she froze herself in time forever.

With this restatement, the conundrum seems to be at an end. The lesson to be learned is an important one, to be certain – one cannot live in the past and truly live. So commonsensical a point, though, does not appear to be worthy of our attention; neither would it be, did its interpretation not hang on a strange solution: to resolve the juxtaposition of space and time, we have substituted one for the other. A strange assertion to make, but an important one to understand.

It is to the understanding of this substitution that Henri Bergson turned his

attention in his work: *Time and Free Will: An Essay Concerning the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. Although we experience time as a flowing stream in which experience and reality are both transient and continuous, we analogise it to the homogeneous and immutable dimension of space under many different circumstances.

The case of Lot's wife is a particular example of this analogy. What is not present with us in time cannot truly be "looked upon" because it is no longer contemporaneous with us. What is past or future cannot be available for our inspection in the same way as things co-located with us in space. In order to look behind ourselves it is therefore necessary to bring the object of our attention with us through time. Whether that object lies in the future or in the past, it cannot be "looked upon" without having it ready-at-hand, *id est* in our present.

Yet this locality of "distant" events is not in the nature of time as we experience it. While the objects around us do not appear to change much as we pass through time [an example ably provided by Lot's wife herself], we do. So long, therefore, as the object of our consideration is not something of ours [such as our lives, homes, families, friendships] – something which changes as it passes through time – we can believe that we do not change it from what it is by extending it temporally towards us. Yet if we try to do the same with anything which is subject to this kind of change, we may not be able to maintain the object as it is – somehow, the object might become transformed, and its nature distorted beyond recognition.

If Lot's wife was not looking back spatially at the destruction of the city, then she was looking back temporally upon the lifestyle and home which she had abandoned: two things which can normally fluctuate as readily as a person's emotions. So we, as she, cannot be certain that the lifestyle and home which she is looking upon are those which she has genuinely experienced any more than that they might be those which she would have experienced, had she not been forced to flee.

Lot's wife must consequently be deluding herself; but why should this delusion be of anything more than passing interest to us? We still have not determined why this act of self-delusion should result in her utter immobilisation; but then, neither have we considered precisely what this immobilisation might represent to us. If we understand her immobilisation by the same means of extension which have already been applied to her final action, then her temporal immobilisation prevents her from any possibility of change. If there is no possibility of change – no alternatives to the continuation of present circumstances – then there is no possibility of choice, without which, there can assuredly be neither liberty nor freedom. At last, the title of Bergson's work comes into clear focus. The inappropriate use of a spatial analogy for the examination of objects in time has the potential to rob us of our dearest possessions.

This potential was precisely that which Bergson faced in his own day.

Writing at the turn of the 20th century⁴, the principles of the physical sciences – having, since Newton, employed the spatial analogy as their means of coping with time – seemed ready to lay bare the foundations of the universe, even of man's consciousness. The predictive power of the sciences had increased, and, with the aid of the spatial analogy, it became clear that any state of affairs could at last be expressed as a function of the state which preceded it. With the development of scientific laws governing even the previously unimagined forces of particles, and the emergence of new equipment and machinery based on these laws, it seemed that nothing could long remain beyond the inquisition of science into the natural world.

Bergson was not alone in attempting to counteract this tide of positivism. Many *fin-de-siècle* writers, from Freud to Gramsci, raised the banners of consciousness and the nature of subjectivity against the scientific predisposition⁵. But from a postmodern social perspective, wherein opinion and truth alike are at once demeaned and exalted, it can be difficult to appreciate the genuine purpose of the individual battles, even as we understand the nature of the war. For Bergson, the battle was one which had been fought many times before; but which was given new impetus and shades of meaning by the advent of modern science.

The paradox of determinism and free will had arisen before. It was best

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By which time virtually all of the technological advances which would find application by the year 2000 had already been uncovered.

⁵*Vis: Hughes, Consciousness and Society*

known – and possibly most troublesome – as the reconciliation of human free will with the existence of an omniscient and interested divinity. The problem of divine foreknowledge had been dealt with by no lesser writers than Augustine and Aquinas; and there was no reason to appeal their defenses of human possibility. If anything, the “death of god” which Nietzsche had proclaimed would eliminate the problem entirely.

Yet there was always a second significant challenge to human will: the idea of logical determinism. By dint of the necessary validity of one of the two statements: he will fall tomorrow; he will not fall tomorrow, it must be maintained that one is true and the other false. If the first is true, then regardless of what he chooses to do, he will fall; if the latter, then he will not fall, irrespective of his actions. Therefore, if every statement is either true or false, then planning is inefficacious: the future is already written.

This contention of Aristotle's has been objected to on the simple grounds that a statement of events' outcome is not that which produces the outcome⁶; and this objection has both merit and justification. But the power of a predictive statement found new life in the arms of scientific theory; and the increasing reach of that theory brought it to the point of a significant challenge. If a predictive statement could validly be made on the basis of a given state of affairs; why could each human act not be validly predicted on the basis of the state of affairs in

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Excluding, for the moment, the possibility of motivational statement, which might disprove the determinist argument from its outset.

which the “decision” producing it were made? This new predictive force might not be limited to the question of someone’s options, dispositions, and needs – it might go so far as to consider the very constituent elements of the physical self, down to the state of the brain at the time of decision; and employ new scientific practice to neatly preclude any possibility that man has the ability to choose his own course of action.

Of course, the terms of the proposed theoretical model give its game away: it is not *the present* state of affairs which are to be used for the determination, but *any given* state of affairs; and, as Bergson pointed out, it is against the nature of time as experienced by man for any given state of affairs to be properly assimilated to any other. That similarity is in the nature of time as experienced by the unchanging – as by Lot’s wife, presently, and through a long span of time. In explaining the nature of time as experienced in consciousness and by differentiating that time from the kind of time used in predictive and objective scientific endeavours, Bergson demonstrated that free will and scientific determinism could coexist. And yet, that is not to say that they did.

The nature of time experienced by Lot’s wife’s consciousness did not protect her from the transformation which froze her in time. If it was not her consciousness itself which demanded this end to freedom, then what is left to explain the fate which befell her? The only unexamined part of the tale is her act of looking back; and here, at last, we come across the essence of the warning, for somehow, this “looking back” to know the other managed to affect her. The

relationship between subject and object was, as I have said, questioned by many of Bergson's contemporaries, so it is no wonder that we should run across it as we consider affairs closely connected to his thought. It is not, however, to them that we must turn to understand this particular dichotomy, but to one who came before them: to Hegel.

In examining Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the effort spent considering the nature of time will be invaluable. Looking back in order to know lies at the heart of our understanding, not merely physically but also temporally – and this distinction will help to explain the fate of Lot's wife once Hegel's work explains the relationship between the subject and the object, for knowing the object of our attention cannot be cleanly separated from looking back, be it physical or temporal. The word reflection itself demonstrates it. 'Flect' could come to us from the Latin *flecto*, to turn or to march – to direct. 'Re' could come to us from the Latin *res*, a placeholder which can be generically understood as "the thing" or the object with which one is concerned. Yet we may probably refer 'reflection' to the Latin *reflectere*, to turn back. To turn back, therefore say, is the same as to turn to the thing; and this double meaning is the action which we undertake when we set out to satisfy that underlying desire which drove Lot's wife to her doom.

Hegel, as Kojève illustrated, explored the question of change in our world to discover how closely it was related to those processes by which we are motivated to seek out and extend our knowledge. Our desires, their objects, and our lives are intimately bound up in the vision of change which Hegel maintains

as the underlying order not only of an abstracted life, but of history itself.

The knowledge which we acquire through reflection is not an accumulation of abstract or unreferenced impressions. Just as we can understand Lot's wife's desire to look back, we can appreciate that reflection upon an object external to ourselves rests upon desire that originates within us. Knowledge, therefore, is ultimately directed back towards the subject. By constructing a world of knowledge through our reflection upon the external objects, we make it possible to understand the selves which look out into the world. We may therefore be said to construct our self-images in relation to the world which we construct from objects we perceive. Lot's wife, therefore, is looking back on more than a city behind her, it is her understanding of herself that she must somehow recapture.

By keeping Bergson's close attention to the temporal basis of our activities in mind, the nature of Lot's wife's problem suddenly comes into focus. What Lot's wife is looking back upon is an object [or set of objects] brought out of the past, preserved in its already-vanished state, for the purpose of producing her present and influencing her future self. Yet, since the past is already complete, she has only what is finished and no longer capable of being changed or transformed in relation to which to construct her sense of self. Consequently, like the past which she attempts to extend through time into her present, she herself can only continue in a static form, unmoving but extended, into her own future. The danger, therefore, lies in our very means of acquiring knowledge; and not only can the method of reflection lead us incidentally into this pitfall, but the method

has the potential to do the very same thing historically. This ultimate error, arriving only at the very end of the process of self-exploration, is what in Hegelian terms is considered to be the end of history; and it is the particular form taken by this historical terminus to which Nietzsche was referring when he wrote of the death of God.

Will and freedom were no trivial matters to Nietzsche. A way had to be found out of the static situation into which human understanding had blundered. There had to be a different means established by which to understand both the world and oneself, by relation to it. At its heart, this new method would have to ensure that the objects which it encountered were not simply extensions into the present of pasts already written.

Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* can therefore be interpreted as being underlaid with this effort: the attempt to develop and present a new method of understanding for humanity which is rooted in and derived from the need to preserve freedom. The *übermensch* of the text figures prominently in this attempt: it is a reversed causal structure of time analogised to space which man is entreated to use. By means of living that the *übermensch* might come to be, the objects with reference to which our lives are understood are located in the future and extended backwards into the present, hopefully preserving possibility.

Yet this possibility is not enough, because in replacing forward extension with rearward extension, we have done nothing to remedy the inappropriate matching of our non-spatial consciousness of time with the spatial analogy of time

in our method. To guard against the continuance of this error, Nietzsche's method does not rely on that of objects in spatialised time, but borrows a model of change from another source.

Plato presented Socrates to us as a model of the man concerned with change, who was willing to live and die in the name of the social transformations which he sought. As an educator, Socrates inevitably was faced with what must be the greatest possible challenge in education: not to teach a student to the limit of the teacher's own ability, but to teach the student to the limit of his ability. The limitations of the teacher – the boundaries within which he defines himself – must not become shackles for the student; which is another form of the problem posed by the use of delimited objects for understanding oneself: how to use a model and yet escape its limitations?

The proposed solution is contained within the pages of the *Republic* of Plato. Rather than a course, charted step by step and marked at each by an objective signpost, a pathway must be used, whose destination is not predetermined. Rather than a guide to the process, the pathway serves as a locus for activity – some place, temporal and physical, where/when activity can take place.

By combining the inaccessible model of the *übermensch* with the procedural form of the pathway, as he did in *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche was able to provide what he hoped to be a plausible solution to the problem posed by the death of God and the logical system of understanding, thereby providing for the possibility of

continued change and hence, freedom. In the examination of *Zarathustra* which will follow anon, these two structures will appear within the form of the work, both structurally and materially.

To be able to perform this analysis, it will first be necessary to make the terms of this argument more precise and explicit than is possible within the confines of an introduction to the subject. The dual temporalities of Bergson must be clearly understood and firm terms must be established with respect to what has been explained. This foundation once granted, it will become possible to consider Hegel's presentation of understanding within the context of temporality and to explain the correlation between the Hegelian end of history and the death of God *per* Nietzsche. Finally, having explored the Platonic model and having observed its connection to our starting point of temporality, the material of *Zarathustra* will be ready to offer itself.

We have already in hand the image of Lot's wife and an appreciation of her unhappy fate – it will serve the purpose well: to provide us with the poetic image which can provide a coherent framework for the understanding to come, without so constraining the understanding as to render what is to come unproductive. Fortunately, she's not going anywhere.

Time and Simultaneity

That pillar of salt with which this exploration is concerned is frozen in time and unable to change. Yet somehow, that description falls short of capturing the essence of Lot's wife in time. Regardless of her inability to change, she accompanies us through time, even serving to connect us with the successive generations which, in passing time and a changing world, have in their turns seen the same frozen column. If, as I have suggested, her immobility stems from her location in a different kind of time, then how can we understand her continued presence with those of us who have not been similarly frozen? This paradox of the pillar's time, both beyond it and within it, lies at the heart of the challenge to freedom which Hegel's end of history entails, and is precisely what Bergson's analysis of time can clarify for us.

Bergson does not delve into our approach to the understanding of time – the connection between our consciousness and a given temporality. Instead, he analyses the ways in which we construct our understandings of time – our temporalities, and draws attention to the disparity between our experience of time and the implicit way in which we most frequently deal with it when we consider the world around us. Which is not to suggest that we do not understand time as we experience it. Rather, we often fail to deal with time as we experience it, perhaps even, as will be shown, because we are occupied by dealings with things other than our personal experience – objects.

Bergson lays out his thought very much as Heidegger later would when distinguishing between the vulgar concept of time and that temporality which is in the essential nature of his concept of *Dasein*. The former, in Heidegger's estimation, has a spatial and datable quality of an "endless succession of nows passing away"⁷, while the latter is directed towards that future end which it must ultimately face, in the form of Being-towards-death⁸. The contrast between these temporalities as treated by Heidegger provides a fair analogue to the fundamental distinction between the two temporalities presented by Bergson; and especially the latter, Being-towards-death, should be borne in mind as we move towards our final goal.

Like Heidegger's "vulgar" time, the first temporality which Bergson presents consists of a way of spatialising the passing of events and, before Heidegger, Bergson acknowledged that this approach to time could be a genuinely useful way to deal with some kinds of situations. Beyond Heidegger's later treatment, Bergson clearly illustrates the more serious consequences of this understanding of time – the way in which it can homogenise the frame of reference of the objects of our attention, the meaning and consequences of which will become clear with the full exposition of Bergson's position. To this first, spatial temporality, which Heidegger referred to as "vulgar", I will apply the technical term "dimensional".

⁷Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 390

⁸Heidegger, §52

The second understanding of time is more difficult to deal with, if only because , by its nature, it defies the kind of stable objectification which lies at the heart of our fundamental means of understanding [as will be more fully outlined in subsequent chapters]. This temporality is not exactly the same as that “authentic Being-towards-death” which Heidegger discusses. Bergson is not concerned with the same kind of “purposefulness” which drives Heidegger’s approach to consider the meaning of Being rather than simply the parameters of its operation. Bergson’s second temporality is related to passing. It is that “space” or area which allows passing itself to exist by serving as the frame within which the passing of things takes place. It is that common medium in and by virtue of which things may pass – the place⁹ or locus of change. It is not to be confused with the passing itself which only uses it. The temporality itself does not “pass”, neither is this temporality occupied by objects which pass into or from existence – only the activity, motion, or change of what we would otherwise consider objects have a part to place in it. The term which Bergson uses for this temporality serves as well as any other to describe it: ‘duration’.

Once this discussion comes to consider the difference between the object-

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Obviously, the language which refers to an event or happening is so closely bound up with the notion of spatiality that my efforts at quickly summarising and rendering more accessible the Bergsonian notion of duration bear the tinge of dimensional space. The language does not as yet exist to adequately deal with the idea of change as distinct from space and its objects, in large part because understanding itself has yet to be detached therefrom. Hopefully, the reader will bear in mind that despite my use of terms which have spatial connotations, duration must not be confused simply with the dimension of time as considered by the physical sciences.

types subject and complement, and, finally, to consider the relationship between the subject-complement pair which we may eventually imbue with the elements mortal and divine, the temporalities of dimension and of duration will be clearly allied to these related concepts. For the moment, it will be necessary to lay out what these temporalities are, because understanding them and bearing them in mind will be essential to the analyses of Hegel and Nietzsche's thought which are to follow. Bergson's analysis of temporality will assist in interpreting analysis and reflection themselves – the interpretation which will at once reveal both Nietzsche's solution to the challenges presented by Hegel's end of history and the significance of the role which temporality, properly understood, can play in understanding the human condition and our very position.

Bergson had high hopes for temporality in the service of that understanding. The work from which I will draw out his analysis of human time was intended to demonstrate the study's potential effectiveness through its application to the ongoing philosophical debate over free will. From the beginning, then, the purpose for which these concepts were intended bears a close relationship to what might be considered a major or perhaps the very issue at the heart of Nietzsche's extant works: the question of will. *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* would therefore be appropriate to this study simply on that basis.

Yet beyond this casual connection between the works of these two thinkers, an essay on the question of free will has further specific application to the

question of change. Free will demands that there be choice. Choice, however, demands possibility – there must, at the least, be the possibility to choose between action and inaction; and possibility can exist only in the future, so far as our choices are concerned¹⁰.

The past, as an exploration of Bergson's analysis of time will show, is fixed behind us – within the framework of the past, or with sole reference to it, there is no possibility of change. The ever-transitive moment of the present is meaningful only for being itself, un-self-conscious and unreflective, as the analysis of reflection yet to come will show. Within the moment of the present [but one of that endless succession of nows], there is no place for the self-consciousness which would be necessary for making choices.

The future, then – the only “space” in time upon wherein free will can meaningfully bring its works to pass – is also the “place” where the meeting between free will and change takes place. To speak of change is to speak of the future, wherefore the effort to make change fit the parameters of our desire is the effort to assert free will. If change is limited, co-opted, or prevented, then so is free will. The fight to preserve our ability to change is therefore equally a fight to

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In point of truth, one can have possibility in the past, but only through the addition of past or the alteration of past – as will shortly be discussed, the past itself, once known, is fixed. These possibilities, however, are not generated in the past, but extended into the past from the future. That extension becomes possible because of the homogenous nature of dimensional time – this, too, will shortly become clear. Consequently, though the point may be quibbled with, the fact remains that possibility only exists in the future – at least so far as those of us moving forward in time may be concerned.

preserve our freedom. Bergson's essay on the question of free will is by extension, an essay on change itself, and as these two issues merge, the significance of the question of change comes clearly into focus: it lies at the heart of at least one quality by which we understand our humanity [and our mortality - anon].

Bergson contends that the debate over the question of free will has persisted for a great length of time because of confusion over a number of aspects of the issue:

of duration with extensity, of succession with simultaneity, of quality with quantity; this confusion once dispelled, we may perhaps witness the disappearance of the objections raised against free will...of the problem of free will itself.¹¹

Each of these confusions forms a pair of the type subject-complement, which has already been mentioned but which has yet to be elaborated. Simply for the present, within each pair, if the first object is the subjective or perceiving object, the second object represents the contrasting conditions which define the first's limits – which tells us what the subject is definitely not. In the next chapter, this structure of definition through negation will form the base of the interpretation of Hegelian dialectic, but for the moment, they are descriptive of the essential duality of temporality with which Bergson is concerned: dimensional-durational or stasis-change, and it is by describing these bases that the confusions will be made clear and the temporalities will be explained.

The temporality which I have described as dimensional is one which

¹¹Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, xx

Bergson tells us emerges by approaching the understanding of time in the same way as we approach the understanding of space. The process of counting, as one of the most basic forms which recognition and objectification can take, serves to illustrate this temporality.

When we observe a succession of objects in space we make a total tally of the individually distinct objects: “we began by imagining e.g. [sic] a row of balls, that these balls afterwards became points.”¹². These points are counted in time, for we can only count the units¹³ of a total one after the other in successive moments of passing time. We can only reflect upon one thing in any given moment or now. As a result, the counting of the balls is equivalent to the counting of the moments in which we recognise those numbers which are elements of the count.

Yet what we consider in the counting to be points in “time” are truly being counted by direct analogy to points in space, because the counting consists of a localization of each point, which must remain in place in order for a total to be maintained¹⁴. It is therefore the need to create a total which demands the maintenance of each unit in a locality – which compels us to conceive of a spatial,

¹²Ibid., 78

¹³

Units are defined as the standardised elements of the count [Bergson, 77], a definition which may appear to be somewhat self-referential, but which will shortly be properly and fully explained.

¹⁴Bergson, 79

and hence, dimensional¹⁵ field for our tally.

To understand precisely what this elision between passing time and space means for our understanding, we must understand how it impacts on the subjects caught up within it – those who are being compared to the points on the line, or to the elements of the count. Elements of a count have the following fundamental qualities for the purposes of the count and from the point of view of the totality which they compose: indivisibility, discreteness, and, hence, impenetrability¹⁶.

Elements are indivisible in that they cannot be further broken down within the framework of the count without altering either the total of the count or that which is being counted. If we count the number of poker hands [groups of five cards] in a deck of cards, we will arrive at one answer, but if we break one of these hands down into the individual cards which compose it, we will no longer be counting poker hands [no more than we would be counting cards, *per se*].

Similarly, each element must be discrete from the next in order to maintain the coherence of the count. If we were to count seven cards as two poker hands because we could make two selections of five cards from among the available cards, we would not be able to take and place two poker hands alongside each

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Dimensionality in this sense should help to bring a structure like a number line [the extension of a singularity] to mind, which serves as an excellent illustration for the concept of spatiality with which this temporality is concerned.

¹⁶

The indivisibility and distinctiveness of elements of a count are described in Bergson, pages 76-78. The impenetrability of elements is described on page 88.

other, and again, the nature of the count would have changed, from an outline of the present state to a presentation of the range of alternate future possibilities.

Together, these two requirements necessitate the impenetrability of these elements, for if each forms an indivisible and discrete whole, then they each form a complete entity, into which nothing foreign can enter: neither an adjacent and identical [from the standpoint of the count] element, nor any other thing. It would not be possible for the poker hand to be merged, for example, with a rummy hand and retain either its identity within the count or the coherence of the count itself.

These qualities of the elements of counting prove, in fact, to be the qualities of all objects which are located in dimensional time, just as they are true of objects in space. These qualities compel us to arrange the objects of our counting or identification by creating the space into which each unit may be properly placed. In this way, the objects which we count successively – identifying one, then the next, then the next, and so on – and, more importantly, the points in time which we are enumerating along with them, are crafted as the count into a simultaneity of existence: “we have only to think them [elements] at first separately, and then simultaneously, within the very medium in which they come under our observation”¹⁷.

To illustrate the precise meaning of this superimposition of the inherent

¹⁷Bergson, 85

discreteness of elements and their simultaneity within the totality of the count, consider the difference between two totalities which we might examine: a trio of sheep in a field, standing abreast, or three sheep which, over the course of a few minutes, pass successively before our eyes as we look out through a window.

In the first case, the simultaneous presence of the three sheep is the hallmark of the spatiality of the count. We can look out and see the threesome, a whole and complete thing in and of itself: the quality of which is the “threeness” of the sheep. The three sheep become an element as we come to conceive of them as “three sheep” as opposed to “that sheep and that sheep and that sheep”; and, as a totality, an object complete in itself, the threesome takes on the qualities of those elements which compose counts – most significantly, as will be seen in a moment, those of impenetrability and discreteness. This threesome not only connotes co-presence, it connotes simultaneous co-presence.

In the second case, though, we might, upon reflection, come to regard the sheep just as we did in the first: to be a threesome. We would count the sheep successively, for as each one passes by the window, they have, as temporally distinct and discrete elements, no contemporaneous presence or simultaneity. In order, however, to finally refer to the sheep as three, we must maintain each in succession into a kind of simultaneous presence with its successor. Once we have observed this sheep, that sheep, and the final sheep, we can look back and suggest that we have seen three sheep, but that threesome, as a whole, has simultaneous presence across a span of time, just as the threesome of sheep abreast has

simultaneous presence across a span of space. This simultaneous presence would be the thing to which we refer when we say that we had seen three sheep that day or that there were three sheep in that field.

It is to this simultaneous presence that Derrida is alluding as one of the three “things of the thing” [or of the object, if we prefer] which he describes in *Spectres of Marx*:

It consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present, in the first place by *identifying* [sic] the bodily remains and by *localizing* [sic] the dead...Hamlet does not ask merely to whom the skull belonged [past]...He demands to know to whom the grave belongs [present].¹⁸

Aside from its obvious reference to spatiality [localizing the remains], this statement explains the nature of the paradox which our latter-afternoon sheep produce: they have simultaneous presence, despite the fact that the nature of their collective existence is successive. This process carries forth each sheep into the temporal space of the next, making the remains [things past] present. At the same time, upon reflection, the impenetrability and coherence of the threesome homogenises it across this spatialised time as, absurdly upon further reflection, the threesome must now be understood to have emerged into presence as soon as the first sheep was observed. For otherwise, that sheep would not be part of the threesome, and the threesome itself would no longer be. The threesome comes to span the time over which its constituent existence came to our attention.

¹⁸Derrida, Jacques, *Spectres of Marx*, 9

This spanning of time is that to which Bergson refers in using the term 'extensity', the "lasting traces which they [the elements of succession] seem to have left in space on their passage through it."¹⁹ It is, at once, both the extension of the presences of the first two sheep into the presence of the third and the rearward projection of the threesome which can only first emerge in succession upon the recognition of the third sheep back over the presences of the first two. This extensity could not emerge in time as merely experienced by man. It can only emerge in tandem with the conception of time as a homogeneous dimension of simultaneous presence – the product of the kind of objectification which we undertake: the analysis which Derrida, in the reference quoted above, relates strongly to the paradox of simultaneity which Bergson presents to us. It is plainly not a genuine feature of our existence – its absurdity denies it. However, this absurdity is an element in our process of reflection.

This making of past into present [perhaps even into future], the overtaking of succession by simultaneity turns time into a homogeneous medium²⁰, indistinguishable from space, in which things can have co-presence, depending on the standpoint created for observation [do I look at the objects in succession or all at once] rather than on the nature of the objects' existence within a standpoint fixed beyond the observer. The new present is not simply a present rooted in the

¹⁹Bergson, 79

²⁰Bergson, 90

past but a glossing of any difference between present and past into a span into which medium the presence of the objectified total now emerges. But before stopping to consider the full implications of this dimensional, spatial temporality [or span] for the objects of our interest [the structures of understanding and the end of history], we should examine the other option with which Bergson presents us, to better understand the subject by reference to its potential complement; but also to establish the basis on which the analysis of change itself will eventually be built.

If dimensional time is marked by simultaneity, then duration is marked by succession without end [without death]; and like other subject-complement pairs which will soon come into view, duration is as much defined by negation of dimensional time as by any other means. Perhaps this negation of dimensional time is all the more important because of the familiarity we have with it and the ease we have in understanding its operations – in Heideggerian terms, its “average everydayness” blinds us to the possibility of its alternative.

Therefore, Bergson introduces pure duration to us by distinguishing it from [negating] dimensional time. Asking us to imagine the oscillations of a pendulum, he suggests that we may recall them as individual elements:

I retain the recollection of the preceding oscillation together with the image of the present oscillation...Either I shall set the two images side by side, and we then fall back on our first hypothesis [dimensional time], or I shall perceive one in the other, each permeating the other and organizing themselves like the notes of a tune, so as to form what we shall call a continuous or qualitative multiplicity...I shall thus get the image of pure duration; but I shall

have entirely got rid of the idea of a homogeneous medium or a measurable quantity.²¹

Rather, then, than being suspended in the totality which retains their individual and discrete identities as impenetrable elements, the various constituents of the series merge into a whole. We are presented with a succession which does not consist of an end to its elements, for each is continued in the next.

The distinction between totality and whole constitutes the second object-complement pair we have encountered. This pair is essential to understanding the difference between the unity which renders the threesome of sheep impenetrable and the unity of a melody. The first, a totality [though this need not be true of all totalities], is united by their “placement” in time, from which arises a quality common to them [threeness through simultaneous co-presence] which is the essence of that unified object, the threesome of sheep. By contrast, the latter, a whole, derives its unity from the fact that those “bits” which may be sorted out of it are so constituted only by freezing the object in time. The whole is broken down to describe parts, rather than the totality, which is built up from parts to describe some common quality. However, in breaking the whole down to describe parts, we no longer have the original object in mind, for the original object had no discretion among its elements, though the totality did.

A less abstract metaphor than melody or [to the modern mind] sheep might help to clarify this difference. A human, might over their lifetime be an infant, a

²¹Bergson, 105

child, an adolescent, an adult, and a senior, but these are merely the momentarily paused forms of existence through which the human – the whole – passes, and cannot be made discrete in the same way that the sheep of our count might. For it is difficult, if not impossible, to argue in unpoetic terms that there is a point in time or a moment at which the child ceased so to be or at which the adult became a senior – a point which would allow us to draw the line to cordon the first off from the second; and upon reflection, what rough groupings we create to designate these successive ages are as abstract as any concept can possibly be.

This metaphor of human maturation or growth takes us closer to understanding the fundamental quality of duration, the locus of change. It is the process which occupies duration:

...the process by which it [a moving body] passes from one position to the other...and which has no reality except for a conscious spectator...We have to do here not with an *object* but with a *progress* : motion, in so far as it is a passage from one point to another, is a mental synthesis, a psychic and therefore unextended process.²²

This synthesis is, again, unlike the simple succession of static states which would typify extension, because it maintains the unity which arises from the unified existence of the object in question. Growth is what happens to a person - a whole human, not simply the substitution of an adult for a child; and it is the growth which concerns us when we consider duration – the progress as progress – change as change.

²²Bergson, 111

A strange kind of change for us to consider, at least initially, because our “everyday” concept of change demands that there be both a fixed and statically understood base state and a similarly circumscribed terminus in any “change”. But “change” in this everyday sense is no longer change as process, but the terms of a *change* – an object of reflection, frozen in time like any other which we may choose to consider. That we consider change in this static form is an outcome of the end of history which we have yet to explore.

It is for this reason that the ability *to change* [progress] ceases to exist upon looking backward temporally. The possibility, as already discussed, which is essential to change exists only in the future, and to consider a *change* is already to foresee a static terminus for the progress, transforming it into a frozen image of what must be, rather than an ongoing process.

This freezing is the challenge which temporal misunderstanding has thus far placed in the way of free will. If all changes are treated as objects – which have fixed and immutable endpoints – the outcome of any growth or decision would be foregone. It is this consideration, Bergson argues, which lies at the heart of the last deterministic argument against the possibility of free will, that which defies it “...as being incompatible with the fundamental properties of matter.”²³ The fixed endpoints which are the hallmark of the objectified examination of change function admirably when applied to the external world of material objects.

²³Bergson, 142

This approach is the foundation of the calculus and the treatment of time as t , that dimension on a number line which haunts the dreams of physics students around the world. This is that contention, which when extended, was laid at the doorstep of monotheistic religion in many forms, each contending that the presence of an omniscient God rendered the notion of free will meaningless.

The species of deterministic argument against free will with which Bergson is specifically concerned is that of physical determinism, an extension of the scientific principles which the calculus and other advances in our knowledge over time have produced. The ability to demonstrate that any given state is the consequence of the previous state, owing to the constancy of the physical "laws" which adequately describe the universe, suggests that we, too, are at the mercy of those states which precede our actions: "that our actions are necessitated by our feelings, our ideas, and the whole preceding series of our conscious states."²⁴

Yet both of these arguments fall before the understanding of temporality which Bergson has provided for us. The whole which is the person, to which Bergson refers as the "soul" is not the combination of discrete conscious states like the elements of a threesome:

...there is no need to associate a number of conscious states in order to rebuild the person, for the whole personality is in a single one of

²⁴Ibid., 142

them...²⁵

Which provides the paradoxical conclusion that:

...our daily actions are called forth not so much by our feelings themselves, which are constantly changing, as by the unchanging images with which these feelings are bound up.²⁶

The wholeness of the self or the person is that from which the various actions emerge, rather than from the totalling of the actions which that whole undertakes. This wholeness underlies change with an unchanging and continuous base.

It is, therefore, simply wrong to suggest that our freedom to act or change is circumscribed by the necessity of the actions which we undertake, for it is not the succession of those actions which is determinate of our selves. Like the plant, we are as much what we are when we are bud, or blossom, or fruit, for the whole of our selves is contained in each and every one of our actions or in any given stage which we might choose to consider in discrete and reflective isolation from the chain of growth and change which is the basis of our conscious existence. The continuity of succession does not depend on the consequentiality of the steps in the series, but in the constancy of the quality of selfhood which is all of them.

We realise, therefore, as Derrida's point about objectification illustrates, that the association of the step with the individual is the result of the separation of some part of the whole, rather than the identification of what is naturally a

²⁵Bergson, 165

²⁶Ibid., 167-8

discrete element. Much like the process of creating “Thursday” from the ongoing time of the week, this objectification of “parts” of time is an arbitrary division which creates a constant and enduring object only in name: “Is it Thursday today?” “Yes. All day long.” A brief exchange which points to the emptiness of any meaning in the production of a indivisible and unitary object by division of this section of duration from those areas which flank it. The security guard who begins work at nine o’clock in the evening finds little meaning in dividing one day from the next halfway through her shift.

How, then, are these arbitrary “elements” separated out from duration imbued with meaning? Why is the process of transforming duration into dimensional time necessary? How is it that we could come to ignore duration in exchange for dimensional time; and what does our average everyday way of looking at time have to do with the construction of understanding and our world? To answer these questions, we must delve more deeply into the subject-complement duality and explore the dialectic which Hegel lays out as the historical process.

But even as we move forward to consider Hegel, we must keep Bergson’s analysis in mind. For the seeming contradiction between simultaneity and succession and the danger which it poses to understanding ourselves constitute only the very tip of the real problems which Bergson’s exploration of temporality expose. Bergson relates these two competing visions of temporality directly to the two classes of things into which he is interested in classifying the objects of his

study: material objects and states of consciousness. These two classes of objects are those necessary to his exploration of free will; and will be revelatory in our exploration of the subject-complement duality, for they demonstrate the logical necessity of their existence.

Bergson is deeply interested in the laws of mechanics and the material world and therefore does not deny the value of dimensional time: its place at the foundations of the analysis of material objects; but material objects have a peculiarity which conscious states such as desires, understandings, and ideas do not. Material objects are fully external to the observer; and external objects are greatly responsible for our ongoing ability to conceive of our experienced time as homogeneous simultaneity rather than as a medium of duration:

...we find it extraordinarily difficult to think of duration in its original purity; this is due, no doubt, to the fact that we do not *endure* alone, external objects, it seems, *endure* as we do, and time, regarded from this point of view, has every appearance of a homogeneous medium.²⁷

The enduring presence of external objects is not simply their presence, it is their unchanging presence, and in this regard, they constantly serve to delude and confuse us, as they deluded Lot's wife. They turn our attention away from the duration which surrounds us by their apparent constancy – one that differs from the constancy underlying our own experience of time and consciousness.

The process of reflection in which we have been engaging relies on the

²⁷Bergson, 106-107

dimensional quality of time – that to which Derrida’s discussion of the “thing” alluded. Reflection on the object of our concern moves it into the past – it fixes it in its qualities and pushes it away from us while making it a discrete object in its previous continuous surroundings. This movement takes place if only because to consider an object is first to see it, then to recognise it, and these two successive and discrete acts mean that the observation and, hence, the observed, is not in our present – where we are observing the observation. We cannot do both at once, not sensibly; but this impossibility is precisely what dimensional time makes possible for us.

In the unification of the past moments of observation and recognition with the present moment of reflection afforded by dimensional time, the object is carried forward with us – it is extended, like the sheep. This baggage handling is what causes the object of our concern to take on the qualities of the material object and to become external: it remains constant as we and its context continue to change. For if the object had changed in the time between its observation and our reflection then we could not have engaged in reflection at all. At some point, our standpoint must be fixed and an image of the thing must be chosen. As MacDonald puts it in her discussion of Derrida’s point, “closure must be invoked”²⁸.

Finally, for the state of consciousness to be subjected to this kind of

²⁸Macdonald, “Deconstruction’s Promise: Derrida’s Rethinking of Marxism”, 165

analysis, it must take on the qualities of a material object – that is to say, it must become external to the subject. The subject must therefore herself become the complement: the final expression which will, in the end, reveal what will become of this pair at the end of time. It is to this which Hegel's exploration of subject and complement will bring us.

Yet, understanding the process of reflection as we have hereunto briefly encountered it reminds us that our exploration will point beyond the subject becoming the complement. For if reflection is to continue beyond the point of that unification, there must continue to be a complement. How that will play out will be the subject of a chapter yet to come. For now, we must turn to Hegel, to fully understand the nature of the subject-complement pair and to see what kind of change our reflection and understanding of the world has and will yet produce.

Reflections in Time

When dealing with a concept as multi-faceted as time and change it is difficult to choose any one place from which to set out. It was necessary to begin with Bergson's outline of temporality in order to provide some basis of understanding within which I might properly situate the elaboration of dialectic which now lies before us; but the task of making Bergson's work clear and relevant necessitated that the concepts which I am about to clarify – the subject and the complement – be introduced and provisionally outlined.

But Bergson's work has only opened the door to ever-more-difficult questions. We might accept the existence or presence of temporality as Bergson presented it, but the significance of that acceptance lies yet a step beyond: in the reason why dimension or duration would come to dominate our understanding of time and the connection between that reason and the process of understanding itself which has been promised. Even that most pregnant allusion to the meaning of the subject becoming indistinguishable from the complement is not yet clear.

In the end, the emergence of dimensionality as the dominant temporality for our means of understanding and the impact of this event on change itself has a great deal to do with that concept of change drawn from Hegel's work: the end of history. To understand the nature of this temporal terminus, it will be necessary to explore its meaning, both as presented by Hegel and as it has manifested itself in our world since his time, which will subsequently be explored through

Nietzsche. The final exposition of temporality and change will therefore have to wait. For now, we will deal with Hegel's presentation of the processes of human understanding and introduce his notion of historical change: the dialectic. Once that presentation is complete, it will be possible to relate this dialectic and the process of understanding which underlies it to the temporalities which have already been explored.

The outlining of the subject-complement pair which the last chapter required may have hinted at the fuller implications of the relationship, but its brevity and cursory nature permitted little more. Now that time has been explored, the time has arrived to properly explore objectification as that form of reflection with which we are most familiar; to explain the relationship between reflection and the subject-complement structure which has already put in an appearance; and beyond these goals, to uncover what waits at the head of the structure we are about to explore – both temporally and theoretically.

At their most fundamental level, reflection, objectification, and all the various processes of understanding which they underlie exist to provide the human animal with the framework of a world. Until they become objects²⁹, such manifestations as those identified as “light”, “tree”, “blue”, or “scent” remain no more than a vague and disjunct assembly of sensation. Some sensations may be welcome and others frightening, but it is our efforts to control them which allow

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And, therefore, are bound by the three conditions of objectification: indivisibility, discreteness, and impenetrability.

us to operate in ways different from those similarly sensible yet not nearly sentient animals which surround us.³⁰ Our quest for objectification – as an aspect of our ongoing quest to develop theory – is part of the process by which we seek to understand the world around us, and therefore a fundamental part of our nature.

Yet even the basic level of motion and sustenance which underlies survival is not the most primary level of consideration for creatures as concerned with abstract reasoning as us. Even as we understand the world around us, we will come to realise that we, too, are part of this world. Regardless of whether we can properly understand ourselves in the same way as we understand our world – as objects³¹, we often make this effort; and, as the nature of objectification will reveal, it is not possible for us to understand ourselves in this way without having an understanding of a world. Understanding the world around us may therefore also be essential to developing an impression of ourselves. It is for this reason that the term ‘self-consciousness’ is more than a lapse into redundancy – because to understand oneself demands consciousness of the world in which that one is

³⁰

An exploration of the neurological differences between humans and animals can be found in Lewis *et alia*'s *A General Theory of Love*. Simply, most mammals possess both a hindbrain responsible for fundamental instincts and emotion and a “mammalian brain” which allows for the division of sensation into a self and an external world. Humans and a few other animals also have a cortex, which apparently permits for the development of abstract concepts.

³¹

Here Heidegger would seem to part terms with the line of discussion, but in his treatment, the world and the way in which it is understood are dependent upon our own nature, which leads, in the end, to the same point: that observed and observer are interdependent. The question of priority may be left for a later argument – that over the validity of free will.

already immersed.

If these two objects of understanding may be construed as the alternatives, then we emerge with the structure already presented in outline: the subject-complement pair. Here, the individual is the subject, and the world her complement. This example and what has already briefly been noted about the process whereby the understanding of each of these objects is related to the other provides us with the defining qualities of the pair: their origins in abstract understanding and their interdependence. Lot's wife manages to further clarify an important element of this pairing: that the "world" so constituted need not have the completeness which the term might seem to signify. It is possible to base self-consciousness on what might seem to someone else to be a narrow frame of experience. Bearing these qualifications in mind, we can move on to explore the structure as it emerges and flourishes in Hegel's thought.

Owing to the significance of its philosophical legacy, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* has been the subject of many explanatory and illustrative essays. It is not my intention to reinterpret or transcend these works in their exploration of the *Phenomenology*, only to place certain concepts from that work in the broader context of the question of change with which this piece is concerned. For this reason, I will rely for many references on a number of works which have already explored and described the parameters of the Hegelian dialectic and its constituent elements, referring directly to the *Phenomenology* itself only when Hegel's elaborately translated language better serves to illustrate

the required point.

To explore the *Phenomenology*, I will make use of Alexandre Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. Additionally, when dealing with the connection between these concepts and the process of reflection and analysis, I will be referring to *The Feast*, by Tom Darby, which offers a possible inspiration for Hegel's approach to the dialectical process and which further relates this process to a discussion of symbology and semiotics which will allow us to move more easily from the discussion of the pair to a discussion of reflection.

We most commonly associate definition with the itemisation of the properties which constitute a given thing: that man, for example, is an upright-walking creature with two legs – obviously qualities which are of the object under consideration. Yet, on closer inspection, this itemisation may not be intended to provide the qualities which constitute the object but rather, to distinguish the object under consideration from other objects around it – to provide the object with its discreteness. To this aspect of the definition of objects – and, hence, the understanding or analysis of those worldly manifestations which we apprehend through sensation, Hegel refers when he speaks of the 'This' and the 'Nothing':

The This [an object] is, therefore, established as *not* [*semper sic*] This, or as something superseded; and hence not as Nothing, but as a determinate Nothing, the Nothing of a content, viz. Of the This.

Being...is a universal in virtue of its having mediation or the negative within it; when it *expresses* this in its immediacy it is a *differentiated, determinate* property. As a result *many* such properties are established simultaneously, one being the negative of

the other.³²

The creation of the object through the establishment of these negative properties of the other object therefore is the fundamental process whereby things are objectified or made amenable to our understanding.

Every time that objectification is undertaken, two complementary objects come into simultaneous presence, and neither is understood for and by that which it positively is [the qualities which pertain to it], in terms of its 'Being', but only with regard to the qualities of the 'This' which is established as its opposite. This process of objectification holds as true for the subject 'I' as it will for any other object which it will create to enable its own understanding:

The being that eats, for example, creates and preserves its own reality by the overcoming of a reality other than its own, by the "transformation" of an alien reality into its own reality...the positive content of the I, constituted by negation, is a function of the positive content of the negated non-I.³³

That which therefore defines our selves as subjects is dependent upon that to which our efforts turns our attention, just as that object is, in its turn, dependent upon our attentions with respect to it.

That which defines the relationship between this object and its complement is the nature of the subject's interest in the complementary object: the relationship which we create between the object which will be the non-I and our selves. This

³²Both of these excerpts are from Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §113

³³Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 4

defining quality is generally constituted of our desires, and these become central to the ongoing emergence of understanding:

Desire is what transforms Being, revealed to itself by itself in (true) knowledge, into an “object” [complement] revealed to a “subject” by a subject different from the object and “opposed” to it.³⁴

The power of desire to change the world should therefore never be underestimated. It is, after all, desire which turns the head of Lot’s wife rearward, and the effect on her was significant.

Each desire will generate by its operation between the self and the world, two entities: the subject and its complement. Each of these entities is defined by virtue of its negation of the qualities of the other. From either perspective, therefore, the complement is the opposite of the subject with respect to the qualities with which the desire motivating the subject in this particular case is concerned.

For the purposes of this work, the subject-complement pair can be visualised as two objects connected along a horizontal axis – the axis of desire. With the particular desire as the quality [dimension] along which the subject and complement are related, it is possible for a given subject to be related to many different complements³⁵. A creature as self-complicated as a human will therefore

³⁴Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 3-4

³⁵

This is not the multiplicity of desire to which Kojève refers. That multiplicity of desire bears principally upon the need for desire to be directed towards some other desire. This need for another desire forms the basis for human society – the need for the companionship of other human individuals emerges from the logical necessity of other

be defined in relation to many different complements, and as man's desires change, those complements which are central to his understanding of self will shift. As a result, man becomes what he is with regard to his desires. It is, therefore, our desires which control the way in which we change – for desire, at last, we may understand to be a single element of will.

This process of self-transformation is not limited to desires which cause man to interact with the outside world. As the last chapter pointed out, the process of objectification freezes the object of scrutiny in time, even pulling it through time so as to create and occupy a homogeneous span within which its properties and qualities do not change. This process makes the complement external to the subject, which itself continues to exist in and remains conscious of that temporality which makes its existence as a whole possible – duration. Yet the span of time occupied by the frozen object can exist only in that other temporality – dimensional time, within which change cannot take place, only the substitution of one homogeneous and impenetrable element for another in the same line.

Yet Kojève suggests that this process in dimensional time is that very thing which makes change possible:

For there to be Self-Consciousness, Desire [sic] must therefore be directed toward a non-natural object, toward something that goes beyond the given reality... Desire, being the revelation of an emptiness, the presence of the absence of a reality, is something

desiring selves to the raising of human desire above the animalistic [which merely desires the external object, and not desire itself] [Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 5-6].

essentially different from the desired thing, something other than a thing, than a static and given real being that stays eternally identical to itself.³⁶

Something negated by that which stays eternally identical to itself is that which always becomes something different from itself, or that which changes continually. The non-natural object is something not of present, but of future, and of a future which is separate and distinct from the present, for if the two were one, it would not be possible for them to be related by this process of desiring which always creates the subject-complement pair.

In other words, the very being of this I will be becoming, and the universal form of this being will not be space, but time... Thus, this I will be its own product: it will be (in the future) what it has become by negation (in the present) of what it was (in the past)...³⁷

From the nature of Desire, therefore, Kojève manages to infer the process which will underscore and delineate time and history itself. It is a process whereby man is continually engaged in surpassing that which he already is.

Thus is history itself set into motion; and thus, the end towards which that history will point becomes accessible for the first time. But before stopping to consider the movement of this history and whether or not it violates the Bergsonian-defined impossibility of change within the dimensional time which it spans, there are a few points worthy of emphasis. The surpassing of man is the very object of change within man himself. The work of Nietzsche with which we

³⁶Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 5

³⁷Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 5

will soon be concerned dwells upon this point in particular – the surpassing of man and the going-beyond what man is. Of greater immediate concern is the following point. If man is to surpass that which man is, then man must first have a definition of what man is; and, whether defined through desire with respect to what man currently is or what man will be, this definition consists of a negation and, as seen already, consists of the simultaneous generation of both subject and complement.

This last point brings us back again to the nature of objectification in dimensional time. If man is defined with respect to that which man has yet to become, then the future man and present man emerge at once and not in subsequent steps. In dimensional time it would be possible for man and what can for the moment be referred to as after-man to exist, but as elements in dimensional time, these two would be mutually impenetrable and discrete. Furthermore, for them to emerge into dimensional time simultaneously would, as I suggested above, mean that they would come to occupy a span of homogeneous and simultaneous dimensional time, as Bergson provides for in his definitions. Yet two impenetrable and discrete objects cannot occupy the same span of homogeneous time – its very homogeneity is generated by the singularity of the object which persists within it. It is therefore not possible for this process of man looking temporally beyond man to take place in dimensional time. What then, is Kojève speaking of?

It is the difficulty of adequately considering duration from within the

analytic structures which both necessitate and emerge from dimensional time which in this case gives rise to the potential confusion. What Kojève is genuinely referring to is the presence and persistence of an conscious entity in durational time, and that which he is describing greatly helps to sharpen our understanding of this temporality.

Discrete elements, as units, can only come together to occupy a homogeneous span in dimensional time if they therein constitute a totality which is as unchanging and homogeneous as the time which it occupies. The threesome of sheep cannot be transformed without losing that quality which has defined it [the axis of desire along which it emerges into complementhood alongside the subject scrutinising it] and, hence, ceasing to be that which it is.

By contrast, the man who changes through time by looking beyond himself exists in duration, where the incidental moments have no sense in and of themselves, but only by relation to the whole of the passage which constitutes them. It is for this reason that the woman who looks beyond herself is becoming and not being. The object is that non-object, the whole or complete thing which transcends objectification itself by virtue of its transformation.

In this durational transformation, the simultaneity refers to the wholeness of the entity which is both the negated present [subject] and the negated future [complement]. They must come into simultaneous existence because the whole of the self is only so as present originally in both the subject and complement, rather than the summation of both the subject and the complement. This situation

perfectly models the duration to which Bergson referred, and the historical process of becoming to which Kojève has alluded as present in Hegel. Notably, there is one more conclusion to be drawn from this situation: if valid, then, with respect to wholes and duration, the future may cause the present as surely as the past; and the arrow of time is set spinning. In the spinning arrow of time lies the genuine possibility of which will must make use; as I will discuss anon.

The transformation taking place in duration would be sufficient to explain change only if man's desire extended only with respect to himself. Yet, as we have already noted, there may be many axes of desire along which man constructs himself and his scrutinised reality as subject and complement; and man's imagination allows him to move beyond the natural world as the whole of that which is sensibly manifest without moving to construct temporally distinct versions of himself. Therefore, though the process by which man moves beyond himself, like every other process, occupies his time [duration as locus of change], it may not be defined by his time [duration]. He may instead choose to define the time which the process occupies – the objectification which will lead to the emergence of dimensional time. Man may seek to go beyond himself without consciously constructing a future self, but simply by desiring the other.

It is true that such a distinction neglects the fact that the desire of the other, enacted, will create a future self distinct and different from the present one. But this distinction, unless consciously undertaken by the desiring man, is being overlaid upon the process only by the observer, objectifying the locus in this, as in

all other things, and thereby transforming duration into dimension. It is necessary that if an object cannot be present spatially, the space in which it exists must emerge temporally [one possible explanation for the development of temporality itself]; but the impenetrability of objects demands that “space in time” only becomes necessary if space in space would be impossible – i.e. - if the space in which it would be is either already occupied, or if it is not there. So I must conclude, if my glass of tea is empty, that the tea was present in either past or future; but I need not imagine that I had a glass of tea in present or future if I can’t presently see it – the glass with tea could be elsewhere in spatial locus.

The desiring man is therefore not necessarily simultaneously creating subject and complement as aspects of self in duration but can also use subject and complement already at hand as elements in an instant or span of dimensional time, frozen, with one state of the system as a total substituting itself for the previous. Unless this desiring is understood as a transformation of self – therefore, as change to self – the self cannot change, for it will cease to be operating in duration. To change, we must not merely become different, we must *willingly negate* our present selves. For a subject to enfold elements or properties which were previously part of its complement demands only that it negate those elements of that complement – the element of desire towards self becomes incidental rather than fundamental. The pair, as the whole which occupies [and hence, defines] that span does not change, wherefore the “place in time” or span need not change, either.

The point that we must undertake to negate ourselves – the necessity of willingness – should be particularly borne in mind when we move to consider the object of Nietzsche's concern. This willingness is not desire in itself, but desire directed towards ourselves – something that will obviously take on greater significance if our selves as objects become the external complements that have already been foretold.

The other process which is ongoing is actually the very process from which we first set out – for the perceiving animal did not set out to know in order to change itself but in order to maintain itself. Self-consciousness as the process of negating began with the negating of the other-than-self, the world. And along the various axes of desire, this negation of the world remains the means of understanding the self.

This process is the one to which I have hitherto not made enough reference: reflection. The meaning of reflection can now be more clearly understood – it is the process of a subject understanding itself by reference to those complements which come into simultaneous existence with the subject itself. As in the case of Lot's wife, it can now be more clearly understood that reflection upon the present complement – really an extended past complement, rather than on the future self as complement cannot lead to change – it prohibits change.

The process of reflection, of mutual understanding through present subject-complement pairs, reveals a certain blindness on the part of subjects: that they cannot know themselves. This much should be easy to understand – one cannot

look upon oneself, and as Lot's wife's tale suggested, looking upon the other is essential to the negating of the other. Reflection's role in revealing the nature of the other can be understood in a need as simple as that for another person to adjust one's tie, or in the need of another person's desire to satisfy one's own³⁸. This latter use for reflection brings us to the prime motive force in Hegelian history: recognition.

Self-consciousness lies at once both beneath and beyond consciousness of the external world. By negating [or, in Hegel's terminology, "superceding"³⁹] a complement being which is possessed of consciousness [though not necessarily of the self-consciousness which marks the subject's being], the subject manages to establish the reality of its own consciousness to itself. Quickly summarising the consequences which follow from this premise, Kojève illustrates the emergence of the first interaction between men:

...the "first" anthropogenetic action necessarily takes the form of a fight: a fight to the death between two beings that claim to be men, a fight for pure prestige carried on for the sake of "recognition" by the adversary.⁴⁰

Though the fight is to the death, it is not merely unnecessary, but counterproductive for it to actually reach that point – death is the goal, rather than as the actual endpoint of the conflict. For it would be impossible for a dead

³⁸Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 5-6

³⁹Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 180

⁴⁰Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, 11-12

man to provide conscious recognition of the victor – the very prize over which this battle is to be fought. Therefore, it is essential for the combat to be a success that one overcome the other “dialectically”, rather than mortally. The one who is overcome must be:

...annulled in its contingent (stripped of sense, “senseless”) aspect of natural, given (“immediate”) entity, but it is preserved in its essential (and meaningful, significant) aspect; thus mediated by negation, it is sublimated or raised up to a more “comprehensive” and comprehensible mode of being...[the overcomer] must leave him [the overcome] life and consciousness, and destroy only his autonomy.⁴¹

The destruction of autonomy, therefore coincides with the capacity of the subject [here, the overcomer, he who negates the other] to determine and to define [here to mediate] the complement. It is this mediation which makes the complement “comprehensible” and this mediation is its “meaningful” aspect – meaningful to the victor, of course.

The resultant emergence of the “master” and “slave” [terms as translated from Kojève] or “lord” and “bondsmen” [as translated from Hegel] as the humans who, respectively, prevail and succumb before the mortal clash is not of immediate consequence to the matter before us. Yet the outcome of this relationship, too, should be borne in mind, for it has illustrated the connection between reflection and autonomy of action. The slave has surrendered the capacity to define himself through the reflection upon and mediation of a

⁴¹Ibid., 15

complement – thus, his freedom, too, has been surrendered; but what has been explained with respect to time should not now be ignored. In fact, now that we have reached a point of revelation with regards to freedom, we should pause to reflect again on how it relates to time.

The slave has not lost the ability to reflect upon those structures which he has already mediated – these are carried with him through dimensional time by the activity of his imagination and they remain. Neither has the master truly stripped the slave of the capacity to perform the first kind of dialectic [this will prove to be the very means by which the slave finally transcends the strictures of his bondage] – that by which the present self is negated by the future self. The one ability which has been irrevocably stripped from the slave is the ability to define and negate the master – the other consciousness in his present. Naturally, the possibility of the slave defining himself in the present is thereby precluded; but the definition of his subject with reference to a past complement remains. The slave may live time out in a reverie of the past or live time out in fantasies of the future – the master cannot deny him these pastimes; but these pastimes do not permit him change or freedom. In fact, his continued existence as a slave is an instance of his self-definition with respect to a past complement. The master overcame him – he is not continually overcome until he turns this past complementary effect into an extended one in a span of time. The slave can live autonomously or otherwise only in dimensional time – frozen, static, and unchanging. His life comes to bear a strong resemblance to that of our erstwhile

friend: the pillar of salt.

Leaving the slave and master to their codependancy for the moment, we should turn back to reflect [hoping all the while to avoid Lot's wife's fate] upon the process in which they were engaged and what it sets in motion. Though the master seizes the autonomy, the slave may continue to reflect. This reflection, though, may only take place within the subject-complement structure established by the master – that is to say, the slave must understand the master as the master constructs his subject in reflection upon the slave. The only logical possibility the slave can maintain in the face of this structure is for his subject to be constructed as the complement to the master's, resulting in exactly the same understanding of himself as that which the master already has.

The impossibility of self-reflection reminds us that only the complement in any given relationship can be understood by its subject. The subject can only understand itself as the dialectical counterpart to what it perceives. What the subject in each case is therefore understanding is not truly itself, but the complement upon which it looks. Through reflection, the subject comes to acquire greater and greater understanding of the complement. Given enough time, it may even come to completely [totally] understand the complement.

Which hints at the true nature of this second process underway in history. The process whereby the two elements in the subject-complement pair are engaged in the gradual unveiling of each other's true being and existence. Ideally, at least, there can come a future point where the two have achieved complete

knowledge of each other; and by each outlining the other, the basis for each to understand itself comes into being.

This mutually revelatory chain of events unfolds as follows. The master remains in the position of being able to change herself through self-determination [negating the present self with respect to a future self]. She acquires her understanding of her present subject through the process of negating her present complement – the slave. Therefore, any change which the master [subject] undertakes is mediated by the negation of her subject which is constructed by negation of her complement [the slave]. The result? The master becomes more and more like the slave if she undertakes change. Ultimately, the master and the slave will come to encompass one another. Though the logical consequence of the combination of self and other is easy enough to understand, it is somewhat difficult to see how the whole of being could be achieved in a union of master and slave. A different axis of desire might make it easier to understand how this transcendence can produce what it claims; and to consider this alternate axis, it will pay to momentarily consider the lineage of this consequence of transcendence.

It is to this lineage that Tom Darby's *The Feast* turns its attention in its fourth chapter, "Hegel's Debt to Jakob Böhme". Böhme, a Lutheran theosopher, maintained a cosmology which unified a dialectical structure with more traditional Christian metaphysics. In this cosmos, the omnipotent God represents the positive object of primary presence [subject], while this God's desire to

understand itself spontaneously creates and reveals the negativity within it [complement] – in this case, the fallen angel Lucifer⁴². It is the process of the subject attempting to look upon itself that leads to the spontaneous generation of the complement, by the negation of which in turn the subject [God] may seek to understand itself.

The final purpose of the world, if this axis is to be maintained, is the complete revelation of man to God and of God to man⁴³, which double revelation at once makes it possible for each of these elements to know themselves. The two complementary parts of the world, man and God, become reconciled, united, and transcendent in spirit.

Just as his man-God pair can help explain how the cosmos can be unified through the complete co-penetration of knowledge by each element, Böhme's reference to the divine provides us with an excellent model by which to completely describe the structure of the Hegelian dialectic, even up to the end of time. We have already established the subject-complement pair, conceived as two poles arranged at opposite ends of the horizontal axis of desire which creates and connects them. Such a pair has its reflection in Böhme's theosophy: the father and son of the holy trinity, for there cannot be either without the other, and it is the emergence of either that spontaneously brings the other into being. With this

⁴²Darby, *The Feast*, 124-125

⁴³Darby, *The Feast*, 134

model under our belt, we may extend the metaphor. Just as father and son are united in the spirit of the holy trinity, man and God, master and slave, day and night are united and transcended at the end of their dialectical history and through the complete co-penetration of their knowledge by a third element which subsumes them: the *transcendant*. This element adds a second dimension to the Hegelian dialectical structure – a vertical connection between the base pair and the transcendant which brings both together to form a triangle – a trinity.

This Hegelian trinity of subject, complement, and transcendant is the key to understanding the nature of change in Hegelian history. The slave, left to his own devices, eventually developed a kind of freedom for himself. Unable to escape the dialectical process which still dominates understanding, he could only achieve the freedom he sought [the ability to change] by replacing his master with another, the Christian God⁴⁴. Thus, the man-God pair comes to be the definitive relation of history and hence, of change. Its ultimate resolution becomes the final objective of history; and the measure of its success.

Before considering the state of this final objective, the significance of the dialectical pairs should be properly noted. These emergent entities: the subject and the complement are more than merely the incidental objects upon which they are based, whether those be man and animal, master and slave, or man and God:

Just as universality is its principle in general, the immediately self-differentiating moments within perception are universal: 'I' [subject]

⁴⁴Darby, *The Feast*, 104

is a universal and the object [complement] is a universal. That principle has arisen for us, and therefore the way we take in perception is no longer something that just happens to us like sense-certainty; on the contrary, it is logically necessitated⁴⁵.

Those categories which are created through perception to deal with the sensory input of the world no longer pertain solely to those specific external objects and expressions which give rise to them. Their very nature as categories raises them from incidental coping mechanisms to qualities which define the world around us.

Yet, as we have already seen, our interaction with the world is defined by our desires specifically relating to it. Therefore, our understanding of the world, which is composed of these incidental categories raised to the quality of the universal, forms the basis from which we come to desire things. This desire, in turn, further imposes, through the process of negation, that same order on the world, reinforcing its dominance of our understanding of ourselves. The process of change which this desire puts into play is therefore no longer related only to the specific desire which gives it wing; but to all desire as it forms the basis of our concepts of self and world.

This end of history, as the transcendent combination of man and God, is equally an end of those elements which led to it, insofar as their isolate and individual states of being are concerned. Even their individual concepts of existential elements will come to an end, replaced by the corresponding transcendent concepts. Space, being, and time of the subject and of the

⁴⁵Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §111

complement will be replaced by the new space, being, and time of the transcendent.

We have been occupied hitherto with time, and time in particular comes to change at the end of Hegelian history. The different temporalities of God and of man, which we will shortly explore in greater depth, will come to be united along with their subject and complement adherents. The omnipresent and constant eternity of God and the transient and transforming time of man will come together to form an “eternal instant”⁴⁶. But what is the nature of this eternal instant? It is possible to understand an eternal present within the framework of either temporality which has already been laid out. Which actually represents the emergence of time at the Hegelian end of history?

Duration provides us with an eternal instant insofar as it represents constancy within the ongoing movement of time. In this case, the instant refers to the wholeness of the subject across time, for it is only a subject insofar as it is what it is in all past, present, and future, which it always is, was, and will be. Within the first process of dialectic which we laid out, the future and present emerge simultaneously into existence, owing to the unity of the subject across them. If this is what is represented by the eternal instant, then the process of dialectic between subject and external complement has come to an end [the process which was earlier identified with dimensional time]; and only the process

⁴⁶Darby, *The Feast*, 127

of dialectic between present and future subject remains.

Dimensional time provides us with an eternal instant which is far simpler to grasp conceptually. In its translation of past and present into simultaneous presence and span and its extension of that span even into future, it offers a potential eternity of a single and unchanging state. The first process of dialectic cannot exist in this state, for in it, the present is never different from the past or the future. Only a given span can be different from the one before; but the objects within a given span are discrete and distinct from those in every subsequent span – they remain objects. Therefore, in dimensional time, to negate the present to produce the future would be to negate the past rather than the present – one is never dealing with things as they are, only with a stultified and stagnant notion of what they were at some point. If this is the meaning of the eternal instant, then only a process of dialectic between a subject and an external complement would be possible [though, at the end of history, there would no longer be a difference]. It would no longer be possible for an individual to change.

This, then, is the question to which we have finally come in our quest to understand the nature of freedom in time. Change hitherto has led us along the path of Hegelian dialectic. Yet this path leads to an end which may have precluded change. We cannot continue to function with this uncertainty. We must know what has happened at the end of history, whether the Hegelian dialectic has come to an end, and whether or not change remains possible.

We can now elaborate on the situation of Lot's wife. Her desire to see the

city can now be better understood as a desire to understand what she had become; but in looking upon things past [looking back], she was only able to understand herself as a thing already past. Her effort, then, to make herself present from a negation of the past, united past and present in a span of dimensional time; and the results of such a transformation have already been explained. Small wonder that she became frozen in time.

Yet there was another consequence to which the exploration of dimensional time pointed us: the externalisation even of the subject; and we have yet to consider what the reality of this externalisation may be. To understand it properly, we must properly consider the end of history and examine whether the transcendant that comes with it can possibly be that consequence of which we have been forewarned.

The end of history, if we maintain the Hegelian position, must coincide with the end of the elements at the base of the trinity – the subject and the complement, and with the emergence of the third element, the transcendant. Proving the emergence of the transcendant might be difficult, but we thankfully have several sources to turn to concerning the end of the base elements. By considering these, we will be able to find the answer to those questions which remain.

To Kill A God

It is doubtful that any line Nietzsche ever penned gained its author greater notoriety than the bold exclamation of Zarathustra: "That God is dead."⁴⁷ While effortlessly alienating its author's work from the more fundamentally-minded among the religious, it has offered anyone with a memory of at least three words the opportunity to glean a certain cachet of profundity through quotation. Of course, that profundity owes little to the repeater; but, ironically, the profundity is not necessarily that of Nietzsche, either.

Now, though, that we have explored the structure of the dialectic which has been leading our understanding through history, the true significance and profundity of the death of God can be satisfactorily explained. It is a powerful phrase, used by Nietzsche to describe the current state of our world, and explains why it has become more difficult for us to both understand and to undertake change in the modern world. Yet, at the same time, it is the source of tremendous possibility – a way that has been opened; and one which Nietzsche would have us take advantage of – whose course he even sets out to describe. The task, therefore, is to uncover this: the full meaning of the death of God, both for the Hegelian dialectic, and for what must come afterward.

The structural trinity which describes the Hegelian end of history has

⁴⁷Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue, 2

already provided us with one possible understanding of Nietzsche's remark. If subject and complement have been subsumed in the transcendant, then this epigraphic proclamation may be no more than a poetic rendering of the ultimate resolution of the *man-God* pair. Both man and God have disappeared in the emergence of the transcendant, which in future I will refer to by the Nietzschean term which has already come up: the *übermensch*⁴⁸.

But for Nietzsche to merely have confirmed the arrival of Hegel's end of history would hardly confer upon him or those works which elaborate this point any great depth of consideration. In the terminus implicit in the death of God, there is a certain Hegelian legacy; but even at the most obvious level, there is a significant difference between the completion encompassed by this Hegelian trinity and the words of Zarathustra.

It is to man and not to his transcendent successor that Nietzsche's narrator addresses himself when he tells us of his quest: "I am bringing gifts unto men."⁴⁹ Clearly enough, these are not the *übermenschen* [else Nietzsche would not speak of one surpassing the other], but that same transcendence tells us that the man of whom Nietzsche speaks cannot be absolute or complete as would be the fruit of

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Übermensch is used by Nietzsche [as in the second part of the prologue to *Also sprach Zarathustra*] to refer to that manifestation which will bud forth from man, surpassing it. In this regard, the term seems quite appropriate to represent the transcendant of the *man-God* duality, which is that manifestation budding forth in the unification of man and God, as much after man as after God.

⁴⁹Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 2

the man-God transcendent – for that which is complete in being both absolute and total cannot, by definition, be surpassed⁵⁰. The death of God is not accompanied in the Nietzschean canon by the death of man; and without the latter, we can scarcely maintain that the end of history as Hegel saw it had arrived.

If the death of God described by Nietzsche cannot therefore be the Hegelian end of history, then what can it be? The death of God is not a sufficient reason to dispense with the Hegelian dialectic which has described things thus far – its fundamental role in understanding has not been challenged. It is, though, a reason to question the final outcome of that dialectic and how the structure of the trinity might shift to accommodate the loss of one of its foundations.

Such a shift constitutes not only a change in the relationship between man and God, it represents a difference in the relationship between man and his own future – a difference in change and in will. A difference in change means that there will be a difference in temporality – the difference for which we are presently looking. This difference is at the heart of the problem which spurs Nietzsche to speak; and the reason why the death of God must be understood before man can finally be surpassed to complete the trinity. Fortunately, we have another option already hinted at to guide us: the possibility that the subject might even become external to itself.

Without delving into the question of the true nature of death, we can at

⁵⁰Nor would Zarathustra be desirous of surpassing it, as will be discussed anon.

least assert that it is partly constituted by an absence from the “world” previously inhabited – a termination of possibility, or the end of the future and the ever-nascent present. Like the transformation into a pillar of salt, death fixes its object in the past and thereby provides the exhaustion of its potential and hence, its change. Since it cuts off all future changes and developments, death should permit the completion of the description of its object.

Since reflection depends upon the past fixation of the object⁵¹, death permits a final, total, and perhaps even whole description of the object – a highly desirable outcome, since it would be difficult to understand the context and meaning of an absence without being able to properly describe the presence which, in the case of an object’s death, precedes it. To understand the death of God, we must consider the life of God. How can God be best described? What was the nature of God?

If the Hegelian trinity has its origins in theosophical inquiry⁵², then theology may provide the surest footing for an attempt to understand the basis of that structure. To understand the nature of God as it may apply to the Hegelian trinity, we should look to those places in that heritage where we find clues to the nature of God’s presence. In its place as the complement of the man-God pair, God sets the boundaries of what man may be, a relationship which man

⁵¹As discussed in the chapter on time

⁵²As we saw in Darby’s *The Feast*

reciprocates, true to Cates's dangerous remark in *Inherit the Wind*: "God created Man in his own image; and Man, being a gentleman, returned the compliment."⁵³ The nature of God will be best understood not in studied isolation from the nature of the man against which it is posed, but rather in careful contrast with it.

We have already explored the two theories of time as understood by Bergson, and the contrast between them will be fundamental to understanding the contrast between our methods of reflection and the succession which Nietzsche demands that man undertake. The phenomenon central to the ascent of the vertical structure of the trinity may also help us understand the pair at its base. What is the difference between time as experienced by each object in the pair: man and God? If the contrast will explain the structure's elements, perhaps it might be explained by understanding the purely structural element in this contrast's written form: the word 'and'.

The Bible uses the word 'and' in either of two ways. The first denotes simultaneous presence, as in the list of Haman's sons, "and Parshandata, and Dalphon, and Aspata"⁵⁴, characteristic of dimensional time. The other denotes successive points [or spans] in time as in the events before Sinai "And Moses went down from the mount ...; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people.... And it came to pass"⁵⁵, characteristic of duration. These two uses of

⁵³Lawrence and Lee, *Inherit the Wind*, II,ii

⁵⁴Esther, 9,vii

⁵⁵Exodus, 19,xiv-xvi

'and' provide the framework of understanding the difference between the temporalities of man and God when we pause to properly associate them.

We have already seen that man perceives time in passing. Whether the passing that takes place is transformed, by reflection, into a simultaneity or maintained in its pure form as change and duration, succession or the forward pointing of the arrow of time is part of human existence. Man cannot experience anything but the present, and must use reflection to hold on to the past while the future remains completely unknown. The latter use of the word 'and', conjunctive succession, therefore does a good job of illustrating time as experienced by man – duration.

By contrast, then, as the complement of man, God's omniscience would present time in its eternal form: complete and simultaneous presence – very much like the span of dimensional time. In this, perhaps, lies the reason behind man's effort to transform duration into dimensionality: the drive of the Hegelian dialectic to bring man and God together. Time does not pass for God as it would for man, but all the elements within man's duration have their presence before God at once. The first use of the word 'and', conjunctive simultaneity, illustrates time as experienced by God.

This distinction between the temporalities of man and God points to a tremendous chasm between their understandings of experience. To begin at the beginning, consider the conjunction in the Gospel of John's genesis: "In the

beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”⁵⁶

This series of ‘ands’ may be no more to that God than a term of equivalence, but to man, it must always carry the tinge of succession and of mortal temporality – and this dividing chasm between man and God may prove meaningful to the story whose passage we wish to understand – the story of change whose end is already coming into sight.

There was first a Word – a symbol – an image. Then the word was with God – the two were present. Similarly, man was made after God, but was present with God. At last, the two become one. Hegel’s end of history would be gratified by this reading of a passage more conventionally associated with the emergence of the holy trinity; but it can serve us to illustrate that temporal chasm which stands between man and God, for, of course, to God, these three subsequent occurrences do not have to follow one another – they coexist.

To understand this temporal chasm [and, therefore, the objects which sit to either side], there is another beginning to consider. In this beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, not with the Word, but with a word. “And God said: let there be light [yehee or], and there was light [vayehee or].”⁵⁷ A god might understand those two together, but the chasmatic conjunction foils the human effort of understanding.

⁵⁶John, 1,i

⁵⁷Genesis, 1,iii

To a man, these two things remain: that God spoke of light and that there was light. In the beginning, there was the word 'light', and [then] there was light. The act of creation consisted of the calling the creation into Being by the naming of the creation. The final consummation of the calling into Being of that most useful manifestation of the being does not take place until God called "the light day, and the darkness he called night"⁵⁸. Only then can the evening and the morning of the first day, indeed, of the passage of time, be said to come and go, as they do in the subsequent line.

This act of creation is understood of God only as man can temporally understand it. It can only be understood as man can create things – indeed, even the world – for himself. To call the being into Being, out of that indefinite nothingness which forms the grounding of a human future, requires the apprehension of the being – the evocation of the creation-yet-to-be – the name of the object – the word. From this process man learns not only how God created the world, but even how to create.

Yet we could not be faulted now for demanding the relevance of this dalliance with the divine; but for the oft-repeated words of Nietzsche still standing before us – God is dead. We no longer turn to the divine to provide the origins of our world. We no longer require godly intervention to make manifest the reality which confronts us. Why, then, should we remain interested in these Byzantine

⁵⁸Ibid., 1,v

and antique phrases? The answer lies in the very phrase which would first seem to bar further inquiry. What does this mean: that God is dead? Indeed, the very fact that we have ceased to look to the divine for our world's origins conceals the answer. The challenge will be to uncover the meaning behind that cessation of interest in the divine act of creation.

To take that step forward, we must first take a step back and continue with the task of describing God in more ways than its temporality. God is first introduced as a creator – which description might seem so obvious as to be insignificant and superfluous to our consideration. Yet it may not be so insignificant if we pause to reflect upon how recently we have come to look on that act of creation as something within our reach.

We have already recognised the difference which separates the divine from the human in terms of the experience of time and the consequent experiences and meaning of causality. To briefly extend the significance of this divide, the laws of nature most familiar to us – those dealing with Newtonian mechanics and gravitation – depend for their utility on the recognised function of causality in a temporality of successive states. If I push an object, I then expect the object to respond to my advances. How different this experience must be from that of a divine and eternal perspective, wherein it may be difficult indeed to determine whether the response preceded or followed the push – the whole question becomes meaningless, along with the principles and theories which depend upon its accepted answer. These fundamental “laws” of nature might, therefore, be

both irrelevant and insensible to a divine observer.

Yet as distant as this kind of experience may seem to us, depending on the divine for self-identification suggests a vivid similarity between the God that is dead and the humanity that lives. This God would appear to suffer from one of the very sins against which its creations are enjoined, as becomes apparent in the course of its self-identification at Sinai:

I am YHVH, your host[s] [*elohim*, a plural word, sometimes translated as 'god'], who took you from Egypt, the house of servitude; Let yourself not have other hosts upon my countenance [*al panai*, literally, upon my face]...for I, YHVH, your host, am a jealous lord [*el kanah*];⁵⁹

If God self-identifies as “jealous” we should examine the nature of this jealousy to find out more about the presence that “was” God, necessary to achieve our eventual goal: understanding the absence that “is” God. Jealousy may be a mortal sin, but it is clearly also a divine attribute. Yet if gravity, law, and time are different for God than they are for woman, why should we expect jealousy to be the same? Divine jealousy would be best considered in light of the specific injunction to which it is tied. What is it that God’s jealousy will not permit? The answer to this question may equally provide the meaning of divine jealousy.

The injunction in question is the Second Commandment, which stands as a general prohibition against idolatry; but which begins with the specific phrase quoted above: “Let yourself not have other hosts upon my countenance”. Simply,

⁵⁹Exodus, 20, ii-v

this phrase may be taken to prohibit the worship of any other god, idol or disembodied presence; but such a commandment would be amply expressed by the plainer: "Let yourself not have other hosts". The Bible is rarely verbose without cause. The real clue to the nature of this jealousy lies within this additional specification: not that other gods are prohibited, they are prohibited only upon the countenance of God – before God, as more conventionally translated.

Before, for man, is a temporal distinction; but for the issuer of the divine command, it is sequentially indistinct – the real change which 'before' produces is not the precedence or priority of a presence, but the addition of a presence, for the 'hosts' are already plural within the presence of God the infinite and eternal. An additional host would merely be redundant – offering nothing new, but only reiterating what was already present – that is to say, it would be a representation. The injunction against other hosts before God is therefore an injunction against representation. Here, once more, the question before us turns back to our means of understanding and reflection as discussed in the last chapter.

Yet seeing this commandment as a rejection of representation would be nothing especially novel. That the injunction is really an injunction against representation is borne out by the remainder of the Second Commandment:

Let yourself not make unto yourself a statue or aught image of anything that is in the heavens or above and in the earth or below or in the waters below the earth; do not bow down to them neither worship them...⁶⁰

It is not that images or statues are themselves prohibited by this injunction. Very specifically, the commandment insists that it is the making of a representation by man for man which is wrong. What, though, is special about this prohibition? It would be sufficient, were the commandments concerned simply with establishing the sole worship of their issuer as the exclusive divine presence, to insist that such representations not be worshipped as the divine; and, as before, there is meaning and not excess in the message's length.

The simplest and most immediate response may prove the most illuminating: prevent any possibility of such a heresy [idolatry] by precluding even the possibility that there might be something to worship. It would seem that this God has a particularly low opinion of its followers; but it may instead be revealing about the character of the God and of humanity as a whole. After all, this venture into the prohibition against representation has been geared towards explaining what God was – which is as much as to say to tell us what man was.

If competition itself were the object of this divine jealousy, then we would have expected the Second Commandment to be complete without the specific injunction against representation itself. It must therefore be that, in addition to alternative objects of adoration, God is jealous of representation or, more

⁶⁰Exodus, 20, iv-v

specifically, of what that act of representation must actually mean.

To understand what that representation must mean, it behooves us to return to one of our two starting-points. When we are jealous of a thing, we want it for ourselves – even though we may already possess it. God has no need of representation, surely, for as a whole, or complete entity, it would be redundant for him to create a symbol of a thing for the thing, as discussed earlier. Yet the injunction is not for the benefit of God but for the benefit of man. It therefore refers to that which is understood by man as representation. This divine manifestation, made amenable to humankind as representation is our universal starting point – the act of creation itself. God is jealous of creation. Creation is to remain in its hands alone.

Yet the commandment specifies only that no representation be made of anything which is already in the world. It does not preclude the possibility that man might make a representation of a thing not yet created – a thing which was not in the world produced by God. It specifically limits itself to those things which are the creations of this God – a state of affairs which leads only to the question: why?

The representation of those things which are already in existence has a title, lent to it from a source only slightly more recent than that which has led us thus far: Aristotle. In his *Poetics*, he introduced the explanatory concept of *mimesis*, sometimes translated as imitation:

Epic poetry and the composition of tragedy, as well as comedy and the arts of dithyrambic poetry and (for the most part) of music for pipe or lyre, are all (taken together) *imitations* [sic].⁶¹

These imitations, which seem largely to conform to what we might refer to as “art”, serve a special purpose for the human who attends them with patient ears, as Aristotle suggests in his proposal concerning the origin of poetry:

Imitation comes naturally to human beings from childhood (and in this they differ from other animals, i.e. in having a strong propensity to imitation and in learning their earliest lessons through imitation); so does the universal pleasure in imitations. What happens in practice is evidence of this: we take delight in the most accurate possible images of objects which in themselves cause distress when we see them...The reason for this is that understanding is extremely pleasant, not just for philosophers but for others too in the same way...This [sic] is the reason why people take delight in seeing images; what happens is that as they view them they come to understand and work out what each thing is...⁶²

This representation of what is – this art – is therefore part and parcel of the same phenomenon which constitutes knowledge: the labelling and addressing of the object itself by reference to some other object. The process of reflection therefore consists of the creation of symbols.

A symbol is, simply, the relation of a signifying object to another object, signified by the first. Like the subject and complement of the Hegelian dialectic, the signifier and signified of a symbol are spontaneously and simultaneously brought into mutual existence in their respective roles as the symbol is created.

⁶¹Aristotle, *Poetics*, 47a

⁶²*Ibid.*, 48b

The symbol functions essentially by using one object to indicate another, just as reflection looks upon one object to see another. The act of artistic representation is therefore the same as the act of reflection and, indeed, the very dialectic which was explored in the last chapter.

A great junction takes place upon the moment of the representative act – a junction which no divine creator can permit. In this moment, understanding and the act of creation are one, because the same phenomenon, taken in sequential time, serves for both. From the perspective of complete knowledge, there is no way to determine which of the two might be prior – the creation or the representation of the creation; and given the brevity of human memory [which deficiency first led to the recording of the words of commandment which have led us down the path this far], it is not inconceivable that, both acts complete, man, too, should be hard-pressed to distinguish the one from the other. Where would such an unfortunate lapse of memory leave God the jealous creator?

Despite its jealousy, the creating God had allowed this act of representation to take place long before the colloquium at Sinai. The divine presence had encouraged the act of representation and of imitation, bringing each animal in turn before its nascent human creation and enjoining it to label the as-yet unknown beasts⁶³. How could the same God come to condemn the act of representation which it was responsible for instigating? What difference is there

⁶³Genesis, 2, xix

between the naming of the creatures and the further representation thereof?

The danger inherent in the latter makes its mark upon us only when it ceases to have the special qualities of representation – once representation and the dialectic collapse upon themselves. The course which leads to this representational collapse is laid out neatly in the first of our two points of departure: the Word, God, and what became of them both is the story of the death of God and of the collapse of representation. It is a story of understanding, power, and perspective, which may be followed as a story in symbology.

Understanding is different for the divine than it is for the human. That omniscience which is the hallmark of the biblical God is the ultimate expression of the ideal of understanding which Aristotle suggests as that tremendous source of mortal pleasure; and if we crave pleasure – a statement so plain that its defence would be ridiculous – then do we not crave, in the end, the greatest of pleasures? Do we not ultimately crave the same understanding as that of the divine; and does that understanding not come forth from the futuristic realm of possibility into the assured kingdom of the past when its object makes the similar passage into the valley of the dead? It would seem that God has good reason to be jealous of understanding. If God is [or indeed was, if posterity means anything in the time of the eternal divinity] jealous of understanding, it may be only to preclude the possibility of its own death – of becoming the buried object to which Derrida has already directed us.

Aristotle has had a great impact on man's approach to understanding. In

the course of his *Travels in Hyperreality*, Umberto Eco points to a pivotal moment along the path of understanding – one in which Aristotle figures most prominently, yet which is ironically further represented to Eco the semiotician and to us in the person of the saint Thomas Aquinas.

It was Saint Thomas who was responsible for the representation which brought the works of Aristotle, previously well-recognised by the Arab world through such luminaries as Averroes, to the Christian world of the late middle ages. For centuries, the principal scholarly texts providing Christian Europe with an approach to understanding – the paradigm for employing human analysis [reflection, through sequential time and effects] – had been premised on the followers of Platonism:

...the world was a symbolic forest peopled with mysterious presences; things were seen as if in the continuous story of a divinity who spent his time reading and devising⁶⁴ the *Weekly Puzzle Magazine*...Far, far away there is God, in whose unattainable totality [for “unattainable totality” read perhaps, whole or completion] the principles of things, ideas, stir; the universe is the effect of a benevolent distraction of this very distant One⁶⁵

The application of Aristotle to this world of mysterious presences makes very plain sense when we consider, as Eco does, what it was that Aristotle offered up to the hallucinatory world in which the people of that age dwelled:

⁶⁴

In this depiction, Eco reveals to us once more the special temporal character of the divine being – at once both devising the thing [to us, therefore, prior to it] and reading the very thing which it [or, in Eco’s case, he] has devised [hence after it].

⁶⁵Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality*, 261

Aristotle knew how to talk about God, but he also classified animals and stones, and concerned himself with the movement of the stars. Aristotle knew logic, studied psychology, talked about physics, classified political systems.⁶⁶

The common element in each and every one of these offerings is the distance maintained between them and the objects of the world. Aristotle does not know God or physics, he talks “about” God – that is to say he circumscribes God without penetrating that definition into the actual presence or essence which God is. The same for animals, stones, and political systems – Aristotle does not offer knowledge of them, he merely arranges them, “classifying” them and providing them thereby with a structure premised upon their representation and not upon their being. What he is purported to know, ‘logic’, is not a thing of the world, but a way of working with those things which point to the world – of arranging, deriving, and constructing new representations on the basis of those representations which have already been placed before us. Aristotle is a master of the method of reflection.

It should not be taken from this, though, that the whole of Aristotelian thought amounts solely to the enumeration and labelling of those things which were accessible to the ancient Greek. Rather, it is that element of Aristotle – something which was rarely undertaken in the surviving works of his forebear Plato – which provides the foundation for the connection between understanding and the death of God.

⁶⁶Eco, 262

Eco's delineation of the Aristotelian qualities which the Thomists chose to use is that:

And [Simultaneously? Subsequently?] we needn't waste time [Durational? Dimensional?] trying to recover the trace of essences in that sort of mystic cascade of theirs...The mechanism of things is here, before our eyes; things are the principle of their movement.⁶⁷

It will therefore be sufficient henceforth to consider the principle of the movement. The observed will be the object of scrutiny. Understanding may henceforth consist in the very act of representation, just as it did when God saw the light and knew it [to be good]. Our minds cannot but turn back for a moment, though, realising that the thing, as an object, is incapable of movement.

An aspect of the middle ages and its church which Eco lightly glosses in the course of his considerations is their stubborn resistance to change. It was not a denial of change, or a demand that there was no progress, but an exploration premised on the very injunction which has been driving this inquiry: that no representation can be made of anything which is of this world – the otherworldly, tellingly, remained fair game. The reason for which the line was drawn at the boundaries of the world which was made by God can now come into clear focus. Clearer, too, will become the reason why there is a line between the naming of the beasts and the jealousy of God.

In that moment of creation – that beginning which we set out to consider, the divine evoked the world and the elements of its totality into past and present

⁶⁷Eco, 262

[lest they be stillborn] existence from their potential futures. Yet to the observing man, this creation was an act of representation: the name is given and the object follows [and there was light]. To God, this notion of representation remains absurd – it is God who first provided the self-sufficiently ethereal answer: “I am that I am”⁶⁸; and to God, to say “let there be light” is little more than to say “there is light”. For man, though, representation is the essence of what has been done and now will be done again.

When the object to which the representation created by man pointed [be that representation name, statuary, or painted frieze] to the object which was evoked by God, man sought still to know of God’s world. By naming the elements of the world which God had brought forth, that first man was still pointing to the world which God had created. By bringing logic to bear, man was distancing himself by one degree from the world which God had created.

It was no longer the object of which man would speak, but of the manifestations of the object – those things which were the representations for the creation of which man himself was responsible. Man would no longer use the symbols to know the objects pointed to by their symbols, but would make use of the symbols to know new objects, whereby only the symbols [representations] themselves were known and not the objects to which those symbols originally pointed. Ultimately, as Eco points out, the essences of things could and would be

⁶⁸Exodus, 3, xiv

glossed over⁶⁹ in the course of working with the representations which man had made thereof.

By the means provided by reflection, man could make new objects of the objects which were already in the world – that is, man could add to the world created by God simply by representing elements of the world God had created. Man could create a world of these representations and worlds dependent upon them, and those upon those, until the turtles are amassed beyond all count and humanity rises from the reality in which it emerged into the hyperreality through which Eco wades. Man could thereby perform the same kind of representation that he had seen God perform [or, perhaps, heard of its performing], in the beginning. Man could become a creator – far worse – the creator of his own world⁷⁰.

It is for this reason that Eco can describe Saint Thomas Aquinas as genuinely revolutionary – against the faithful presentation of the divine presence as the object to which all symbols in the world pointed, his work at representing Aristotle⁷¹ provided the possibility that man could be a creator – and thereby comes to erase the boundary between the human and the divine.

⁶⁹Eco, 263

⁷⁰To which the opening lines of Hobbes's *Leviathan* provide ample allusion.

⁷¹

A key element of which is, naturally, the point that it was not Aristotle which he presented, but a representation of Aristotle which he provided – the manifestation of the philosopher in Aquinas's own Christian framework which was up for grabs.

The idea that man could be a creator of new things was not common until more recently; but that is not to suggest that there was no change. From the thousand-year history of the Roman Empire, only two inventions come down to us: concrete and the crane. In the middle ages, so unthinkable was the possibility that something new might be made by man that elaborate forgeries and hoaxes were produced to provide novel ideas and things with acceptable heritages – a task which the literate of the day considered central to the preservation of society itself⁷². It was only more recently that the idea of the mortal as creator became acceptable. The line between naming of the things which God has made and the representation of things which is prohibited by the commandment proves, therefore, to be a boundary preventing the creation from becoming the creator; and a line only recently transgressed.

This line is the meaning of the jealousy with which God set out to guard his sole role and right as creator of the world. If this line does not hold, then man may stand alongside God as creator without abandoning his worldly role as man. Yet, if this combination of roles [creator and creation] has taken place, then may we not assume that we have arrived at that Hegelian end of history, borrowed from Jakob Böhme⁷³, in which man and God come to subsume one another and transcend in unison? Is this transcendence the genuine death of God?

⁷²Tout, *Mediaeval Forgers and Forgeries*, 5

⁷³As seen last chapter in Darby, *The Feast*

Why the answer to this last question is no depends upon the world which has itself been created and what that means for the presence or absence which should mark the death of God. To return to the discussion of presence and absence which first informed the foray into the nature of the death of God, we must return to the presence of God to understand its absence and the nature of its death. The question: "Why were the boundaries of the prohibition drawn at this world?" must be answered in order to continue. The question of excluding man from creating is a question of control. Control is a manifestation of power. To understand the full implications of this jealousy, we must briefly consider power.

In considering power, Eco leads us to the decentralised model admirably outlined by Foucault⁷⁴, where power is not centralised within a particular set of institutions which may exert or withhold their effects, but in the multiplicity of relations between individuals. Every relationship which connects two individuals thereby becomes a part of the power structure and, by extension, a kind of power. Relationships are, in themselves, a kind of frozen or embedded power. The symbol, too, is therefore a kind of frozen power.

If representation is the creation of relationships, and relationships are power, then representation may be understood as the creation or manipulation of power. It is for this reason that we have the phrase: "He who defines the terms

⁷⁴In, among other places, *Discipline and Punish*

wins the argument". The creation of the relationships between the terms [the symbols] and the objects to which they refer [their objects] is a tremendous capacity, and one which any divinity anxious to retain its own control, presence, and force would do well to guard. Small wonder, then, that the jealousy of God would prohibit man from creating representations of the world which God had created – such representation would allow man to acquire the same power as God.

God's power over the world is understood as absolute, being both beyond question and beyond any possibility of upheaval. The ultimate expression of that power consists in that ultimate [or here, perhaps, primary] ability to establish relationships as set out in that beginning to which we have returned time and again: the world is as it is because God has said that it is so. It is to this same first and ultimate, primary and final or, in a single word, absolute power that parents hope to refer when they finally inform an insistent child: "because I say so!"

This final and absolute representation can only retain its absoluteness if the original point of terminus remains. The axis of the subject-complement pairs of this representation extends, by the act of creation, from the creation of God to the name assigned by man beneath God's watchful gaze. So long, therefore, as these two elements, name and creation [symbol and symbolised or subject and complement], remain alone in their duality – unconnected beyond their relationship to other elements, the power remains in the hands of the agent who undertook the creation [from its perspective, the subject].

Yet while the child may choose to extend its test of the parent's power to

the parent's side of the representation [relationship] with the repeated: "why?", man does not have the same means of access to discourse with God. Therefore, the effort of man to test the boundaries of the relationship must extend on his own side of the relation. As a result, man comes to rely upon himself to provide his own representations – lending his own meaning to his world, thereby asserting his own power – part and parcel of the creation of understanding through the development of new layers of representation. Yet how does this inform us about the presence or the absence of God?

Just as the test of the child when it begins to answer its own questions reduces its reliance upon the relations and representations established for it by the parent, man's turning to himself to extend representation and, hence, understanding, destroys the absoluteness of the representations created by God. It does not accomplish this by confronting them, for neither does the child by confronting the parents rules. It accomplishes this by ignoring them completely [in response to confrontation over which behaviour the child offers a timid "I dunno..."].

Instead of dealing with the objects created by God and which, therefore, point to God symbolically], man comes to deal with the objects which he erects on his own, which therefore point only to the objects encountered in the world and not beyond to any other creator. Though such representations may have originally emanated from the divine, the relations themselves, those things which were created by the divine, no longer constitute the world inhabited by man. Man

now inhabits a world composed of his own representations and relations, and of powers which he himself may erect. The world created by God is not denied – it doesn't have to be. The world of seven days' genesis simply fades away from view in the distance.

With this change in view, man arrives at a new perspective, at last open for our understanding. The historical endpoint to which Hegel intended to direct us was that place where man and God would at last be reconciled, fused, and subsumed into the we, and which takes place precisely as Darby suggests: “[man has] arrived at the knowledge of God as essential existence”⁷⁵. Those qualities which made God man now make man God. The problem, as Zarathustra's quest illustrates, is that man has not ceased also to be man.

Man now possesses the ability to create as God possessed the ability to create. Man now possesses the ability to represent as God possessed the ability to represent. Man has surpassed the boundary between man and God which stood along the frontier of the Second Commandment's injunctions: that nothing of God's world was to be represented, and that nothing was to be placed to mediate, to represent God to man. Again, we may return to Cates's quotation: God made man in his own image [a representation of God], and man, being a gentleman, returned the favour [making a representation of God out of himself].

The absence of the world created by God from the new world into which

⁷⁵Darby, 154

man has emerged is the missing element which can answer our question: what has become of God? God stood as the creator – his first function. Yet from the perspective of eternity, there cannot be creator without creation – their simultaneous presence is the only indication that they exist. Without priority or posterity, succession or subsequent states of time, effect and cause must be as one, not divided; and they absolutely cannot exist on their own.

Here, then, we may have finally arrived at the meaning of the death of God – the absence which defines the end of that divine presence. Here, then, is the reason why Nietzsche's proclamation tells us something beyond that which was proffered by the Hegelian dialectic, for man and God have not been mutually reconciled. What should have been a coming together, a junction of understanding and the act of creation, hence, as Hegel suggested, a junction of knowledge and action, made complete by the transcendence of both man and God has instead the character of an reflective conquest. Man has acquired the qualities that made God God, but God's relationship to the new equation is measured not by its presence but by its absence. Not only do men make history, in the words of Marx, but they make themselves, too.

The subject-complement pair man-God has therefore been transformed in the following fashion: man has put himself in the place of God, but without leaving his own place to provide us with the new pair man-man. If, as was suggested in the previous chapter, the possibility of change through reflection was maintained through history by the presence of the complement – a negating

alternative, then the new relationship eliminates that possibility of change, so long as reflection remains the means of understanding and man looks to himself to provide the necessary complement.

The first dialectical process is no longer available to us, for we had not yet arrived at an understanding of what we presently are – this would have been possible only if the dialectic had run its course. Without the understanding of what we presently are, we cannot negate our present state to produce a future. We can negate only past states which we carry with us into the present. We have, therefore, come to dwell in dimensional time, where we make our present and future out of our past, and no different from it. Change may have been unthinkable to the mediaeval mind; but now it has become impossible, though it is the only thing we think of. Man has come to express every possibility, being both subject and complement, but without gaining those parts of being which were originally his complement.

We have looked back, therefore, and continue to do so. We look upon ourselves, and in the process have begun to cut off the possibility of change. We remain, but frozen and isolated from any future other than the one already with us. Just as we have carried the past with us into the present to constitute the simultaneity of our now, we project our static state of existence beyond, and into the future, extending the homogeneous span of simultaneous time which we occupy to cover our past, our present, and what remains of our future. At last, Lot's wife will have companions in her lonely passage through static time. We,

too, have become pillars of salt.

This new state of affairs and new relationship, in which man both lives his own life and masquerades as complement in the form of God emerges, therefore, from the engineered simultaneity of dimensional time as discussed in the previous chapter on Bergson and time. Yet we still speak of change. If it has become impossible, then to what are we referring? To understand what has become of change, we can look to the pair stasis-change which has undergone a similar transformation.

Our contemporary scientific approach to change which, as Bergson observed, was appropriate to external and material objects, considers not the ongoing emergence and continuity of identity which are characteristic of duration, but the difference between adjacent and discrete points or spans in static time which are characteristic of dimensionality. If this is true, then we have seen the same transformation in the stasis-change pair that we have just seen in the man-God pair: stasis, bedecked as change, has taken the place of change, and transformed the pair into stasis-stasis. If the previous transformation precluded change, the latter precludes even our understanding it.

If change has been precluded, then what of free will or growth? How can humanity become any different over time if it has come to the point where the possibility of change through reflection is beyond us? This is the challenge which Nietzsche had recognised in the death of God. It remains now to show how Nietzsche hoped that we could meet this challenge, how the challenge had

manifested itself, and how very important a new approach to time would be to setting back out along the road of change, free will, and history itself. For the end of change and the end of history which Nietzsche encompassed in the death of God mark a tremendous opportunity for those of us fortunate enough to live with them. Nietzsche presents us with the vision of the *übermensch* in order to lead us onwards through the process of change and to return us to duration.

Yet there is, as yet, one element missing from the foundations of our quest. If what has been said is true, then reflection must be avoided as a process with terminus – it can lead us only back into the company of the pillars. Nietzsche must find a new way of proceeding. We have already managed to explore the structures of time; we have explored the structures of analysis; and we have explored the present state of our relationship with both time and change through these other lenses. These foundations have addressed several aspects of our guiding question: the end of Lot's wife. She moves through time yet does not change – dimensional time has accounted for that. She looks back and becomes frozen in time – negation and reflection have accounted for that.

Surely the fleeing party would have been equally secure if its course took it just beyond the gates of the city – God probably has at least that much accuracy. Yet the family flees into the hills, setting out on a journey to escape the fate of their erstwhile home. Perhaps a flight and good distance between oneself and a major disaster makes good sense in any circumstances, but there is a deeper significance to be uncovered in the journey which the family undertakes. To

unveil the truth behind this final element, we must understand the journey and explore the pathway – the second of the components of Nietzsche's plan to restart the process of change.

Process and the Pathway

Though we now understand the situation into which reflection has thrust us and see in it the sad fulfilment of the warning provided by Lot's wife, we cannot so easily dispense with the acquisition of knowledge. The entire dialectical structure as it has been elaborated comes into being in order to provide us with an understanding of the world. Our desire is to understand the world in order to understand ourselves; our profound desire, if Aristotle's position is to be believed, is to be able even to reproduce it. The need to understand the world is simple: the need to interact with it, to plan, to choose to do things beyond the horizon of our current circumstances, whether spatially or temporally, demands that we know what exists there or that we be able to predict what will be, spatially or temporally. To dispense of the attainment of knowledge is as much as to dispense with an element of our humanity – it cannot be done.

Change threatens our ability to know. If the objects of our scrutiny – the world in which we find ourselves and, ultimately, even ourselves, can become other than what we know them to be, then our significant investment in knowing and understanding reaps us scant returns; and our hopes even for surviving are dealt a painful dose of uncertainty. Change is a fundamentally frightening thing – the moreso as we realise how essential it is to growth and how embedded it is in the world around us. For this reason, if for no other, Lot's wife hesitates and looks back – the new life before her is unknown, an end to what she has been, and,

therefore, threatening.

In order to provide a plan for change – something which, though necessary, has the potential to preclude free will, Nietzsche had to find a model which would not impose the limitations of objects on the process of change. He had to find a model which, like duration itself, would provide the locus within which change could take place, rather than determining the limits of future endeavours and choices. In order to accomplish this, he chose the pathway, a model which can be easily seen in book seven of Plato's *Republic*; it is therefore to that work and to the elucidation of the pathway that we must now turn – the last puzzle piece necessary before we can explore *Zarathustra* itself.

When Plato sets out to provide a locus for change in the *Republic*, he begins by setting his protagonist out on a pathway. As the work opens, Socrates is on a journey down the demarcated passageway from the port town of the Piraeus to the hillside city of Athens. This route, like similar ones from the ancient world⁷⁶ would have been a vital strategic link for a people as dependent on their naval power as the Athenians; and we can well imagine the precautions that would have been necessary to safeguard it – to prevent the seizure of that essential passage from the city's would-be assailants in the turbulent times of the Peloponnesian War.

Like any defended route, we can perceive a pathway, well-worn and

⁷⁶e.g.- that from Rome to its harbour at Ostia

marked by the passage of pedestrians, wagons, and beasts, each leaving behind its own trail – a pathway well suited for each of their kind who would follow. To either side, defending the precious route, there would be solid walls of stone, topped with walkways to accommodate the necessary defenders in times of conflict.

A passageway then it was, its walls and rutted soil marking out its pathway even as they barred the would-be destroyers of the city. Yet what boundary was established to hold back the enemy just as assuredly holds in the ally; and the boundaries which hold the ally to the pathway effortlessly channel his every impulse toward the destination set before him by their masons' aim. The walls which at first might seem to be a defensive structure stand revealed equally to be bulwarks of oppression. Despite the fact, therefore, that the pathway permits change, it represents stability. In this paradox lies one of its greatest strengths – that it does not frighten us the way change itself might.

Plato's *Republic* has been as unshakeable at the foundation of studies in Western political philosophy as the makers of those walls could have wished their creations to be. Yet it shares more with the walls than a formidable position. If *Republic* shows us a pathway or series of pathways it buttresses them with nearly insurmountable boundaries. In truth, it is through these boundaries that the pathways themselves are laid out. The pathway borrows one simple technique from reflection: it is established through negation. That which here distinguishes the pathway from those other formations of negation, the subject and

complement, is that each of these has only a single boundary – the other, while the pathway has many.

Like the walls defending the port-city pathways, these boundaries are determined by the pathway which they must flank. Like the earth which fills the space between the walls, there are a multitude of tracks laid out, each one adapted for a particular class of traveller. Like the walls erected to keep out unknown dangers, these boundaries prevent the alien and unlike from encroaching upon those still progressing on the pathway. Only at the journey's end will the traveller be free from the constraints that formerly determined his course. What he can then make of himself becomes the pertinent question: how can a pathway which so constrains action remain an object permitting change? The answer, simply, is that it is not the pathway which must change – that itself is frozen. It is those who travel the pathway who must change. The secret of the pathway, then, is this: as duration is the locus of the pathway, the pathway is the locus of the change upon which its devotees embark; and, unlike a pattern, it neither determines the nature of those who would travel it nor imposes a course on them. In fact, unlike the sequence which might make up a plan, the pathway need not be traversed in any particular direction or with a single impetus. The traveller can pass backwards and forwards, pausing and even discovering new areas along the length.

It is therefore the pathway which Socrates has a particular interest in establishing. In Book seven of *Republic*, he lays down a “system of education”

which is, in reality, a pathway – one designed to aid in the development of philosophers, and one that is essential for the future emergence of those who will move towards the end that Socrates envisions – who will change as Socrates would have them change.

There is a particular relationship established in *Republic* between the individual man and the state. What is writ small in man [or perhaps in the soul of man] is writ large in the state – it is for this reason that the conversation first turns to discuss the composition of a just state:

So then, perhaps there would be more justice in the bigger and it would be easier to observe closely. If you want, first we'll investigate what justice is like in the cities. Then, we'll also go on to consider it in individuals, considering the likeness of the bigger in the *idea* [sic] of the littler?⁷⁷

That reflections of the same qualities or virtues can be seen in miniature in the man and large in the state does not end only with ideas which may naturally be applied to both, as this example might suggest. The correlation of qualities between the two is a repeated theme within the text.

Having discussed the structure of a the city where justice is to be perceived, Socrates turns back to speak of the soul. Here we find not only that the same kind of justice may be observed in the soul, but also that the structural elements which lend themselves to give rise to justice in the city are paralleled within the soul.

⁷⁷*Republic*, Book II, 369a

...Just as there were three classes in the city that held it together, money-making, auxiliary, and deliberative, is there in the soul too this third, the spirited, by nature an auxiliary to the calculating part...?⁷⁸

There are...likely to be as many types of soul as there are types of regimes possessing distinct forms.⁷⁹

The soul [or man] and city can therefore be viewed as parallel structures, not a jarring notion considering Plato's ideas concerning the composition of the world.

The opening lines of *Timaeus* suggest that its material is supplementary to that of *Republic*. Socrates reminds his audience that, "Yesterday, my [his] main object was to describe my view of the ideal state and its citizens..."⁸⁰ In the course of the text, Socrates' companion Timaeus outlines the cause for motion and change within the world: all spirited things within it are composed of the same substance: a mixture which gives animation to the world composed of simple elements⁸¹. The very living of the world – that which causes things to happen – is the same as that which animates the soul. What stands for one will therefore stand just as well for the other.

But this mixture has a further quality. It is an ambiguous stuff. It itself is composed of three substances, Existence, Sameness, and Difference. In turn, each of these substances was a mixture of two different kinds of each of these

⁷⁸Ibid., IV, 441a

⁷⁹Ibid., IV, 445c-d

⁸⁰Plato, *Timaeus*, 17

⁸¹Ibid., 36-37

substances, one from each of two worlds: the world of the ever-unchanging and eternal and the world of the constantly changing and mutable⁸². These are the worlds of being [the unchanging] and of becoming [the changing]. We have already described their respective temporal representatives to our consciousness as the dimensional and the durational.

We exist within the latter world, that of becoming or of duration; but are told that it is modelled on the world of being⁸³ or dimensional time. The world of being is that which can be apprehended and understood only by “intelligence, with the aid of reason being eternally the same.”⁸⁴ The world of being is that which is perceived through reflection, through negation, and through the process of “freezing” the world into span.

Yet this is highly desirable. Change, we remember, is frightening and dangerous. This world of the unchanging, those things which are eternally immutable, are what Socrates, in *Republic*, therefore sets out as the objectives of the pathway to be constructed – that towards which the pathway will be oriented. That the world of Becoming is modelled on the world of Being means that it has a tendency toward the latter, striving to approximate it [though duration cannot rid itself of change without ultimately negating itself]. This striving is the movement from one place to another, from the port to the city, and here certainly from a

⁸²Ibid., 35

⁸³Ibid., 28

⁸⁴Ibid., 28

lesser to a greater [or, if you prefer, a lower to a higher] – and such movement is always a journey. Yet this journey, towards the world of Being, cannot be accomplished without an end to the very world which embarks upon it. Another aspect of the pathway, therefore, is that it has a goal at its end; and that this goal need not be achievable.

A particular journey is described in Book seven of *Republic*. Here, Socrates sets out the journey of an imaginary captive from a cave into the outside world⁸⁵. Within the cave, the captive [like others of his kind] sees only shadows of objects and the echoes of voices. His journey begins with his fortunate emancipation. He finds his way [we are not told how] out of the cavern and, little by little, acquaints himself with the objects that confront him in the real world. At last, turning his attention to the bodies of the heavens and the light which they provide, he comes to the realisation that his new-found world is the real world and that his former prison contained only pale imitations of the real objects which he has now discovered. At last, he recognises that he has come to understand things as they actually are; and he delights in his newfound wisdom and understanding.

How like the philosopher! Born into the captivity of the body, the soul [which, owing to its composition, has knowledge of both of the worlds] strives to regain knowledge of the model – the perfect cosmos upon which its own, limited

⁸⁵*Republic*, Book VII, 514a to 516c

prison has been based⁸⁶. Therefore, like the prisoner, the philosopher has a journey to make from the shadows which confound him into a world of light and knowledge.

Socrates makes reference to this journey. He calls it an ascent⁸⁷, like the climb up a mountainside⁸⁸. In the same section, he insists that the would-be philosopher must “go to the study”. It is travel in a direction with a destination as the student must be “turned toward the light”⁸⁹, which is not to say that by merely turning one has reached the light – it is merely the direction which is provided by the turning. Socrates clearly has the notion of a journey in mind for the student of philosophy. Every journey proceeds along a way of some kind.

But if the cave is to be analogous, then we are confronted with a serious problem. We have not been told as yet how it is that the captive finds his way from the place of his confinement. “Bit by bit” he makes his way, grasping, here and there, onto whatever chances before him; and chance is the problem. Socrates is convinced that this change towards philosophy is absolutely necessary; but he must find a way to overcome even that aspect of change which, embodied in chance, would preclude his objective.

The escape of the prisoner is fortunate. It is a piece of luck. It is through

⁸⁶The soul as a confused prisoner of the body is elaborated on in *Timaeus*, 45

⁸⁷It is therefore represented as a passage from the lower [becoming] to the higher [being].

⁸⁸*Republic*, VII, 519d

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, VII, 518c

sheer serendipity that he finds his way to understanding what it is that lies before him. The prisoner is like a man setting out from the gates of a port-city. He is told to head inland to the mother-city, but there is no pathway set out before him. He can't, therefore, tell which way would be the best to go and instead wanders back and forth across a new and unfamiliar territory. That he reaches the city he may owe to nothing more than chance. Assuredly, if there are way-stations between the city and the port, he will miss them and arrive at the walls of the city possibly unprepared for what lies within. Without a pathway to follow, each step must be taken by negating the previous static position through a new static position. The overall journey disappears in a series of discrete moments which, related only to each other, provide no security that they form, as one, what they ought – the way to the city.

Lamentably for Socrates, this kind of haphazard wandering is the way in which or path along which philosophers must presently emerge. The odds are most definitely against the man who would sojourn towards the world of being. Socrates remarks that it is a very small group that has successfully completed the journey – only a few possible arrangements have permitted philosophers to emerge⁹⁰. “They [philosophers] grow up *spontaneously* against the will of the regime in each [city].”⁹¹ The will of a city's regime sets out the way in which

⁹⁰*Republic*, VI, 496a-b

⁹¹*Ibid.*, VII, 520b

things are to be done – the pathways along which the spirit which drives the world of change can flow.

Socrates could count himself fortunate in this regard at least. Like other philosophers, he followed a pathway which went against that established by his city's regime. His death at their hands is enough to confirm it. Yet he managed to find a pathway along which to move – to blaze a trail from the world of becoming to the world of being. For this piece of luck, he thanks his *daemon* – the spirit which has animated and driven him towards the good and his place in philosophy⁹². Like a gadfly, the *daemon* propelled Socrates along the pathway and towards his goal; but as unlikely as it is that random wanderlust should lead the traveller to the city, it is even less likely that the traveller might benefit from the attack of a vicious dog, which just happens to be going in the right direction. As Socrates himself observes, it isn't likely that more than one other man had ever profited from such an impetus⁹³.

There are, naturally, those who are inclined towards philosophy, having the necessary elements of "facility at learning, memory, courage, and magnificence"⁹⁴. Yet without a pathway, there is no way for them to reach the goal for which their capacities make them suitable. There must be a way for them to travel towards the world of being; and that way, once established, isn't just the pathway that will

⁹²*Republic*, VI, 496c

⁹³*Ibid.*, VI, 496c

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, VI, 494b

let the individuals traverse the distance from port to city: what is writ small on the soul is writ large on the city. The question which follows: what way can a city establish in order to facilitate philosophy is not merely a question of how the individual can be permitted to develop to his own ends. The question is “how a city can take philosophy in hand”⁹⁵ for the benefits are to accrue no less to the individual than to the city at large – as Socrates will yet maintain, philosophers by nature make the best rulers⁹⁶. And so, it is to the nature of this way that the discussion must turn if it is to answer the question.

My insistence on the use of the word way is to maintain a clear division between it and the concept which lies at the heart of this present investigation: the pathway. The way between the port and the city, as the way between the world of becoming and the world of being is always there; but that does not mean that it will be traversed or even found. For the way to be traversed, it must be found, used, and marked. Once marked, its route and boundaries become available; and once they become available, those who can travel can use them to reach their destination.

To ensure that the traveller finds the pathway, it must be marked and identified. To ensure that the traveller does not stray from the goal of the course, it must be bounded – the same measure that will protect the traveller from

⁹⁵*Republic*, VI, 497d

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, VII, 520c-d [amid other points in the text]

anything hostile or obstructive to his progress. A pathway, as we have already noted, requires multiple boundaries.

The necessity of these boundaries is important because a way is often hard to mark out; and harder still to follow. “Ten paces forward, thirty degrees left, and twenty paces forward” are instructions both ambiguous and relative – hard to follow and hard to decide on. These kinds of instruction belong exclusively to the realm of dimensional time. It is far easier, therefore, to mark the boundaries of the way than to mark the way itself. It is, therefore, to the task of establishing these boundaries that Socrates turns in Book seven of *Republic* – this is the second part of the answer to the question: what is the nature of the way; and the act which will transform the way into a pathway.

It begins by determining what areas of study are to be included in the way. Socrates commends the studies “which draw the soul from becoming to being”⁹⁷. These studies will be those concerned with what *is* – those things which are concerned with the eternal world of being. These are the studies which “summon the intellect”, that very quality which, as I earlier remarked, was determined by Timaeus to be the means of apprehending the world of being. The point must be reiterated: the essence of the pathway is its direction towards the end, not its absolute connection between its outset and destination. It is for this reason that Socrates speaks in what we might otherwise consider vague and undecided terms:

⁹⁷*Republic*, VII, 521c

“drawing the soul” or “summoning the intellect”.

Socrates chooses the studies of calculation to be among these, since numbers have an eternal and unchanging quality to them⁹⁸. From here, he continues to itemise the various fields of study which relate most directly to number: calculation [the use of numbers along a single dimension], geometry [the use of numbers in two dimensions], the study of solids [the use of numbers in three dimensions], and finally, astronomy [here the use of numbers in three dimensions and time]⁹⁹.

To these studies based directly on the apprehension of numbers and the functions performed on them, Socrates adds what he hopes will be a new approach to the study of music: the attempt to appreciate the numerical relationships which exist within and among the notes and harmonies in music¹⁰⁰ – presumably, these, too, will prove to have the constancy and immutable qualities of the world of being.

Having recognised that these are the qualities that lie along the way between the world of becoming and the world of being, they must be formally incorporated into a programme of learning and education. This incorporation will make the way clear – the act which will transform the way into a pathway. The formal structure of this pathway – its boundaries – must still be laid down:

⁹⁸Ibid., VII, 525b

⁹⁹*Republic*, VII, 526c-529a

¹⁰⁰Ibid., VII, 531c

Will you set it down as a law to them [the children being trained to be philosophers/rulers] that they pay special attention to the education on the basis of which they will be able to question and answer most knowledgeably?

I shall join with you [replies Glaucon]... in setting down this law.

The setting out of the boundaries is not completed simply by introducing the fields of inquiry, because there is no guarantee that these studies will be properly turned towards the idea of being – they must be followed in the right way. This way will be new for music, and also to astronomy¹⁰¹. As a result, the boundaries must still be clarified. It is, therefore, to the distribution of this education – the boundaries of the pathway, that Socrates next turns.

He first considers the construction of the outer boundaries of the pathway.

Like the walls surrounding the pathway from the Piraeus, these boundaries are set, at first, to exclude the outsider¹⁰²:

If we bring men straight of limb and understanding to so important a study...Justice herself will not blame us, and we shall save the city and the regime; while, in bringing men of another sort to it, we shall do exactly the opposite and also pour even more ridicule over philosophy¹⁰³.

Therefore, the first set of boundaries will establish a division between those who should be set out along the pathway and those who must be excluded from the pathway. This division must be established in order to preserve the regime – the

¹⁰¹*Republic*, VII, 530c

¹⁰²Which is as much to say as to *create* the outsider – there cannot be an outsider without an inside and an outside.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, VII, 536b

way of doing things. To include those unsuitable for these studies on the pathway would pose a threat to the pathway itself and the pathway must be preserved lest the way from the port to the city be lost.

Socrates decides that only children are suitable for entry into these studies – for the journey along the pathway which has been set out¹⁰⁴. The special quality which children bring to this travel has to do with children's lack of boundaries. The same walls which protect the traveller from the attacks that might come from the outsider will prevent the traveller from straying off the pathway set out before him. Unlike adults, who might rail at being contained when they understand what exists beyond the boundaries, children do not yet have an appreciation of the breadth of the world. Socrates' hope is clearly that they will take the boundaries as given and direct all their energies into the travel along the pathway:

...we have from childhood convictions about what's just and fair by which we are brought up as by parents, obeying them as rulers and honouring them¹⁰⁵.

Brought up, therefore, within the boundaries of the pathway, we can expect the children to treat these as their convictions. The children will honour the boundaries of the pathway and be ruled by them.

But the pathway does not consist only of boundary walls flanking the way. As each kind of creature moves along the pathway it makes its own tracks – tracks

¹⁰⁴Ibid., VII, 536d

¹⁰⁵*Republic*, VII, 538c

easier for those of its own kind to follow than others. A wagon can move faster along the ruts hardened in the loose soil by its forerunners than trying to carve out new tracks for itself. There are, therefore, different tracks along the pathway; and each of these creates a boundary of its own. Not every track will reach the destination – indeed, in their roles as the locus of change, we might be surprised if even a single track extends so far as the ultimate destination.

Socrates therefore lays out a series of tracks, each one ending at a specified point; and not every traveller moves to the next track. After the end of their compulsory¹⁰⁶ preliminary education, consisting of an introduction to the various fields of study which they must follow¹⁰⁷, the travellers will be moved on to the study of warfare¹⁰⁸. From following the tracks of their early instructors through the fields of inquiry hitherto open to them, they move to following the tracks of the army's cavalry laid out as they head into battle. Having completed these tracks, in turn, at the age of twenty, those chosen to follow the next track begin to look into the overview and interconnectivity of all the studies which they have reviewed¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁶

Though Socrates remarks that this education should not be compulsory in the sense of forced: "The free man ought not to learn any study slavishly ... no forced study abides in a soul." [*Republic*, VII, 536e]

¹⁰⁷*Republic*, VII, 536d

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, VII, 537a

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, VII, 537c

Those who have made it thus far along the pathway are again winnowed at the age of thirty to a select company¹¹⁰. Here again, Socrates emphasises the importance of establishing protective boundaries between the pathway and any other route:

...here, my comrade, you have a job requiring a great deal of guarding. This new track on which they are embarking is that where they will learn about argument and argumentation; and on this track stands the danger that they may be turned towards flattery and away from those who enclose them in the boundaries of law and justice¹¹¹.

Therefore, the importance of the marked pathway must be stressed at this point – only the older individuals will be permitted to participate in the processes of argument¹¹². Emerging, at last, from the study of argument, the travellers must return again to the port until the age of fifty¹¹³, whence at last, if they return, they will finally become philosophers.

Emerging, at last, from this lengthy process, we might come to wonder whether Socrates could not envision the possibility that the establishment of this pathway might lead, in time, to the definition [static freezing] of its conditions for travel. Given enough observation and time, might not the guardians of the way come to recognise ever sooner those who are naturally adapted to traversing the

¹¹⁰Ibid., VII, 537d

¹¹¹Ibid., VII, 538e-539a

¹¹²*Republic*, VII, 539d

¹¹³Ibid., VII, 540a

pathway and winnow these out before the travel becomes a useless burden on the state's resources?

That Socrates does not move to consider this possibility proves the validity of this process of education as a pathway designed to introduce change. For the most significant aspect of a pathway is its operation as a locus for change, rather than the points which one reaches along its length. To encourage change as change should be, it is enough to set out along it, for the change, as has already been explained, is that of the traveller, and not of the route traversed.

So at last, the boundaries of the way are laid out; and it has become a pathway. The walls will exclude all but the children at first, who must travel past several checkpoints along their way – for it would not do to allow anything foreign or improper to approach the city. At last, having passed all checkpoints but one, the traveller is turned back to the port. If it turns out that he has the ardour to return once more, he can at last be admitted to the city and reach the status of the philosopher. It is therefore those who persist in transforming themselves who come closest to fulfilling Socrates's hopes for change for the better.

The pathway is therefore the route by which the man and the city alike can strive to approach the state of justice which Socrates envisions for an outcome in the course of *Republic*. It begins with a way, but must be provided with a number of boundaries to function. It must exclude those who could not approach the goal, here by permitting only children to enter the pathway. It must provide for the

protection of those who are on the pathway from those who are excluded, here through their isolation from general society and command over it. Finally, its boundaries must be defined with respect to numerous qualities – many axes of negation – in order to prevent it from collapsing into a singularity of only limited options.

When Lot's wife fails to undertake the journey along which she first sets out, she remains frozen in time and cannot change. There had been no pathway laid out to travel from the world of becoming to the world of being, even if there was a way to go between the two. Change was, therefore, as frightening as it could possibly be, and too frightening for her to undertake. Philosophers, therefore, would be rare, even if the will and strength to become a philosopher was not.

It was to solve this dilemma that Socrates' "program of education" is laid out in Book seven of *Republic*. Like a defensible pathway from the port to the city, it is intended to provide a marked way – one with clear boundaries – from everyday life to philosophy. A pathway, by the creation of which it would become possible for all those with the capacity to be philosophers to become philosophers; and for the cities in which they lived to benefit at last from the journey which they, too, would undertake. The terror which change would first have brought to their hearts is allayed by the presence of the marked path. The would-be philosopher sees that wherein he must travel; and though his precise course has been laid out, what he becomes, where he goes along it, and what it does to him

are not. It is the process which has been established by the pathway – and process exists only in duration.

A pathway therefore offers a powerful way to institute change, because it can define change without penetrating into the change itself – into the individual. In this regard, it does not penetrate into what the individual might consider his own province, regardless of the fact that it constrains and defines the route that the individual will follow.

Along a pathway, each footstep is connected with the next. A series of steps is disjunct, but a pathway is continuity itself, because it is not itself composed of the steps. Pathways can allow change to take place because of this continuity – the very same quality as duration itself. To move along a pathway is to engage in a process. To move through a series of steps is only to go from one fixed place to another to another still.

Dimensional time is a locus, but it is a locus for objects – things that can be in a place, frozen and unchanging. Duration is a locus for process – for transformation, for growth, or for motion, all of which are different kinds of change. A pathway permits change to take place because it is a process, situated in duration. To tell people what should be – to offer a vision of the future is to provide an immutable state of affairs. To tell people how to proceed is to offer them possibility and, therefore, change.

Yet a pathway must still be defined, and if we are to continue to maintain what has gone before, we must concede that this, too, is a process of

objectification. Surely the establishment of a fixed course will be as stultifying as any other model produced through the negation of the present?

We have already provided one answer to this question: it is not the pathway which must change, but the traveller along the pathway. Another answer, though, will help to refresh the fundamental elements of the pathway and prepare us for one final step in our consideration of change.

We observed earlier that a pathway, unlike an object, requires multiple boundaries – multiple negations. This feature is an important aspect of its existence, for it is this which permits it to avoid the masquerade which stasis offers. A mathematical model will help to demonstrate how this is so.

A single strip of paper, given a half twist and joined at its ends, will produce a mobius strip. This topological curiosity is a surface with only one side and only one edge – a single boundary. The fact that it has only one, looping side would permit a traveller along its side to mistakenly traverse its same finite length an infinite number of times without coming to its end. Only by careful comparison of a marker left behind in the course of its wanderings could our hypothetical traveller come to the realisation that his seemingly endless trip only retraces the same paucity of steps.

To establish a surface for motion that does not conform to the finite infinity of the mobius strip requires at least two edges, surfaces, or boundaries. In this mathematical model, therefore, lies the second answer to why a pathway, to succeed as such, must have multiple boundaries: a single boundary could establish

a route with only the illusion of change, masking a reality of stasis.

The pathway is the means to mark out a temporal locus change and to bring others to follow along it. When combined with a goal, it can be a powerful model for anyone concerned with proposing change. Now that its nature has been laid out, with Nietzsche's goal already in mind, I can at last proceed to detail the presence of the pathway and the *übermensch* in his effort to set man free once more in *Zarathustra*.

To Go Up, You Must Go Down

We have now explored every aspect of the tragedy which befell Lot's wife. The act of objectifying herself by reference to externalities already past froze her in time and precluded change. This misfortune claimed her despite the fact that she was already on a pathway up into the hills. Her family was set on the course to change – to make a new life for themselves in the wake of the destruction of their home and former existence. We would seem to have explained the lesson of her transformation.

But we find ourselves, in our time, in a situation which threatens us with a fate not unlike hers. The end of history is upon us: "Once," Zarathustra says, "spirit was God, then it became man."¹¹⁴ At the end of history to which the Hegelian dialectic has brought us, we have been trapped in a totalising discourse: a discourse which is restricted to dimensional time. In dimensional time, wholes are meaningless, only totalities and spans exist and their discreteness prohibits them from becoming part a whole that would create continuity between past, present and future without subjecting the latter two to the first. Wholes may only be approximated through the act of addition, an act that results only in the creation of totalities. Since totalities must be destroyed and eradicated to be altered, change has become an undreamed-of possibility. Even change itself has

¹¹⁴Also *Sprach Zarathustra*, 36

become indistinguishable from stasis.

Yet in all of this, there is tremendous reason to hope for change. We remember the nature of the initial rupture which, according to Böhme, gave rise to the whole world of possibilities which only recently came to be limited: it was when the first subject, the "I" of the divine, tried to reflect upon itself, making itself both subject and complement, that the efflux of creation came about. If man is to become the source of a new world, then the end of this partner in meaning had to come about. In the words of the ugliest man:

The God who beheld everything, *and also man* [sic] [who looked upon man as object]: that God had to die! Man cannot *endure* [sic] it that such a witness should live.¹¹⁵

The death of God is recognised as being necessary for man to be able to take the next step in his own progress – necessary, but not sufficient. The outlook of man has now been restricted to this very relationship: man-man. But unlike the first subject, though, man does not look to this selfsame complement in what he imagines to be self-consciousness, but as an externality, little realising that it is not the world that he is examining. Man must return to self-consciousness in order to restore the process of change and recapture his freedom. If man was enslaved to God, then now, as the complement, man is enslaved to himself, and Zarathustra reminds us of this, "Even in your folly and despising ye each serve your Self, ye despisers of the body. I tell you, your very Self wanteth to die, and turneth away

¹¹⁵*Zarathustra, The Ugliest Man*

from life.”¹¹⁶

We may turn to the works of science which have so successfully given man the capacity to reshape and, finally, to create his world; but we would do so in vain. Rather than realising that these theories and models are the impositions of his own consciousness, merely mediating the reality of the world to his understanding, man comes to look upon these theories and models as though they themselves constituted the world they set out to describe – it is this same fault which led us to the death of God and the premature end of the dialectic of change in the first place. Man’s own consciousness has become the world he seeks to mediate and is still external to himself. In “The Despisers of the Body”, Zarathustra reminds us of this setting of our consciousness against themselves, telling us that we set the ‘self’ to play against the ‘ego’ and imagine that either can be considered separately from the body.

Thus the prophecy of the application of dimensional time to our method of understanding is finally realised: the subject has become external to itself. Again, remembering that the mediation of the world is used to reimpose the parameters within which man can act, the realm of possibility within the world becomes defined by what man can understand about what he already is. Desire can therefore no longer extend beyond what is already within the scope of human existence – man can no longer conceive of anything that is beyond the scope of

¹¹⁶Ibid., The Despisers of the Body

human existence; and without the creativity of such conceptions, there can be no true freedom.

Though historical change had come to an abrupt terminus – spirit having become invested solely in man – Nietzsche demanded that we still make our way to this end:

A new will teach I unto men: to choose that path which man hath followed blindly, and to approve of it – and no longer to slink aside from it, like the sick and perishing.¹¹⁷

While hitherto, man had little reflection upon the fact that his process of change was leading him to the end, he will now look at that process as the path to be taken. In doing so, man realises that the *übermensch* is the future form of himself, thereby satisfying the necessary condition to reestablish the first form of dialectical change.

Zarathustra, we are told, having once gone up into the mountains, is going to become a man¹¹⁸. The ascent to the top of the mountain – the quest for understanding – brought man to the point where he was both man and God, both subject and complement. To become man once more is to realise one's own subjectivity and forego the mistaking of self for external world that has led to the end of change. It may even lead to the reflection of self which will once more make possible the flowering of possibility which came from the first "I-I" structure.

¹¹⁷*Zarathustra*, Backworldsmen

¹¹⁸*Zarathustra*, Prologue 1

The realisation of subjectivity rather than the mistaking of self for external world is essential if the first method of change which the dialectic permits can be resurrected. Change of the whole of self must stem from desire that relates to oneself rather than to the external world – we recognised this fact in the second chapter of this work; and Zarathustra draws our attention to it as well:

...I say unto you: your neighbour-love is your bad love of yourselves...The *Thou* [sic] is older than the *I*; the *Thou* hath been consecrated, but not yet the *I*...Ye cannot endure it with yourselves and do not love yourselves sufficiently...Let the future and the furthest be the motive of thy today...¹¹⁹

I love him who seeketh to create beyond himself, and thus succumbeth.¹²⁰

His step betrayeth whether a person already walketh on *his own path* [sic]...¹²¹

Zarathustra is entreating us to think of our actions and choices with respect to ourselves – even dedication to the future, the goal of the pathway, must be connected with one's own self in order to be meaningful and fulfill the need for change. There can be no freedom, certainly, if one's actions are always beholden to another, be it to the needs of a fellow man, or to the exigencies of a state of affairs governed by natural law which must conclude with its sole valid result. On every level, therefore, the assumption of the *übermensch* as goal must be accompanied by the resumption of the connection of the desire/quality axes of

¹¹⁹Zarathustra, Neighbour-Love, 57-8

¹²⁰Ibid., The Way of the Creating One, 61

¹²¹Ibid., The Higher Man

reflection to the self.

Yet, despite this resumption of normal relations with ourselves, the *übermensch* alone cannot rescue us from the dilemma which we face, because it is nothing more than a masquerading form of the problem which led us into trouble in the first place. As that by reference to which to understand ourselves, we had used, in turn, God and the externalised representation of what we had already discovered of ourselves. Both of these, as objects, had been recognised in past forms and extended, frozen, into the present for our consideration. Such predetermined, unchanging concepts cannot help us if we truly wish to set ourselves free. Man must now cast aside the old prejudices of objects and objectification in favour of the better understanding of time as duration:

When the water hath planks, when gangways and railings o'erspan
the stream, verily, he is not believed who then saith: 'All is in flux.'¹²²

The truth being, of course, not that existence itself is in motion but that existence itself as man must understand it lies in motion:

'Over the stream all is stable, all the values of things, the bridges and bearings, all "good" and "evil": these are all *stable*! [sic]'

'Fundamentally standeth everything still' – that is an appropriate winter doctrine, good cheer for an unproductive period, a great comfort for winter-sleepers and fireside-loungers...

O my brethren, is not everything *at present in flux* [sic]? Have not all railings and gangways fallen into the water? Who would still

¹²²*Zarathustra*, Old and New Tables, §8

*hold on [sic] to good and evil?*¹²³

Beware lest in the end a narrow faith capture thee, a hard, rigorous delusion! For now everything that is narrow and fixed seduceth and tempteth thee.¹²⁴

Objects themselves – those collective concepts of the values of things – must be disposed of if man is to be able to produce again, and once more to enjoy freedom. It will no longer do to rely on concepts based in stasis. There can be no doubt that Nietzsche is deeply conscious of the problem of temporality; and he clearly endorses the relevance of duration to the human condition.

But where does this leave the *übermensch*? Is not this goal, once posited to be treated reflectively rather than being the unknown end of our efforts, just one more object, here extended from the future into the present? Does this not subject the goal of the Nietzschean solution to the same error which renders objects unsuitable for our purposes?

Free will must itself involve the future. Will is the present disposition of the future. In order for will to remain free, the end must not be predetermined from within the framework in which will operates. As previously discussed, neither divine foreknowledge nor scientific law are relevant criticisms to the possibility of free will because they both operate in a context [dimensional time] which is external to that of free will. My knowing what food a friend is likely to

¹²³Ibid., Old and New Tables

¹²⁴Ibid., The Shadow

order does not obviate the choice of my friend in ordering that food.

The *übermensch* of Nietzsche is free from the error of previous objects thanks again to the very error which those objects made possible: the death of God. The transcendent of the Hegelian trinity was determined from the start: it could not be more than the whole of which man and God partook; and by the method of reflection which the dialectic of its emergence employed, it was far more likely to emerge as a total rather than a whole. By contrast, the transcendent of which Nietzsche speaks no longer needs to find its fruition in a fixed total or predetermined fashion. Zarathustra posits the *übermensch* as an end without an end.

It is of the end without an end that Zarathustra comes to speak when he addresses the assembly in the marketplace of the first city he reaches:

I teach you the Superman [sic]. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man?
 All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man...
 The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the Superman *shall be* [sic] the meaning of the earth!¹²⁵

There is an unassuming truistic quality about much of this: of course the *übermensch* will be the meaning of the earth – the meaning of the earth and the meaning of man lie hand-in-hand now that man has no divine counterpart. It is in the concept and principle of surpassing that the art of evading another end of

¹²⁵Ibid., Prologue 3

history is concealed. Just as Socrates must not define what it is to have become a trained philosopher, lest in doing so, he limit untold generations with his own shortcomings, the new transcendent is not to be defined in any traditional sense. It is to be understood merely as what it is: the transcendent *qua* transcendent. The *übermensch* is therefore not the transcendence of any particular vision or moment of man, but transcendence itself, to be placed as a goal. Constant change and transformation are therefore to become the principles which will inform and direct human existence. The only challenge remaining is that of finding a method to reach this goal – a method which can cope with a goal as utterly inaccessible as transcendence itself.

If the goal is reminiscent of Socrates, then, as I have indicated, the solution for arriving at that goal should not surprise us in the least. The pathway will provide the means by which to arrive at the goal. The pathway is defined by a multiplicity of relations – as varied as the relations which compose man himself. Rather than being defined through a single negation, the locus within which transformation and change may take place will be defined by a myriad thereof; and it is a firm law [if a spatial analogy may temporarily be used] that the greater the number of sides by which a figure is defined, the larger is the space which that figure must enclose. The larger the locus within which activity is to take place, the greater must be the range of possibilities which man will have before himself; and therefore, the greater will be man's freedom.

Unlike the late introduction of the pathway by Plato, Nietzsche establishes

the metaphor of the new pathway in the opening of the work. Zarathustra, like the many prophets and holy men who entered the wilderness, had gone into the mountains to be alone and contemplate; but now, the time had come for him to return from his isolation:

Lo! I am weary of my wisdom, like the bee that hath gathered too much honey; I need hands outstretched to take it...
 Therefore I must descend into the deep...Like thee [the sun] I must go down, as men say, to whom I shall descend...
 Lo! This cup [containing his wisdom] is again going to empty itself, and Zarathustra is going to be a man.
 Thus began Zarathustra's down-going.¹²⁶

Zarathustra's path could be described by the static place to which he goes, but that is not sufficient for the purpose of describing the pathway. Instead, it is the process which is described. Zarathustra "must descend", the cup is "going to empty itself" rather than be empty, and significantly, the quest as a whole is given a title which speaks of process rather than endstate: "down-going". The course of this pathway will mark a return from the isolation of man as an object of scrutiny to the whole of man which can exist only in duration.

The first encounter which Zarathustra has on his way down from the mountain is with a representative of that very quest which must be abandoned: a priestly hermit who has ascended to the heights in search of god. This hermit recognises Zarathustra and remarks on the change that has come over him since they last met, "Altered is Zarathustra; a child hath Zarathustra become; an

¹²⁶Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 1

awakened one is Zarathustra...¹²⁷. The child in this context speaks of the opening of possibility, the whole of the future which lies in front of youth and the attitude which stems from that possibility; but it also should remind us of the first requirement of the pathway which Socrates specifies: that only children can enter upon the course to philosophy. Zarathustra establishes the very same limitation on the beginning of this new pathway, "Innocence is the child, and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a game, a self-rolling wheel, a first movement, a holy Yea."¹²⁸ Those who can set out along the course are limited by the need to possess this innocence as much as by the need to arrive at love of self.

The new beginning and a rediscovered flowering is the paradox of the end of history and the rediscovery of possibility. Only once man became alone in the world could he possibly enter into the "I-I" relationship which could cause possibility to come once more into full blossom. It is to this paradox that the saint alludes when he compares Zarathustra to the phoenix:

Then [when he went up] thou carriedst thine ashes into the mountains: wilt thou now carry thy fire into the valleys? Fearest thou not the incendiary's doom?¹²⁹

Only from the final end of change and termination of possibility – the ashes – did it become possible for change to come about again – the fire, an image which conjures change and life itself. Change has become a fearful thing in a world of

¹²⁷Ibid., Prologue 2

¹²⁸*Zarathustra*, The Three Metamorphoses

¹²⁹Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 2

dimensional time. It no longer affirms one's own state of being in simultaneous emergence with the self which will come; but demands the obliteration of self and the termination of identity which separate entities in spatialised time must have. It is for this reason that the saint wonders at Zarathustra's eagerness: he is still on the quest which first led to this temporal freezing. The saint cannot understand how Zarathustra does not fear the change which he brings – Zarathustra's eagerness surprises him.

Zarathustra is in turn surprised. From the saint's reaction to him, he surmises the reason for the man's inability to understand the situation as it genuinely is. As he turns away, he realises what it is that has prevented the saint from understanding: the saint has not yet understood what has happened to the world around him. "This old saint in the forest hath not yet heard of it, that *God is dead!*"¹³⁰

Yet this talk of the surpassing of man might on first inspection carry the tinge of dimensional time with it, rather than being the ultimate surpassing of surpassing. To replace man with something else, after all, is not the kind of change which follows along a pathway, but the kind of change which uproots the present to install the future without establishing a connection between the two. This dimensional upheaval is not what Nietzsche makes reference to. The change which will surpass man is not to come through this terrifying kind of

¹³⁰Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 2

displacement, but through the process which lies along a pathway:

Ye have made your way from the worm to man, and much within you still is worm...

Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the frenzy with which ye should be inoculated?

Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that lightning, he is that frenzy.¹³¹

Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman – a rope over an abyss.

A dangerous crossing, a dangerous *wayfaring*, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting.

What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what is lovable in man is that he is an *over-going* and a *down-going*.¹³²

It is time for man to fix his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope.¹³³

Sombre is human life, and as yet without meaning: a buffoon may be fateful to it.

I want to teach men the sense of their existence, which is the Superman, the lightning out of the dark cloud – man.¹³⁴

It is not a replacement or a theoretical movement in dimensional time to which Nietzsche is urging man. It is a way – a passage and a process. Man is not to construe himself as a thing or a state to be either maintained or to be replaced, *per se*, but as one to be traversed. There is to be a goal [the lightning which is the *übermensch*] to raise him to act and to transform his being through its time as man. Man is neither the goal nor that which will set the terms of the goal. Man

¹³¹Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 3

¹³²Ibid., Prologue 4

¹³³Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 5

¹³⁴Ibid., Prologue 7

himself is the pathway which must be followed to transcendence. Life, writ upon the locus of man, is to be transcendence.

Man, as was earlier discussed, is defined through negation, but in a multifaceted array of desires, as should any pathway be. We may therefore undertake this "over-going" and "down-going", keeping the goal which Nietzsche sets before us: the *übermensch*, clearly ahead of ourselves. Nietzsche even calls our attention to the most significant danger standing along our course: the danger of looking back. Though looking back is fundamental to the continued existence of man as a pathway, it must be used only to maintain that pathway even as it is crossed and over-gone. Otherwise, it would return man to the bestial state in which he has been languishing.

Thus, the pathway which Nietzsche would open before us is laid out. Man serves as the pathway over and across and hence, the locus within which being will be passing in order to arrive at the eternal transcendence which will be the *übermensch* [maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but soon, and for the rest of our lives]. It is for this reason that Zarathustra loves man. Yet this pathway will only become possible once possibility is opened up once more. In order to bring about this efflux, the present state of affairs must end:

Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and therewith also those blasphemers. To blaspheme the earth is now the dreadfulest sin, and to rate the heart of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth!

Once the soul looked contemptuously on the body, and then that contempt was the supreme thing: the soul wished the body meagre,

ghastly and famished. Thus it sought to escape from the body, and from the earth.¹³⁵

The earth is blasphemed in mistaking ourselves for it, as it was once blasphemy to worship the works of man as though they were the works of God. The unknowable – the self or subject is rated more highly than the meaning of the earth as it becomes confused for the meaning of the earth. The escape of the soul from the body is the very externalisation of the subject which has finally stomped out any possibility of change for mankind. The soul escapes from the earth by looking upon its external presentation rather than the earth itself, just as man escapes from the limitations of the world which constrains him by creating a world of science and technology for himself to interact with rather than face the uncertain and imperfectly understood world which still lies before him. It was man's mistake to imagine that because he was constrained by an external world he was weak and insufficient; but, by withdrawing from it as a solution, man has made himself weak and unable to interact with the world. It is to this problem that Nietzsche alluded when he compared God to the lingering shadow of the Buddha in *The Gay Science*¹³⁶.

Recalling that man must reflect upon himself as the subject in order to reignite the process of flowering and unfolding which first led to the emanation of possibility [to try to create the "I-I" structure], the question before us becomes:

¹³⁵Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 2

¹³⁶Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, III, §108

how does Nietzsche expect man to come to this realisation? What does Zarathustra bring to men in order to bring their attention back to themselves as subjects?

The answer to this question can be found by starting with *The Gay Science*, wherein Nietzsche draws our attention to the masquerade of externalised self as the creation of a new world:

This has given me the greatest trouble and still does: to realise that what things *are called* [*semper sic*] is incomparably more important than what they are...How foolish it would be to suppose that one only needs to point out this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to *destroy* the world that counts for real, so called "*reality*." We can destroy only as creators. – But let us not forget this either: it is enough to create new names and estimations and probabilities in order to create in the long run new "things."¹³⁷

Nietzsche understands, therefore, precisely how the death of God and the emergence of man the creator have come about. He understands that it is not possible to undermine the world as it has become. Only by moving to perform an actual act of creation [an act which contains the stuff of change] will it be possible to leave behind the "reality" which we have made of our externalised subjectivity.

To accomplish the reflection which will lead to that spontaneous act of creation, Zarathustra demands that man oppose those forces which have hitherto caused him to turn to externalities in order to understand himself. Rather than negating these externalised presentations of self as world, man must reflect upon the very qualities which first led him to create that external world:

¹³⁷Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, II, §58

What is the greatest thing ye can experience? It is the hour of great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becometh loathsome unto you, and so also your reason and virtue. The hour when ye say: 'What good is my happiness...But my happiness should justify existence itself!'
 Have ye ever spoken thus? Have ye ever cried thus? Ah! Would that I had heard you crying thus!¹³⁸

In looking upon and negating these elements, man is looking upon himself as himself rather than looking upon the other to understand himself. Just as Lot's wife fell prey to the delusion that the outside world was the source of her self, we have fallen prey to the illusion that a vision of our past selves, masquerading as our outside world complement, is the source and reference of ourselves. We must awaken ourselves to the absurdity of this reality.

Nietzsche laments the extent to which we come to rely on the "reality" of the other to understand ourselves. At the end of history, we rely on the externalised subject-become-complement to understand ourselves because we do not realise the potential within ourselves: the potential of the creator and origin of all:

The creating Self created for itself esteeming and despising, it created for itself joy and woe. The creating body created for itself spirit, as a hand to its will.
 Even in your folly and despising ye each serve your Self, ye despisers of the body. I tell you, your very Self wanteth to die, and turneth away from life.
 No longer can your Self do that which it desireth most – create beyond itself. That is what it desireth most; that is all its fervour...
 To succumb – so wisheth your Self; and therefore have ye become despisers of the body. For ye can no longer create beyond

¹³⁸Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue 2

yourselves.

And therefore are ye now angry with life and with the earth. And unconscious envy is in the sidelong look of your contempt.

I go not your way, ye despisers of the body! Ye are no bridges for me to the Superman!¹³⁹

These “despisers” of the body are those who have externalised the soul to serve the self's will to be separate from the body. These are no longer men, and therefore cannot serve as the loci within which change will take place. They have not realised the value of the self in the body or the potential of the self in its body. Instead, they detest the body and value only those virtues which have been erected outside and beyond it. Yet now, the end of possibility has made an end of this generation of values – they can no longer be erected beyond the body, for the self, and the body with it, have come to be the only venue and locus for creation. Change has been cut off for those who act in despite of their complete selves.

It is necessary, therefore, to come to act in regard to one's complete self. Here, again, we witness the definition of the path by negation; but by multiple negations rather than by a single, simultaneous one. The man who is the bridge, the pathway to the Superman is defined by a multiplicity of characteristics – the whole of the human character and qualities rather than any particular one. Nietzsche must therefore move towards the redefinition of every value, rather than have his philosophy turn on the reflective analysis of a single one. Joy and happiness, as we have already seen, must be reexamined, lest the externalised self

¹³⁹Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, I, §4

continue to dominate the whole of the human. Good and evil must be transcended and surpassed, too¹⁴⁰. Even that then-nascent political structure, the state, must come under scrutiny¹⁴¹ and be surpassed to mark the pathway which is man.

The wandering style of *Zarathustra* may be read as an amble through the various specific satires and presentations which Nietzsche sought to bring forward, from contact with his friends to organised religion; but at the same time, it serves the purpose of establishing a pathway by multiple points of contact and along multiple axes of desire and quality. By touching on a wide range of highly contentious issues, Nietzsche shows the wanderer the boundaries of the path that he is likely to encounter and thus keeps the wanderer on the pathway and directed towards the goal without forcibly laying out the path for him.

Thus, Nietzsche manages in his turn to negate the conditions responsible for our difficulties at the end of history. The externalisation of the self is to be reversed and the method of change with reference to the whole of the self to be restarted by means of the model of the *übermensch*. A pathway provides him with the ability to lay out a course of action without the intricacies of a paradox between an established course and the need for freedom. The conditions for entry to the pathway are established: to have the mindset of a child and to be turned

¹⁴⁰Hence, *Beyond Good and Evil*

¹⁴¹Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, I, §11

towards the goal. The warnings against the many hazards of the world stand along the course to keep the traveller directed towards his goal rather than permitting him to wander into trouble. Finally, the goal stands ever beyond the end of the pathway, by which it becomes possible to follow the path without becoming tied to it.

Nietzsche is apprised of the need for change and of the importance of it. As we have seen, he writes with an understanding of each of the elements of the lesson of Lot's wife: the danger of looking-backwards, the role of desire in determining our world, and the importance of the pathway to establish change. In response, he presents a pathway forward, one that sets itself a goal and which embodies process. By calling for process, rather than for static analysis, he is calling for us to consider ourselves in duration once more, rather than in the stultifying and externalising halted flow of dimensional time. It is this which will allow the whole of ourselves to create ourselves as we would have ourselves be. This new process of creation, setting out along the pathway determined by the whole of what man is, will allow us finally to escape the totalising discourse of the end to which our dialectical history has come. This new process of creation is the process of freedom itself. Zarathustra's intention is to lead us along the path which returns us to change and to freedom. Lot's wife not only ended her own life, but surrendered herself at the moment when she had before her the ultimate possibility: the possibility of life as freedom.

Beyond a Different Future

We have learned the lessons offered up by the end of Lot's wife. The question which remains is: what will we make of them? Hegel had hoped that the end of history at which we arrived would have brought about a universal condition of liberty¹⁴²; and, following in his footsteps, Fukuyama declared that the victory of liberalism as a regime was already upon us¹⁴³. Globalisation, the ascendancy of the sciences, and even the transformation of education itself could perhaps be traced back to the legacy of the trinitarian dialectic.

Yet, as we have seen, something went wrong within the scope of that gradual transformation. We would not be content to live within a world of another's design; and so, we redesigned the world to suit our needs, little realising either our own strength or its inherent weakness. Our brave new world we treat with the same deference and sense of awe as that which came before it. Having made God in our own image, we forgot that we had made it. Having come to live in a world of our own design, we have forgotten that it is only a design in which we live. As attractive as the Mona Lisa might be, she hasn't anywhere to go.

Such things as we consider immutable, natural, and inevitable: the State, "rights", or even the self as an individual must, upon reflection, be realised as no

¹⁴²Expressed in his Essay, *The Philosophy of History*

¹⁴³Expressed in his book, *The End of History and the Last Man*

more than models. They are our own creations, not natural parts of something beyond ourselves. This realisation should not bring us to denigrate these constructions; but it may permit us to understand why and how they share the very fragilities which threaten our more immediate personal existence.

We are loath to consider change to institutions and aspects of society by which we define even ourselves – the more so when we fail to recognise what change truly is; and, as we have seen, at this point in history [which, lamentably, is a point], we are scarcely able to recognise change for what it genuinely is.

When change is proposed nowadays, it takes the form of a replacement. We consider what should be different, not realising that what is merely different is also distinct. We should reform the Canadian Senate, we are told, not acknowledging that to re-form is also to de-form. To create a new thing of different qualities, we must first destroy the old. We can no longer create without destroying, for the totality of the world has been counted by the progress of our understanding; and there is no more within dimensional time for us to build with.

To change – to allow ourselves to change and grow, we must surrender the idea, imposed by dimensional time, that change consists in the difference of subsequent states. Paradoxically, the change which is most natural is not marked so much by difference as it is by continuity. Else it would not be change but replacement. This kind of change remains within our capacities – yet we must behave differently in order to accomplish it.

We must follow a pathway, rather than rush to a visible goal. The visible

goal [the triple-E Senate, for example] brings us to believe that the change which will take place is change in the pathway itself – change in the locus where we carry out our lives. Yet this is not completely true. As our discussion of time has illustrated, the change which a locus permits does not come from the translation of points which constitute the locus: the example of the mobius strip has stripped us of that folly. The change comes from a the transformation of that entity or subject which moves on the pathway.

For this reason, change remains possible for us, despite the dimensional quality of the understanding which we employ. We must come to understand that those static qualities which constitute “man” are not the objects which we seek to change. It is the man possessed of those qualities which can change through the pathway [the capacity or process] constituted and enabled by those qualities. The surpassing of “man” therefore does not come from the negating of man, but from the use of man, of ourselves, towards something beyond ourselves. Change is a process in which we engage and can engage constantly, if we simply realise that we are capable of that growth. That growth to constant change is a growth from self-captivity to an eternal and – if Lot’s wife has anything to show us – probably frightening state of freedom.

Change and freedom and the relationship between these two are far easier to understand once the nature of time which underlies them has been understood. The difficulty which confronts us time and again is the need to reconcile this ultimately natural understanding of duration with our almost psychotic need to

constantly augment our knowledge. Derrida finds a solution similar to that of Nietzsche in Marx, in the form of what he chooses to typify as the “spectre”. The spectre of communism which haunts Europe at the outset of *The Communist Manifesto* is a creature both of an unattainable future perfection and an immediate and relevant apparition. On the basis of this model, Derrida sets out to straddle the perilous line between definition of progress through negation and freedom. Marx’s own solution, the unending transformation of consciousness, hearkens back to that which we have already considered in the work of Hegel. These problems are by no means unique. The quandary of Lot’s wife is difficult, if not impossible to ever fully unpack, even if the basic meaning has already been explained.

Rather than turning her attention to the continuity which maintained her existence, Lot’s wife insisted on dwelling upon the difference which had crept up to dominate the world as she understood it – why? Constituting herself only in relation to this difference, it became impossible for her to genuinely move along the pathway with which she was confronted. In this way, change became impossible for her to undertake.

We are frequently faced with the same opportunity and crisis which befell her. Freedom for us is not so simple a prospect as it might have been for a wandering patriarch. The cleaning of the slate of those who would be our masters is a much more difficult prospect without the hope of divine vengeance. Our freedom, therefore, is bound up today with the difficult concept of power in ways

that would scarcely be recognizable to men of another age – small wonder, therefore, that some propose deconstruction as a saviour. For to tear apart the symbolic references which constrain us is an essential element in offering ourselves freedom. Yet power may not yet be as well-considered as freedom proper; and time passes by our notice too often unexplored. To these things we must therefore attend, to avoid ourselves becoming pillars of salt.

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