

Beyond Native and Alien: Nietzsche, Literally

Author(s): E. A. Kiss

Source: *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (2018), pp. 1-23

Published by: Penn State University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/philrhet.51.1.0001>

Accessed: 02-03-2018 17:49 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

Penn State University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Philosophy & Rhetoric*



Beyond Native and Alien: Nietzsche, Literally

E. A. Kiss

ABSTRACT

This article presents the outline of a rhetorical theory that allows us to take Nietzsche's statements that "all language is rhetorical" and that "language is entirely the product of the rhetorical art" literally, not as a hyperbole or metaphor. Nietzsche argues that the normativity of the human world canonized by scientific and philosophical taxonomy and logic is but a makeshift edifice of metaphors—habituated prejudices that humans take to be norms by suppressing the fact that they are but the residue of a primordial rhetorical activity. In this sense, scientists speak metaphorically, overlooking their own axiomatic bias, while poets speak literally, drawing on unbiased and defamiliarized "first impressions." Human cognition, rigged by the homogenizing abstractions of metaphors, can thus be rebooted by the rhetorical art and thereby reconnected with the shared physiological roots of empathy and language. The newly empowered competence for achieving bias-free, unprejudiced, free thinking is rhetorical heuristics.

KEYWORDS: Nietzsche's philosophy of rhetoric and language, metaphor and migration, rhetorical heuristics, *pathos* and empathy, transcendental homelessness and migration

INTRODUCTION

As a still quite young professor of classical philology at the University of Basel, Nietzsche taught a rather traditional, almost antiquarian, course on ancient rhetoric. The title of his 1872–73 lecture notes—"Presentation of Ancient

Rhetoric” (“Darstellung der Antiken Rhetorik”)—clearly indicates that this time Nietzsche did not spoil for a fight or set out to uncover the hidden hybridity of origins as he did in his controversial book of the same year (*The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*) in which the origin of Greek tragedy is revealed as miscegenation between the Dionysian and Apollonian principles. Rather his lecture notes exhibit an apparent commitment to following the traditional rhetorical curriculum and demonstrate a scholarly faithfulness to the classical texts and taxonomies. Yet in the first lecture entitled “The Concept of Rhetoric” (“Begriff der Rhetorik”), Nietzsche categorically denies that any taxonomical distinction could be made between straightforward expressions produced by following correct linguistic rules and figurative expressions produced by the rhetorical violations of those rules:

(Es gibt gar keine unrhetorische “Natürlichkeit” der Sprache an die man appellieren könnte: die Sprache selbst ist das Resultat von lauter rhetorischen Künsten.) (1989, 20)

There is obviously no unrhetorical “naturalness” in language to which one could appeal; language itself is the result of purely rhetorical arts. (1989, 21)

Nietzsche’s idea that there is no limit to rhetoric proved to be a powerful genie once set free. It conjured up in turn Foucault and his followers, deconstruction, cultural studies, and the intellectual tendency to see everything, including gender and kinship, as being a social (or, for that matter, rhetorical) construct. Even though what rightly can be called Nietzsche’s general theory of relativity has had an enormous impact on the humanistic disciplines, the depth of his dangerously radical epistemological skepticism has not been fathomed analytically, only intuitively. Indeed, no fan or foe of Nietzsche’s truly believes that language as such is literally the product of rule breaking as opposed to rule following.

New Rhetoric, for example, benefited hugely from the twentieth-century Nietzsche renaissance, yet its representatives were not ready to sign up for the literal meaning of Nietzsche’s rhetorical paradox that there is no distinction between proper and figurative language. Instead, New Rhetoric defines rhetorical rule breaking as merely strategic. In the understanding of their leading theorists, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, the violation of rules that distinctively characterizes rhetorical behavior is not earnest but hypocritical. Rhetorical rule breaking in New Rhetoric is

not genuinely heuristic as they claim but rather merely a strategic appeal to the habitual rule-following behavior of the addressees that rhetors make in order to exploit in a covert manner their addressees' unthinking conformism.

According to Nietzsche, however, genuine heuristics is only possible through genuine rule breaking. Genuine rhetorical heuristics is a true challenge to the status quo of beliefs, not a manipulative strategy the intent of which is to create an echo chamber. Genuine rhetoric does not appeal to passive conformism; rather it triggers active resistance by liberating thinking from what Nietzsche would call herd-like mental habits. At any rate, Nietzsche would have found the objective of rhetorical argument as defined by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca as securing "the adherence of the minds addressed" (1969, 6) to be vulgar both by virtue of its utilitarianism and on account of its exploitation of the semantic conformism with herd mentality. Genuine rhetoric cannot be defined by how successfully it persuades an audience. Rather, it is just like the genuine medical art of a doctor treating a terminally ill patient; Nietzsche argues in his own voice but using the example that serves as the backbone of Aristotle's novel anti-Platonic definition of genuine rhetoric as heuristics, the theoretical competence of discovering arguments.¹ Nietzsche (appropriating Aristotle's argument) says that the operation or the treatment can be successful even if the patient dies because the art of medicine does not adhere to external standards; instead its standards are intrinsic to the medical care itself. Similarly, the success of a speaker cannot be measured by how much the audience is persuaded as a result of it. It is possible that an audience was not persuaded, and yet the speech was successful rhetorically. On the other hand, an audience can be persuaded for the wrong reasons, just as a patient can heal *despite* incompetent medical treatment or for reasons unrelated to the medical care the patient received. Rhetoric that sets its sights on an external goal by planning to win over hearts and minds is mere propaganda, not genuine rhetoric. Nietzsche in this passage of the lecture notes expresses complete agreement with Aristotle's definition of genuine rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" and not the ability to persuade (1984, 2155 [1355b27–28]).

Similarly to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Paul de Man, the most explicitly Nietzschean deconstructionist, reinstates the division of language in the slightly different terms of "grammar versus rhetoric" despite having understood that Nietzsche denies such a dichotomy (1983). Another important reader of Nietzsche's, James I. Porter, writes that

“Nietzsche’s analysis is at the very least tendentious; more generously, we might call it hyperbolic” (2002, 168). He argues that Nietzsche’s statement that “all language is but figuration” is nothing but the figure of hyperbole used strategically. Sarah Kofman (1983) also agrees that Nietzsche is not to be taken literally. Kofman argues not only that Nietzsche’s analytical prose is metaphorical through and through and written in the poetic mode but that her own critical analysis, whose general approach I am countering in this article, would likewise ideally be metaphorical in order to keep up with Nietzsche’s complex poetic truths. These readers of Nietzsche, however, simply contradict themselves: they seem to accept that all language is rhetorical yet cling to the idea that Nietzsche’s language is still more rhetorical or differently rhetorical than language in general without being able to explain the difference.

This article, therefore, goes against the grain of Nietzsche scholarship by taking the statement about the impossibility of “unrhetorical ‘naturalness’” literally. Once understood literally, this statement twists into a paradox: it becomes a variation on Socrates’s radical epistemological skepticism. As Gregory Vlastos (1991) points out, it also goes against the grain of classical scholarship to take Socrates’s profession of his ignorance literally. Most readers interpret Socrates’s profession as a rhetorical strategy, not as an analytical albeit paradoxical expression of radical epistemological doubt.

The skeptical method of this article navigates between the disciplined (literary) mindfulness of the constructed (rhetorical) nature of language, on the one hand, and the enchanted (metaphorical) mindfulness of the representational aspect of language, on the other. This method allows one to be mindful of the distinction between what Nietzsche referred to as “concept-metaphors,” whose metaphorical equations are uncritically taken to be valid representations of reality, and what he referred to as *Anschauungsmetapher*, or perspectival metaphors, that under the skeptical scrutiny of a “literal” reading draw attention to the fact that comparisons are grounded in distinctively individual perspectives. Metaphors under literal scrutiny turn out to be more about differences than likeness. Perspectival metaphors understood literally determine the unique perspective from which otherwise incomparable views of reality are pulled together in a meaningful but not universally valid manner.

While Socrates presents his famous epistemological paradox in the frame of expert versus liberal learning, Nietzsche frames his as the ancient quarrel between philosophy and rhetoric. Nietzsche attacks the *superbia* of philosophers (and scientists) by pointing out that the methodological properness by which they claim to measure rhetorical deviation is a

sham. Nietzsche's paradox concerning language and the Socratic paradox concerning knowledge complement each other. There is no positive knowledge because there is no unrhetorical naturalness, and there is no unrhetorical naturalness because there is no positive knowledge. Nietzsche's rhetorical paradox then (just like the Socratic aporia) brings knowledge into an interminable crisis, which, however, inspires a raising-oneself-by-one's-bootstrap-style escape: the very recognition of this double bind of knowledge is critical thinking itself. In Nietzsche's epistemology, the genuine rhetorical activity of presenting all the possible means of persuasion liberates the mind from dead metaphors made unthinkingly by drawing habituated inferences.

Nietzsche's is an inverted world in which poets and other free spirits speak clearly, distinctly, and literally, in a way that is mindful of the fictionality or the constructed character of all meaning, while philosophers, scientists, and everyone else are busy covering up the abyss of the mind and human communication with clever or makeshift metaphors and other habitual inferences and, at the same time, falsely claiming to be literal and scientific. (It follows then that the paradigm-changing leaps of science and philosophy are made possible by the literal-poetic manner of free thinking that reveals the chasm to be leaped over.) Once we take Nietzsche the philosopher literally, it follows that we must also take genuine poetry literally. I argue that genuine poetry is also born out of the twofold crisis of knowledge and language and that it is also an instance of free thinking liberated from habituated inferences such as metaphors.

Metaphor, then, is not a poetic phenomenon; rather—as Nietzsche argues—it is the routine cognitive regulation of the human mind that over time has a tendency to rigidify into a lifeless taxonomy whose fictionality or rhetorically constructed nature is self-deceptively overlooked. Genuine poetry (which for Nietzsche includes all arts as well as myths) uncovers—if read literally—a crisis of knowledge and language, which metaphors try to cover up. I investigate these questions by focusing on three texts by Nietzsche: his 1872–73 Basel lecture notes on classic rhetoric, the famous *On Truth and Lying in an Extramoral Sense*, which elaborates on the rhetorical paradox of the lecture notes and his poem.

Despite my close reading of these Nietzsche texts, this article does not harbor exegetical ambitions. There is no essential Nietzsche that could be discovered exegetically. Strictly speaking, creative thinkers (including artists) do not posit a definite body of knowledge in the hope that a faithful copy of it will be impressed on future minds. Philology as such has been set on its course by the enigmatically hybrid authorship of Plato's Socrates.

In this sense, this article on “my” Nietzsche approximates his ideas while expressing my own. This, however, does not mean that authors should be used as mere pegs on which to hang our own ideas, as is done too often in contemporary academia, or that there are no worse and better interpretations but only that the quality of our reading cannot be measured against the author’s supposed intention. Skeptical discipline lies in reading the original text in spite of its *what* (what is obtainable referentially and metaphorically) yet as closely as possible to its *how* (how it is in fact being constructed).

BEYOND PROPER AND IMPROPER MEANING: THE LITERAL OR EXTRAMORAL SENSE

Tropes are traditionally defined as lexicalizations produced by the transference of meaning from its proper place to a place where it does not belong. The traditional definition, however, ceases to make sense once we accept that there are no fixed places in the semantic field: there is no semantic properness. As Nietzsche puts it,

(Tropen treten nicht dann und wann an die Wörter heran, sondern sind deren eigenste Natur. Von einer “eigentlichen Bedeutung,” die nur in speziellen Fällen übertragen würde, kann gar nicht die Rede sein.) (1989, 24)

Tropes are not just occasionally added to words but constitute their most proper, essential nature. It makes no sense to speak of a “proper meaning” which is carried over to something else only in special cases. (1989, 25)

Similarly, figuration at the grammatical level is itself a constituting condition of language: “In fact, what is usually called language is actually nothing but figuration” (25) (“Eigentlich ist alles Figuration, was man gewöhnlich Rede nennt” [24]). According to Nietzsche, the concepts of proper and improper as applied to language have only an ideological reality: “There is neither a pure nor an impure speech in itself. A very important question arises of how the feeling for purity gradually is formed, and how an educated society *makes choices*, to the point when the whole range has been defined” (27, emphasis in the original).

Nietzsche is particularly sensitive to the fact that it is the spirit of discrimination, as well as elitism, that have defined the shape of classical rhetoric,

giving rise to the dichotomy between *auctoritas* (authority) and *vitia* (violation) that is central to it. The very names of the rhetorical vices—“barbarism” and “solecism”—reflect a political ambition to dominate the periphery from the center.² In other words, Nietzsche does nothing less than identify the drive behind the basic principles of classical rhetoric as a discriminating power that acts in defense of a purity of proper Greek and proper Latin, untouched by the language of the colonies—a purity that has always been a fiction. The fiction of purity serves to explain and legitimize the origin of power, when, in fact, all power consolidated in the present was once violence. Linguistic purity is similarly a fiction that is perpetuated for both practical and ideological reasons: “And, it was through these barbarisms and solecisms, that the good rule-bound French came about!” (27) Thus Nietzsche not only explains rhetoric in political terms but also unmasks the political credo concerning the necessity of protecting proper core values against the alien through assimilation or exclusion: the political credo in core values is a lie, because there never is and never was any purity. There simply is no “properness” to protect.

THE “ALIEN IS NATIVE” PRINCIPLE

The origin of the stubborn idea that language can be divided according to proper and improper, or normal and figurative, use is falsely attributed to Aristotle—specifically to his definition of rhetorical language at 1404b in the *Rhetoric*. However, as Paul Ricoeur points out, “the opposition between figurative and proper meaning, omnipresent in the later tradition, is not implied here” (1978, 19). The following two translations of this Aristotelian definition display the blind spot Ricoeur attributes to the later rhetorical tradition: both translators avoid the most obvious word choice of “foreign” for Aristotle’s own term “*xenikos*.” While W. Rhys Roberts’s translation completely sidesteps the Aristotelian conceptual frame of native (*idiotikos*) versus foreign (*xenikos*) by rendering “*xenikos*” as “distinguished,” George A. Kennedy’s keeps it by using the word “native” yet makes it weaker and fuzzier by translating “foreignness” as “unfamiliar quality.” Despite the paler expression for the original “foreignness,” Kennedy’s translation conveys the Aristotelian argument without relying on the misleading and ahistorical use of the category of properness:

This we gather from the fact that these two classes of terms, the proper or regular and the metaphorical—these and no others—are used by everybody in conversation. We can now see that a good

writer can produce a style that is distinguished without being obtrusive, and is at the same time clear, thus satisfying our definition of good oratorical prose. (1984, 2240)

All people carry on their conversations with metaphors and words in their native and prevailing meanings. Thus, it is clear that if one composes well, there will be an unfamiliar quality and it escapes notice and will be clear. This, we said, was the virtue of rhetorical language. (1992, 223)

Aristotle clearly states here that the use of metaphors does not distinguish between everyday conversation and artful rhetorical language; we *all* use metaphors. Instead he argues that metaphorical equilibration (“metaphorein”), or, in other words, rhetorical figuration, is characterized by a twofold semantic movement as if on a nonorientable Möbius strip: the familiarization of the foreign, on the one hand, and the estrangement of the familiar, on the other. The unfamiliar quality passes as familiar—the foreign as native—by virtue of rhetorical competence. Yet the native can likewise be made appear unfamiliar by virtue of rhetorical figuration.

The sea-change between strange and familiar is an equilibration between incompatible qualities, which is the characteristic rhetorical phenomenon of figuration itself. Nietzsche claims that, in fact, there is nothing outside of the incessant exchange between alien and native, new and old, strange and familiar, stranger and kin. In the extramoral sense, there is only the continual equilibration of incommensurable qualities whose limiting of one another creates their differential definition relatively to each other without fixed boundaries. Once the dynamic balancing of incommensurables stabilizes, then a scale of homogenized qualities (metrics) becomes available, and only then values are externalized and moralized as positive and negative. The extreme ends of the scale are then taken as rigid dichotomies despite the fact that the scale is defined by the very fluid exchange of these qualities such as that between “native” and “alien.”

Whether the alien-native equilibration is primarily a linguistic or a political phenomenon seems like a chicken or egg problem. Still, there is a pervasive feeling that the sense of something as alien or native precedes language, although it is also reinforced and made manifest by language. Aristotle, for instance, argues that “people do not feel towards strangers [*xenikoi*] as they do towards their own countryman [*idiotikoi*], and the same thing is true of their feeling for language” (1984, 2239 [1404b8–10]).

Barbarism and solecism are political concepts (in the widest anthropological sense), concepts that seem to become linguistic only derivatively. There is all the more justification to interpret the rhetorical notions of familiarity and unfamiliarity politically because the first lexical meanings of the original terms used in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* that ended up being translated as "proper" and "improper" in various languages suggest the same: *idiotikoi* are one's countrymen; *xenikoi* are foreigners.

The idea of properness, purity, and core values is formed gradually, driven by the political discrimination between kin and foe. If there is no external standard of correctness or purity, as Nietzsche claims, then we are out on an incessantly moving sea with no certainty about what is alien and what is native. The Nietzschean view that there are no core values but instead a continuous hybridizing exchange of native and alien qualities might be able to clarify a thing or two in politics as well. To explore this possibility, I borrow Gregory Nagy's the "alien is native principle" (1990), which he worked out for the ancient Hellenic world but that might serve our world equally well. This principle debunks the false dichotomy between native and alien.

Nagy's principle is best understood through his definition of the two-fold function of the hero: the hero is an outsider who seeks to bring the foreign values to the center of tradition and thereby reinforce their native qualities: "Thus the role of the outsider, a role that is really inside the tradition, attracts genuinely foreign features to reinforce itself" (1990, 297). The native qualities of the center (the so-called core values) are also unstable and can turn into threat: "the converse of 'alien is native' is that the reassurance to be found in things native can lead to a self-deception since the threats associated with things foreign . . . can in fact come from within" (1990, 298).

The civilizational dynamism of the Hellenic world according to Nagy is, on the one hand, a movement from outside to inside that conveys the feeling of being protected by familiarization; on the other hand, there is an overlapping opposite movement from inside to outside that is expressed in the fear of the strange and in alienation. Familiarization and defamiliarization, however, are but two modes of human cognitive regulation that help people cope with the constant fluid exchange of native and alien qualities, which from one aspect appear as family resemblance while from the other as hybridization. This twofold movement on the nonorientable Möbius strip never comes to an end. In fact, Nagy says that this instability concerning what is native and what is alien fuels Hellenic civilization.

WE ALL COME OUT OF NIETZSCHE'S "ON TRUTH AND LYING"

At the same time as Nietzsche was completing his university teaching on ancient rhetoric he was also penning a short yet incredibly influential piece that seems to be dedicated to the further investigation of the subversive idea that there is nothing outside of rhetoric. "On Truth and Lying in an Extramoral Sense" ("Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne") elaborates the dizzying rhetorical paradox (which is simply announced in the introductory lecture to rhetoric) in the form of a theory of metaphor. Here the paradox reappears in the following form: all language is metaphorical and all concepts are metaphors. In the extramoral sense, genuinely rhetorical or, as I call them, perspectival metaphors (*Anschauungsmetapher*, to use Nietzsche's own term) are heuristic, while metaphors used habitually in everyday speech and by philosophical and scientific discourse are lies because they pose as straightforward, unrhetorical utterances. This means that genuine metaphors of poetry should be taken literally and mediocre utterances of philosophy and science only metaphorically.

"On Truth and Lying" was only published posthumously, yet it since has assumed the same significance for the philosophy of language and rhetoric as Gogol's short story "The Overcoat" did for Russian literature, according to Dostoyevsky, who said "We all come out of Gogol's Overcoat." We all come out of Nietzsche's "On Truth and Lying." Yet the scholarly consensus on this seminal text is that it is strategic, hyperbolic, and metaphorical. Nietzsche's argument that language is not the result of linguistic rule following is treated as a mere figure of speech. "On Truth and Lying" elaborates on the idea of unlimited figuration from a clearly epistemological point of view. Nietzsche's thesis here is that all concepts are in fact metaphors.

Every word becomes a concept as soon as it is supposed to serve not merely as a reminder of the unique, absolutely individualized original experience, to which it owes its origin, but at the same time to fit countless more or less similar cases, which strictly speaking, are never identical, and hence absolutely dissimilar. Every concept originates by equation of the dissimilar. Just as no leaf is ever exactly the same as any other, certainly the concept "leaf" is formed by arbitrarily dropping those individual differences, by forgetting the individual factors, and this gives rise to the idea that besides leaves there is in nature such thing as the "leaf." (1989, 249)

The origin of a word, on Nietzsche's view, is unique and therefore unrepeatable in its uniqueness. The uniqueness of the originating experience, however, is traded for iterability when it enters language.

The phenomenon of repetition is made possible by the act of seeing similarities (comparison), which is conditioned by forgetting. Iterability is likewise made possible by a false sense of homogeneity both in terms of equations between individual qualities and the homogenized distribution of probability, by one's "arbitrar[ily] dropping . . . individual qualities, [and] by forgetting the individual factor." This cognitive operation, then, amounts to the suppression of the radical individuality of facts for sake of communicative exchange based upon metaphorical equivalences. Thus, the genus that is responsible for resemblance and kinship cannot be thought of as something externalized; it is rather an act of cognitive regulation in Nietzsche's opinion. Human cognition forges a false origin, the genus that poses as the cause of the different species: "Das Blatt ist die Ursache der Blätter" ("The leaf is the cause of the leaves") (1967-, 1:880). The development of the genus does not halt at the level of concept but continues to mushroom, and the process has two aspects: causality (its diachronic face) and analogy (its synchronic face). This process is underwritten by our recognition of sameness in things and events that are in fact not only different but incommensurable: "In this respect man can probably be admired as a mighty architectural genius who succeeds in building an infinitely complicated conceptual cathedral on foundations that move like flowing water" (1989, 251).

Conceptualization, analogy, and causality are metaphorical in nature, since they all establish identity, quasi identity, kinship, and similarity in an environment in fact indifferent to identity. They are not only metaphors but dead metaphors, derived from habitual as opposed to creative inferences. Metaphorical equilibration is the ability to see identity and kinship in what in fact is different. There needs to be an act of forgetting, a suppressing of parts of reality in order to give form to it. Seeing the genus in the different species, seeing the identity of analogical relations, and seeing the identity of the word and its occasion in the pattern of cause and effect are all metaphorical equilibrations that give shape to the observable world. The observable world is therefore what has left after the terrifying and exhilarating, new and unique physical experience is filtered through the cognitive net of metaphors. There is no "immediately perceived world," there is no straightforward witnessing or reporting of reality, as there is no positive knowledge or unrhetoical language. The observable world is always already under the cognitive regulation of metaphorical equilibration.

Although Nietzsche radically stretches the concept of metaphor, he still stays within the boundaries of the most traditional and commonplace definition that says that to metaphorize is the ability to see sameness in difference, or, with a little adjustment, the ability to see sameness and difference together. Whenever we encounter the observable world of qualities, we double it and reunite it at one and the same time by the act of “seeing-as,” to use Wittgenstein’s term.³ It is not only language but also the very physiology of perception that is figurative through and through.

The cognitive structure in which there is a simultaneous awareness of sameness and difference is repetition. Originally, the formulaic character of oral poetry and mythic rituals made language as a mnemonic (recording) technology possible. Repetition is the condition of articulation and habituation, the process that gives form to the indefinite by transforming it from its unique existence into a recursive existence. This process is what I refer to as metaphorical equilibration that translates the world of incommensurable qualities into the world of quantities or metrics. According to Nietzsche’s corresponding psychological theory, humans use the deception of metaphor as their special evolutionary survival technique. Metaphors are our fangs and claws or, rather, what protects us: clothing and homes.

Externalization and repetition give humans the comforting feeling of being in control and safe from the unexpected, the irregular, the accidental, the indefinite, and the terrifying vividness of strange new impressions. Metaphorical equilibration is the constructive drive behind home and nation building, which Nietzsche claims is the human condition itself: “The drive toward the formation of metaphors [*Trieb zur Metapherbildung*] is the fundamental human drive, which one cannot for a single instant dispense with in thought, for one would thereby dispense with man himself” (1989, 250). Thus the fundamental drive of home (settlement/nation) building motivated by the fear of the foreign is a characteristically human evolutionary response to such fear, a third option (cultural adaptation by home building) distinct from the original evolutionary reaction of “flight or fight.”

Nietzsche’s argument becomes confused as he proceeds, which is probably responsible for the general puzzlement over this text. Nietzsche here claims that this fundamental drive of home building is subdued by the rigidity of the edifice, its own residue, and that therefore it is compelled to find another channel in the arts and myths. Yet this drive cannot be exactly the same as it was before its transformation, but Nietzsche does not spell out that difference: “This drive is not truly vanquished and scarcely subdued

by the fact that a regular and rigid new world is constructed as its prison from its own ephemeral products, the concepts. It seeks a new realm and another channel for its activity, and it finds this in myth and in art generally" (1989, 250).

The artist and the mythmaker are free spirited outsiders who are antagonistic toward the "home" constructed by metaphors, which is but a prison for them. This antagonistic drive, I argue, cannot be seen as the metaphorical drive. On the contrary, it is a literal drive for debunking metaphors from the alien ground of extramorality. As Gregory Nagy suggests, however, the outsider is, at the same time, inside the tradition. Even though innovative poets are outsiders, they still reinforce the tradition of their native language; their homelessness reinforces the home ("Heimat" in German). Poets are, first of all, innovators of language; they decalcify the rigid edifices created by the fundamental human drive for metaphor building. The alien qualities of poetic language appear native by virtue of the rhetorical art, thus reinforcing the language community and further alienating the poet. Poetry is an ever-interrupted going home. Poets never stop to seek acceptance by the tradition and community, but their very nature as poets keeps them outside of tradition and community at the same time.

THE FREE SPIRIT

Philosophic, scientific, and everyday discourse are metaphorical through and through in the conventional sense—it is only free spirits ("liberalischer Mensch," in Nietzsche's words), such as poets, who can liberate themselves from the prison language of metaphors. Free spirits have the courage to exile themselves from home (in the sense of the German "Heimat," both home and homeland). They lose their home but do not need "emergency aid" because their loss becomes their strength, as the power of invention surges into the vacuum left by their destruction of conventional metaphors.

That enormous structure of beams and boards of concepts, to which the poor man clings for dear life, is for the liberated intellect just a scaffolding and plaything for his boldest artifices. And when he smashes it apart, scattering it, and then ironically puts it together again, joining the most remote and separating what is closest, he reveals that he does not need the emergency aid of poverty, and that he is now guided not by concepts but by intuitions. (1989, 255)

Free spirits demolish the prison language of concept metaphors and replace it with what I translate as “perspectival metaphors” (“Anschauungsmetapher”). This passage is also rather confusing because Nietzsche does not differentiate clearly the formation of primal or mythical metaphors driven by literal meaning from the gradual process of habituation resulting in the conceptual net of dead metaphors, nor the calcified conceptual edifice from the tertiary movement of the demolition of dead metaphors that is accompanied by the renewal of the edifice of language by poets. Genuine poetry (including myths and the arts in general) is characterized by Nietzsche as a return to the primal human condition following the in-between state of security provided by the edifice of metaphors to which human beings have become habituated, yielding a shared morality. The perspectival metaphor (*Anschauungsmetapher*) is, according to Nietzsche,—“individual and without equals and is therefore able to elude all classification, the great edifice of concepts, which displays the rigid regularity of a Roman columbarium and exhales in logic that strength and coolness which is characteristic of mathematic concepts, is torn by art” (1989, 250). Poets and other artists escape the prison language of dead metaphors by eluding the habituated taxonomy. Only these free spirits are strong enough to face contingency itself without the shelter of metaphorical structures.

Nietzsche describes the metaphorical edifice ironically both as a home, a protective shelter, and as a prison in which individual liberty is exchanged for protection. There is, however, no home for the free spirit. The free spirit smashes the home apart and scatters it and assembles it in an ironic chiasmus of familiar and unfamiliar, home and homelessness. A poem by Nietzsche originally tentatively titled “Free Spirit” (“Freigeist”) and later first lengthened then shortened again and published under the title “Forlorn” (“Vereinsamt”) offers sharp insight into this ironic state of transcendental homelessness. The language of “Freigeist” is so simple—indeed, almost banal—that with the help of my literal, prosaic, word-by-word English translation even those who don’t know German will be able to follow the original language.

Nietzsche the philosopher shows us how the free spirit demolishes the moralizing taxonomy built up from the metaphors we habitually live by. This state is what Nietzsche refers to as the extramoral sense (*außermoralische Sinne*), which is an epistemologically privileged state of going beyond habituated inferences where free thinking becomes possible.

Now it is time to turn to Nietzsche the poet for inspiration as to how to fill the vacuum left by morality. To go beyond the false dichotomy proper and improper meaning calls for proceeding in the literal sense, which is at the same time to go beyond morals, to go beyond the metaphors we live by. I discuss Nietzsche's poem only as it relates to my argument and do not try to do justice to its *poiesis*.

Die Krähen schrein Und ziehen schwirren Flugs zur Stadt: Bald wird es schnein.— Wohl dem, der jetzt noch— Heimat hat!	The crows croak And move on, with whirring wings, to the city Soon it will snow Good for the one who now still—has a home!
Nun stehst du starr, Schaust rückwärts, ach! wie lange schon! Was bist du Narr Vor Winters in die Welt entflohn?	Now you stand there frozen Looking backward, oh! For how long already! Why did you, fool, escape from the winter into the world?
Die Welt—ein Tor Zu tausend Wüsten stumm und kalt! Wer das verlor, Was du verlorst, macht nirgends Halt.	The world—an entrance To a thousand wastelands mute and cold He who has lost What you have lost, nowhere makes a stop.
Nun stehst du bleich, Zur Winter-Wanderschaft verflucht, Dem Rauche gleich, Der stets nach kältern Himmeln sucht.	Now you are standing blanched Condemned to winter wandering Just like the smoke That searches ever-colder heavens.
Flieg, Vogel, schnarr Dein Lied im Wüstenvogel-Ton!—	Fly, bird, whirr Your song in wasteland-bird-tone

Versteck, du Narr,
Dein blutend Herz in
Eis und Hohn!

Hide, you fool
Your bleeding heart in ice and
scorn!

Die Krähen schrein
Und ziehen schwirren
Flugs zur Stadt:
Bald wird es schnein.—
Weh dem, der keine
Heimat hat!

The crows croak
And move on, with whirring
wings, to the city
Soon it will snow
Woe to the one who has no
home! (1967-, II:329)

There are three explicit images in the poem. The first is that of the diurnal migration of crows (who are paradoxically stationary and moving at the same time) as contrasted with the implicit image of the long-distance migratory birds fleeing to warmer grounds to escape the cold. The second is the acoustic imagery of the crow's "song"—the flat, croaking sound in the unembellished wasteland-bird tone of the "modernist" crow contrasted with the implicit auditory image of the embellished song of the "romantic" nightingale. And the third is the thermodynamic imagery of heat that is exchanged for cold, thereby compelling migration, contrasted with the implicit image of the heat generated by the human-made hearths of the city that allow humans to cultivate home and homeland and thus avoid seasonal migration.

These imageries invite a reading in the literal mode. It is a mistake to think that a literal reading consists of only considering what is explicitly embodied in the words of the text and nothing else but these words, for the twin reasons that all language is rhetorical and that there is no positive knowledge, as I have argued by connecting the Nietzschean and Socratic aporias. Instead, in the literal mode, the images are read as differential definitions of a chain of distinctive features forming a family resemblance pattern capable of mushrooming in the mind and putting implicitly articulated features in their place, just like in familiar pattern-seeking intelligence tests. While a literal reading enables infinite teaming of family-resemblance patterns, all a metaphorical reading can yield is tautological or incorrect (fuzzy) definitions in the form of a closed-circuited "this is that." Standard metaphorical close reading routinely covers over the differential definitions of the braided patterns of distinctive features in poetry with interpretations such as "the crow represents the free spirit"—or more theoretically,

the proper meaning of “crow” is transferred to the improper referent of the “free spirit.” What enables the transference of meaning—according to the standard theory of metaphor—is a forgetting of certain nonrelevant qualities of the crow and of the free spirit and with a squinting eye, so to speak, apprehending their essential sameness.

In place of the standard taxonomy of metaphorical equations, I suggest hybridizing family resemblance patterns as a taxonomical principle.⁴ In such an infinitely extendable pattern, there is not a single common feature shared by all family members, and yet they are all relationally connected. The family resemblance taxonomy accommodates hybridity within a family group, just like in the nuclear family in which the hybrid offspring of the genetically unrelated mother and father forms a relation between individuals who become a class despite their heterogeneity. (Nietzsche, by the way, extends the argument of “On Truth and Lying” to argue aphoristically that biological kinship is also only a metaphorical lie, which lie the free spirit is able to escape.) My literal reading of Nietzsche’s poem looks for differentials, not the appearance of sameness. Underneath the poetic comparisons, the literal reading exposes the chasm of incommensurable “internal difference where the meanings are,” to quote Emily Dickinson (2016, 153).

The seasonally migrating birds cover long distances between their native breeding ground in the north and nurturing winter ground in the warmer south. The crow’s diurnal migration, by contrast, is only a stationary soaring above a heat column rising from the hearth of a home in the city. The biological drive to escape cold and hunger (lack of nurture) compels evolutionary adaptation (learning) that results in the instinctive organization and logistics of bird migration from native conditions to nurturing conditions and back, from nature to culture and vice versa in each and every generation starting anew. Nature as origin versus nurture through adaptation to alien grounds is the “native versus alien” principle in the context of animals’ migratory instincts. The crow, however, with its inverted instinct flies toward urban civilization, the city. For the crow, the native *is* alien and the alien *is* native.

The differential between the diurnal and the seasonal migration is not metaphorical; rather, it is literal, verified by the scientific observation of the diurnal migration of larger birds. This kind of bird migration is motivated by seeking out lower grounds where thermal columns of rising hot air enable the large-winged bird’s soaring hoveringly as if in one place, thereby utilizing the thermodynamic equilibration of heat exchange. The movement of heat consuming itself while rising toward the cold nurtures the bird by providing the energy that fuels its flight while saving the bird’s

own. Yet at the same time, the rising and cooling heat also keeps the crow away from the source of the heat itself; the bird settles itself on top of the column in a frozen position.

While long-distance migrating birds are compelled to adapt to new grounds seasonally, generation by generation, for their species to survive, the human species has freed itself from prebiotic and biological determinations by erecting enduring edifices in the form of myths and other shelters so that they do not have to leave their breeding ground for the sake of their weak and young that would only thrive in a strange, new, faraway ground. Developed nations can avoid migration by the nurturing of man-made edifices of urban civilization. Leaving home for humans born in such sheltering edifices has become a choice. The crow, then, is the interface between the biological necessity compelling the long-distant migration of certain species of birds and the social instinct of humans that emancipates them from biological determination and allows them to settle in enduring intergenerational homes. The crow's biological instinct is tempered by the technical competence of humans who afford the crow a choice: to settle on human-made heat stacks (becoming in some way domesticated) or not.

The apparent choice the crow has, even if it cannot be taken literally or seriously, explains the comparison suggested by the title between the homeless bird and the free spirit. The ambivalent pull, however, that humankind feels toward the comforting metaphorical and architectural edifices of urbanity (that might turn out to be but an entrance to the alienation of "colder and colder heavens") is not like the half-domesticated instinct of rooks. The crow might have lost its native ground, but it cannot know what it has lost. The differential lies in the human condition of self-knowledge, or as the poem emphasizes, an ability to recognize the tragedy in one's loss: "He who has lost/What you have lost, nowhere makes a stop." The loss—that is the estrangement of the individual from the *Heimat*—however, is the gain of the *Heimat*, since it brings its renewal. The ancient Greek word "xenosis" means both "estrangement" and "innovation," which brings us back to Nagy's definition of the culture hero in terms of the "native *is* alien" principle. It seems that the heroes in Nagy's theory also find themselves in the predicament of transcendental homelessness.

The only syntactically explicit "just like" metaphor in the poem comes with the image of the smoke seeking colder and colder heavens: "Now you are standing blanched/Condemned to winter wandering/Just like the smoke/That searches ever-colder heavens." The heat column rising from a hearth of a home through a smokestack that disappears in the higher

stratospheres is but the prebiotic version of the migrating movement of the birds exchanging native for alien grounds. Yet this reading would draw a metaphorical equation between “smoke” and “crow.” Significantly, however, this single explicitly stated (in fact overstated) metaphorical equation is debunked by the differential between the physical phenomenon of smoke and the sentient creature it is compared to. The recognition of differences constitutes a semantic resistance to the drive for metaphor building. This semantic resistance keeps growing in significance until swells into *pathos*. *Pathos* is meaning or signification in the rhetorical as opposed to the analytical or everyday mode of discourse. The arts—by virtue of rhetorical competence—have the ability to raise our *pathos* from the ground zero of morality in the form of empathy with the physical world and to carry us—literally—beyond both sensations and morals. We are now in a state of unsentimental, amoral empathy (which, I argue, is irony), being “rolled round in earth’s diurnal course/With rocks and stones and trees,” to quote Wordsworth. This is the extramoral sense from which perspective Nietzsche asks us to consider the question of truth and lying.

When our sentimental empathy is thus turned into empathy with the insentient we realize that all along we have been semantically moving toward our starting point, as if on a nonorientable Möbius strip. The poetic image of the lifeless thermodynamic equilibration (physical law) of the heat column tempers the pitch of our *pathos* until it becomes renewed empathy endowed with sensual force. This extramoral mode of unsentimental empathy with the insentient, however, is modulated again to match the pitch of the biological equilibration (instinct) of a sentient but not moral creature of the still nonhuman world. With the next differential, however, our empathy is modulated to match the soulful, ironically moral equilibration of the free spirit that we can now call deliberation.

The differential between the lifeless equilibration of the smoke in which heat is exchanged for cold and the equilibration animated by biological instinct is literal, while their “just-like” sameness is merely metaphorical. The lifeless thermodynamic equilibration as such can only be grasped from beyond morality (*im außermoralischen Sinne*). From the perspective of the extramoral sense even the dichotomy of warmth and cold that we are so habituated to think of in moral terms reveals its amorality. There are a few dichotomies such as warm/cold, high/low, light/dark, and native/alien that are hardwired in language. These value-laden dichotomies demonstrate Nietzsche’s point that our morality is rigged by hidden, habitual metaphors whose moralizing has

to be demolished in order for us to be able to think freely and feel freely. As differential analysis and empathy coincide in the genuine rhetoric of Nietzsche's poem, so does thinking freely and feeling freely coincide without prejudice. In fact, in the later *Beyond Good and Evil* (1887), we see such a debunking of the moralizing dichotomy between good and bad, which from the view of the extramoral (literal) as opposed to the metaphorical sense is revealed as the false dichotomy between aristocratic and common birth.

Once we are rolling with rocks in earth's diurnal course, we have the kind of extramoral competence that is able to empathize completely unsentimentally even with the self-annihilating spiral of smoke, and we are also ready to find the differential between what it means to be a sentient being without humanity as opposed to being human. Yet this differential *pathos* of ironic empathy also gains significance in its resisting the metaphor that frames it. Semantic resistance (irony), when meaning emerges in spite of what is posited, is manifested in a rhetorical utterance in which *pathos* is impossible to separate from intellectual analysis (argument).

Thus, according to Nietzsche, habitually moralizing metaphors need to be demolished because they have lost their connection with physical stimuli, which is the root of empathy. He says that "truths are illusions about which one has forgotten what they really are; namely, metaphors used till uselessness, drained from all sensual power" (translation mine).⁵ I argue therefore that Nietzsche's rhetorical paradox (in the form of a theory of metaphor) is presented in "On Truth and Lying" as a genealogy of morality. Nietzsche suggests a connection between the rhetorical category of *pathos* and the moral category of empathy.

Far from having a fuzzy logic, genuine poetry offers a complex and sharp analysis that is able to uncover the human condition through differential equilibrations. The family resemblance structure of the differential analysis is often wrongly perceived as similes and metaphors; however, if we open our eyes instead of squinting, we will find that these family resemblance structures are not fuzzy but analytical definitions of hybridizing taxonomies that have managed to avoid essentialism, universalism, and simplification. The human condition as uncovered by art is, therefore, not an essential or universal trait that all members of our species share but a pattern of linked distinctive features formed in the interplay with the prebiotic, the biological, and the human condition, which all come into existence coincidentally and relatively to a unique and particular perspective of an individual human intelligence of infinite variations. This plurality that constitutes the human condition allows us to empathize with the

stranger not through the habituated metaphorical connections of morality but literally and viscerally.

Taking poems seriously, literally, means bravely letting go of our habitual metaphorical inferences and working through the prebiotic, the biological, and, finally, the moral development of the human condition of having a soul, starting from the ground zero of morality. Physics informs animal instinct, and animal instinct informs human choice in the great chain of being that Nietzsche's poem models by differential equations of family resemblances. A poem then is the phylogenetic analysis of the human soul.

A poem is an odyssey: one breaks the familiar yet worn bonds of empathy and reestablishes them arduously through empathy with the stranger. The journey of empathy starts with the demolition of habituated moral edifices and taxonomies. After having leaving a lifeless morality that has been drained of sensual power behind, empathy can return to its origin in form of pure physiological reflex, and thereby the human spirit is freed. The origin of morality is the amoral and unsentimental empathy of rolling with rocks and stones and smoke, or, to use Adam Smith's and David Hume's example of empathy, of involuntarily swaying our grounded bodies with the tightrope walker in the sky.

CODA

Nietzsche argues in "On Truth and Lying" that our moral taxonomies that we habitually live by are emptied out of their original sensuality. Only the artist and the mythmaker can lead us back to the physiological roots of our morality and put the sense back into our moral sense. This argument about the loss of moral sensuality has enormous political significance because it explains why citizens bound together by morality are unable to feel empathy for the alien.

"On Truth and Lying" in fact argues that, ironically, it is the edifice of morality (the pride of humankind) that prevents us from feeling empathy for anything we are not already dutifully bound to. This is why I advocate in this article (as its title suggests) going beyond morality and going beyond the likeness of metaphors. Nietzsche introduces empathy as the rhetorical category of *pithanon* (what is persuasive) and claims that what is persuasive—in the sense of visceral empathy—is not homey likeness but new and not yet familiar strangeness.

Nietzsche argues that the liberal goes beyond the empty moralizing of native versus alien or likeness and strangeness, adopting a transcendental

homelessness that is an ironic form of citizenship. Gregory Nagy's "native is alien" theory defines the hero in terms of the same "going beyond," which, of course, rightly reminds one of Nietzsche's scandalous *Übermensch*. This cosmopolitan ideal of transcendental homelessness (first theorized by the ancient Sophists, and then Dante, and then Goethe, Hölderlin, and Lukács) has by now been recognized as heroic (reminiscent of Nagy's Hellenic heroicism) in the sense that it calls on one to estrange or exile oneself for sake of innovation. Transcendental homelessness has become an accepted and respected paradigm of the modern intellectual life of the mind in the understanding that innovation comes from estrangement, not from inside. Accordingly, cosmopolitan intellectuals are welcomed migrants once their promise of innovation is obvious, that is, if and when it becomes clear that they have long-term utility.

The migrants of today's news, however, who also "go beyond" native and alien, are not considered to be Nietzschean heroes, despite the fact that they are also compelled to leave their native ground like birds to find more nurturing grounds afar. This kind of homelessness is not recognized as a potential source of innovation and renewal in the human context, as only birds can migrate freely to save their offspring. Still, we might as well imagine the cultural hero not as the self-exiled cosmopolitan intellectual but as the migrant, given that the migrant has given up home and is willing to reinforce another tradition if given a chance. For the migrant and especially for the migrant child everything is new, and this is exactly why the more developed and consolidated a country is, the more it should embrace the genuine source of innovation and renewal that is the gift of the migrant child.

*University Center for Human Values
Princeton University*



NOTES

1. "Nicht das *πειθεῖν*, sondern das, was man für eine Sache vorbringen könne: gleich einem Arzt, der einen Unheilbaren pflegt, könne auch der Redner eine missliche Sache verfechten" (1989, 8).

2. The term "solecism" originates from the name of the Greek colony Soloi.

3. Nietzsche himself refers to this phenomenon as a doubling or twofold presentation ("doppelter Weise Vorstellung"), in which "the empirical world *seems* (erscheint) and *becomes* (wird)" at one and the same time (1967–, 3:171).

4. Family resemblance as a logical principle is credited to Ludwig Wittgenstein, but it is already the logic of Epimetheus's and Protagoras's economy of distributing their gifts among animals and humans respectively, as narrated by Protagoras in Plato's eponymous dialogue. Aristotle is the first to reflect philosophically on the logic of family resemblance, which is also the logic of Dante's rainbow theory of language, Adam Smith's theory of exchange value, and Goethe's theory of world literature.

5. "Die Wahrheiten sind Illusionen, von denen man vergessen hat, dass sie welche sind, Metaphern, die abgenutzt und sinnlich kraftlos geworden sind" from "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne" (1967–, 3:881).



WORKS CITED

- Aristotle. 1984. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Jonathan Barnes. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . 1992. *On Rhetoric: The Theory of Civic Discourse*. Trans. George A. Kennedy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- de Man, Paul. 1983. *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dickinson, Emily. 2016. *Emily Dickinson's Poems*. Ed. Crisianne Miller. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Kofman, Sarah. 1983. *Nietzsche et la métaphore*. Paris: Galilée.
- Nagy, Gregory. 1990. *Pindar's Homer*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1989. *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*. Ed. Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, and David J. D. Parent. New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 1967–. *Nietzsche Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Perelman, Chaïm, and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. 1969. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. Trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre-Dame Press.
- Porter, James I. 2002. *Nietzsche and the Philology of the Future*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1978. *The Rule of Metaphor*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Vlastos, Gregory. 1991. *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.