

Nietzsche's Highest Love:

Creating a Life-Affirming World

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Friedrich Nietzsche gives an account of love that consists of life-affirmation and artistic creation as a celebration of life. A theme of loving the totality of life permeates the different ways he discusses love. Nietzsche's love is considered great insofar as it is a creative act, which seeks to actualize something new and beyond one's self as a celebration and affirmation of life. There is an artistic "great love" which he discusses in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* which "still wants to create the beloved" and "overcomes even forgiveness and pitying."¹ Beyond the great love of artistic creation lies a complex relationship among understandings of masculinity and femininity, will and willingness, creators and actors, instinct and intellect, and falsity and truth that make Nietzsche's views on love both difficult and elusive. Creativity, masculinity, instinct, will, and visions for the future are identified as primarily creative forces, whereas imitation, femininity, intellect, willingness, and aesthetic conservatism are identified as secondary refinements of the creative forces. The former love that which they seek to create, the latter, that which was dictated by the creators. Nietzsche's emphasis on creativity, specifically masculine creativity, raises the question whether or not Nietzsche values masculinity or femininity more. The answer to this would seem to be rooted in his account of love and how it unfolds in sex, gender, and romance.

In this paper, I will demonstrate that in each of Nietzsche's accounts of love, he is developing a life-affirming vision as opposed to other nihilistic forms of love. Creativity coincides with life-affirmation for Nietzsche, and his concept of *amor fati* explicates a complex dynamic of love in creation and destruction. There appears to be a hierarchy of love, for Nietzsche, insofar as it can be "great," and greatness seems to be measured by the level of life affirmation in artistic creation. I will engage with Brian Leiter's article "The Truth is Terrible"

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ed. Adrian Del Caro and Robert B. Pippin, trans. Adrian Del Caro, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 69.

and claim that his interpretation, that Nietzsche is advocating "innocent narcotics" to seduce one back to life, is opposed to Nietzsche's concept of *amor fati*. I will further claim that Leslie Paul Thiele's article "Love and Judgment: Nietzsche's Dilemma" provides a better understanding of Nietzsche's views on *amor fati*, insofar as it affirms the totality of life rather than seeking hedonic escape from it. I will argue that Nietzsche's account of sexual love is rooted in an emphasis on the creative and life affirming capacity of pregnancy and the creative tension that arises from traditional gender roles. I will agree with Laurence Lampert's analysis in *Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil* that Nietzsche sees modernity as rejecting traditional "truths" about gender in favor of scientific "truths" about gender which hinder the creative and life-affirming capacity of sexuality. I will argue that Nietzsche's misogynistic remarks in *Beyond Good and Evil* are an attempt to rescue sexuality from the creative "boredom" or nihilism of biological facts, which reduce traditional accounts of inequality between the sexes to "objective" claims about the biological similarity of the sexes. I will further elaborate that Nietzsche's views on truth indicate a rejection of any claims to objectivity, which results in a nihilistic idealism. I will respond to Willow Verkerk's account that transgender women are potentially more creative than cisgender women in her article "Transgendering Nietzsche" by claiming that Nietzsche's reactionary account of women is a cruel attempt at preserving the life-affirming artistic capacity of pregnancy and the tension between the sexes. I will then argue that Nietzsche would see "transgendering" as a rejection of artistic potential, with lies concerning the sexes forming the basis for creative flourishing through pregnancy and sexuality. Regardless, it will be shown that Nietzsche is not particularly bothered by his lack of honesty or cruelty, because he views lies as the basis for the possibility of life and thought, indicating their life-affirming potential as a root of creativity, and views life as something often cruel and ultimately

difficult to affirm. Finally, I will demonstrate that all of the different ways that Nietzsche discusses love, gender, and sexuality are valued and spoken about in relation to his vision for the *Übermensch* as the greatest love of artistic creation which loves and affirms life in its entirety.

Nietzsche's "great love" in *TSZ* is a hope for the creation of some vision of the beloved in the future.² There appears to be a hierarchy of love, for Nietzsche, insofar as it can be "great."

The "great" love of Nietzsche's character Zarathustra seems opposed to Christian understandings of love evoked by "forgiveness" and "pitying."³ It is an "overcoming" of the two, implying their necessity as steps to a higher love. In overcoming pity and forgiveness, one is released from the burdens of others and, in doing so, one has a surplus of strength to overcome or carry one's own burdens. This is particularly relevant in Nietzsche's understanding of life-affirmation, which affirms even one's heaviest burdens. Life affirmation would then appear to be a refinement of a type of nihilistic love. Nietzsche gives an account of life in *The Gay Science*, writing:

"*What is Life?*- Life- that is continually shedding something that wants to die; Life- that is: being cruel and inexorable against anything that is growing weak and old in us, and not just in us. Life- therefore means: being devoid of respect for the dying, the wretched, the aged? Always being a murderer? And yet old Moses said: 'Thou shalt not kill.'"⁴

This account of life is noticeably opposed to the image of love evoked by pity. How could one kill something dying and weak if one has pity for it? How could one live if one cannot let go of something that wants to die? Furthermore, how could one live if one could not forgive oneself for always being a murderer? Nietzsche's account of life seems opposed to pity and forgiveness and it seems that living is not possible for him unless one overcomes two conventional forms of love. Life is also opposed to the strict commandment not to kill of Judeo-Christian morality.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. Bernard Williams, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff and Adrian Del Caro, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 50.

Furthermore, Nietzsche seems to indicate different tones when he discusses love and gender depending on the goal and audience of the particular book. Nietzsche writes about the task for *Beyond Good and Evil* following *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in his last work and autobiography *Ecce Homo*, "Now that the affirmative part of my task was done, it was the turn of the denying, the No-saying and No-doing part: the revaluation of existing values themselves, the great war—the evocation of a day of decision."⁵ Nietzsche provides the reader with an understanding of *BGE* as a destructive, No-saying, yet necessary follow-up to the creative and yes-saying *TSZ*. The highest love of creation in *TSZ* could be inappropriate reading for different readers, just as it would be inappropriate for the destructive need that is later satisfied in *BGE*. Furthermore, Nietzsche has emphasized the need for a denying and destructive book following *TSZ*, which seems to have satisfied an affirmative need. This becomes clear when comparing Nietzsche's statement in *TGS*, "I want to learn more and more how to see what is necessary in things as what is beautiful in them - thus I will be one of those who make things beautiful. *Amor fati*:² let that be my love from now on,"⁶ to his former statement in *Ecce Homo*. The perspective affirming life requires a denial of nihilistic or life-denying perspectives, which Nietzsche appears to section off in *BGE*.

With the rejection of pity and forgiveness and the necessity to overcome them in order to live, a picture of Nietzsche's understanding of love emerges. Nietzschean life and love appear opposed to forms of love which are not creative and, by extension, those which are not destructive, insofar as they cannot let go of what is weak and wants to die in favor of what is new

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is*, Revised (London, United Kingdom: Penguin Book Ltd., 1993), 82.

⁶ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 157.

and stronger. If living involves a constant murdering and renewal, a constant overcoming, then what kind of love would be appropriate for life? Nietzsche writes:

"My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be other than it is, not in the future, not in the past, not in all eternity. Not merely to endure that which happens of necessity, still less to dissemble it... but to *love* it."⁷

Love of what one is, of one's life and fate, and even the cruelty of necessity, is Nietzsche's formulation for greatness. At the core of Nietzsche's account of greatness is love, an affirmation of what one is, knowing the untruth of what one is. The "great" love of artistic creation of the beloved, would then seem to derive its greatness from its capacity to give birth to something more affirmative of life as a refinement of the life which came before it. Life-affirmation is a refinement of a life-denying past. So too is life a refinement of death, not being its opposite, but rather a subtler and more complex form of death and destruction as creation and consumption. Furthermore, being creative, great love seems to be destructive of both weakness and things which want to die. Rather than destroying out of some inhuman sadism, creative destruction seems to be both necessary and affirmative to life, with Nietzsche defining life as a sort of overcoming of what is weak and wants to die. The strength to live is born as a refinement of and an overcoming of what is weak and wants to die. Overcoming as a refinement of what presents itself in life is essential to the greatness of creation.

Nietzsche's account of truth as a refinement of lies is particularly important to an understanding of Nietzsche's understanding of life and what it means to affirm life. Lies, or imperfect metaphors and assumptions, form the basis for truth and life, with truth and life as their refinement. Missing this will inevitably result in a poor interpretation of what it means to love and affirm life for Nietzsche. Brian Leiter offers a problematic interpretation of Nietzsche's

⁷ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 37-38.

affirmation of life that is opposed to Nietzsche's formulation of love. At the beginning of "The Truth is Terrible," he writes, "for Nietzsche... there are the terrible existential truths about the human situation."⁸ He attributes this to "the inescapable psychological fact that we all live in a state of constant striving and desire, which is met most often by disappointment, and sometimes by momentary satisfaction, only for the cycle to begin anew."⁹ Leiter indicates that truth and desire are terrible and a constant disappointment for him and Nietzsche, but he seems to mean "the terrible epistemic truth...that all of our moral beliefs are based on lies" and the "terrible existential truths...constituted by pain and suffering."¹⁰ While Leiter is right to point out the tragedy in perceiving the hollowness of moral truths, the ensuing pain seems to be ultimately undesirable for Leiter while Nietzsche seemingly affirms tragedy, pain, and the abandonment of one's morals or society.

While somewhat accurate, Leiter's analysis does not address what *truth* is for Nietzsche and applies it to two different senses of the word. Nietzsche writes in his essay *On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense*:

"Insofar as the individual wishes to preserve himself in relation to other individuals, in the state of nature he mostly used his intellect for concealment and dissimulation alone; however, because necessity and boredom also lead men to want to live in societies and herds, they need a peace treaty, and so they endeavour to eliminate from their world at least the crudest forms of the *bellum omnium contra omnes*¹¹... that which is to count as 'truth' from this point onwards now becomes fixed... the contrast between truth and lying comes into existence here for the first time."¹²

⁸ Brian Leiter, "The Truth Is Terrible," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 49, no. 2 (December 5, 2018): 151.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 152.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 154-155.

¹¹ "war of all against all"

¹² Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense," in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, trans. Ronald Speirs, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 143.

Nietzsche's truth is a useful invention of the intellect. Refined lies, or "truths," become useful as fixed laws of normality to make peace for the establishment of societies, in opposition to "lies," which are anomalous and unrefined metaphors. Here a distinction between art and politics, between the *exception* and the *rule*, emerges in Nietzsche's thought. "Truth" and regularity stand opposed to what is unrefined and instinctual, with an emerging normativity creating peace and unity between otherwise distinct individuals and wills. Leiter still holds on to an understanding of truth as something stable, objective, and law-affirming, rather than a refined lie. Nietzsche, contrarily, views truth as a refinement of falsity, implying that fundamental truths about existence are not *truly* terrifying or even objectively present, but that terror is born from abandoning the *comfort* of a structured and refined lie and seeing it from a perspective beyond the "good," "true," or "objective" perspective. Regarding morality, Leiter acknowledges the tragedy of uncovering the lie inherent in moral truths, though he calls the tragedy "true," implying that tragedy is an objective response to a lack of trust in lies. Rather, one is trained by one's moral upbringing to be terrified of perspectives which lie beyond the comfort of its walls. It is not a fact of existence that lack of trust accompanies tragedy.

Furthermore, Leiter posits pain and suffering as terrible "truths," but in an existential, not epistemological, sense. Leiter's problematic interpretation reaches its climax when he states, "aesthetic experience produces affective arousal sufficient to thwart the nihilistic impulse, the impulse to give up on life because of the terrible truths about it"—"but it does so in the same way that sexual arousal and intoxication do: by creating certain powerful feelings with a positive valence, feelings that stimulate the subject and erase, or at least overwhelm, any awareness of the actual realities of the human situation."¹³ Leiter posits aesthetic experience as a corrective to a

¹³ Ibid., 163, 165.

natural will to suicide elicited by "terrible truths" or "actual realities," listing sexual arousal and drunken intoxication as means to escape "truth." Objective or actual truths do not seem to be accessible for Nietzsche, but existential truths do. If Leiter is referring to the pain of tragedy, which is a response to a metaphorical perspective on appearances, then this pain cannot be objective and must be something learned insofar as it is a response to an aesthetic appearance. If he is referring to the presence of pain itself, then Nietzsche would not agree with Leiter, since even pain would be affirmed through Nietzsche's notion of *amor fati* rather than escaped. Leiter states, "What makes the terrible existential truths about the human situation *terrible* is precisely that they are utterly *meaningless*," but this is problematic insofar as he posits meaningless narcotics as a corrective for life.¹⁴

While Leiter's interpretation is right to emphasize the life-affirming quality of aesthetic experience, it is opposed to Nietzsche's notion of *amor fati*, with love of fate providing the foundation for life-affirmation and Zarathustra's highest love of artistic creation. Leslie Paul Thiele writes of Nietzsche's formulation of *amor fati*:

"Through endless change and growth one seeks to become that which may be accepted as it is. Indeed the struggle is to become a person who can truly love himself... To love fate means to fully affirm one's life, not resentfully to struggle that it be otherwise. Yet Nietzsche's point is that it is the most difficult struggle to love fate."¹⁵

Thiele argues that Nietzsche's emphasis is on the affirmation of life in all respects, possessing love for even the most difficult tragedy and struggle. He writes earlier: "The only means to affirm life as a whole is to affirm the suffering it entails, which is to say, to transform it into growth."¹⁶ This thesis on the contents of Nietzsche's life affirmation is confirmed when

¹⁴ Leiter, "The Truth is Terrible," 158.

¹⁵ Leslie Paul Thiele, "Love and Judgment: Nietzsche's Dilemma," *Nietzsche-Studien* 20, no. 1 (January 1, 1991): 93.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

Nietzsche comments in *Ecce Homo*: "Nothing that is can be subtracted, nothing is dispensable - the sides of existence rejected by Christianity and other nihilists are even of endlessly higher rank... than that which the *décadence* instinct may approve of and call good. To grasp this requires *courage* and... a superfluity of *strength*."¹⁷ Nietzsche values the affirmation of the totality of life, which requires the courage and strength to love the evil and tragic potentially even more than what is called "good" or "true." Furthermore, life and its affirmation are refinements and developments of death, nihilism, and life-denial rather than their opposites. The tragic becomes just as necessary as the comic or "good" for the development of life-affirmation. To take the tragic away, to escape it with aesthetic narcotics, breeds weakness and the avoidance of the violence of life. To confront tragedy and nihilism and to say yes to them as well as the rest of life breeds the strength to love life as a refinement of terrible experience. Life-affirmation is a refinement of tragedy, not its opposite. It is a confrontation with life in its horror and an internal struggle to say yes to it. Nietzsche rejects Leiter's thesis that one seeks aesthetic pleasure to escape tragic truth when he writes:

"The extent to which I therewith discovered the concept 'tragic'...I most recently expressed in the *Twilight of the Idols*. 'Affirmation of life even in its strangest and sternest problems; the will to life rejoicing in its own inexhaustibility through the *sacrifice* of its highest types...that is what I recognized as the bridge to the psychology of the *tragic* poet.'"¹⁸

Tragedy, the destruction of what is best in humanity, is an affirmation and celebration of life in its most devastating form. It is not simply an attempt to mask "terrible truths" in seductive representation. Rather, it is a celebration of even the deepest abysses of life, betraying the level of life-affirmation and subtle refinement in a culture. While these abysses are not objectively real, they are subjectively experienced as the subtle perception of what presents itself through the

¹⁷ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 50.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 50-51.

revelation of refined hollow metaphors. In the process of discarding life-denying drives, one learns to celebrate even the highest pain and nihilistic revelation, with aesthetic metaphor being necessary for life rather than a seductive obfuscation of life.

With Nietzsche's views on truth and tragedy in mind, it appears that he values the subjective appearance and presentation of his works. The presentation, aesthetic, or metaphor of Nietzsche's love *changes* depending on the goal and audience of different books, and this love perspective is broadest in his character of Zarathustra. Nietzsche writes in *Ecce Homo* of his character Zarathustra:

"The ladder upon which he climbs up and down is tremendous, he has seen further, willed further, *been able* further than any other human being. He contradicts with every word, this most affirmative of all spirits; all opposites are in him bound together in a new unity. The highest and lowest forces of human nature...stream forth out of *one* fountain with immortal certainty."¹⁹

Here it becomes clear that Nietzsche's Zarathustra is a representation of the broadest perspectives of human nature. As such, he is the most affirmative of spirits, having said yes to many human perspectives, which would also necessitate being the most negative spirit, since having a perspective implies the rejection of another. He contains the furthest understandings of good and evil or the heights and depths of human accomplishment, having climbed the ladders of humanity higher and lower than any other. Nietzsche writes: "Reckon into a single sum the spirit and goodness of all great souls: all of them together would not be capable of producing one of Zarathustra's discourses."²⁰ As such, he is beyond all other heroes and great *overcomers* of humanity, having overcome more than all of them together. This frames the voice of the titular character of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as the freest and strongest of humanity.

¹⁹ Ibid., 76.

²⁰ Ibid.

Zarathustra represents the voice of human overcoming itself. This implies that the "great love" of something that has yet to be created, insofar as it is the great love of humanity, is symbolized in the character of Zarathustra. This great love is thus a hopeful love of a great overcoming, as humanity, for Nietzsche, is itself a constant overcoming of what is old and dying and a change. It would then seem that humanity would also love its own death, insofar as it is a creation of something new and life-affirming. Nietzsche writes: "To me, appearance is the active and living itself, which goes so far in its self-mockery that it makes me feel that here there is appearance and will-o'-the-wisp and a dance of spirits and nothing else."²¹ To die is to change the dream and to let someone else dance and experience. To love or affirm one's death is not to love the absence of life or what appears to one, which would be nihilism, but to love the new and changing experience, to give birth to new dreamers and changing perspectives and appearances, while also gradually perishing in identity in the process of their emergence. Humanity as overcoming and a living-dying dance or process of appearances is first indicated when at the beginning of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes a poem entitled *Ecce Homo*, meaning "Behold the human":

"Yes! I know now whence I came!
 Unsatiated like a flame
 my glowing ember squanders me.
 Light to all on which I seize,
 ashen everything I leave:
 Flame am I most certainly!"²²

Humanity is a constant change, unsatiated, consuming, and bright for that which it consumes, leaving everything dead and dying as ash. Like a flame, man changes and grows brighter and more powerful the more it consumes and burns what is susceptible to it. This metaphor for

²¹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 63.

²² *Ibid.*, 23.

Nietzsche's understanding of man also implies that destruction is fuel for creation. Nietzsche gave a similar account of *life* in *What is Life* as constant murdering and shedding of that which wants to die and is growing weak and old.²³ Humanity, being a living thing, is a constant killing and growing, a constant assimilation of the old and dying into the new and living as their refinement. Life is a continually changing nature that consumes what is weak and old within and without itself in order to create something newer, stronger, and subtler. The "great love" of *TSZ*, therefore, involves a murdering of something dying and wanting to die. It is above pity, forgiveness, and love for the low, old, and weak, being love for something newer, stronger, younger, subtler, and freer than that which is being destroyed.

But humanity is not always "great" or life affirming. Many do not possess a great love, source of meaning, or high hope. When Zarathustra tells a crowd, "Uncanny is human existence and still without meaning: a jester can spell its doom," he is indicating the odd lack of purpose and goal that currently constitutes a large portion of human existence.²⁴ Can humanity be truly human without a great love? Can it live? Why is human existence without meaning and purpose? Purpose and meaning imply a goal or vision for the future that gives value to life. Nietzsche's account of humanity seems to require the constant movement and development of creation and destruction to be truly human. Without a purpose, without meaning, this human movement seems to stop and humanity seems to freeze into a state of uncanny existential absurdity or nihilism.

Zarathustra's goal seems to be searching to a solution for this problem, starting with his descent to and exploration of the humans around him. It would appear that there is a dichotomy between humans who lead or follow the dictates of tradition and destructive or creative ones for Nietzsche. This dichotomy reflects two different types of humans who choose either to freeze in

²³ See footnote 4

²⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 12.

an uncanny ambiguity or to remain fiery and dangerous like living humans. Zarathustra states in *TSZ*:

"To lure many away from the herd- for that I came. The people and herd shall be angry with me: Zarathustra wants to be called a robber by shepherds. Shepherds I say, but they call themselves the good and the just. Shepherds I say: but they call themselves the faithful of the true faith. Look at the good and the just! Whom do they hate most? The one who breaks their tablets of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker- but he is the creative one. Companions the creative one seeks and not corpses, nor herds and believers. Fellow creators the creative one seeks, who will write new values on new tablets."²⁵

Here, Zarathustra divorces himself and his potential companions from shepherds and herds. He states his intentions, "[t]o lure many away from the herd," which he distinguishes from being a shepherd or sheep in a herd and rejects along with corpses. He appears wolf-like in his intent to lure people from following the shepherds of "good." He does not seek sheep to lead on his own, but admits to seeking companions.

It is notable that Nietzsche portrays shepherds as those who "call themselves the good and the just." Their moral status seems to be derived from their appearance of power and authority over the herd. The herd does not hate the shepherds for their hypnotic authority, for their ability to maintain unity and to conserve the ideal good of the past. Rather, they seem to unflinchingly hate Zarathustra, the one who breaks their rules which hold authority insofar as they are "good." They do not like a rule to be broken; value is given to silent obedience. They do not value life-affirming creation, Zarathustra's highest love, but value the preservation of unity and that which is often called "good." The herd and shepherd seem to work to preserve some "good" which was created and bestowed by someone else. The act of creating or bestowing a rule itself is not valued. Value comes from embodying or following rules and preserving or enforcing them for as long as possible.

²⁵ Ibid., 14.

Zarathustra appears as an exception to the herd and shepherd, as something more dangerous and loving, foreign and creative, surreal and seductive. He refers to himself as "the creative one" and it would appear that his companions would hold the same status. The creative ones are destructive to the unity of the herd, to the laws and images of the past, to dead and dying dreams of a world that is crumbling. The laws of dead old ones, whoever they may be, were clung to like the earth's surface for security and meaning, and it is at this time that Zarathustra's statement about the uncanny existence of humanity, the desperate conservatism of those clinging to the life of something dead and dying, rings true. The creative ones, insofar as they will be creative, are necessarily destructive, destroying the tablets of laws or goods and creating their own values, their own good and evil, shattering the hypnotic dreams of dying values and the diminishing authority of dead laws.

Like a wolf, Zarathustra, a creative and destructive one, seeks to lure many away from the herd or shepherd. The lonely wolf seeks a pack. Here, companionship, or friendship, is valued as a legitimate form of love for Nietzsche, as something to be valued when old values are abandoned, as a bond between destroyers and potential creators. Nietzsche writes in the preface to *Human, All Too Human*, which was published almost a decade later than the book itself during Nietzsche's late period: "Thus then, when I found it necessary, I *invented* once on a time the 'free spirits,' to whom this discouragingly encouraging book...is dedicated. There are no such 'free spirits' nor have there been such, but... I then required them for company to keep me cheerful in the midst of evils... as brave companions and ghosts."²⁶ Nietzsche's need and desire for companionship is brought out by these words and this passage provides a better understanding of how Nietzsche, or Zarathustra, views "great love" which still seeks to create the beloved.

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, "Preface," in *Human, All Too Human*, trans. Helen Zimmern, The Barnes & Noble Library of Essential Reading (New York, New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 2008), xxviii.

Nietzsche confesses to writing *Human, All Too Human* for companions that he has invented, companions meant to keep his spirits up. By no means is Nietzsche opposed to lying for the sake of creation or life-affirmation; he writes this book for friends who do not exist. Why did he need friends? To keep him "cheerful in the midst of evils." Friendship is valued insofar as it maintains elevation and freedom. It keeps spirits gay and free, even if the friends are *illusions* of great and free spirits. This tells the reader that Nietzsche is not necessarily opposed to lying to himself about the existence of friends, going so far as to dedicate a book to them, and values health and cheerfulness of spirit, with friends as a means to their proliferation. Health and cheerfulness of spirit seem to be valued insofar as they keep one free and creative: free from the need of a herd collective and the dying and unsatisfactory meaning and purpose that comes from their consciences. Companions or "free spirits," be they invented or present to the senses, are a means to maintaining one's own freedom and creativity.

While the "free spirits," illusory friends of Nietzsche, are a creation of Nietzsche's, they are not the highest creation. They appear merely as a means to keep Nietzsche's spirits up, to keep him fiery like a flame, with a creative vision of one beloved above all. Why does Nietzsche require an elevated spirit? Nietzsche writes in *TSZ*: "Companions the creator sought and children of his hope, and truly, it turned out that he could not find them unless he first created them himself."²⁷ Here is an echo of the previous statement from the preface of *HAH*, in which Nietzsche seems to have found the need to create companions from his solitude and inability to find them. This passage, however, emphasizes the act of creation significantly more than the prior. Searching for companions turned out to be fruitless; the need for them is something prior to their existence. Thus, they must be created. Zarathustra, or Nietzsche, is seeking to create

²⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 128.

"children of his hope" along with these companions, implying futurity and hope as a vision of his "great love," the beloved that is still to be created. Zarathustra continues, stating: "And so I am in the middle of my work, going to my children and returning from them; for the sake of his children Zarathustra must complete himself."²⁸ Zarathustra's self-development is here linked necessarily to the creation of his children of hope. Earlier, Zarathustra says of his, as well as all creators' great love: "I offer myself to my love, *and my neighbor as myself* - thus it is said of all creators."²⁹ Self-sacrifice, or rather the preparation of one's self and even the preparation of others for one's creation, is linked to the love of Zarathustra. Zarathustra's children demand a sort of self-giving or bestowal of something worthy; they demand appropriate aesthetic circumstances into which they will be born. His great love appears to be an aesthetic love toward some beautiful emanation, the preparation of a setting for something new and beloved to be born. Zarathustra states: "For at bottom one loves only one's own child and work; and where there is great love for oneself it is the hallmark of pregnancy."³⁰ Self-love is inextricably tied to the preparation of one's self and setting for the birth of artistic vision and so too is friendship. But, in order to have a creation, one must first have a vision of that which is to be valued and demands to be created.

The Gay Science provides a telling understanding of Nietzsche's views on creation, with appearance, name, or vision playing primary roles in its formation. Nietzsche writes: "This has caused me the greatest trouble and still does...: to realize that *what things are called* is unspeakably more important than what they are...what started as appearance in the end nearly always becomes essence and *effectively acts* as its essence!"³¹ Appearance or articulation plays a

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 69.

³⁰ Ibid., 128.

³¹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 69-70.

primary role in creation. All creation requires a prior vision, an image or name that is beyond reality, possibly in the realm of metaphoric language or poetry, that delimits what is possible to be made real. As such, creation appears to be something that links the possible, that displays itself in language or vision, to the actual. With a word or definition, for Nietzsche, something seems to become something else entirely. Language and appearance, therefore, seem to be a realm of possibility and form, with human reality gradually becoming the appearance of these names and visions as they appear to us and implant great love and pregnant creativity.

With this in mind, it becomes clearer what Zarathustra is attempting when he tries to teach humanity about his vision of the *Übermensch*.³² Zarathustra speaks to a crowd watching a tightrope walker at the beginning of *TSZ*, stating: "*I teach you the Übermensch*. Human being is something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?"³³ Humanity is something to be overcome for the birth of the *Übermensch*. This is relevant since humanity, as was previously mentioned, is "uncanny...and still without meaning" and appears, itself, to be an overcoming, insofar as it is living. As has been mentioned, Zarathustra is seeking to create the children of his hope and great love. The *Übermensch* would seem to represent this pregnant hope. Zarathustra continues, saying: "The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the *Übermensch shall be* the meaning of the earth!"³⁴ Zarathustra is bestowing a new meaning and source of valuation for humanity, one that still lies in the possibility of human language. Of humanity, Zarathustra states: "All creatures so far created something beyond themselves; and you want to be the ebb of this great flood and would even rather go back to animals than overcome humans?"³⁵ Here it becomes clear what Zarathustra is attempting. All animals are said

³² Possible translations: overman, *overhuman*, beyond-human, superman.

³³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

to be creators and to have created something beyond themselves. Humanity is wavering in its creative capacity, in its ability to *live*; many flee to a primitive state of being, ridding themselves of the humanity which was bestowed upon them from some ancestor. Thus, much of humanity is denying itself a great love or meaning, having no tangible vision of something possible beyond itself and lacking a future to create.

Zarathustra is giving humanity a new future to create. Without this vision, it would seem that humanity would return to a primitive state of being, renouncing its creative capacity and love of something beyond itself, unable, or unwilling, to find a vision for the future. Zarathustra later states: "What is great about human beings is that they are a bridge and not a purpose: what is lovable about human beings is that they are a *crossing over* and a *going under*."³⁶ Human beings are great insofar as they are dynamic and not a state; they are lovable in that they are a "*crossing over*" and a "*going under*". Thus, the great love of humanity is that for the sake of which they change and go under. Nietzsche has compared humanity to a flame and has linked life with the killing of what is old and wants to die. It would appear, then, that humanity is beginning to lose this essence. Without a new vision, humanity will seemingly freeze up and want to die, with no passion or spark for something great, for something to be created beyond their dying past. Humanity requires a vision of a future that can be created, communicated in metaphor. Fleeing to some nostalgia for the ignorance of unrefined animals and ancestors is not a going under. Rather, it is a going back, a return to a fulfilled and dead image of the past, that was willfully discarded for the emergence of humanity. As such, it becomes highly important that humanity have a vision or name for this future, if it truly desires to create something beyond itself and if it desires to live.

³⁶ Ibid., 7.

Nietzsche's, or Zarathustra's, great love appears to be creation, and Zarathustra creates a new source of values and hope for a humanity that has lost such a wellspring of meaning, but what of more conventional understandings of love? It has already been pointed out that Zarathustra discounts pity and forgiveness as lesser loves which must be overcome and weigh one down and repress the higher love of creation, but what of romantic love? Sexual love? What about lesser loves which seem to create? Furthermore, are pity and forgiveness not means to creating and maintaining more and more people and more life? Nietzsche's emphasis on life affirmation, as a source of valuation, gives the creation of values and artistic visions their value as "great" loves. But in order to create a state of being like the *Übermensch*, Nietzsche need first prepare the world for such a creation. Nietzschean value derives from life-affirmation, with creative capacity or possibility deriving value from its ability to create something which is not life denying. Therefore, love is great for Nietzsche insofar as it creates something which celebrates and affirms life.

There seems to be a hierarchical valuation of creative capacity in Nietzsche's philosophy in which masculinity is valued over femininity, with masculinity representing the primary creative drive in humanity. This is first indicated when Nietzsche discusses gender in the aphorism *Will and Willingness* in the second book of *TGS*. In this aphorism, a wise man debates a crowd who claim that women have corrupted a young man, with the wise man stating: "The way of men is will; the way of women is willingness - that is the law of the sexes; truly a hard law for women!"³⁷ Prior to this aphorism, Nietzsche writes an aphorism entitled *The strength of the weak*, stating: "All women are subtle at exaggerating their weaknesses...in order to appear as utterly fragile ornaments that are harmed by even a speck of dust: their way of living is supposed

³⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 73.

to remind men of their clumsiness and burden their conscience with this. Thus they defend themselves against the strong."³⁸ This aphorism, along with the wise man's assertion that willingness is a hard law, imply that Nietzsche's account of femininity is a way of acting or appearing that conforms to the brutishness or untamed will of masculinity. Femininity, or willingness, is a hard law to follow insofar as it has to be constantly, and doubly, performative and illusory. It needs to invent metaphors for its preservation, since it is continually required to convince men, with these metaphors, that they are strong and willful and that they *ought* to preserve the "weak" woman and be more careful in her presence. In reality, women are no weaker than men, but the normative law of the sexes dictates their behavior towards accentuating weaknesses. It also demands that women be very good actors in order to constantly appear weak and in need of gentle, yet strong, men. As such, Nietzsche has indicated that women must constantly adapt to the winds of men's wills and excel at convincing them of their weaknesses and need for salvation.

Willingness appears a degree more difficult than the way of will, insofar as it must always appear receptive and attractive to will. It must provide a reason why women need to be safeguarded by men, and, as such, weaknesses are invented and accentuated. Nietzsche's account of femininity is thus a state of constant change which attracts the adamant will of men. This is given clarity in the following aphorism, *Feigning oneself*, where Nietzsche writes of two lovers who have finally come together: "What bewitched him was precisely that she seemed utterly changeable and unfathomable! He already had too much steady weather in himself! Wouldn't she do well to feign her old character? To feign lovelessness? Isn't that the counsel of - love? *Vivat*

³⁸ Ibid.

comoedia!"³⁹ Here, Nietzsche provides an account of what attracts a man to a woman. It appears that men, being steadfast in their "way of will," desire something changing and mysterious, something dangerous and beyond themselves. It is the unrefined bluntness and persistence of masculinity that men are tired of according to Nietzsche. They want something uncertain, refined, changeable, and clothed, not another naked certainty, but a new perspective. As such, Nietzsche seems to recommend that the woman return to her indifferent, mysterious, and theatrical appearance. "To feign lovelessness" becomes the ironic return to love between the genders, with Nietzsche cackling, "Long live comedy!" at the end of the apparent farce that is love between the sexes. The game of feminine willingness to the masculine will is exposed for its paradoxical madness. The blunt masculine will falls in love with the subtle feminine willingness and its apparent indifference.

The love of some obscure and loveless vision resembles the great love that Nietzsche's Zarathustra has previously described. It is a love which creates the beloved; man creates the image of woman, woman maintains this image of woman by acting in accordance with it. The farce, or tragedy, is that this image of femininity, this masculine desire for a woman who is mysterious and disinterested, is based on a lie that women are receptive rather than willful and has failed to prove itself satisfactory at fulfilling the promise of its hope when unveiled. Rather, the woman fulfills the promise of love insofar as she is veiled, consciously or not. The process of lying and acting in accordance with the drive of a man is that which is sought as a refinement of sex.

Romantic love necessitates distance to maintain itself. It seems to be a parody of the higher form of love for creation, with the joke being the ultimate banality of both sexes beyond

³⁹ Ibid.

their created and preserved images. The image of the beloved is loved, insofar as it is blurry and incomplete, but proximity defiles this, eliciting the comedic, or tragic, truth behind gender-based romantic love. The Nietzschean image of woman is a lie that is being maintained even in the face of its failure. The appearance of willingness, the command for men to restrain themselves in order to gaze upon veiled feminine secrets, the notion that these secrets will be hidden from those too aggressive to the fragile feminine aesthetic, demands subtlety and restraint from brute will and attracts masculine spirits with the promise of gazing upon a secret beauty or insight. The joke, as Nietzsche has observed, is that either women do not appear to possess such a secret beauty or that, regardless of its presence, men are only attracted to it insofar as it is hidden from them; men seem to possess an unrefined consistency in their ability to create and conquer the image of woman. This is the Nietzschean understanding of the "truth" of romantic love between genders. Lies and distance of perspective are at the core of romance, with romance being the refinement of unadorned sexual drive.

The lie at the core of romance between genders seems to conflict with the ancient Greek understanding of love, which Nietzsche seems to think lacks the shame and subtle lying of modern romance, yet finds ultimate human creativity in the sexual act. Benjamin Douglas Mitchell writes of Nietzsche's view on Greek sexuality and love: "the Greeks perceived that procreative instincts were needed for the future - the drives were fated and necessary."⁴⁰ Mitchell's analysis links the apparently blind instincts and wills, or even the masculinity, that Nietzsche seems to value, to the ultimate futurity and hope of creative vision. Here, instinct and vision become one in the relation of sexual instincts to the creative sexual act, and this linkage is

⁴⁰ Benjamin Douglas Mitchell, "Ariadne's Labyrinth: Nietzsche on Love, Danger, and Affirmation" (Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, USA: American Political Science Association, 2004), 28.

furthered when Mitchell states: "Nietzsche sees the ancient Greeks as possessing the proper sensuality and disposition towards the necessity of *eros* and, in their piety, they affirm the necessity of sexuality for life in tragedy instead of masking it in the case of ascetic morality."⁴¹

Sexuality is necessary for the life affirmation of a species, and Nietzsche sees the Greeks as possessing a healthy sexuality that sees the necessity of, and not the shame in, *eros*, sex, and the romantic process, standing in contrast to the historical Christian or ascetic moral stance, which sees shame and weakness in erotic desire. Sex and erotic desire are not a point of shame and the basis for chastity or ascetic denial. Rather, they become the basis for a life-affirming culture.

Mitchell's account is further supported by Nietzsche's discussion of female chastity in *The Gay Science*, where he writes:

"There is something quite amazing and monstrous in the upbringing of upper-class women; indeed, maybe there is nothing more paradoxical. The whole world agrees that they should be brought up as ignorant as possible about matters erotic, and that one has to impart in their souls a deep shame in the face of such things and the most extreme impatience and flight at the merest suggestion of them."⁴²

Knowledge of sex had become a significant source of shame and evil in Nietzsche's time among noble women. Furthermore, this evil, this shame, seems to have been fabricated by "[t]he whole world," resulting in a contemporary Christian idealization of honor that is linked to chastity and perceptions of chastity in nineteenth century Europe. This morality consists of blindness and ignorance in the face of knowledge of *eros* or sex, something which would appear more natural, instinctual, life affirming, and creative than other drives. The result is a culture covered in moral "truths" about life-affirming drives, with humanity on the brink of losing its creative and life-affirming essence.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 74-75.

With European Christian values of honor and shame linked to obscuring knowledge about instinctual drives for sex and eroticism, morals and sexual drives naturally conflict and problematic sexual obsessions emerge out of the chaos. Men are idealized and obsessed over for their mythical honor and goodness, and not for their sexual facade, obscuring the sexual attraction and drive fundamental to life-affirming sexuality. Women, on the other hand, are hidden away from anything sexual, resulting in sex-obsession and a resulting nihilism in men due to its forbidden and hidden image. This obfuscation creates a culture in which the most basic life-affirming drive, sexual desire, is regulated by and subjugated to the secondary priority of maintaining chastity or virtue. Neither sex nor its creative potential is loved, but, rather, there is an obsession with an objectified image of the beloved that promotes life-denying shame.

Traditional European sexuality consists of shame in the face of basic life-affirming drives in favor of the life-denying virtues of chastity and sexual asceticism. This life-denial seems to place the majority of shame and burden on women, who are exposed to sex-obsessed men and the act of sex. Nietzsche writes of a land of small ones and small virtues in *TSZ*: "There is little here of man, therefore their women masculinize themselves. For only he who is man enough will redeem the woman in woman."⁴³ Women are burdened with defending themselves against sex-obsessed men and the shame of their sexuality, with men not being man enough to maintain their masculinity or their gentleness towards women, vying instead for obsessions, brutish disrespect, or life-denying ascetism.

Regardless of the problems with Christian sexual morality, romance itself has its problems as well. Nietzsche writes in *TSZ* of the setting and peoples in which he found these masculinized women: "A few of them will, but most of them are merely willed. A few of them

⁴³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 135.

are genuine, but most of them are bad actors.//There are unknowing actors among them and unwilling actors among them - the genuine are always rare, especially genuine actors."⁴⁴ This setting, a land of "small ones" and "small virtues," consists of people who are drained of their will or drive for life.⁴⁵ The ones who will are few and far between, since will is synonymous with creative masculine drive for Nietzsche. As such, there are many who are simply willed. Their existence is dependent on the rule of normative laws. Most are bad actors, with genuine creative ones few and far between. Being willed, they act according to the fabricated roles of others, having no drive of their own. The many small ones are burdened by roles which they must inauthentically live in accordance with. Their creative energy, their living drive, is spent out in continuous acting and masquerading. In the Nietzschean sense of willingness to maintain false roles created by others, this setting has become extremely feminine. As such, the land of the small ones becomes highly reactionary, with many valuing the maintenance of their social role and morals above all else.

Being feminine and emphasizing the masculine role of women, it becomes clear that women are reacting to the hyper-feminizing of this setting, with men not masculine enough to "*redeem the woman in woman*."⁴⁶ Men seem to be poorly embodying their masculine roles, being bad and unwilling actors, sexually castrated through subservience to shame in the face of sexuality, resulting in many ascetic and spiritual types. Nietzsche seems to think that this burdens women to compensate for the lack of masculine drive by taking on traditional masculine roles while simultaneously having to act and appear feminine. Thus, Nietzsche seems to view women as burdened by the lack of masculine drive expressed by men necessary for the creative

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 133-137.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

coexistence of the sexes. To be simultaneously masculine, independent, driven, receptive and a dream-image to others requires more strength and creativity than may be possible for one person to bear. Regardless, it serves to disrupt the creative myth of the sexes and to creatively neuter lies which were once life-affirming.

The land of the small ones seems to represent the spirit of Nietzsche's world, in which acting to preserve life-denying morals, gender roles, and social roles in general becomes the most common and important value. This understanding of Nietzsche's judgment about the cultural erosion of the west as a result of a spirit of willingness, is not a dismissal of women or a sexist judgment about the weakness of women. It is an assertion of the breakdown of traditional gender roles for women, a draining of masculinity from men, and women's willingness to take on the role of masculinity: the willingness to will.

Regardless of the feminine way of willingness, Nietzsche clearly has a preference for the way of will, or masculinity, which is exemplified in his admiration for men's perceived ability to create. Nietzsche writes in the voice of a "wise man": "'It is men who corrupt women', he exclaimed, 'and the failings of women should be atoned for and set right in men - for man makes for himself the image (*Bild*) of woman, and woman shapes herself (*bildet sich*) according to this image (*Bild*)'."⁴⁷ According to Nietzsche, "Woman" or femininity is an aesthetic vision of man, and women shape themselves according to this image in order to be preserved or to receive a form of pity. This is difficult for women to live in accord with, being a constant adaptation to an image of indifferent mystery and receptivity, and, being difficult, it is ultimately the result of men's aesthetic vision of what is desired by the "way of will." As such, Nietzsche seems to give weight to the cultivation of a proper form of masculinity, ending the aphorism with the wise man

⁴⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 73.

shouting at the crowd, "One has to raise men better" followed by him beckoning the young boy from the crowd to follow him, but failing in the fulfillment of his request.⁴⁸

That masculinity is primary or first in its socio-sexual creativity is further indicated in the aphorism *Mothers*. Nietzsche writes, "Animals think differently about females than humans do; they consider the female to be the productive being."⁴⁹ Here Nietzsche distinguishes between the gender perceptions of animals and humans. Humans, he indicates, through *modus tollens*, view men as the productive sex, with animals, differing from humans, viewing females as the productive sex. He states of male animals, "there is no paternal love among them, only something like love for the children of a beloved and a getting used to them."⁵⁰ According to Nietzsche, male, non-human animals do not have a love for children, as male humans do. If one refers to Nietzsche's discussion of "great love" in *TSZ*, it appears that love is valued according to its ability to create something better than what already is and that this creation requires a prior vision of something more beautiful than what already is. With this in mind, it would appear that Nietzsche's understanding of male animals implies that they do not possess a love for children since they have no vision of a potential creation more beautiful than what currently is in their children. This is not to say that they view what already *is* as satisfactory and love it, but that they either have no capacity for visions of a potential future or that they do not have this vision for children. Through Nietzsche's understanding, the latter is most likely true, since he indicates that male animals may possibly view children as an extension of the beloved, implying that male animals can see female animals as something to be created. As such, this coincides with Nietzsche's prior aphorisms which indicate that "woman" is a male construction and is desired

⁴⁸ Ibid., 74.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 75.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

insofar as it was created to fulfill the promise of an aesthetic of something more beautiful than what apparently is. As such, women seem to represent the highest love for male non-human animals, being a purely male creation for Nietzsche.

How then do humans and animals differ in their understanding of creation? Nietzsche continues in *TGS* with a discussion of the relationship between females and their children, not necessarily non-human females, writing: "In their children females have a satisfaction of their desire to dominate, a possession, an occupation, something that is totally intelligible to them and can be prattled with: all this taken together is motherly love- it is to be compared to the love of an artist for his work."⁵¹ This passage strikes one as odd; when has Nietzsche mentioned a desire to dominate? What does this desire have to do with love? With creation? Some answers may lie in a previous aphorism in *TGS*, entitled *We artists*. Nietzsche writes:

"When we love a woman, we easily come to hate nature because of all the repulsive natural functions to which every woman is subject; we prefer not to think about it at all, but when our soul for once brushes against these matters, it shrugs impatiently and, as just said, casts a contemptuous look at nature: we feel insulted; nature seems to intrude on our property and with the most profane hands at that."⁵²

Here Nietzsche has indicated a dichotomy between the male lover's perception of woman as opposed to nature. This appears odd since women are a part of nature. Why would men be disgusted by these natural functions? They appear to be just as natural as women. But, as Nietzsche says of the male lover, "we feel insulted; nature seems to intrude on our property and with the most profane hands at that." The natural functions of womanhood are aesthetically disgusting to the male lover. They represent an apparent insult to a man. Why? Because they intrude on the male lover's property. When Nietzsche references this intrusion on property, it becomes clear how possession and domination factor into love. Natural female functions serve to

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 70.

disrupt the aesthetic creation of woman by man. Menstruation, for example, smears itself over the male construct that is woman. Nature infringes on male property insofar as this property is a perspectively beautiful creation. Nature ruins artificial woman for the male gaze.

In just the same way, mothers are artists insofar as they are able to create a beautiful image of their children and think themselves in control of the forces that shape this aesthetic. As such, it might be said, following this Nietzschean calculus, that men are the *mothers* of women and that women are the *mothers* of children. Being a Nietzschean *mother* constitutes being an artist that gives birth to a created aesthetic. To what is created, the beloved that is to be created, one seems to ascribe value and self-worth.

The importance of pregnancy and its life-affirming and creative potential is expanded when Nietzsche begins to discuss the creative capacity of human "male mothers." Nietzsche writes: "Pregnancy has made women gentler, more patient, more timid, more pleased to submit; and just so does spiritual pregnancy produce the character of the contemplative type, to which the female character is related: these are male mothers. Among animals the male sex is considered the beautiful one."⁵³ Spiritual pregnancy seems to be prevalent among the male sex, but why does Nietzsche indicate that the male sex is considered the beautiful one among the animals? The male sex would seem to be the performative one among animals, vying for the attention of females via aesthetic competition. The beautifying urge, the value and shame ascribed to appearance at a distance, manifests in the sexual selection of male animals. Males are the beautiful sex among the animals because they uphold an image of the beautiful male, seemingly created by females, the productive sex among animals. As such, the male animal is non-productive, yet the "spiritual pregnancy" of contemplative types seems to manifest in

⁵³ Ibid., 75-76.

humans, who, in contrast to the animals, seem to view males as the productive sex. The artist seems to be the manifestation of male productivity for Nietzsche, with art encompassing a broader human aesthetic that includes the creation of values and social structures along with more conventional works of art. As such, the male human artist, for Nietzsche, becomes more submissive, patient, gentle, and timid when pregnant with aesthetic vision and the will to release it.

Nietzsche's formulation of *amor fati* along with the great love of artistic creation is directly related to his views on women and pregnancy. Nietzsche links female pregnancy with the great love of an artist. To create a new life, to possess and mold it into something beautiful, is a life-affirming intersection between biology and art. Men create the image of woman and women seem to act according to the role of this image, but the creative capacity of men is not linked to their biology. Rather, through the creation of gender roles, men seem to indirectly influence biological creation by fabricating a normative ideal or image of "woman as such." Following Nietzsche's views on normative ideals or "truths," it would appear that the image of "woman as such" is, indeed, a lie or refined metaphor for life.

In an interesting move, however, Nietzsche seems to support a traditional image of woman as fundamentally desiring children. Nietzsche links the creative capacity for biological pregnancy with his vision of the *Übermensch* in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. An old woman approaches Zarathustra and asks him to speak about women, with him responding:

"Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one solution: it is called pregnancy./A man is for woman a means: the end is always the child. But what is woman for a man?/Two things the real man wants: danger and play. That is why he wants woman as the most dangerous plaything...Let your hope be called: 'may I give birth to the overman!'"⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 48-49.

Here a consistent logic unfolds. Nietzsche values pregnancy and creativity as life affirming, and this spills over into his views on gender and sexuality. There are two clear understandings of gender in his philosophy: man creates the image of woman and seeks a dangerous plaything; woman is capable of giving birth and seeks to entice men through emulating the image of woman for a child. Both of these gender formulations derive consistently from the greatest love of Zarathustra which seeks to create the beloved. At the same time, Nietzsche develops this seemingly traditional account by expressing the importance of these genders for the development of biological creativity. To acknowledge the parody of the sexes through gender is necessary to understand the artistry and creative capacity behind sexuality. Not acknowledging the falsity behind it or the creative capacity of it is to blindly value traditional gender roles in either a nihilistic way, in which one truly believes that one's self-worth is in the image of the gender created, or an uncreative way, insofar as one rejects traditional gender roles as arbitrary for some "true" or "objective" account of gender that ends up being just as false and arbitrary. Creativity loves constraints, and an acknowledgement of gender roles as creative, dangerous, and as falsified metaphor is a refinement of sexuality.

Nietzsche's formulation of gender as the creative roles that generate sexual attraction gives some explanation of his harshness towards women in *Beyond Good and Evil*. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche writes of *BGE*: "This book (1886) is in all essentials a *critique of modernity*."⁵⁵ This links *BGE*'s message to Nietzsche's understanding of modernity. He continues:

"If one considers that the book comes *after* Zarathustra one will also perhaps divine the dietetic *regime* to which it owes its existence. The eye grown through a tremendous compulsion accustomed to seeing *afar*...is here constrained to focus sharply on what is close at hand, the age, what is *around us*."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, 82.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 82-83.

The artistic vision of *TSZ*, through which great love derives, looks upon the reality of modernity and is appalled. It offends the Zarathustran taste. It is with this in mind that Nietzsche writes in *BGE*: "Woman wants to become self-reliant-and for that reason she is beginning to enlighten men about 'woman as such': *this* is one of the worst developments of the general *uglification* of Europe."⁵⁷ Nietzsche clearly indicates his aesthetic disgust at the idea of economic independence and self-reliance in women, along with the idea of educating men about the concept of "woman as such." It makes sense that Nietzsche would say this, following the logic of the previous discussion on the importance of art for "great love" and the rejection of modernity for its aesthetic barrenness. To assert the economic independence of women, for Nietzsche, is to reject the drive and masculinity of men and, by extension, the creativity grounded in traditional gender roles. While gender seems to be false, in the sense of objectivity, this is not a Nietzschean argument against its existence. Rather, Nietzsche seems to see the caricature of masculinity as inherently creative when juxtaposed with "woman," especially because it is false. Further, the assertion of the economic independence of women seems to threaten the creative capacity of gender insofar as it invalidates the lie of masculine primacy in economic ability and prowess. This may be fine for Nietzsche, insofar as another lie or something more creative may take its place, but the modern reliance and emphasis on objective scientific "truth" threatens the ability for such creative lies to exist. Thus, it would seem that Nietzsche views "truth" as no valid argument for the removal of lies. Nietzsche says in *BGE* of modern feminist voices, "they threaten with medical explicitness what woman *wants* from man, first and last."⁵⁸ The apparent desire for pregnancy becomes the defining characteristic of women for Nietzsche, but, as

⁵⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, Vintage (New York, USA: Vintage Books, 1989), 162.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 163.

indicated in *On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense*, the idea that there is such a permanent truth as "woman as such" that objectively defines women is a refined lie. Rather, it seems that when Nietzsche writes earlier, "I shall perhaps be permitted more readily to state a few truths about 'woman as such' - assuming that it is now known from the outset how very much these are after all only - *my* truths," he is pitting *his* refined lie against modern democratic society's refined lie.⁵⁹

Laurence Lampert argues that Nietzsche, in *BGE*, sees the modern rejection of traditional gender roles and norms as a destruction of a useful lie that promotes humanity's creative capacity. He states:

"The chief issue running through these sections is *Aufklärung* ["Enlightenment"]: the democratic Enlightenment inspires women to want to enlighten men about woman as such. Any such enlightenment simplifies and falsifies, reducing a mysterious and nuanced *an sich* ["Thing-in-itself"] to something explicit and unnuanced, the modern ideal of the human. Such supposed enlightenment masks the most basic truths of sexual difference and destroys the useful beliefs the sexes once held about one another, to some degree fictional but edifying idealizations of dangerous difference."⁶⁰

Lampert portrays Nietzsche's harsh words against the modern democratic movement for enlightenment and equality among women as a reaction to the rejection of the importance of innate sexual drives, existential truths, in favor of an ideal of "woman as such," as "objective" or normative "truth," in which sexual difference is not emphasized or encouraged. Modern enlightenment masks the prominence of sexuality and biological-sex in self-definition, opting for philosophically or scientifically objective images of "woman as such." While liberating from tradition, modern "truths" about women seem to replace traditional images with hollow and

⁵⁹ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁰ Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001), 235.

sexually "boring" roles for women to emulate, with scientific "objectivity" erasing the seductive danger that Nietzsche defines women with. Lampert continues:

"Why engage in such enlightening? For the modern reason of gaining self-reliance. But modern self-reliance or autonomy is, in Nietzsche's language, the autonomy of herd animals, one of the dominant illusions of modern times: 'the autonomous herd' is not only the herd without a shepherd but the herd of the supposedly self-reliant who rely on others for self-definition and self-regard."⁶¹

Nietzsche seems to view the autonomy of modernity as an inappropriate and abhorrent substitute for traditional gender roles. The autonomy that is being fought for is dependent on others for self-definition and is lacking in creative potential. Living up to the modern ideal of "woman as such" depends on the judgment of others with one deriving her self-worth from upholding or fulfilling the modern demotic, and ultimately unartistic, ideal of "woman as such," rather than opting for self-knowledge, self-love, or self-becoming. The ideal democratic woman becomes a new burden for women and restricts their independence in a way not as familiar as the old traditional ideals of women. Democratic freedom is unfree for Nietzsche, with one's self-image defined by the people. Individuality takes on petty and popular forms, with conformity ironically penetrating it. One is still burdened by popular forms of shame and honor, with socioeconomic independence only serving to normalize and spiritually neuter rather than liberate. Furthermore, it relies on yet another dogmatic adherence to scientific "objective truth," an argument once made about traditional gender roles, rather than acknowledging the untruth of both and subscribing to gender on the basis of its creative potential rather than assertions of the arbitrariness of one lie because it is not the "truth." Scientific objectivity breeds dogmatic assertions about the arbitrariness of gender insofar as it does not acknowledge the value of lies.

⁶¹ Ibid.

The idea of "woman as such" is something falsified and created by men for Nietzsche, and some parts of feminism seem to be attempting to recreate it. Willow Verkerk writes of Nietzsche and Jacques Derrida's interpretation of Nietzsche in "*Transgendering Nietzsche*":

"The urge to be like men, to make claims about science and objectivity, is said [by Nietzsche and Derrida] to be a break from the artistry and power that women have as great actors; it is conceived as a loss to their feminine styles (Derrida 1979, 65). Derrida attempts to defend Nietzsche from this move by claiming that the feminists whom Nietzsche attacks are also men because they believe in the 'truth' of 'woman.' In other words, if they were "real" women they would understand the untruth of woman."⁶²

Verkerk's analysis of Nietzsche and Derrida points to Nietzsche's critique of modern feminist movements as an ignorance about the "untruth" of woman, and even of "man." It would indeed seem to be correct, following Nietzsche's remarks about how man invented woman and how woman upholds the image of woman created by man, except in the case of modernity where this image seems to be created by women. The solution to a falsified misogynistic, yet artistic, image of woman is a similarly falsified postmodern image of woman as approximately equal to man, obscuring sexual differences in reaction to a former image which accentuated them. Verkerk's overall analysis, while accurate in its acknowledgement of the untruth of "woman," seems to miss the importance that Nietzsche places on pregnancy and the role of artistic creation in defining love and life affirmation. To be sure, she acknowledges this when she writes, "He thinks women are abandoning their most important and natural roles in order to attempt to be like men," but Verkerk's views do not acknowledge just how much Nietzsche seems to value pregnancy and tension between the sexes.⁶³ Verkerk states:

"Potentially, the transgender woman goes further than the ciswomen of Nietzsche's philosophy because she must, in order to survive, move from the position of a reactive figure of truth who enacts what Nietzsche calls 'falseness with a good conscience'

⁶² Willow Verkerk, "Transgendering Nietzsche: Male Mothers and Phallic Women in Derrida's Spurs," *PhiloSOPHIA* 7, no. 7 (May 30, 2017): 101-102.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 105.

(Nietzsche 1974, 316) to an affirmative position of power in which being woman is a doing that she creates."⁶⁴

While Verkerk sees transgender women as affirming life by affirming the falseness of gender, Nietzsche clearly thinks this a significantly life-denying move, writing: "[Animals] consider the female to be the productive being. There is no paternal love among them, only something like love for the children of a beloved."⁶⁵ Nietzsche views the female biology as primarily more creative or life-affirming. In Nietzsche's view, only when "contemplative types" emerge among the male sex, are men considered the more productive sex, i.e. in humans.⁶⁶ To deny the principal capacity for biological creation and the myth of tension between the sexes is the ultimate artistic and life denial for Nietzsche. Contemplative creative types seem to emerge among men due to their biological-creative barrenness rather than in spite of it. Men cannot become biologically pregnant and give birth; women can. For Nietzsche, to deny biological creativity would be to deny the principal mode of creation and life affirmation for humans. Retreating into a dangerous and asymmetric sexual mythos is more affirmative of life than neutering one's biological creativity due to "objective truths" about gender in science. Lies and names are immensely important in creating art, and in the same way, gender. As such, it seems that Nietzsche's asymmetric vision of gender is meant to counteract the potentially sterilizing modern vision of "woman as such," which is ultimately a boring, uncreative, and nihilistic image.

Ultimately, one loves and takes shelter within what one gives birth to for Nietzsche. He writes in *We artists*:

⁶⁴ Ibid., 106.

⁶⁵ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 75.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 75-76. "and just so does spiritual pregnancy produce the character of the contemplative type, to which the female character is related: these are male mothers."

"We need only to love, to hate, to desire, simply to feel- at once the spirit and power of the dream comes over us, and we climb with open eyes, impervious to all danger, up the most dangerous paths, onto the roofs and towers of fantasy... We artists! Who conceal naturalness!... We untiring wanderers, silent as death, on heights that we see not as heights but as our plains, as our safety."⁶⁷

Here, oddly enough, love, along with desire and feeling, seem to come over people like dreams. These feelings, or rather dreams or visions, cause people, or "We artists," to tirelessly labor towards their accomplishment. These visions of aesthetic beauty seem to blind people to a "natural" perspective for the sake of some vision or dream that *might be* or *ought to be*, some possible creation, that, through its aesthetic allure, demands the obfuscation of nature as it might naturally present itself. As such, Nietzschean love seems to be the command of dreams, the demand of possibility to unfold as actuality, and the hope that the future will conform to this beautiful dream, this possible creation, this promised child of Apollonian inception.

These creations, insofar as they are still possible and not actual, are the great love of creators, of men and women, and, as Nietzsche writes in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "from time immemorial we are- *accustomed to lying*... one is much more of an artist than one knows."⁶⁸ Everyone is an artist for Nietzsche, with subtle lies constituting the majority or totality of human life or experience. Nietzsche clearly prefers the art and lies of creators who do not seek to preserve their image as unwilling actors. Human life is dreamlike, temporal, and metaphorical. Earlier, Nietzsche writes in the same aphorism: "Our eye finds it more comfortable to respond to a given stimulus by reproducing once more an image that it has produced many times before, instead of registering what is different and new in an impression. The latter would require more strength, more 'morality.'"⁶⁹ We obscure what is different and new with metaphors of our past,

⁶⁷ Ibid., 70-71.

⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 105.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

and often times fill in the gaps with something of our own experience, imagination, or construction. We are good actors and preservers, often times opting to recite our rehearsed lines and lies over listening to what we say or what is being said.

Notably, Nietzsche emphasizes that to see things as they actually appear, as continuously new and different, requires "more strength, more 'morality.'" Strength and morality are linked to subtlety in perception and the ability to keep one's perception free of one's dreams and experiences, yet, as has been seen, these appear to be the exceptions in humanity. It is easy to remain in dying dreams, to use the past as a bulwark for the present, to be willed and not to will, and to act according to a dictated role. It is in possessing the strength to see the world as ever new and changing, to know one's self and see new life on the horizon, to wake up for a period and to become what one is, that Nietzsche's preferences lie.

Why choose to unveil an aesthetic interpretation of life? Why strain one's eyes to see something which may appear ultimately disappointing rather than filling in the gaps of life with a prior aesthetic vision? How are strength and morality linked? It seems that possessing a vision of how things ought to be is a safe haven for all people, insofar as they are actors and preservers. The "weaker" perspective keeps the present and future ordered and fills in gaps of perception to keep things simple and comfortable according to a traditional system of values. It preserves the *vision* of what is, being an actor and advocate for that vision. The creative or moral perspective uses a vision of possibility to change the present and make a vision of a possible future the actual present. Both perspectives seek shelter in dreams of beauty and reduce life to their appearance. The "strong" perspective acknowledges the continual change and subtlety of the present, without cowering in a shelter of visions of the past or possible future. But what does this "strong" and subtle perspective have to do with morality? Would not the creative perspective be the moral one

and the "weak" perspective, the preserver of a morality? What does the strength to have a subtle and open acknowledgment of things *as they appear* have to do with morality, which seeks to change things to what they *ought to be*?

The strong perspective is a refinement of the creative artistic perspective as philosophy, with Nietzsche viewing acting and conservatism as weak and shallow. The acknowledgement of the world as it presents itself, with eyes trained for subtlety, is crucial to the realization of Nietzsche's aesthetic vision. Nietzsche traces the origin of the dominant morality, which rejects the world as it presents itself in favor of the "true world," back to the inception of Socratism and Platonism. This genealogy is important as it provides an understanding of how Nietzsche views the refinement of truth from lies into a world which is highly dogmatic and life-denying, and which rejects the tragic and the false. Nietzsche writes: "The ancient theological problem of 'faith' and 'knowledge'-or, more clearly, of instinct and reason...the question whether regarding the valuation of things instinct deserves more authority than rationality...first emerged in the person of Socrates."⁷⁰ Here Nietzsche frames an ancient philosophical problem regarding whether or not instinct or reason is to be valued more than the other, or whether both are to be co-valued. This problem, he claims, as theological and as a tension, first arose "in the person of Socrates." Nietzsche continues:

"Socrates himself...had initially sided with reason; and in fact, what did he do his life long but laugh at the awkward incapacity of noble Athenians who...were men of instinct and never could give sufficient information about the reasons for their actions? In the end, however, privately and secretly, he laughed at himself, too: in himself he found, before his subtle conscience and self-examination, the same difficulty and incapacity."⁷¹

Nietzsche is claiming that Socrates, once valuing intellect above instinct, secretly realized through self-examination that instinct guided his actions prior to reason. This is not the

⁷⁰ Ibid., 103-104.

⁷¹ Ibid., 104.

conventional understanding of Socrates. Laurence Lampert writes in *NT*: "Socrates, examining himself and others, learned the difference between himself and others, learned the necessity of esotericism. The Socratism set forth in the previous section is no more to be identified with Socrates' true views than Platonism is with Plato's."⁷² Lampert and Nietzsche indicate that Socratism, namely, the idea that "Nobody wants to do harm to himself, therefore all that is bad is done involuntarily...Hence the bad are bad only because of an error," or the idea or dream that intellect is superior to instinct, is a noble lie, created to veil the truth that "Socrates' insight into the limits of reason in himself and others allowed him to see that reason is no ground for detaching oneself from the instincts; he saw that his own reasoning was in the service of his own instincts."⁷³⁷⁴ Nietzsche and Lampert's interpretation are teasing out the notion that instinct and will are more powerful and primary than intellect and that involuntary action is not an illness or sickness to be cured.⁷⁵ Nietzsche is claiming that the images and constructions of the intellect are always in service to prior drives.

It would appear that the drive to create a false exoteric surface of Socratism, which privileges intellect over will, in short, the drive to create a good and intentional moral philosophy, was let loose to hide the basic insight that instinct is more fundamental than intellect. Plato, following Socrates, refines this noble lie, with Nietzsche writing: "Plato, more innocent in such matters and lacking the craftiness of the plebeian, wanted to employ all his strength- the greatest strength any philosopher so far has had at his disposal-to prove to himself that reason and instinct of themselves tend toward one goal, the good, 'God.'"⁷⁶ Nietzsche writes prior:

⁷² Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task*, 158.

⁷³ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*, 103.

⁷⁴ Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task*, 158.

⁷⁵ Instinct and will are not the same, but the two are closely related. Will is prior to instinct as drive itself. Instinct is reactionary and guided by the force of will. Both are prior to intellect for Nietzsche and Lampert.

⁷⁶ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*, 104.

"Plato did everything he could in order to read something refined and noble into the proposition of his teacher- above all, himself."⁷⁷ Plato, apparently a philosopher of the most immense strength and nobility, is claimed to have put more strength than has ever been dispensed into the Socratic proposition that reason and instinct tend toward the good and that intellect is corrective and prior to instinct. Laurence Lampert writes: "Lacking an end for detaching oneself from the instincts, Socrates made a place for both: 'One must help provide justification' for both instincts and reason, 'one must follow the instincts but persuade the reason to assist them therein with good grounds.'"⁷⁸ As such, Plato seems to represent the ultimate philosophical artist for Nietzsche, having created a morality from the exoteric facade of Platonism and Socratism. As such, Plato, from Nietzsche's interpretation, seems to be the father of modern morality, the creator of good and evil and the dichotomy of instinct and reason. Nietzsche's Plato created his *Good*, with the will to truth or intellect embedded in it, to preserve those who sought life beyond good and evil, with the will to truth, as the refinement of will as intellection rather than a dogmatic faith in truth, at the forefront of the definition and destruction of modern institutions of morality.

In a sense, Plato gave birth to his vision for humanity; philosophy was preserved and expanded. Modernity, however, lies at a tipping point with the supposed death of the Platonic "Good" or "God" by the hands of the very will to truth that fabricated it. Furthermore, philosophy, with Nietzsche, has come to understand the untruth of truth, throwing the supposed dogmatic drive for the truth at all costs out of philosophy. What then is to become of philosophy and theology? Nietzsche writes in *BGE*:

⁷⁷ Ibid., 103.

⁷⁸ Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task*, 158.

"When one is young, one venerates and despises without that art of nuances which constitutes the best gain of life, and it is not only fair that one has to pay dearly for having assaulted men and things in this manner with Yes and No...Later, when the young soul, tortured by all kinds of disappointments, finally turns suspiciously against itself... how wroth it is with itself now! how it tears itself to pieces, impatiently!...Ten years later one comprehends that all this, too—was still youth."⁷⁹

Philosophy and Theology are confronted with maturity and are at a stage where refinement and subtlety are necessary. The initial reaction at their youth, at their realization of their dogmatic faith in opposites (i.e. truth and falsity, good and evil, etc...), is violent and suicidal. But the refinement of tragedy and life-denial is life and Nietzsche is attempting to prepare the way for a refinement of philosophy and the religious instincts as stronger and life-affirming. Humanity has a choice to create a new beloved, beyond good and evil in a realm of subtlety where opposites are really just degrees and ranks of refinement, or to cling on to the murdered Platonic "Good" and "Truth." It is in this setting that Nietzsche's greatest love and vision of the *Übermensch* is bestowed upon humanity by Zarathustra.

Affirmation of life and the artistic creation or destruction which celebrates it are at the core of Nietzsche's view of pregnancy, with the *Übermensch* of *TSZ* representing the culmination of his life-affirming vision. Nietzsche writes of women: "Let your hope be called: 'May I give birth to the overman!'"⁸⁰ Zarathustra's "great" love, which seeks to create the beloved, is applied to pregnancy, with pregnancy playing a crucial artistic role in creating the overhuman. The great love of giving birth to the overhuman becomes a synthesis of artistic creation and the source of greatness in life, *amor fati*, in Zarathustra's vision. Zarathustra relays this vision of the *Übermensch* to a group of travelers, stating:

"*But there lay a human being!* And there! The dog jumping, bristling, whining- now it saw me coming- then it howled again, it *screamed*: had I ever heard a dog scream like this for help?"

⁷⁹ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 43.

⁸⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 49.

And truly, I saw something the like of which I had never seen before. A young shepherd I saw; writhing, choking, twitching, his face distorted, with a thick black snake hanging from his mouth."⁸¹

Zarathustra finds himself alone, excepting a human laying out in the distance and a dog barking wildly. The "*human being*" appears to be a young shepherd who is being strangled by a black snake. The image of the snake is significant as an ancient symbol of knowledge of good and evil, yet it is choking and biting the inside of the shepherd's mouth. Zarathustra continues:

"My hand tore at the snake and tore- in vain! It could not tear the snake from his throat. Then it cried out of me: 'Bite down! Bite down! Bite off the head! Bite down!' - Thus it cried out of me, my dread, my hatred, my nausea, my pity, all my good and bad cried out of me with one shout.-
...
Now guess me this riddle that I saw back then, now interpret me this vision of the loneliest one!
For it was a vision and a foreseeing: *what* did I see then as a parable? And *who* is it that must some day come?
Who is the shepherd into whose throat the snake crawled this way? *Who* is the human being into whose throat everything that is heaviest, blackest will crawl?
- Meanwhile the shepherd bit down as my shout advised him; he bit with a good bite! Far away he spat the head of the snake- and he leaped to his feet.-
No longer shepherd, no longer human- a transformed, illuminated, *laughing* being!
Never yet on earth had I heard a being laugh as *he* laughed!
Oh my brothers, I heard a laughter that was no human laughter- and now a thirst gnaws at me, a longing that will never be still.
My longing for this laughter gnaws at me; oh how can I bear to go on living! And how could I bear to die now!"⁸²

The overhuman overcomes the blackest snake of morality, which seems to represent the "abysmal thought" of eternal recurrence that Zarathustra is told earlier by the "spirit of gravity," who rides on his back and drops lead into his ears.⁸³ As such, it would seem that the *Übermensch*, as one who laughs in an apparently inhuman, yet irresistible manner after biting off the head of a snake, is the embodiment of *amor fati*. To laugh and say yes to one's fate and to

⁸¹ Ibid., 126-127.

⁸² Ibid., 127.

⁸³ Ibid., 125-126.

affirm the eternal recurrence of one's life is the mark of the *Übermensch*, as the creation of humanity who wills everything, all of life, as it is, laughing all the way.

The overhuman is the great love of Zarathustra, and potentially humanity, who affirms the eternal recurrence of all life in its necessity. As a great love, the *Übermensch* is the object of Nietzschean artistic creation and valuation, indicating the importance of creative capacity and activity for the emergence of one who can fully affirm life. As such, the emphasis Nietzsche places on the affirmation of tragedy through art, the creative power of lies, biological pregnancy as an artistic capacity, and the overcoming of eternal recurrence and morality, is essential to the creation of Nietzsche's vision of an overhuman that affirms life unconditionally and fully. *Amor fati* becomes the measure of a culture and greatness, with the level of celebration of the worst tragedies of existence serving as a measurement of a culture's life-affirmation or greatness of love for life. This affirmation does not involve an escape into some form of narcotic or sleep-like state, a celebration of artistic genius, or even an apparent liberation from one's biological self as one's "true" self. Rather, it is a celebration of even the most unimportant and terrible parts of life, a yes-saying to all of life, and not a rejection of one's ability to celebrate and affirm life. Nietzsche's greatest love is to create people who affirm or love life without a need to retreat into something beyond it. To love life is to dance in the chains of one's fate and to love it.

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