

KANTIAN AND NIETZSCHEAN AESTHETICS OF
HUMAN NATURE:
A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE
BEAUTIFUL/SUBLIME AND
APOLLONIAN/DIONYSIAN DUALITIES

ABSTRACT: Both for Kant and for Nietzsche, aesthetics must not be considered as a systematic science based merely on logical premises but rather as a set of intuitively attained artistic ideas that constitute or reconstitute the sensible perceptions and supersensible representations into a new whole. Kantian and Nietzschean aesthetics are both aiming to see beyond the forms of objects to provide explanations for the nobility and sublimity of human art and life. We can safely say that Kant and Nietzsche used the dualities of the beautiful/sublime and Apollonian/Dionysian to advocate their general philosophical worldview, and that the initial formation (in *Observations* and *The Birth of Tragedy*) and final dissolution (in the *Critique of Judgment* and *Zarathustra* and other later works) of these dualities are determined by the gradually established *telos* of their philosophical endeavor. Therefore, by observing the evolution of these so-called dualities, Kaplama gathers important clues as to how Kant's and Nietzsche's aesthetics transformed into different ways to affirm human art and life. On the one hand, Kaplama argues, the Dionysian came to be the heart and soul of Nietzschean aesthetics and ethics, and the Apollonian (or the formal drive of individuation) was reduced into a mere aesthetic criterion. On the other, Kant treats the sublime (which is originally an idea-producing feeling and/or judgment) as a mere appendix to his *Critique of Judgment* and aesthetic theory teleologically reducing it into its possible moral consequences. This is why Schopenhauer calls the sublime "by far the most excellent thing in the *Critique of Judgment*" which touches on the real problem of aesthetics very closely but does not provide a real solution for it. Kant's forced teleological move is to make his theory of aesthetic judgment stand as a 'reaffirmation' of the

earlier ethical justification he believed to have accomplished in the first two *Critiques* and the *Groundwork* where he defends an affirmation of human life through a teleological morality centered on the principle of free-will. In contrast, Nietzsche's aesthetics (particularly the Dionysian) guides his ethics and metaphysics again through defining an ideal human nature without which *ethos* would be static and meaningless, lacking the ability to move and change and represent the tragic *pathos* of human life.

KEYWORDS: Kant, Nietzsche; Sublime, Dionysian; Beautiful; Apollonian; Ethos; Human nature; Will to power; Eternal recurrence; *Übermensch*

INTRODUCTION

Kant and Nietzsche regarded aesthetics not as a systematic science/thought based merely on objective logical premises, but rather as a set of intuitively attained artistic ideas that constitute or reconstitute the sensible perceptions and supersensible representations of phenomena into a new whole. Kantian and Nietzschean aesthetics are both aiming to see beyond the forms of objects to provide explanations for the nobility and sublimity of human art and life. We can safely say that Kant and Nietzsche used the dualities of the beautiful/sublime and Apollonian/Dionysian to advocate their general philosophical worldview, and that the initial formation (in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* and *The Birth of Tragedy*) and final dissolution (in the *Critique of Judgment* and *Zarathustra* as well as other later works) of these dualities are determined by the gradually established *telo*i of their philosophical endeavor¹. While the concept of *beauty* dominated the entire Kantian aesthetics of the

¹ Nabais, in his *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, rightly suggests that Nietzsche's duality of the Apollonian and Dionysian is comparable to Kant's duality of the beautiful and the sublime and that Nietzsche's aesthetic idea of the tragic can be better understood when compared to the Kantian sublime. (Nabais, Nuno. *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, trans. Earl, Martin, London: Continuum, 2006, p.10) However, here Nabais also questions whether the same kind of relationship governs both considering the fact that the Apollonian completely disappears in Nietzsche's late period works. Moreover, Ansell-Pearson also confirms the significance of the sublime in Nietzsche's aesthetics and ethics stating, "in accordance with the tradition stretching from Longinus to Kant, Schiller, and Schopenhauer, Nietzsche employs the sublime in connection with notions of elevation, exaltation, loftiness, ennoblement and the attainment of newly discovered heights of experience". He also adds that Nietzsche treats it as the "tragic sublime in *The Birth of Tragedy*, in which nauseous thoughts about the dreadful and absurd character of existence, as human beings encounter it, are transformed into mental images with which it is possible to live, and in which the sublime represents the artistic taming of the dreadful and the ridiculous or the comic the artistic discharge of the dreadful". (Ansell-Pearson, Keith. 'Nietzsche, The Sublime, and

critical period, the Dionysian has become the central principle of the late Nietzschean philosophy. On the one hand, Kant treats the sublime as a mere appendix to his *Critique of Judgment* and aesthetic theory and eventually decides to discard it. He does this by emphasizing and analyzing the possible moral (but not necessarily significant) consequences of the experience of the sublime instead of the sublime itself as an aesthetic idea-experience. But this move seems to be a forced one as it evidently attempts to make the sublime compatible with the Kantian ethics as well as with the two previous *Critiques* and the *Groundwork*. Kant struggles to relate his aesthetics (particularly the aesthetics of the sublime) to his metaphysics and ethics. On the other hand, the Dionysian, though already the focus of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* and other early writings (like *The Dionysian Worldview*), also transforms into the very central principle of his critique of morality and science, the driving force of his *Zarathustra*, a main theme of many of his poems, and finally the ultimate *Weltanschauung* of a philosophy that explores the *pathos* of humanity beyond the ready-made conceptions of good and evil. In this paper, I will argue that Nietzsche's attempt to bring together his aesthetics, ethics and metaphysics was guided essentially by the abovementioned (Dionysian or tragic) worldview of life-affirmation². This is because Nietzsche explains 'art' as the affirmation of human existence within a cosmos of moving forces, and without this aesthetic self-positioning of humanity within cosmos, *ethos* (or the way humanity defines its nature, character or existence in relation to the existence of the whole – *ta panta*) would be static and meaningless, lacking the ability to move and change and represent the tragic character of human life. By contrast, Kant attempts the affirmation of human life or existence through a teleological morality revolving around his principle of free-will which, he argues, belongs exclusively to human morality. Therefore, his aesthetics becomes only a secondary reaffirmation of this earlier justification (which he believed he achieved in the first two *Critiques* and the *Groundwork*). Aesthetic judgment, for Kant, is just another proof for humanity's superiority (*Überlegenheit*) over nature. For nature, when understood as the totality of human perceptions of the phenomena (appearances), derives its aesthetic qualities

the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn' in Nietzsche Studien 2010, pp.204-5) Similarly, Haar establishes the link between Kant's and Nietzsche's aesthetics as follows: "As a result of his partial belonging to the metaphysics of subjectivity, Nietzsche remains *de facto* blindly dependent upon 'aesthetics' in the Kantian sense of the word, i.e., upon the definition of aesthetic pleasure as a pleasure of 'reflection,' as enjoyment in the creator or the spectator" (Haar, Michel. *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, trans. Gendre, Michael, Albany: SUNY Press, 1996, p.156)

² Nabais clearly confirms this point I will be using to compare Kant's consequentially moral aesthetics and Nietzsche's essentially aesthetic ethics. He argues that unlike Kant and Schopenhauer Nietzsche does not prioritize ethics and morality over aesthetics, and that the sublime cannot be reduced to its possible moral consequences and should be analyzed fully as an aesthetic experience. (Nabais, *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, p.9)

from free and reflecting human judgment, and therefore *phusis* (or the way humanity defines nature in itself) is necessarily dependent on *ethos* which can and should be cultivated by human cultures. The highest or most enlightened culture, for Kant, is the one that manages to fully represent the separation between *phusis* and *ethos* so as to acquire maturity and finally purity. The purest and most mature *ethos* is the one that overcomes and goes beyond its origins in nature, generating its own force-principles based on aesthetically affirmed and teleologically confirmed universalizable moral laws.

In the following I attempt to show how the dualities of beautiful/sublime and Apollonian/Dionysian played an important role not only in Kant's and Nietzsche's aesthetics but also in their ethics and metaphysics. I will also demonstrate how these thinkers, based on their philosophical *teloi*, dominant *Weltanschauung* and the resulting definitions of human nature, have transformed these essentially aesthetic dualities. In doing so, firstly, I will start by comparing Kant's *Observations* and Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* due to the following reasons; they both present an exposition of the duality between the beautiful and sublime as well as their comparison, both constitute the frameworks for the aesthetics developed and reconstructed later in their philosophies, and both are written rather artistically instead of establishing a critical-philosophical system on aesthetics. Referring to *Observations* and *The Birth of Tragedy*, I will highlight the discrepancies between Kant's and Nietzsche's early treatment of the beautiful and the sublime, first as mere feelings and character traits, then as ideas which need to be critically examined. Here, I will also discuss whether or not it is adequate to consider the feeling of the sublime as a product of human rationality and morality contrary to the picture of human life presented in Nietzsche's *Dionysian Worldview*. Secondly, I will provide a critical analysis on the role of Kant's and Nietzsche's conceptualizations of the beautiful and sublime in their definitions of human nature looking at Kant's third *Critique* and Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* along with other late period works³. This will enable us to determine whether or not Nietzschean aesthetics stands as a reaction against the moralizing tendency in Kant, and his interpretation of the sublime as a consequentially moral experience. I will argue that this is very evident in his aesthetic-metaphysical idea-principle of the Dionysian which has become a reactionary, yet innovative philosophical *Weltanschauung* posited against European-Christian metaphysics. In this section, I will also demonstrate the final dissolution of these

³ This paper will purposefully avoid analyzing Nietzsche's middle period works (particularly *Daybreak* and *Human, All Too Human*) both because the Dionysian is almost non-existent in these works and to be able to restrict the focus of the paper to Nietzsche's tragic sublime which is the dominant aesthetic, ethical and metaphysical idea-principle of his early and late period works. For an extensive analysis of Nietzsche's understanding of the sublime in his middle period works, see Ansell-Pearson, "Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn".

aesthetic dualities of the beautiful/sublime and Apollonian/Dionysian after Kant's forced reduction of the sublime into a mere appendix to his third *Critique* and his declaration of the sublime as an aesthetically acquired moral idea and Nietzsche's departure from the Schopenhauerian philosophy and his redefinition of the Dionysian as a predominant force that moves, directs and thereby justifies *ethos* through the realization and representation of *pathos* in human nature. This section will show how the dissolution of the beautiful/sublime duality functions as a justification of Kant's moral philosophy – as well as human life and dignity – while critically discussing the essential weaknesses and shortcomings of this move. It will also follow the transformation of the aesthetic principle of Dionysian into a central idea-force-principle that underlies the notions of 'will-to-power', 'self-overcoming' and *Übermensch*. Further, it will trace the final humanization of the notion of eternal recurrence and the justification of human life as art while outlining the strengths and weaknesses of Nietzsche's final elevation of the Dionysian to the purest representation of *pathos* of human life.

I

Why and how do beautiful and sublime stand as a duality in Kant's first treatise on aesthetics, *Observations on the Feelings of the Beautiful and the Sublime*? In the very beginning of this book, Kant acknowledges the validity of the Heraclitean principle of *panta rhei*. However, this acknowledgment comes together with a hasty repudiation and evasion. While Kant admits that taste is subject to change like every thing, concept, idea and judgment, he disavows change to try to establish certainty and clarity of mind. Thereby, he attempts to find "fixed points in nature" in order to be able to set the standard principles to which judgments on the beautiful and the sublime "ought to adhere".⁴ Goldthwait rightly argues that Kant's critical philosophy is a result of this attempt to establish markers for thinking as guidelines that would lead man to discover or rediscover his moral worth. This is what makes man an autonomous and self-conscious human being and attributes a real purpose to his life.⁵ This approach is also apparent in Kant's teleologically constructed duality between the beautiful and the sublime in the *Observations*. Kant associates the sublime with the terrifying as well as with the noble and the splendid all of which, he argues, makes the feeling of the

⁴ *Immanuel Kant' Sammtliche Werke*, ed. G. Hartenstein (Leipzig, 1868), VIII, 625; quoted by Goldthwait, 'Translator's Introduction' in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, University of California Press, 1960, p.8 and Paul Arthur Schilpp, *Kant's Pre-Critical Ethics* Evanston and Chicago, Northwestern Univ., 1938, p.73

⁵ Goldthwait, 'Translator's Introduction' in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, University of California Press, 1960, pp.8-9

sublime an important moral component of the person.⁶ Goldthwait further argues, “the interplay of the sublime and the beautiful generates a description of our moral lives, accounting for the various human motivations including the motivation by moral principle”⁷ and stresses the unavoidable proximity of the aesthetic and moral aspects of experience. Especially the sublime, he adds, can stand for the attributes of human subjects and guide human conduct based on the beauty and dignity of human nature. Hence, like Aristotle, Kant prioritizes the moral outcomes of the tragic and the sublime rather than providing a critical/philosophical discussion on the aesthetic essence of the experience of the sublime.

Goldthwait asks whether Kant made any significant contribution to the concept of the sublime and responds that, in Kantian philosophy, the beauty and dignity of human beings exhibit man’s embodiment of the sublime both as an idea and as a purpose that ought to guide human life. In other words, human nature extends beyond the beauty of nature and exhibits the sublime.⁸ Kant associates sublimity with the dignity and nobility of human nature to firmly establish the alleged moral character of the sublime and beautiful. He then brings together beauty and sublimity with virtue and the nobility of humanity and reconciles aesthetics with ethics. This is evidently an intuitive but vague and uncritical reconciliation that he later (if not entirely) abandons in the Third *Critique*. Arguably, the reason for the vagueness and simplicity of this association is Kant’s failure to bridge the experience and concept of the sublime and beautiful with the noble, virtuous and sublime human conduct and character, in other words, the metaphysical and the ethical. This, I argue, is due to the lack of an aesthetic force-principle. While Kant regards both the beautiful and the sublime as mere feelings, he also assigns them an important role as the primary representations of the essentially metaphysical moral/ethical worth of humanity. As a result, he fails to link human worth philosophically with the principle of virtuous conduct, which is one of the reasons why *Observations* has never been considered a rigorous philosophical treatise. It simply fails to demonstrate the transition Kant was trying to achieve between metaphysics and ethics because, I argue, by attaching moral *telos* to the sublime and the beautiful, Kant empties their aesthetic content. This is why he later tries to establish the faculty of judgment as the transitory faculty between the faculties of pure (dealing with metaphysics) and practical (dealing with ethics) reason in the Third *Critique* by acknowledging the essentially aesthetic (and not moral) qualities of, not the feelings but the judgments on the sublime and the beautiful. Moreover, according to Goldthwait, in the three *Critiques*, Kant entirely abandons his zeal to

⁶ Goldthwait, ‘Translator’s Introduction’, p.18

⁷ Goldthwait, ‘Translator’s Introduction’, p.18

⁸ Goldthwait, ‘Translator’s Introduction’, p.25

ground the supreme rule of conduct empirically (solely based on observations) and instead attempts to do so by resorting to deduction and the authority of human reason.⁹ In the Third *Critique*, for instance, Kant purposefully reduces the sublime to its initially-terrifying-but-consequentially-rational form categorizing it under the dynamically and mathematically sublime. This reduction stems from his unyielding effort to reaffirm the ability of the human mind to transcend nature and its so-called irrational qualities that seem formless, painful, harmful and fearful to human senses. Kant champions this ‘extraordinary’ human ability to transcend beyond the terrible and the tragic because of the very dependence of his thinking process to the ideas and ideals of Enlightenment and the *telos* of an “enlightened humanity”. Accordingly, Kant tries to define the sublime through this limited moral consequence of the experience and especially in the Third *Critique*, construes it as a teleological idea which proves the superiority of the moral dignity of man over the experience of the formless, infinite and dynamic nature. This moralizing aspect sounded very incomplete to philosophers like Nietzsche and motivated their attack on the Kantian aesthetics.

Kant’s argument on *Überlegenheit* (being superior to nature) directly or indirectly substantiates his denial of hedonistic and utilitarian accounts of aesthetic judgment which gives way to his principle of *disinterested* pleasure. According to Kant, the disinterested pleasure arises from the inner life of the mind beneath the senses, thereby leading us to finer feelings through detachment from the direct reception of the dynamic nature or surroundings. Aesthetic response needs to be indirect and detached and therefore based on reflecting and regulating judgment which, Kant interprets, is necessarily rational. According to Kant, what we really experience, when we face the dynamism, abundance and formlessness of nature is the disturbance of our faculty of imagination which consequentially resorts to the very capacity of human rationality to detach itself (or transcend) from the overwhelming presencing of nature. This escape from the presencing of nature in human mind can be understood as the individual’s escape from the very realization of his essential unity with the so-called ‘external’ things. This escape is founded on the essential supposition of the radical separation between the external things and internal ideas. Controversially, Kant calls this human ability to escape into the realm of moral ideas ‘sublime’. This argument feeds into Kant’s general zeal to interpret the sublime (as well as the beautiful) as one of the links between aesthetics and ethics by way of its alleged function of reminding human beings of their noble and moral nature. According to Kant, both the beautiful and the sublime (as experiences) are relevant and valuable only insofar as they lead the human mind to the realization of its moral and rational capacity. This is also linked to the

⁹ Goldthwait, ‘Translator’s Introduction’, p.34

humanistic *telos* or ideal of Kantian philosophy, namely the moral maturation of humanity through a sublime transcendence of human reason from the rest of nature, through the realization of the superiority of its own vocation.¹⁰

Kant then goes on to relate his arguments regarding the sublime and the beautiful to the attributes in man in general to demonstrate the relevance of aesthetic categories in ethical judgments. Nevertheless, in *Observations*, Kant's approach to ethics is not deontological but rather resembles the Aristotelian ethics of character. For instance, he says, "those in whom both feelings (beautiful and sublime) join will find that the emotion of the sublime is stronger than that of the beautiful, but that unless the latter alternates with or accompanies it, it tires and cannot be so long enjoyed".¹¹ The sublime, as a character trait, is a stronger feeling than the beautiful, however, it needs the balancing (and form-giving) energy provided by the beautiful to be long-lasting and meaningful. In another place, Kant argues that even the most praiseworthy and noblest qualities of human nature degenerate once they lack the form-giving beautiful.¹² Though, as expected, Kant again advocates the necessity of a rational-

¹⁰ This is one of the main arguments of Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. He articulates this idea in multiple ways both in *The Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment* and in *The Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment*. In the former, for instance, he argues that the sublime objects in nature "elevate the strength of our soul above its usual level, and allow us to discover within ourselves a capacity for resistance of quite another kind, which gives us the courage to measure ourselves against the apparent all-powerfulness of nature," and he adds this resistance is "found in our own faculty of reason...which has that very infinity under itself as a unit against which everything in nature is small, and thus found in our own mind a superiority over nature itself..." (Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp.144-5) Furthermore, he continues, "...sublimity is not contained in anything in nature, but only in our mind, insofar as we can become conscious of being superior to nature within us and thus also to nature outside us (insofar as it influences us). Everything that arouses this feeling in us, which includes the **power** of nature that calls forth our own powers, is thus (although improperly) called sublime; and not only under the presupposition of this idea in us and in relation to it are we capable of arriving at the idea of the sublimity of that being who produces inner respect in us not merely through his power, which he displays in nature, but even more by the capacity that is placed within us for judging nature without fear and thinking of our vocation as sublime in comparison with it" (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.147-8) In another place Kant says, "For the human being...is the ultimate end of creation here on earth, because he is the only being on earth who forms a concept of ends for himself and who by means of his reason can make a system of ends out of an aggregate of purposively formed things" (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.294-5) Korsgaard, in her introduction to Kant's *Groundwork*, also confirms this arguing that all human desires, needs and wants must be transcended for the overarching *telos* of an ideal human community based on human rationality conceived above and beyond the contingent realm of nature. (Korsgaard, Christine. 'Introduction', in Kant, Immanuel, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp.xxv-xxvi)

¹¹ Kant, Immanuel. *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, University of California Press, 1960, p.51

¹² Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.55

moral principle that extends beyond individual virtues such as sympathy. He thereby calls sympathy and blind good-natured passion ‘good’ and ‘beautiful’, while adding that it cannot be considered ‘virtuous’ unless it is compatible with the duty of justice. He puts forward the necessity of an underlying universal principle based on ‘affection’ as the ground of our actions from which arises total duty. Only then, he continues, an action becomes sublime. For Kant, it is possible for a moral principle or feeling to become sublime through its universalization of the compassionate quality. Universal affection and morality that derives from good-heartedness can transform into a sublime feeling, idea or principle. Therefore, he reiterates the feeling of the sublime as deriving from the rationalization or universalization of a now-moral (or moralized) aesthetic feeling. He puts this as follows:

“...when universal affection toward the human species has become a principle within you to which you always subordinate your actions, then love toward the needy one still remains; but now from a higher standpoint, it has been placed in its true relation to your total duty.”¹³

According to Kant, this is how ethics and aesthetics converge and how the particular ethical conduct can be universalized through aesthetics. Through the feeling and subsequent judgment of the sublime, such ethical, charitable or heartfelt goodness can become a universally valid noble principle. Moreover, in another place, Kant writes:

“What a large part of mankind would neither have done out of an immediately arising impulse of good-heartedness, nor out of principles, happens often enough simply on account of external appearance, out of a delusion very useful although in itself very shallow – as if the judgment of others determined the worth of ourselves and our actions.”¹⁴

Kant calls these appealing or becoming actions “gloss of virtue” or semblance of virtue. But why does Kant repudiate the aesthetic judgment claiming that decisions, choices, actions and character traits based on it are just simple, shallow and delusional? By reaffirming such dichotomies as external-internal and appearance-reality – following Plato and Descartes – Kant here reduces the aesthetic to the

¹³ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.58-59 Then, Kant adds, “Accordingly, true virtue can be grafted only upon principles such that the more general they are, the more sublime and noble it becomes. These principles are not speculative rules, but the consciousness of a feeling that lives in every human breast and extends itself much further than over the particular grounds of compassion and complaisance...only when one subordinates his own inclination to one so expanded can our charitable impulses be used proportionately and bring about the noble bearing that is the beauty of virtue” (Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.58-59)

¹⁴ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.61

delusional, in order to prioritize such moral principles as *good will*; not only for the ethical territory but also for aesthetic judgments and ideas that are equally relevant for the creation of a universal human society guided by such principles as free will and moral autonomy.

To substantiate these claims, Kant resorts to his general argument regarding the principle-generating dignity and sublimity of human nature, which upholds the ideas of freedom and nobility, champions disinterested judgment and disavows any form of submissiveness to contingent external factors or the *Macht* of nature. He is partially satisfied with human character that accords itself with *principles* and says, “Among men there are but few who behave according to *principles* – which is extremely good, as it can so easily happen that one errs in these principles, and then the resulting disadvantage extends all the further, the more universal the principle and the more resolute the person who has set it before himself”.¹⁵ In other words, the resoluteness of the character of a person depends on the universalizability of the principles from which he acts. The most universalizable principles, for Kant, are love of honour, servicing the common good, acting according to beauty and harmony. This conclusion results from his understanding of the moral individual as someone who can overcome his subjectivity and manage to “take a standpoint outside himself in thought, in order to judge the outward propriety of his behaviour as it seems in the eyes of the onlooker”,¹⁶ thus observing himself from outside. Kant thus considered aesthetic and ethical judgments integrated both essentially and teleologically. They are essentially integrated in the sense that as an individual observes the way her behaviour looks from outside, she reflectively judges whether or not her action is ‘becoming’. Her judgment on the becomingness of an action relates both to her faculty of practical reason and her aesthetic faculty of imagination at the very same time thus requiring these faculties to cooperate in the process of judging. In other words, the individual imagines herself as if from the eyes of the onlooker and makes an ethical judgment based on the appearance of her action. Though Kant is still not satisfied with this explanation and proposes yet another *teleological* explanation as to why aesthetic and ethical judgments are integrated. The reason for this lies in his general ethical project that attempts to prove the beauty and dignity of the moral nature of humanity (which derives from the Enlightenment thought), that relies on Kant’s idea of *Überlegenheit*. *Überlegenheit* stands for the state of being superior to the external, natural, bodily, historical and contextual

¹⁵ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.74

¹⁶ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.74-75

factors that may influence the ethical decision, judgment and action of the subject¹⁷. In this case, however, instead of reiterating the superiority of the human faculty of reason, Kant uses *Überlegenheit* to reconcile ethics and philosophy of nature through aesthetics by emphasizing the harmony-generating ability to step outside one's subjectivity and become a self-observer, therefore an observer of nature and human nature. This in turn allows one to acquire a more general perspective on one's life and life as a whole, thereby setting a higher (moral) purpose for existence. Kant then substantiates this through his argument for the necessary reconciliation of the beautiful and the sublime within that picture of human nature construed as nature's self-expression of its beauty and dignity, and nature as the grounding of human beings' most sublime and beautiful feelings, judgments and actions. Kant here attempts to derive principles from nature to describe the beauty and sublimity in human nature through a teleological reconciliation of the aesthetic and ethical judgments.

While Kant associates the beautiful with such character traits as delightfulness, sociability, friendliness, amiability, charitable feelings, he admits that these cannot be derived from such universal principles as free will. Similarly, he associates the sublime in human character with adoptive virtues (such as appearance-based sympathy) that are entirely contingent, potentially changeable depending on the circumstances and thus non-universalizable. On the other hand, he says, "noble ground remains and is not so much subject to the inconstancy of external things".¹⁸ This is because, he argues, it is completely disinterested as it stands for the highest virtue of benevolence or good will (which, for Kant, is inherent in human nature). According to Kant, this good will is "extremely sublime because of its un-changeability as well as of the

¹⁷ This is Kant's general understanding of the "I" or the subject. Interestingly though, as if to challenge the grounding of his moral philosophy, Kant makes a much-unexpected confession in a much-unexpected place. In the *Criticism of the third paralogism of transcendental psychology* of the first *Critique* Kant accepts the irrefutability of the Heraclitean notion of universal becoming or the transitory nature of all things, admitting the impossibility of positing a totally persistent and self-conscious subject: "Even if the saying of some ancient schools, that everything is transitory and nothing in the world is persisting and abiding, cannot hold as soon as one assumes substances, it is still not refuted through the unity of self-consciousness. For we cannot judge even from our own consciousness whether as soul we are persisting or not, because we ascribe to our identical Self only that of which we are conscious; and so we must necessarily judge that we are the very same in the whole of the time of which we are conscious. But from the standpoint of someone else we cannot declare this to be valid because, since in the soul we encounter no persisting appearance other than the representation "I," which accompanies and connects all of them, we can never make out whether this I (a mere thought) does not flow as well as all the other thoughts that are linked to one another through it." (Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. Guyer and Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.424, A364)

¹⁸ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.65

universality of its application”.¹⁹ Kant substantiates this contradictory argument on the sublime in human nature through his reference to the internal (thus unchangeable) - external (thus contingent) dichotomy. Hence, he eventually declares the sublimity of the good-will and benevolence inherent in human nature based on their universalizability and unchangeable nature.²⁰ In short, Kant’s main argument on aesthetics in the *Observations* relies on the duality between internal human faculties and external natural things. He writes: “the various feelings of enjoyment or of displeasure rest not so much upon the nature of the external things that arouse them as upon each person’s own disposition to be moved by these to pleasure or pain.”²¹ And this disposition evidently depends on the person’s intellectual maturity, which is why Kant adds that ‘virtuous impulses’ are delicate intellectual pleasures impossible for ordinary souls.²² In *Observations*, Kant understands human virtue, dignity and nobility as the reasons behind the sublimity of human nature. Accordingly, only true virtue is sublime and that amiable and beautiful moral qualities can only be regarded as noble in *so far as they harmonize with virtue*.²³ In other words, virtuous actions ennoble or sublimate human nature or *ethos*. This is how Kant reduces noble to right and ethical, an aesthetically pleasing behaviour to morally right behaviour, and thus the feeling of the sublime to morality construing aesthetics as the realm between metaphysics and ethics. By claiming that moral sympathy is not enough to stimulate our actions toward common good, Kant accepts the irreducibility of human nature to the merely pleasing

¹⁹ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.65

²⁰ Nietzsche challenges this dichotomy in his later works (e.g. *Zarathustra*) by exposing the sublimity underlying human nature through such ideas as the will-to-power, strength of character, artistic or creative abilities, tragic character of human life and finally the *Übermensch*. Ansell-Pearson eloquently confirms this as follows: “What Nietzsche is opposed to, I believe, is any attempt to revivify for us moderns the old religiously-inspired sublime. In taking this to task, however, he leaves open the possibility of other and new experiences of the sublime. Nietzsche’s challenge consists in asking the following question: can we be ennobled and elevated by the passion of knowledge and by the insight that the human is an “experiment”? Even when he posits the *Übermensch* as the new meaning of the earth Nietzsche is, in fact, also inviting us to return to the human, to discover it anew and learn what the human is through purifying knowledge. The human does not cease to remain the focus of Nietzsche’s attention and concern.” (Ansell-Pearson, ‘Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn’, p.231-232)

²¹ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.45

²² Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.46

²³ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.57 Here Kant also mentions the mathematically sublime and tries to link it to the meditations of metaphysics and immortality of our souls and simply fails to provide an elaborate argument on that. He also goes on to resort to the idea of “Providence” who has supposedly inserted in us a stronger impulse towards beautiful actions such as goodheartedness, righteousness, kindness and nobility. (Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.60-61)

moral character traits and advocates the grounding of these traits on universalizable and rational principles that necessitate the internal-external dichotomy. Nonetheless, we cannot simply summarize Kant's arguments on the sublime in human nature through such dichotomies as internal-external, particular-universal, pure-contingent, unchangeable-changeable or rational-natural. For instance, in the following passage, Kant defines the tragic action of revenge as sublime not based on its universality but rather on the emotions or affects it generates: "open bold revenge, following a great offense, bears something of the great about it; and as unlawful as it may be, nevertheless its telling moves one with both horror and gratification".²⁴ Similarly, in the Third *Critique*, Kant argues that sublime actions are the most important components of human *ethos*. Among these, Kant mentions war conducted in an ordered and careful way.²⁵ Similar to Kant's point in the Third *Critique*, in *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche advocates 'the good war' claiming that a well-conducted and courageously fought battle has achieved more good than love of one's neighbour. He thereby champions bravery as the highest form of good and devalues pity as a weak human feeling.²⁶ Therefore, despite the fact that Kant generally refers to the principles of universalizability and disinterestedness in his aesthetics, as Nietzsche does in *Zarathustra* as well as other writings, he also assigns importance to the strength, impact and quality of the feeling and/or action.

While the sublime moves as it represents motion, the beautiful charms as it represents form. In the *Observations*, Kant identifies the beautiful with joyousness, lightness, charm, cheerfulness, shape, ornament, predictability, artfulness, pleasantness, flattery, blue eyes, blonde skin, youth, light colors and agreeableness.²⁷ On the other hand, he associates the sublime with such diverse moving experiences, spaces, feelings, character traits as horror, darkness, eternity, melancholy, barren desert, solitude, uncertainty, courage, distress, anger, fear, bold revenge, tragedy, unlawful conduct, black eyes and greater age.²⁸ How are we supposed to make sense of these observations? What could be the link between courage and distress or black eyes

²⁴ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, p.53

²⁵ For further discussion on this point see Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed., trans. Guyer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp.147-8

²⁶ This is the way Nietzsche puts it: "You say it is the good cause that hallows even war? I tell you: it is the good war that hallows any cause. War and courage have done more great things than love of one's neighbor. Not your pity but your bravery has rescued the casualties so far. What is good? You ask. Being brave is good" (Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, ed. Del Caro & Pippin, Cambridge University Press, Kindle edition, 2006, Loc.1285)

²⁷ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.47-53

²⁸ Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, pp.47-53

and old age that would enable us to categorize them all as sublime? Unfortunately, instead of providing philosophical justifications for his observations, Kant instead focuses on another justification for the possible moral consequences of these experiences and character traits which, he claims, could function to reaffirm the rational and intellectual capacities of the human mind and the moral worth of human existence. This is one of the reasons why Schopenhauer says that the Kantian sublime touches on the real problem of aesthetics very closely but does not provide a real solution for it²⁹. Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* can be considered as an attempt to provide a real solution for how sublime (as an experience of nature) relates to human nature. It tries to explain how we can categorize horror, darkness, melancholy, barren desert, uncertainty, courage, anger, bold revenge, tragedy and unlawful conduct under one idea-principle that would encompass and represent them all. And the answer he provides is the concept of the 'Dionysian'. The Dionysian drive, according to Nietzsche, is the primary component of Greek Tragedy that embodies the emotions, impulses, intuitions, feelings, experiences and character traits underlying the tragic character of human nature. However, he also diverges from the pessimistic worldview theorized by Heraclitus and Schopenhauer through his reinterpretation of the Dionysian as a deity representing the self-affirmative components of human existence. For Nietzsche, the Dionysian represents the motion underlying and unifying the appearances of the things in/of nature (or namely natural phenomena) as well as the very transition between nature and human nature or between the human reception of motion (*phusis*) and the human identification of its common character (*ethos*). There is yet another aspect of the Dionysian that clearly indicates Nietzsche's use of it as an aesthetic category symbolizing all aforementioned qualities: its opposing and complementary relation to the category of the form-giving and beautifying Apollonian.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche defines Apollo and Dionysus as "the starting-point for our recognition that there exists in the world of the Greeks an enormous opposition" between the Apollonian sculpting or form-giving drive and the Dionysian imageless and musical drive that exist "side by side, mostly in open conflict, stimulating and provoking [*reizen*] one another [...] an opposition only apparently bridged by the common term 'art'."³⁰ Echoing the Kantian beautiful, Nietzsche argues that the individuating force Apollo, the god of beauty and perfection, comes to be the ethical divinity that represents *ratio* or *measure* and demands one to know oneself thus

²⁹ Schopenhauer, Arthur. *The World as Will and Representation Volume I*, trans. E. F. J. Payne, Dover Publication, 1969, p.532

³⁰ Nietzsche, Friedrich. 'The Birth of Tragedy' in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Geuss and Speirs, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.14

associating aesthetic necessity with an ethical necessity of self-consciousness.³¹ In other words, the Apollonian is the formative force in ancient Greek tragedy that represents the beautiful appearance and the measured restraint with its ability to avert self-destruction caused by the boundless attraction of the Dionysian. The Apollonian transfers the essentially metaphysical and musical but senseless, wild and terrible (or namely sublime) Dionysian force into the world of phenomena by which the art of tragedy is represented in aesthetic form. And the most essential component of tragedy, according to Nietzsche, is the chorus of satyrs which occupied the space higher and above the so-called everyday reality, on the platform of “a fictitious *state of nature* on to which they placed fictitious *creatures of nature*”.³² And Nietzsche (following Schopenhauer) controversially goes on to suggest that every true tragedy contains the “metaphysical solace” represented by the chorus of satyrs and whose existence extends beyond ethnic, ethnic and cultural limitations despite the changing appearances. This is the source of the Dionysian transcendence towards oneness and unity which Nietzsche advocates so as to affirm the tragic essence of life as sublime, “indestructibly mighty and pleasurable.”³³ For even the artist gives up “his subjectivity in the Dionysiac process” and “the ‘I’ of the lyric poet begins to sound out “from the deepest abyss of being; his ‘subjectivity’, as this concept is used by modern aestheticians, is imaginary.”³⁴ As in the case of the experience of the sublime, through this Dionysiac process (of transition), the individual apprehends the unity and oneness of the dynamic nature as well as the belongingness of his very being in this unity. Moreover, for Nietzsche, the sublime (in tragedy) and the comical (in comedy) are “a step beyond the world of beautiful semblance” and “in the actor we recognize Dionysiac man” who “goes beyond beauty and yet he does not seek truth”³⁵. Establishing a direct relationship between the sublime and the tragic, Nietzsche continues, these tragicomical plays “were plunged into the sea of the sublime and the comical; they cease to be only ‘beautiful’; they absorbed, as it were, the older order of gods and their sublimity”³⁶. While Aeschylus depicts the sublime in nature and human nature through the Olympian idea of justice, Sophocles finds it in the obscurity of a terrible fate and puzzles of human existence³⁷. Later in his *Attempt*, Nietzsche argues that this

³¹ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, pp.26-7

³² Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.39

³³ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.39

³⁴ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.30

³⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich. ‘The Dionysian Worldview’ in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings* ed. Geuss and Speirs Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.130

³⁶ Nietzsche, ‘The Dionysian Worldview’, p.131

³⁷ Nietzsche, ‘The Dionysian Worldview’, p.131

interest in the sublime and the tragic myth, “severe will to pessimism”, the “*demand for ugliness*” and the affirmation of the “fearsome, wicked, mysterious, annihilating and fateful at the very foundation of existence” are the symptoms of the Dionysiac madness (as represented in the ‘satyr’), a madness that results from strength, overbrimming health and an excess of plenitude that spawned both tragedy and comedy.³⁸

Some of these aspects of Nietzsche’s account of aesthetics are inspired by the beautiful/sublime duality Kant first introduced in the *Observations* and later developed into a critical analysis in the third *Critique*, as well as by the Schopenhauerian reinterpretation of it. Nabais, in his *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, demonstrates this relationship between the sublime and the tragic (as the tragic belongs to the experience of the sublime), in Kant’s third *Critique*, chapter 37 of Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation* and Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*. He also claims that Nietzsche abandons the metaphysical duality he inherits from Schopenhauer as early as *Human, All Too Human*, and arguably this abandonment leads to the disappearance of the Apollonian in Nietzsche’s later works³⁹. Nabais interestingly states that Nietzsche’s ideas of eternal recurrence and will to power completes his overcoming of Schopenhauerian metaphysical dualism, and will to power constitutes “the basis for a new figure for the tragic yes to universal existence

³⁸ Nietzsche, Friedrich. ‘An Attempt at Self-Criticism’ in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Geuss and Speirs, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.7

³⁹ Although we have sufficient evidence to argue that Dionysian, as already the essential drive of Nietzsche’s early works, has revealed itself and dominated the later works such as *Zarathustra*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Gay Science*, *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Ecce Homo*, he does also mention and discuss the ideas of the Apollonian and Dionysian in dualistic form in his *Ecce Homo* and *Late Notebooks* while commenting on *The Birth of Tragedy*. For instance, he says: “Being as a fabrication by the man suffering from becoming. A book constructed entirely of experiences about the states of aesthetic pleasure and unpleasure, with a metaphysics of the artiste in the background...Fundamental psychological experiences: the name ‘Apollonian’ designates the enraptured lingering before a fabricated, dreamed-up world, before the world of *beautiful illusion* as a redemption from *becoming*. Dionysos, on the other hand, stands namesake for a becoming which is actively grasped, subjectively experienced, as a raging voluptuousness of the creative man who also knows the wrath of the destroyer. Antagonism of these two experiences and the *desires* that underlie them: the first wants appearance *to be eternal*, and before it man becomes quiet, free of wishes, smooth as a still sea, healed, in agreement with himself and all existence; the second desire urges men towards becoming, towards the voluptuousness of making things become, i.e., of creating and annihilating. Becoming, felt and interpreted from within, would be continual creating by someone dissatisfied, over-wealthy, endlessly tense and endlessly under pressure, by a god whose only means of overcoming the torment of being is constant transformation and exchange...This metaphysics of the artiste stands counter to the one-sided view held by Schopenhauer, who cannot appreciate art form the standpoint of the artist but only from that of the recipient” (Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, ed. Bittner, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp.80-81)

with a sense of triumph”⁴⁰. On the other hand, according to Sallis, as early as *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche had actually realized the inappropriateness of the Schopenhauerian thought, his distinction between *will* and *representation*, and his approval of Platonic and Kantian dualisms to understand the idea-principles governing the Greek tragedy.⁴¹ However, referring to the discussion between Fink and Heidegger, Sallis also adds that Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche’s thought “regards the Schopenhauerian distinction between will and representation as still operative in *The Birth of Tragedy*, even if no longer as a demarcation between two separate regions but rather as structuring the originary *poiesis* of cosmic life.”⁴² And he continues, “Nietzsche’s text cannot but have twisted free from the Schopenhauerian metaphysical axis. It is only a question whether there is a structural necessity that links the reinscription to that twisting. . . . A certain twisting commences as soon as the question of Dionysian art comes into play.”⁴³ This is because, Sallis argues, Nietzsche’s construal of the Dionysian art or music dislocates the metaphysical language he inherited from Schopenhauer collapsing the fundamental distinction between will (or thing-in-itself) and appearance.⁴⁴ In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche further discusses this point as follows:

“To divide the world into a ‘true’ half and an ‘illusory’ one, whether in the manner of Christianity or in the manner of Kant (an *underhanded* Christian, at the end of the day), is just a sign of decadence, - it is a symptom of life *in decline* ... The

⁴⁰ Nabais, Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic, p.63

⁴¹ Moreover, Sallis asks, “Does Nietzsche’s thinking of the Dionysian turn outside, turn against, exceed, the space between intelligible and sensible? Or does it not remain situated precisely within the compass of that distinction in the guise that it assumes beginning with Kant, as the distinction between thing-in-itself and appearances? Or even in its Schopenhauerian guise, as the distinction between the will (as the thing-in-itself) and appearances produced through the operation of representation? Is the fundamental distinction of *The World as Will and Representation*, the distinction that reinscribes the metaphysical order of fundament, that is, of ground—is this distinction not reinscribed in *The Birth of Tragedy*?” (Sallis, John. *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991, p.60)

⁴² Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, p.60 On the other hand, Sallis defends the argument that young Nietzsche’s admiration of Schopenhauer was only regarding his philosopher-character, not the content of his philosophy which stems from the Platonic separation of reality and appearances. This view can be justified referring to Nietzsche’s radical and critical approach against “the simple oppositional thinking” whose attributes ascribed to the will are simply the binary opposites of the attributes of appearances.” (Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, pp.64-5)

⁴³ Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy*, p.68

⁴⁴ Sallis, *Crossings: Nietzsche and the Space of Tragedy* pp.71-2 Moreover, in his book, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, Haar agrees with Sallis as follows: “The reasoning through which Nietzsche overcomes Schopenhauer is the following: If the will *needs* representation, the representation is already in the will or is *originarily* associated with it. Isn’t such an association or such a primitive link the Dionysian itself?” (Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, p.44)

fact that artists have valued appearance more highly than reality is not an objection to this proposition. Because ‘appearance’ here means reality *once again*, only selected, strengthened, corrected...The tragic artist is *not* a pessimist, - he says *yes* to the very things that are questionable and terrible, he is *Dionysian*...”⁴⁵

This is precisely because the Dionysian art of the tragic artist leads to the dissolution of the individual within nature and thereby to the negation of all logical oppositions or dichotomies such as subjective and objective, will and representation⁴⁶. Hollingdale, in his introduction to *Dithyrambs of Dionysus*, while agreeing that Dionysus (“as an ideogram for the ‘uncivilized’ energies”) and Apollo (as “the civilizing force”) are posited as a duality, also adds that Nietzsche was not satisfied with this dualistic position that he had imposed on nature and the sublime art of tragedy. This is why he continues, “the concept of ‘sublimation’ became a necessary and key concept in Nietzsche’s monistic philosophy of ‘will to power’: his attempt to show that all the phenomena of human life are expressions of one basic drive at various levels of its sublimation. Within this system of thinking, ‘Dionysus’ becomes an ideogram for sublimation will to power, and the ‘Dionysian man’ is now a synonym for *Übermensch*, the man in whom will to power has been sublimated into self-mastery and self-creativity”⁴⁷ Following this argumentation, it would not be wrong to conclude that Nietzsche’s philosophy transforms from a Schopenhauerian dualism, represented in the Apollonian/Dionysian duality, into a Heraclitean-Nietzschean monism, represented in such ideas as eternal recurrence, will to power, *Übermensch* and self-overcoming as different forms of the aesthetic principle, idea and experience of the Dionysian.

On the other hand, in Kantian aesthetics, the beautiful/sublime duality is relatively more persistent even though, in the third *Critique*, both the beautiful and the sublime are transformed into judgments or ideas generated by the faculties of imagination and understanding. As Goldthwait argues, in *Observations*, that Kant

⁴⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich. “Twilight of the Idols” in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Ridley and Norman Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.170 Nietzsche resumes this discussion in his *Late Notebooks* as follows: “Only aesthetically can the world be justified. Happiness with existence is only possible as happiness with *illusion*. Happiness with becoming is only possible in *annihilating* the reality of ‘existence’, of the beautiful semblance, in the pessimistic destruction of illusion. *Dionysian happiness reaches its peak in the annihilation of even the most beautiful illusion.*” (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, pp.81-82)

⁴⁶ Haar substantiates a similar argument as follows: “...in itself Dionysian feeling is more the joyful feeling of the *necessity of a universal link* than the will that follows from it. The Dionysian feeling, which is also called “tragic wisdom,” is that of the *necessity* of coexistence and mutual relativity of contraries such as perfection/imperfection, joy/suffering, creation/destruction” (Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, p.146)

⁴⁷ Hollingdale, R.J. “Introduction” in Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Dithyrambs of Dionysus*, London: Anvil Press Poetry, 1984, p.17

regards beauty as an entirely objective criterion that belongs to the objects themselves and he adds “the reality of beauty is the constant assumption of the *Observations*”⁴⁸. However, in the third *Critique*, Kant understands the feeling of beautiful as an outcome of the harmony between the faculties of the mind (imagination and understanding) during their employment in the judgment of a particular aesthetic object⁴⁹. Similarly, while the sublime in *Observations* was used to describe diverse moving experiences, spaces, feelings, character traits, the sublime in the third *Critique* is merely the consequence of the failure of the faculty of Imagination in its zeal to determine the indeterminable feelings. This is why Kant claims that the maturity of the culture trying to conceptualize these feelings plays an important role in the eventual description of the idea of the sublime:

“There are innumerable things in beautiful nature concerning which we immediately require consensus with our own judgment from everyone else and can also, without being especially prone to error, expect it; but we cannot promise ourselves that our judgment concerning the sublime in nature will so readily find acceptance by others. For a far greater culture, not merely of the aesthetic power of judgment, but also of the cognitive faculties on which that [i.e. our judgment concerning the sublime in nature] is based, seems to be requisite in order to be able to make a judgment about this excellence of the objects of nature.”⁵⁰

While we can expect immediate universal agreement concerning many beautiful objects in nature, the sublimity of natural phenomena does not communicate to everyone immediately and, thus, a consensus on such judgments is hardly ever universal. This is because, Kant explains, the judgment on the beautiful represents an easily intelligible quality of the object and thereby directly contributes to the particular *ethos* and culture, which in turn makes it purposive (serving the purpose of cultural progress). Furthermore, Kant adds, “the sublime consists merely in the relation in which the sensible in the representation of nature is judged as suitable for a possible supersensible use of it”⁵¹. In other words, the sublime depends not on the aesthetic judgment itself but rather on its very relation to the ideas of reason or different manners of thinking. The worldview of the particular culture conceiving the sublime determines the content and extent of the sublime experience, feeling and idea. Therefore, the sublime *indirectly* contributes to *ethos* and cultural progress by way of

⁴⁸ Goldthwait, ‘Translator’s Introduction’, pp.21-22

⁴⁹ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.89, pp.102-3

⁵⁰ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.148

⁵¹ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.150

reaffirming the superiority of human intellect and ideas to sensibility and contingent feelings (or, as Kant puts it, by expanding the soul⁵²). In that sense, even though Kant accepts in his earlier works that, through the experience of the sublime, the movements of the mind or emotions are stimulated essentially by *motion (phusis)* or the moving movedness of nature, in the third *Critique*, he upholds intellectual purposiveness and its ultimate indirect relation to the supersensible as the primary criterion for an experience or presentation to be judged sublime beyond human virtues, religious values and social/communal interests.⁵³ The essential reason behind Kant's emphasis on the primacy of intellectual purposiveness is his final declaration of the supremacy of the moral law beyond human senses (thereby beyond the feelings of the beautiful and the sublime). He argues that the "inextinguishable idea of morality" carries with it a moving, life-giving and empowering force (or will) that affirms humanity and life as a whole – even when senses find no aesthetic satisfaction to hold onto.⁵⁴ For even though the idea of freedom is essentially inscrutable and thereby resists any positive presentation, according to Kant, the internally motivating and empowering moral law is originally determining and self-sufficient and thereby does not need the support of an external motive force affecting human sensibility.⁵⁵ Here, Kant reiterates the dependency of the judgment on the sublime in nature to the cultural maturity of the judging person who needs to be predisposed to the feeling for moral ideas. But, Kant adds, this does not mean that the sublime itself is generated by culture or by social convention, rather "it has its foundation in human nature, and indeed in that which can be required of everyone and demanded of him along with healthy understanding"⁵⁶ acquired through an affirmation of moral potential of humanity. But then, one may rightly ask whether this judgment remains aesthetic or is not rather transformed into a moral/ethical judgment, and how the moral law can replace the aesthetic content of the sublime. Kant simply neglects this problem and instead of providing justifications, he argues that since, in the case of the sublime, the faculty of judgment relates the imagination to reason, it comes under a subjective presupposition referring to the moral capacity of the judging person and thereby ascribes necessity to the aesthetic judgment.⁵⁷ Yet, this necessity is not an aesthetic or natural necessity (which Nietzsche calls *amor fati*), but rather an ethical necessity, a

⁵² Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.156

⁵³ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.155

⁵⁴ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.156

⁵⁵ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.156-7

⁵⁶ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.148-9

⁵⁷ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.149

necessity that underlies and universalizes the state of being-human. This necessity revolves around an *a priori* principle beyond the senses and empirical knowledge, namely the principle of the transposition of the aesthetic feelings into transcendental philosophy.⁵⁸ The exploration of this initially aesthetic but ultimately teleological and moral principle along with a redefinition of aesthetics as the preparation for or reaffirmation of morality are the essential purposes of the third *Critique*.

II

Guyer, in his introduction to the third *Critique*, refers to Kant's letter to Reinhold where Kant clearly indicated that he tried to find *a priori* principles grounding the faculty of taste, one being the aesthetic and the other being the teleological principle. In the same letter, Kant added that he would not replace aesthetics with teleology even though he would *try* to connect them.⁵⁹ While working to figure out how he can manage to establish this connection, Guyer says, Kant came up with a new *a priori* principle that would not only parallel his previous writings on the judgment of the beautiful but also would explicate the complex "relation between the human mind and the nature that surrounds it including other human minds, that can give us confidence in the validity of our judgments without directly giving us new concepts of objects".⁶⁰ Relating intellectual taste to natural teleology, Kant claims that the reflecting judgment can only acquire universal validity by way of its relation to teleology. In other words, aesthetic judgment needs to be established on an indirect (but *a priori*) principle and use this as a compass to be considered universal.⁶¹ Particular appearances can only be linked to each other and acquire unity, universality and thereby meaning through the purposeful imposition of a principle which can be found in nature, e.g. the teleological principle of self-preservation through multiplication.

Kant's use of teleology (in relation with aesthetics) can be likened to the concept of *phusis* which also functions within the individual parts of a whole (nature), e.g. *phusis* of a certain individual phenomenon that actually contributes to the *phusis* in general thus acting both as cause and as effect. While the former understanding of *phusis* relates to the physical constitution of a thing in nature, the latter *phusis* is the aesthetically and/or reflectively acquired idea of nature. This construal would also substantiate Kant's definition of the reflecting judgment as the intermediary faculty between ideas and

⁵⁸ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.149

⁵⁹ Guyer, Paul, 'Editor's Introduction' in Kant, Immanuel *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.xiv

⁶⁰ Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', p.xxi

⁶¹ Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', p.xxii

empirical intuitions and observations to find universals for given concepts.⁶² However, Kant defines teleological and aesthetic judgments separately, first concerning the internal purposiveness of living things as well as the purposive character of nature in general, and second concerning the judgment we make on the beautiful and sublime in nature and art with respect to the inspiration these works of art and natural phenomena trigger. For one of Kant's main purposes in the third *Critique* was to bridge aesthetic inspiration or enthusiasm we acquire from beautiful and sublime phenomena of nature or works of art with the purposive character of nature and art. According to Guyer, Kant attempts to relate the essential complexity of the feeling of the sublime, which is generated by the idea of an absolutely great whole due to the understanding's inability to grasp it with the limited faculty of imagination, to the complexity of the moral feeling of respect, which is equally moving and self-satisfactory for human reason.⁶³ This dubious and unclear attempt at justification reminds us of his attempts in *Observations*, where he also tried to link moral teleology with aesthetics.

Since his very early writings, Kant is deeply convinced about this connection between aesthetics and teleology with respect to their common support for morality (which does not depend on reflecting judgment) arguing that the beautiful leads to disinterested attraction and the sublime leads to respect or esteem even contrary to our interest.⁶⁴ He also claims, due to its formlessness and direct relation to the *idea* of nature, the judgment on the sublime relates directly to human nature while the judgment on the beautiful relates to it indirectly through the objects. For instance, the sublime, as the representation of the infinite, expands the soul and underlies all religions that are essentially based on the assumption of a transition between the human and divine, mortal and immortal through long-term moral decisions and choices as well as reflecting judgments. And what Kant does is to follow their example and identify the idea of the sublime as transition towards human morality. He thinks that human morality is capable of generating a motive force or motion for the moral

⁶² Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', pp.xxiv-xxv However, unlike in reflecting and teleological judgment, in aesthetic judgment "the only universal that we seek is the idea of interpersonal agreement in pleasure in a beautiful object or in awe at a sublime one (which is actually both awful and pleasurable)" (Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', p.xxiv)

⁶³ Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', xxxi

⁶⁴ Guyer, 'Editor's Introduction', p.xxii Here, despite putting considerable emphasis on the abstract idea of reflecting judgment, he somehow decides to omit it in his conceptualization of the moral middle ground between aesthetics and teleology.

will, which is, by no means, static or lifeless, but rather thanks to such sublime ideas, is rendered dynamic⁶⁵.

Another example we can provide is Kant's conceptualization of the sublime as "monstrous" which is very much related to the idea of the infinite. Kant describes the sublimity of nature as monstrous, and an object is monstrous like nature if it destroys its purpose or the main constituent of its concept as follows:

"...if the aesthetic judgment is to be **pure (not mixed up with anything teleological** as judgments of reason) and if an example of that is to be given which is fully appropriate for the critique of the **aesthetic** power of judgment, then the sublime must not be shown in products of art (e.g., buildings, columns, etc.), where a human end determines the form as well as the magnitude, nor in natural things **whose concept already brings with it a determinate end** (animals of a known natural determination), but rather in raw nature...merely insofar as it contains magnitude. For in this sort of representation nature contains nothing that would be monstrous (or magnificent or terrible); the magnitude that is apprehended may grow as large as one wants as long as it can be comprehended in one whole by the imagination. An object is **monstrous** if by its magnitude it annihilates the end which its concept constitutes...A pure judgment on the sublime...must have no end of the object as its determining ground if it is to be aesthetic and not mixed up with any judgment of the understanding or of reason"⁶⁶

In this crucial passage, Kant describes and discusses the pure aesthetic judgment on the sublime which can be shown neither in products of art "where a human end determines the form" nor in natural phenomena that are assigned a determinate end (by the faculty of understanding). And he adds that a pure judgment on the sublime can only be shown with reference to "raw nature" as long as it contains magnitude.

⁶⁵ Among other places, Kant most explicitly communicates this idea in the following passage from the third *Critique* referring to the Jewish Book of the Law and highlighting the similarity of the associated enthusiasm to the moral law: "Perhaps there is no more sublime passage in the Jewish Book of the Law than the commandment: Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor any likeness either of that which is in heaven, or on the earth, or yet under the earth, etc. This commandment alone can explain the enthusiasm that the Jewish people felt in its civilized period for its religion when it compared itself with other peoples, or the pride that Mohammedanism inspired. The very same thing also holds of the representation of the moral law and the predisposition to morality in us. It is utterly mistaken to worry that if it were deprived of everything that the senses can recommend it would then bring with it nothing but cold, lifeless approval and no moving force or emotion. It is exactly the reverse: for where the senses no longer see anything before them, yet the unmistakable and inextinguishable idea of morality remains, there it would be more necessary to moderate the momentum of an unbounded imagination so as not to let it reach the point of enthusiasm, rather than from fear of the powerlessness of these ideas..." (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.156)

⁶⁶ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.136

The monstrous, in contrast, does not possess a determinable magnitude and eventually annihilates the end of its concept. This is the point where Kant contradictorily defines the pure judgment on the sublime as the one that has “no end of the object as its determining ground if it is to be aesthetic” so that it does not resort to the faculties of understanding and reason for its apprehension. Therefore, despite not possessing a determinable magnitude, since it eventually annihilates the end of its concept, the monstrous could also be considered a pure aesthetic judgment on the sublime. This aspect would also substantiate the argument regarding the link between the Kant’s mathematically and dynamically sublime and Nietzsche’s idea of the Dionysiac, as the monstrous force aesthetically representing the infinite magnitude and excessive dynamism of raw (arbitrary or purposeless) nature as well as the pure aesthetic judgment associated with it⁶⁷. However, according to Kant, the sublime is monstrous (*Ungeheuer*), not in itself but rather in its representation in the human mind as an entirely inapprehensible inhuman phenomenon that is beyond the reach of the faculty of imagination due to its irrational and supersensible character. And Kant acknowledges the destructive effect of the sublime in nature and accepts that for the pure judgment on the sublime to be aesthetic, it should not be grounded on the object or its conceptual representation. Based on Kant’s general treatment of the sublime it is rather based on the fact that the judgment “monstrous” is not sublime in itself but becomes sublime through its consequential effects, or through triggering human imagination and forcing it to resort to the safe, familiar and superior realm of human reason and morality. Evidently, to justify this claim, Kant here would have to admit that the judgment on the sublime would then cease to be purely aesthetic but rather would become ethical with the faculty of reason as its determining ground and human morality as its new end. In both cases, Kant conceptualizes the sublime with reference to essentially human standards and values rather than sticking to his initial explanation as to why ‘monstrous’ and ‘infinite’ can be construed as sublime. He purposefully links

⁶⁷ In his *Late Notebooks*, Nietzsche, once more associating the Dionysian monstrous force with his doctrines of eternal recurrence and will to power, confirms this argument as follows: “do you know what ‘the world’ is to me? Shall I show you it in my mirror? This world: a monster of force, without beginning, without end, a fixed, iron quantity of force which grows neither larger nor smaller, which does not exhaust but only transforms itself, as a whole unchanging in size, an economy without expenditure and losses, but equally without increase, without income, enclosed by ‘nothingness’ as by a boundary...as a play of forces and force-waves simultaneously one and ‘many’...blessing itself as what must eternally return, as a becoming that knows no satiety, no surfeit, no fatigue – this, my *Dionysian* world of eternal self-creating, of eternal self-destroying, this mystery world of dual delights, this my beyond good and evil, without goal, unless there is a goal in the happiness of the circle...*This world is the will to power – and nothing besides!* And you yourselves too are this will to power – and nothing besides!” (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, pp.38-9)

this once more to his moral teleology in order to avoid possible coining of aesthetic judgments as judgments devoid of moral concerns in expense of their purity⁶⁸.

Even though Nietzsche also defines the Dionysian as monstrous (*das ungeheuere Phänomen*) in his self-criticism of the *Birth of Tragedy*,⁶⁹ despite the obvious similarities such as its indeterminability, purposelessness, excessiveness, irrationality, and potentially destructive effects, there are several differences between their understandings of 'monstrous'. Nietzsche considers the formless magnitude or plenitude of the infinite, sublime and tragic as the purest, most natural, motive and thus life-affirming form of pessimism which is required for a revaluation of values. This pessimism, Nietzsche says in his *Attempt at Self-Criticism*, is not a sign of stagnation, exhaustion, decay or decline but rather one of strength, abundance of existence and overflowing health as represented by the "monstrous phenomenon of the Dionysiac" and by "tragedy, born from the Dionysiac".⁷⁰ This monstrous phenomenon of the Dionysiac and its

"music in particular elicited terror and horror from them (the Greeks)...the power of its sound to shake us to our very foundations, the unified stream of melody and the quite incomparable world of harmony. In the Dionysiac dithyramb man is stimulated to the highest intensification of his symbolic powers; something that he has never felt before urgently demands to be expressed: the destruction of the veil of maya, one-ness as the genius of humankind, indeed of nature itself."⁷¹

As in the case of the Kantian sublime, for Greeks, the Dionysian music was the representation of the experience and consciousness of the inhuman magnitude, infinite dynamism, indivisible oneness and the destructive forces of nature. However, unlike Kant, the Greeks did not resort to a moral transcendent realm of ideas but rather attempted to overcome these Titanic forces of nature by means of "the artistic *middle world* of the Olympians"⁷² as well as through the art of tragedy, which, for Nietzsche, is the purest representation of humanity's experience of these terrifying, un pitying and amoral Titanic forces. These monstrous and barbaric forces transmitted an ancient wisdom regarding the very existence of the Apollonian Greeks, their "entire existence, with all its beauty and moderation, rested on a hidden ground of suffering and knowledge which was exposed to his gaze once more by the Dionysiac. And behold!

⁶⁸ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.140-1

⁶⁹ Nietzsche, 'An Attempt at Self-Criticism', p.4

⁷⁰ Nietzsche, 'An Attempt at Self-Criticism', p.4 And continues Nietzsche, "Conversely, those things which gave rise to the death of tragedy - Socratism in ethics, the dialectics, smugness and cheerfulness of theoretical man - might not this very Socratism be a sign of decline, of exhaustion, of sickness..." (Nietzsche, "An Attempt at Self-Criticism", p.4)

⁷¹ Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', p.21

⁷² Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', p.23

Apollo could not live without Dionysus. The ‘Titanic’ and ‘barbaric’ was ultimately just as much of a necessity as the Apolline!” In the ecstatic sounds of the Dionysiac festivals “the unmeasurable excess in nature found expression in pleasure, suffering and knowledge” and “the individual, with all his limits and measure, became submerged here in the self-oblivion of the Dionysiac condition and forgot the statutes of Apollo. *Excess* revealed itself as the truth; contradiction, bliss born out of pain, spoke of itself from out of the heart of nature.”⁷³ The ‘Titanic’, ‘barbaric’, and ‘monstrous’ are how Nietzsche identifies Greeks’ and Greek artist’s encounter with the immeasurably excessive dynamism of nature which frames their fragile existence. And this ‘encounter’ was artistically transformed by the Greeks into the Dionysiac festivals and eventually, through the Apollonian *principium individuationis* as well as the Olympian mediation, into the sublime art of tragedy. But the ‘monstrous’ (*Ungeheuer*) continued to be directly represented in Aeschylean and Sophoclean tragedies in the form of the ‘satyr’. For Nietzsche,

“...what the Greek saw in his satyr was nature, as yet untouched by knowledge...the original image (*Urbild*) of mankind, the expression of man’s highest and strongest stirrings, an enthusiastic celebrant, ecstatic at the closeness of his god...a proclaimer of wisdom from the deepest heart of nature, an emblem of the sexual omnipotence of nature...The satyr was something sublime and divine; and he was particularly bound to seem so to the painfully broken gaze of Dionysiac man...his eye dwelt in the sublime satisfaction of the handwriting of nature, undisguised, robust and magnificent; here the illusion of culture was wiped away by the primal image of man; here, in this bearded satyr shouting up to his god in jubilation, man’s true nature was revealed. Faced with the satyr, cultured man shriveled to a mendacious caricature”⁷⁴

Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that the ‘satyr’, as the aesthetic extension of the ‘Dionysiac’, became the raw and monstrous artistic expression of the sublime in nature as well as the sublime in human nature⁷⁵. It is the tragic and aesthetic idea that links the omnipotent and destructive Titanic forces of nature to the primal image of man as represented in Greek tragedy. This is why Nietzsche identifies the chorus of satyrs as “a metaphorical expression of that original relationship between thing-in-itself and phenomenon”⁷⁶ or between the supersensible and the sensible, the idea of nature

⁷³ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.27

⁷⁴ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.41

⁷⁵ Nietzsche himself emphasized this relationship represented in the ‘satyr’, and later commented on it as follows: “What does the synthesis of goat and god in the satyr point to? What experience of their own nature, what impulse compelled the Greeks to think of the Dionysiac enthusiast and primal man as a satyr?” (Nietzsche, ‘An Attempt at Self-Criticism’, 1999, p.7)

⁷⁶ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.41-2

and individual appearances. Through the artistic representation of this original relationship, the Dionysian Greek wants to see and experience “truth and nature at full strength”⁷⁷. Nietzsche describes the chorus of satyrs as “the highest, which is to say Dionysiac, expression of *nature* and therefore speaks in its enthusiasm, as does nature herself, oracular and wise words”⁷⁸. Purely aesthetic and tragic representation of the sublime in nature, for Nietzsche, is the first demand of art. “In order to explain tragic myth, the very first requirement is to seek the kind of delight that is peculiar to it in the purely aesthetic sphere, without reaching across into the territory of pity, fear, or the morally sublime.”⁷⁹. This passage plainly shows that Nietzsche posits his tragic sublime or the Dionysian against Kant’s moral sublime, which reaches across to the territory of morality and rationality in its explanation of the enthusiasm triggered by the experience of the sublime in nature. In contrast, he defends the necessity of fully exploring the experience and the resulting enthusiasm to gather more wisdom regarding nature and human nature and their interdependence, which, he thinks, is successfully depicted in early Greek tragedy. Then, asks Nietzsche, “how can things which are ugly and disharmonious, the content of the tragic myth, induce aesthetic delight?” and responds, “only as an aesthetic phenomenon do existence and the world appear justified”⁸⁰. In that sense, Nietzsche does not only consider tragedy as an artistic representation (of the beautiful and the sublime) but also as a wisdom that situates human nature and its values on the constantly changing and infinite (thus monstrous) dynamic landscape of nature/cosmos. At this point, he identifies the Heraclitean metaphor of the child building up and knocking down stone and sand structures with eternal delight, as “a Dionysiac phenomenon” that “reveals to us the playful construction and demolition of the world of individuality as an outpouring of primal pleasure and delight.”⁸¹ In his article on Nietzsche’s understanding of the sublime, Ansell-Pearson points to the same metaphor first mentioned by Nietzsche in his *Pre-Platonic Philosophers* lecture series arguing that Nietzsche had the sublime image of the “ocean” in mind when conversing his Heraclitean idea (and reality) of becoming which “strikes mortal human being as terrifying”⁸². The experience of natural phenomena of the stormy ocean and strong earthquake when one “observes all things in motion,” (which could be considered as monstrous, sublime and purely aesthetic as experiences of raw nature) for instance, makes us aware and conscious of the eternal

⁷⁷ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.41-2

⁷⁸ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.45

⁷⁹ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.113

⁸⁰ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, pp.113-4

⁸¹ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, pp.113-4

⁸² Ansell-Pearson, ‘Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn’, pp.207-8

becoming of nature. Nietzsche praises this Heraclitean metaphor for its depiction of a “purely aesthetic *Weltanschauung*” and exclusion of teleological and moralistic tendencies (evidently in response to Kant’s moral sublime) as follows:

“Only in the play of the child does there exist a Becoming and Passing Away without any moralistic calculations. He (Heraclitus) conceives of the *play of children* as that of spontaneous human beings: here is innocence and yet coming into being and destruction. . . . The eternal living fire plays, builds, and knocks down . . . directed by justice, may be grasped only as an *aesthetic phenomenon*. We find here a purely aesthetic view of the world. We must exclude even more any moralistic tendencies to think teleologically here, for the cosmic child (*Weltkind*) behaves with no regard to purposes but rather only according to an imminent justice”⁸³

Kant and Nietzsche agree that the magnitude and dynamism of nature is also evident in the experience of the sublime phenomenon of ‘ocean’. Kant uses the phenomenon of the stormy ocean as an example of the dynamically sublime which disturbs our imagination and forces it to resort to the ideas of reason by which the subject is elevated above nature⁸⁴. Kant says, “we gladly call these objects sublime because they elevate the strength of our soul above its usual level, and allow us to discover within ourselves a capacity for resistance of quite another kind, which gives us the courage to measure ourselves against the apparent all-powerfulness of nature.”⁸⁵As Ansell-Pearson suggests, Nietzsche rejects Kant’s teleological interpretation of the sublime as the consequential realization of the superiority of our faculty of reason but rather argues that during such sublime experiences, one reconciles with nature’s lack of purpose and finally overcomes and purifies his human nature through reestablishing

⁸³ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Pre-Platonic Philosophers*, trans., ed. Whitlock, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006, p.70

⁸⁴ Ansell-Pearson puts this as follows: “For Kant the “boundless ocean heaved up” is one example of several phenomena of nature where we see at work a dynamical sublime. Here nature is called sublime whenever it “elevates (erhebt) our imagination” by exhibiting cases in which the mind comes to feel its own sublimity, that is, in a vocation that elevates it “above nature”. As already noted, for Kant the task is to judge nature beyond a state of fear. (Ansell-Pearson, ‘Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn’, p.207)

⁸⁵ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.144-5 However, Kant’s account of the experience of the sublime is very interesting as here, he actually seems to be discussing it as an aesthetic phenomenon instead of referring to its possible moral-rational consequences: “(We) must not take the sight of the ocean as we *think* it, enriched with all sorts of knowledge (which are not, however, contained in the immediate intuition) . . . rather, one must consider the ocean merely as the poets do, in accordance with what its appearance shows, for instance, when it is considered in periods of calm, as a clear watery mirror bounded only by the heavens, but also when it is turbulent, an abyss threatening to devour everything, and yet still be able to find it sublime. (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pp.152-3)

the connection between *ethos* and *phusis*⁸⁶. One similar experience of ‘raw nature’ is the experience of ‘giving birth,’ which can be understood as sublime both in terms of its purely aesthetic essence and its ethical consequences. Aesthetically, while giving birth, the person immediately realizes that she is an inseparable part of the whole of nature with her reproductive potential and during the experience, she feels entirely subjected to the experience. Therefore, her judgment (of the experience), like the judgments on monstrous phenomena such as infinite space, being in the middle of an earthquake or stormy ocean, would not be *disinterested* but rather inseparably *attached* to the experience (while contributing to the becoming of nature). This purely aesthetic judgment would also reveal the inseparability of human nature from nature or motion as a whole (*phusis*), which is the main function of the tragic sublime or namely the Dionysian. In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche interestingly mentions a very similar example (with reference to the Dionysian) as follows:

“the ‘woes of a woman in labour’ that “sanctify pain in general, - all becoming and growth, everything that guarantees the future involves pain...There has to be an eternal ‘agony of the woman in labour’ so that there can be an eternal joy of creation, so that the will to life can eternally affirm itself. The word ‘Dionysus’ means all of this: I do not know any higher symbolism than this Greek symbolism of the Dionysian. It gives religious expression to the most profound instinct of life, directed towards the future of life, the eternity of life.”⁸⁷

On the other hand, the person ‘giving birth’ could also focus on the consequential happiness or virtue of becoming a mother or (as Kant would argue) on the realization of her potential duty as a mother instead of the experience itself, and moralize the experience by restricting it to universalizable human values, which is the main function of the Kantian moral sublime (instead of placing it – the experience – on the cyclicity of life and the ever-changing landscape of nature). The sublime experience of giving birth, as Kant would argue, cannot be considered sublime unless it is suffered

⁸⁶ Ansell-Pearson, “Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn”, pp.207-8 Furthermore, Ansell-Pearson asks: “What sublime state is it that the human being might attain here? How can the human being cease being itself? Is this what has really taken place in this experience?” and he adds: “One response might be to suggest that the encounter with the sea challenges us as humans and our sense of scale and measure, confronting us with something immense and monstrous. But here we have to be careful because of the “mockery” that greets us in the experience. All the names we might come up with to describe the mute sea will come back to us: profound, eternal, mysterious. Are we not endowing the sea with our own names and virtues? Do we ever escape the net of language, ever escape the human?” (Ansell-Pearson, “Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn”, p.216)

⁸⁷ Nietzsche, Friedrich, ‘Twilight of the Idols’ in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Ridley and Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.228

for a purpose, namely to affirm the continuation and potential progress of humanity, and this resembles his identification of courage displayed in war as sublime provided that the war is fought for a good purpose, e.g. promoting such human values as freedom. This is the way Kant's moral teleology operates and the *disinterested* judgment on the (morally) sublime diverges from the actual aesthetic judgment of the sublime experience.

Based on these examples, it would not be wrong to consider Nietzsche's idea-principle of the Dionysian and the tragic sublime as a critical reaction against Kantian-Schopenhauerian morally sublime⁸⁸ which in turn led to his Heraclitean doctrine of eternal recurrence and his ethics of *becoming* (as opposed to the normative ethics of *being*). In *The Gay Science*, for instance, referring to the aesthetic values, he asks whether the artistic creation is caused by hunger, lack, "a desire for fixing, for immortalizing, for *being*" or rather by superabundance, over-fullness, "a desire for destruction, for change, for novelty, for future, for *becoming*." And he answers that the latter, or namely, "the expression of an overflowing energy pregnant with the future" represented in the Dionysian force-idea-principle whose intuition belongs to him as his "*proprium* and *ipsissimum*"⁸⁹, is the real source of creation, change, novelty and future that defines and is defined by an aesthetics and ethics of becoming. In his *Attempt*, Nietzsche confirms the predominant presence of the Heraclitean doctrine of *panta rhei* as well as this idea of aesthetic/ethical becoming in *The Birth of Tragedy*. These ideas are represented by "an utter unscrupulous and amoral artist-god who frees (*löst*) himself from the dire pressure of fullness and *over-fullness*" and who "wishes to become conscious of his autarchic power and constant delight and desire, whether he is building or destroying whether acting benignly or malevolently"⁹⁰ in order to become an extension of the eternal change through the affirmation of Dionysian suffering and pessimism. In the famous passage from *The Gay Science* called "What is Romanticism?", he identifies two

⁸⁸ He also confirms this point in *Ecce Homo* among other places as follows: Anyone who does not just understand the word 'Dionysian' but understands *himself* in the word 'Dionysian' does not need to refute Plato or Christianity or Schopenhauer – *he smells the decay*" (Nietzsche, 'Ecce Homo' in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Ridley and Norman Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.109) Moreover, in his *Late Notebooks*, Nietzsche also posits the Dionysian against Schopenhauerian metaphysics, Christian ideals and things-in-themselves as follows: "Around 1876 I had the terrible experience of seeing *compromised* everything I had previously willed, when I realised which way Wagner was going...Around the same time I realised that my instinct was after the opposite of Schopenhauer's: it aspired to a justification of life, even in its most dreadful, ambiguous and mendacious forms – for this I had ready the formula 'Dionysian'." (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, p.149)

⁸⁹ Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Gay Science*, ed. Williams, Bernard, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, sec.370, pp.235-6

⁹⁰ Nietzsche, 'An Attempt at Self-Criticism', p.8

types of sufferers. The first type suffers from “an *impoverishment of life*” seeking “quiet, stillness, calm seas, redemption from themselves through art...” or “mildness, peacefulness, goodness in thought and deed...as well as logic...for logic soothes, gives confidence” to which “all romanticism in art and in knowledge fits” alongside Schopenhauer and Wagner. The second type suffers from “a *superabundance of life*” he wants “a Dionysian art as well as a tragic outlook and insight to life” because he can face the terrible, evil, destructive, non-sensical and ugly aspects of human life and life in general thanks to the rich, overflowing and fertilizing forces dominant in his character.⁹¹ This helps him to say ‘yes’ to every challenge and possible suffering to affirm change or becoming in itself and thereby attaches his very existence to the existence of the whole of nature, instead of detaching himself by declaring the superiority of his rational/moral faculties over nature. In *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, describing Wagner and Schopenhauer as his antipodes, Nietzsche repeats this argument once more establishing a link between the Dionysian aesthetics and ethics as follows:

“He who is richest in fullness of life, the Dionysian god and man, can allow himself not only the sight of what is terrible and questionable but also the terrible deed and every luxury of destruction, decomposition, negation; in this case, what is evil, non-sensical, and ugly seems allowable, as it seems allowable in nature, because of an overflow in procreating, fertilizing forces capable of turning any desert into bountiful farmland.”⁹²

This Dionysian idea-experience that Nietzsche first introduces and elaborates in *The Birth of Tragedy* as the grounding part of the Apollonian/Dionysian duality (although it was already used as the main principle in the unpublished *Dionysian Worldview*), becomes the primary force-idea of Nietzsche’s ethics and metaphysics in his late period works starting from the book IV of *The Gay Science*. In these works, the

⁹¹ Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Gay Science*, ed. Williams, Bernard, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, sec.370, pp.234-5 Nietzsche later expands on this as follows: “I myself have attempted an aesthetic justification: how is the world’s ugliness possible? – I took the will to beauty, to remaining fixed in *the same* forms, as being a temporary remedy and means of preservation: fundamentally, though, it seemed to me that the eternally-creating, as an *eternally-having-to-destroy*, is inseparable from pain. Ugliness is the way of regarding things that comes from the will to insert a meaning, a *new* meaning, into what has become meaningless: the accumulating force which compels the creating man to feel that what has gone before is untenable, awry, deserving of negation – is ugly? – Apollo’s deception: the *eternity* of the beautiful form; the aristocratic law that says ‘*Thus shall it be forever!*’ Dionysos: sensuality and cruelty. Transience could be interpreted as enjoyment of the engendering and destroying force, as continual creation” (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, p.79)

⁹² Nietzsche, Friedrich. ‘Nietzsche Contra Wagner’ in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Ridley and Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.272

Dionysian pessimism makes good and evil and their associated valuations obsolete by situating morality within the world of phenomena to show its deceptive appearance and the final hollowness of its content.⁹³ This, Nietzsche argues, is because of the strict separation between aesthetic/phenomenal reality and the ethical/metaphysical reality imposed by ascetic belief systems with static descriptions of good, just, fair, evil, unjust and unfair. While Kant, through his conceptions of the beautiful and sublime, situates the aesthetic within the ethical necessity of human valuations, Nietzsche, through the Dionysian, situates these ‘delusional’ valuations back in the aesthetic necessity of human senses to demonstrate how unbecoming and groundless these valuations look when placed within life and nature. He goes even further and criticizes the human valuation of the beautiful in *Twilight of the Idols*:

“Nothing is more highly conditioned...*more limited* – than our feeling for beauty. Anyone trying to think about this feeling in abstraction from the pleasure human beings derive from humanity will immediately lose any sense of orientation. ‘Beauty in itself’ is an empty phrase, not even a concept. In beauty, human beings posit themselves as the measure of perfection; in select cases, they worship themselves in it. In this way, a species cannot help but say yes to itself and only itself...People think that the world itself is overflowing with beauty, - they *forget* that they are its cause. They themselves have given the world its beauty – but oh! only a very human, all too human beauty...the judgment ‘beautiful’ is the *vanity of their species*”⁹⁴

Here, Nietzsche’s criticism of the judgment ‘beautiful’ should not be understood as disapproval of the aesthetic *Weltanschauung* (for there are more than sufficient passages in his works to suggest the opposite) but rather as of the narrow human valuations (both aesthetic and ethical) in general. Moreover, the judgment and valuation of the beautiful Nietzsche mentions in this passage is very similar to the Kantian account of it. For, according to Kant, the beautiful is a result of the pleasure acquired through the harmony between human understanding and imagination (of nature), and it therefore orientates humanity helping it to posit itself ‘as the measure of perfection’, as the

⁹³ Nietzsche, ‘Nietzsche Contra Wagner’, p.8

⁹⁴ Nietzsche, ‘Twilight of the Idols’ in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Ridley and Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p.201 Nietzsche expresses a very similar thought but this time blaming human beings for being selfless for calling natural phenomena and intellectual ideas beautiful and sublime as follows: “All the beauty and sublimity we’ve lent to real and imagined things I want to demand back, as the property and product of man: as his most splendid vindication. Man as poet, as thinker, as God, as love, as power – oh, the kingly prodigality with which he has given gifts to things, only to *impoverish* himself and *himself* feel miserable! That has been man’s greatest selflessness so far, that he admired and worshipped and knew how to conceal from himself the fact that it was *he* who created what he admired.” (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, p.215)

species with capacity for disinterested pleasure, superior purpose and detached and harmonious way of living. In that sense, it would not be wrong to claim that Nietzsche in this passage attacks the narrow ethical reconstruction of the conception and judgment of the beautiful as generally understood by Kant and the idealist Enlightenment thought.

As early as *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche defends the argument that such ascetic ethical ideals as good, evil, just, unjust *look* unnatural, groundless and superficial by claiming that the Ancient Greek gods including Dionysus (or namely the Olympians) are entirely devoid of morality, ascetic ideals, spirituality and duty, and rather that they represent the fully affirmative superabundance of life disregarding such simplistic human valuations.⁹⁵ Here, the function of the Dionysian as the critical, destructive yet aesthetic and reconciliatory force-principle between nature and humankind becomes more apparent. The Dionysian, according to Nietzsche, is the purest and true aesthetic representation of human nature as the most sublime extension (or the noblest clay) of nature (*phusis*) or the real 'world of appearances'. Nietzsche puts this as follows:

“...there now sounds out from within man something supernatural: he feels himself to be a god, he himself now moves in such ecstasy and sublimity as once he saw the gods move in his dreams. Man is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: all nature’s artistic power reveals itself here, amidst shivers of intoxication, to the highest, most blissful satisfaction of the primordial unity. Here man, the noblest clay, the most precious marble, is kneaded and carved and, to the accompaniment of the chisel-blows of the Dionysiac world-artist, the call of the Eleusinian Mysteries rings out: ‘Fall ye to the ground, ye millions? Feelst thou thy Creator, world?’”⁹⁶

Nietzsche later expands on his criticism (in *The Birth of Tragedy*) of the idea of the moralized singular god, which has been over-idealized again by way of the idea of *Überlegenheit*, and “demonstrated from the world we know”⁹⁷, or which has been defined from within the narrow human valuations of good and evil. This critique rests on his earlier argument on the profundity of the amoral or *not-yet-moral* Greek myths, the direct deifications representing the human existence in itself. In the *Dionysian Worldview*,

⁹⁵ Nietzsche, ‘The Birth of Tragedy’, p.22 He clearly repeats this argument in the preface of *Ecce Homo* calling himself ‘a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus’ as follows: “I am a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus; I would rather be a satyr than a saint...I won’t be setting up any new idols;...*Knocking over idols* (my word for ‘ideals’) – that is more my style. You rob reality of its meaning, value, and truthfulness to the extent that you *make up* an ideal world...The ‘true world’ and the ‘world of appearances’ – in plain language, the *made-up* world and reality” (Nietzsche, “Ecce Homo”, p.71)

⁹⁶ *ibid*, pp.18-19 This argument can be traced in many of Nietzsche’s later works including *Zarathustra*

⁹⁷ Nietzsche, Friedrich *The Will To Power*, trans. Kaufmann & Hollingdale ed. Kaufmann, New York: Random House, 1968, p.533

for instance, Nietzsche says: “What speaks out of them is a religion of life, not one of duty or asceticism or spirituality. All these figures breathe the triumph of existence...all that exists is deified in them, regardless of whether it is good or evil.”⁹⁸ These gods served as mirrors in which the Greeks could see their existence within a greater landscape and know themselves by sketching the aesthetics of their nature in their tragedies. Moreover in *Ecce Homo*, after having announced himself as the disciple of the philosopher Dionysus, Nietzsche describes his discovery of the phenomenon of the Dionysian as the result of his own innermost experience, the aesthetic transformation of human instincts into a life-affirming deity, and presents it as a necessary motivational (religious) symbolism which empowers the human will for the final ‘Yes’ to life⁹⁹:

“...Saying yes to life, even in its strangest and harshest problems; the will to life rejoicing in its own inexhaustibility through the *sacrifice* of its higher types – *that is* what I called Dionysian, *that is* the bridge I found to the psychology of the *tragic* poet. *Not* to escape horror and pity, not to cleanse yourself of a dangerous affect by violent discharge - as Aristotle thought -: but rather, over and above all horror and pity, so that *you yourself may be* the eternal joy in becoming, - the joy that includes even the eternal *joy in negating*...”¹⁰⁰

Since the very early stages of his philosophy, Nietzsche’s aesthetics focuses on the transformative effect of the sublime, tragic and ecstatic idea-experience of the Dionysian. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche reconciles his Dionysian themes of intoxication and self-overcoming and explains how the sublimity of the Dionysian cult of nature was transformed among the Greeks into the force of transfiguration, which

⁹⁸ Nietzsche, Friedrich, ‘Dionysian Worldview’, p.124

⁹⁹ Nietzsche also defends the significance of art in the affirmation of human life in the following passage: “*Honesty* would lead us to nausea and suicide. But now our honesty has a counterforce that helps us avoid such consequences: art, as the *good* will to appearance. We do not always keep our eyes from rounding off, from finishing off the poem; and then it is no longer eternal imperfection that we carry across the river of becoming – we then feel that we are carrying a *goddess*, and are proud and childish in performing this service. As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still *bearable* to us, and art furnishes us with the eye and hand and above all the good conscience to be *able* to make such a phenomenon of ourselves...we need all exuberant, floating, dancing, mocking, childish, and blissful art lest we lose that *freedom over things* that our ideal demands of us. It would be a *relapse* for us, with our irritable honesty, to get completely caught up in morality...We have to *be able* to stand *above* morality – and not just to stand with the anxious stiffness of someone who is afraid of slipping and falling at any moment, but also to float and play above it!” (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, pp.104-5)

¹⁰⁰ Then continues Nietzsche, “And with this I come back to the place that once served as my point of departure – the ‘*Birth of Tragedy*’ was my first revaluation of all values: and now I am back on that soil where my wants, my *abilities* grow – I, the last disciple of the philosopher Dionysus, - I, the teacher of eternal return” (Nietzsche, ‘Twilight of the Idols’, pp.228-9)

in turn rendered the *pathos* of humanity the most aesthetic event-phenomenon of nature. For Nietzsche, an optimistic rational justification of human life (e.g. Kant's and the Enlightenment's affirmation of humanity) would be false, limited and illusory – especially considering the fact that we are too fragile within the infinite and monstrous background of moving forces and that one global disaster can terminate our existence. Thus, in order to affirm our life, we need to *see* this fact (even though this would certainly cause suffering and pain), experience the sublime motion and aesthetically represent it to affirm our existence as well as the blind overabundant force (*Macht*) of nature, so as to cultivate a second higher nature. While Kant conceptualizes this second (sublime and moral) human nature above and beyond as well as transcending sensual interests and natural inclinations, Nietzsche is the first philosopher to understand transcendence as a 'bidirectional process', an aesthetic process that moves both from the human *ethos* towards the metaphysical/cosmological unity of nature and from the cosmological level towards the human level.¹⁰¹ However, the very bidirectionality of this process transforms transcendence into a *transition* (*Übergang*) as it renders the object-subject relation and the resulting dichotomy obsolete. Remarkably, Kant also acknowledges the mediating role of aesthetics between metaphysics and ethics, while adding that the feeling of the sublime may threaten the purity and free-thinking ability of the human mind unless the faculty of practical reason is sufficiently cultivated. For otherwise, the experience of the sublime may lead to the domination of the interest of senses over judgment, which may in turn lose its disinterestedness. There arises another discrepancy between Kant and Nietzsche in relation to their understanding of free aesthetic judgment. While for Kant, free aesthetic judgment can only be acquired through its intellectual disinterestedness and *purity*, for Nietzsche, free and proper aesthetic judgment is the one that can be made with reference to the degree of immediacy of the natural instincts and *pure* irrational feelings communicated by the natural or artistic phenomena. While, for Kant, purity of aesthetic judgment depends on the judge's degree of *detachment* and freedom from the experience, for Nietzsche, it depends on his degree of *attachment* or involvement within the experience. And this could be one of the reasons why the beautiful, as a disinterested and universalizable idea-judgment, acquired the central stage in Kant's third *Critique*, and

¹⁰¹ The bidirectionality of this process can be observed in the following passage (among others) in *Zarathustra*: "You great star! What would your happiness be if you had not those for whom you shine? ... But we awaited you every morning, took your overflow from you and blessed you for it...Bless the cup that wants to flow over, such that water flows golden from it and everywhere carries the reflection of your bliss! Behold! This cup wants to become empty again, and Zarathustra wants to become human again." (Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, ed. Del Caro & Pippin, Cambridge University Press, Kindle edition, 2006, loc.793-806)

why the sublime (in the form of the Dionysian), as an aesthetic force that *attaches* the judge to the judgment, artist to the art, doer to the action, person to the experience, came to be the central idea-principle of Nietzschean philosophy.

Kant is evidently reluctant to associate the sublime or beautiful with such contingent motive pleasures as represented by the religions or belief systems from the so-called pagan cultures to Christianity (respectively based on bodily satisfaction and the weakness of the human soul). For him, sublime representations must necessarily refer to the ideas of reason in order to become real and intellectually purposive.¹⁰² Against Kant's idealization of disinterested and intellectually purposive aesthetic judgment, Nietzsche proposes that the essentially motive natural forces have immediate effect on our senses and they are immediately intelligible as sublime feelings and can be represented subjectively as ideas. This is why, in his early works, he defines the Dionysian artist as the one who "has command over the chaos of the Will before it has assumed the individual shape".¹⁰³ Through the Dionysian intoxication, the individual becomes conscious of the terrible and absurd aspects of his nature and existence and understands life in the form of the tragic art which in turn functions as natural healing making life sufferable, justifiable and even affirmable.¹⁰⁴ Nietzsche's zeal to show the godly in human nature and the humanly in the metaphysical ideas of nature (e.g. the gods) is very apparent even in his early conceptualization of Dionysus as "the god who experiences the sufferings of individuation in his own person", like the tragic hero, and who "has a *double nature*; he is both cruel, savage demon and mild, gentle ruler".¹⁰⁵ Dionysus comes to represent the metaphysical unification through his double nature which originates from the most complex and deepest insights of human nature as well as the force (*Macht*) of nature.¹⁰⁶ Nietzsche defines the highest aesthetic achievement of human kind as the aesthetic deification of nature and the earth through the acceptance of its *pathos* and the representation of this acceptance in the aesthetic idea of the *Dionysian*. He states in his late notebooks:

¹⁰² Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p.85

¹⁰³ Nietzsche, 'Dionysian Worldview', p.122

¹⁰⁴ Ansell-Paerson confirms this as follows: "Interestingly, in his treatment of the ancient Greeks Nietzsche had viewed tragic art as the means by which a people had conquered a world-weary pessimism (e.g. the wisdom of Silenus) and to the point where they loved life to such an extent that they wanted long lives. The pain and suffering of life no longer counted as an objection but became the grounds of a beautifying and sublime transfiguration of existence." (Ansell-Pearson, 'Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn', p.225)

¹⁰⁵ Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', p.52

¹⁰⁶ Here, Nietzsche heavily criticizes the historical-pragmatic construal of mythology which lacks these complex motives (Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', p.53)

“From that height of joy, where man feels himself to be altogether a deified form and a self-justification of nature, down to the joy of healthy farmers and healthy half-human beasts [was what] the Greek called [...] by the divine name: *Dionysus*.”¹⁰⁷

In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche echoes the necessity of the Dionysian-Apollonian reconciliation he defended in *The Birth of Tragedy* for the creation of the sublime art of tragedy and points to the final embodiment of the sublime and beautiful in the *Übermensch*. However, this necessity does not resemble Kant’s teleological affirmation of the moral nature of humanity, which, while affirming human nature at the same time negates the appearing or sensual nature (*phusis*), thereby standing as a negative affirmation. In contrast, Nietzsche’s affirmation has a double nature, it is both the affirmation of human existence on earth and the affirmation of life as a whole with all its sensual and metaphysical presencing, thereby standing as a positive affirmation, or affirmation that does not associate itself to any sort of negation. This last distinction is very crucial in the sense that both monotheistic moral teleology and teleological Enlightenment philosophy derive from the former affirmation of humanity through the negation of its dependence on life and nature. According to Nietzsche, on the other hand, the *pathos* of humanity not only is ethical, just and fair in itself (without resorting to any meaning or purpose beyond its very existence¹⁰⁸), but also sublime, beautiful and aesthetic all at once. Its very affirmation is accomplished by the ultimate reconciliation of the beautiful and sublime within the ideas of the Apollonian and Dionysian, through which Nietzsche aims to bring together the aesthetic and the ethical with the affirmation of tragic essence of human nature through his concept of *amor fati*¹⁰⁹. In *The Gay Science* Nietzsche describes *amor fati* as the love of aesthetic necessity as follows:

¹⁰⁷ Nietzsche, *The Will To Power*, p.541

¹⁰⁸ Nietzsche clearly articulates his critique of moral teleology and the concept of purpose in *The Gay Science* as follows: “...one is used to seeing the *driving* force precisely in the goals (purposes, professions etc.), in keeping with a very ancient error; but it is only the *directing* force – one has mistaken the helmsman for the stream. And not even always the helmsman, the driving force...Is the ‘goal’, the ‘purpose’, not often enough a beautifying pretext, a self-deception of vanity after the fact that does not want to acknowledge that the ship is *following* the current into which it has entered accidentally? That it ‘wills’ to go that way *because it – must?* That it certainly has a direction but – no helmsman whatsoever? We still need a critique of the concept of purpose” (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.225)

¹⁰⁹ Nabais rightly argues that the tragic justification of life has always been the driving force in many of Nietzsche’s works either overtly or covertly. He even goes further and claims that it “is probably more present in the texts that remain silent on the subject of tragedy than in those in which Sophocles and Euripides are the subjects” (Nabais, *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, p.xiii)

“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*: let that be my love from now on! I do not want to wage war against ugliness. I do not want to accuse; I do not even want to accuse the accusers. Let *looking away* be my only negation! And, all in all and on the whole: some day I want only to be a Yes-sayer!”¹¹⁰

In another place he adds, “Not only laughter and gay wisdom but also the tragic, with all its sublime unreason, belongs to the means and necessities of the preservation of the species”¹¹¹ Here, Nietzsche does not try to affirm life or what *is* through the affirmation of the necessity of the beautiful. Rather, he argues that the yes-saying or affirmation is itself an act of accepting and more importantly *seeing* one’s fate as an aesthetic necessity. He borrows this thought from the Dionysian aesthetics, the only path to pursue for a yes-sayer or life-affirmer. Therefore, *seeing* or intuiting or *looking at* is simultaneous with the affirmation, not only of life, but also of the transition between living and thinking, willing and conceptualizing, *phusis* and *ethos*. While willing requires a transition to seeing, seeing requires a transition to willing, and thus aesthetic understanding becomes an ethical necessity. *Amor fati* is in this sense the very affirmation of the transition between seeing and willing, and as a result of this affirmation it leads to *experiencing*¹¹². The experience of life became the motto of Nietzschean thought, which has culminated in the doctrine of the will-to-power and willing through becoming. And the principle of aesthetic necessity built on a Dionysian affirmation or *amor fati* has become the driving force of Nietzsche’s aesthetic reevaluation of *ethos*. Nietzsche articulates this in his *Attempt at Self-Criticism* as follows:

“...as an advocate of life my instinct invented for itself a fundamentally opposed doctrine and counter-evaluation of life, a purely artistic one, an *anti-Christian* one. What was it to be called? As a philologist and man of words I baptized it, not without a certain liberty – for who can know the true name of the Antichrist? – by the name of a Greek god: I called it *Dionysiac*”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.157

¹¹¹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.29

¹¹² Nabais rightly argues that Nietzsche’s notion of *amor fati* stands for immanent or aesthetic necessity as a transitory, neither moral nor teleological, idea-experience bringing together *ethos* and *phusis* (Nabais, *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, p.65)

¹¹³ Nabais, *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, p.9 Among other places, Nietzsche also mentions this argument in his *Late Notebooks* as follows: “This is where I set the *Dionysos* of the Greeks: the religious affirmation of life, of life as a whole, not denied and halved...Life itself, its eternal fruitfulness and recurrence...*existence* is held to be *blissful enough* to justify even monstrous suffering. The tragic man says Yes to even the bitterest suffering: he is strong, full, deifying enough to do so...Dionysos cut to pieces is a

The Dionysian affirmation is necessary so as to repair the belief in the possibility of the construction of bridges that can put an end to the present stagnation or exhaustion of humanity. The aesthetic *ethos* is necessary to re-establish the link between being-human and being as a whole. This is the only way to overcome nihilism. If we agree to consider the tragic art as a disturbance for humanity's discovery of its real *phusis*, then, similarly, the sublime art functions as the disturbance or change of direction in human history or the history of human *being*. This is because the human act of creation can only mimic the ever-evolving and ever-changing purpose of human existence, and therefore art stands as a necessity for the affirmation of human life. In *The Gay Science*, he articulates this argument regarding artistic self-overcoming and self-creation with reference to a *phusis*-based or physiological ethics as a reaction against Kant's idealist morality¹¹⁴. This also strengthens humanity's role of transition between nature and art, through the Dionysian affirmation, as well as the argument that *whatever 'comes to be' is an aesthetic and thus ethical necessity*¹¹⁵.

Arguably, one of the main purposes of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* is to demonstrate the affirmation of tragic (both aesthetic and ethical) necessity. In *Ecce Homo*, for instance, Nietzsche describes Zarathustra as the most affirmative spirit and the *Übermensch* as the one who says the loudest 'Yes' to life, and embodies all oppositions in human nature such as the sweetest (the beautiful) and the most terrible (the sublime):

promise to life: it will eternally be reborn and come home out of destruction" (Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, pp.249-250)

¹¹⁴ This is how Nietzsche puts it: "Let us therefore *limit* ourselves to the purification of our opinions and value judgments and to the *creation of tables of what is good that are new and all our own*: let us stop brooding nauseous about some people's moral chatter about others. Sitting in moral judgment should offend our taste. Let us leave such chatter and such bad taste to those who have nothing to do but drag the past a few steps further through time and who never live in the present – that is, to the many, the great majority! We, however, want to *become who we are* – human beings who create themselves! To that end we must become the best students and discoverers of everything lawful and necessary in the world: we must become *physicists* in order to be creators in this sense..." (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.189) And he concludes: "...while hitherto all valuations and ideals have been built on *ignorance* of physics or in *contradiction* to it. So, long live physics! And even more long live what *compels* us to it – our honesty!" (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.189)

¹¹⁵ In *Birth of Tragedy*, referring to Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, Nietzsche expresses a similar idea as follows: "The double essence of Aeschylus' Prometheus, his simultaneously Apolline and Dionysiac nature, could therefore be expressed like this: 'All that exists is just and unjust and is equally justified in both respects'" (Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', p.51) Moreover, Haar, describing the Dionysian transfiguration as the all-affirming sublime wisdom, states: "A Dionysian "magical" power pushes Greek humanity to affirm the *enigma as enigma*, to find "just" even the terrifying destiny of undeserved suffering, to affirm *everything*...Sublime wisdom dissolves the woe of existence into a *possessed* transfiguration" (Haar, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, p.171)

“*But this is the concept of Dionysus himself* – Another consideration also leads to this conclusion...Zarathustra is a dancer – how someone with the hardest, the most terrible insight into reality, who has thought ‘the most abysmal thought’, can nonetheless see it *not* as an objection to existence, not even to its eternal return, - but instead find one more reason in it for *himself to be* the eternal yes to all things, ‘the incredible, boundless yes-saying, amen-saying’...’I still carry my blessed yes-saying into all abysses’...*But this is the concept of Dionysus once more.*”¹¹⁶

In his *Attempt at Self-Criticism*, Nietzsche once more associates Zarathustra with the “Dionysiac monster”¹¹⁷ he introduces in *The Birth of Tragedy*, also quoting a passage from his *Zarathustra* titled ‘On the higher man’. This again justifies our attempt to link the sublime and monstrous idea-experience of the Dionysian to the idea of the *Übermensch* as well as Zarathustra’s own experience of the sublime and his self-overcoming. As Pippin rightly states, the overman’s “self-overcoming is not transcending a present state for the sake of an ideal, stable higher state (as in a naturally perfected state or any other kind of fixed telos).”¹¹⁸ Rather, I argue, to achieve a higher state of being, the *Übermensch* has to embrace the constancy of change (represented in the idea of the Dionysian) and the impossibility of positing an unchanging “I” (or an unchanging *telos*) along with his *phusis* as it is and as it appears. The affirmation of change and the entailing idea of *Übermensch* (as the affirmer of change) are posited against Kant’s transcendental moral teleology. While for Kant, a higher state of being is necessarily a purer state (of rationality, freedom and moral autonomy) not influenced by *external* factors, Nietzsche understands those so-called external factors (or namely the world of appearances) or the earthly (and not otherworldly or spiritual) life as the only reality to which the *Übermensch* needs to submit his very existence as an individual together with his will and values. He articulates this thought in *Zarathustra* as follows:

“The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman *shall be* the meaning of the earth! I beseech you, my brothers, *remain faithful to the earth* and do not believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes! They are mixers of poisons whether they know it or not. They are despisers of life, dying off and self-poisoned, of whom the earth is weary: so let them fade away!”¹¹⁹

Here, Nietzsche considers the actual world as the highest possible ideal whose sublimity can only be discovered, not via reason, but via strength. For the latter is more universal and substantial owing to its direct and immediate reference to *phusis*.

¹¹⁶ Nietzsche, “Ecce Homo”, pp.130-1

¹¹⁷ *ibid*, p.12

¹¹⁸ Pippin, Robert B., “Introduction” in Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, ed. Del Caro & Pippin, Cambridge University Press, Kindle edition, 2006, Loc.442

¹¹⁹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.837-844

But this self-overcoming requires the *Übermensch* to become the abundant flow and relentless change with all its resulting chaos and madness, the most essential prerequisite for an artistic and creative transformation (or in Nietzsche's words, "to give birth to a dancing star"). Therefore, unlike Kant's linear moral teleology, which ideally leads to the peaceful and universal humanity ruled by reason, Nietzsche's aesthetic and transformative teleology seeks after the ultimate ideal of the *Übermensch*:

"Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this lightning, he is this madness...Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and overman – a rope over an abyss. 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*"¹²⁰

While for Kant, cultivated and universal humanity itself remains to be the one and only purpose through which our moral and aesthetic judgments are determined, for Nietzsche, this very humanity Kant praises is nothing but "a polluted stream" which will eventually flow under the great ocean of the *Übermensch*¹²¹ (which is the real meaning of humanity's very existence). In other words, the only thing that could redeem and justify the weaknesses and ascetic ideals of the present humanity is its affirmation of new beginning(s) and its eventual self-overcoming and becoming the aesthetically justifiable *Übermensch*.

In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche also adds that the force exerted by the *Übermensch* does not derive from the will-to-exist, but rather "what is not cannot will; but what is in existence, how could this still will to exist! Only where life is, is there also will; but not will to life, instead – thus I teach you – will to power!"¹²² Nietzsche argues that the actual world is the highest possible ideal that can only be affirmed through will-to-power, and through the concentration of motion in one man's (or overman's) imagination. For this world assigns him the task of representing the artistic *extension* of nature thanks to which he can mediate between humanity and the forces in nature, between *ethos* and *phusis*¹²³. To become an artistic extension of *phusis*, the *Übermensch*

¹²⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.861-867

¹²¹ Nietzsche articulates this as follows: "Truly, mankind is a polluted stream. One has to be a sea to take in a polluted stream without becoming unclean. Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this sea, in him your great contempt can go under." (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.849) Then he adds, "Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this lightning, he is this madness...Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and overman – a rope over an abyss. 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*" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.861-867)

¹²² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.2199

¹²³ Kaplama, Erman. *Cosmological Aesthetics through the Kantian Sublime and Nietzschean Dionysian*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 2013, p.140

also needs to extend beyond his sublimity, let his beauty arise and represent the taste of the earth “invigorating the entire landscape”¹²⁴ as well as the motion underlying nature. Thus, Nietzsche defends the eventual necessity of the reconciliation between the sublime and the beautiful in order for the ‘hero’ to be able to overcome himself, to become an over-hero and continues:

“I saw a sublime one today, a solemn one, an ascetic of the spirit; oh how my soul laughed at his ugliness!... He has not yet overcome his deed. I do love the bull’s neck on him, but now I also want to see the angel’s eyes. He must also unlearn his hero’s will; he shall be elevated, not merely sublime – the ether itself shall elevate him, the will-less one! But precisely for the hero *beauty* is the most difficult of all things. Beauty is not to be wrested by any violent willing...When power becomes gracious and descends into view; beauty I call such descending. And from no one do I want beauty as I do from just you, you powerful one: let your kindness be your ultimate self-conquest. I know you capable of all evil – therefore from you I want the good... Yes, you sublime one, one day you shall be beautiful and shall hold the mirror up to your own beauty... For this is the secret of the soul: only when the hero abandons her, she is approached in dream by – the over-hero”¹²⁵

Nietzsche here reconciles the sublime and the beautiful in his idea of the overhero. But the sublime he mentions in this passage refers to the Schopenhauerian sublime (and the consequential self-overcoming of individuality or becoming will-less) rather than the Dionysian (aesthetic) sublime of his early works. The importance of this

¹²⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.4440 Here, on this new relationship and reconciliation between the sublime and the beautiful, Ansell-Pearson, also referring to Gooding-Williams, notes that “in the discourse entitled “On Those who are Sublime” in part two of Z Nietzsche has his eponymous hero reflect on what lies at the bottom of his sea and forces him to acknowledge that it harbours “sportive monsters” (Z II, Von den Erhabenen, KSA 4.150). He encounters a “sublime one” and notes how ugly he appears as a “penitent of the spirit”. The sublime one is “decked out with ugly truths” and although many thorns hang on his attire, no rose can be seen on him. Such a spirit has learned neither laughter nor beauty but has returned from the forest of knowledge bearing a gloomy disposition. Not until he has grown weary of his sublimity (Erhabenheit), Zarathustra states, will beauty radiate from this spirit and only at this point would Zarathustra find him a creature of taste and something tasty. He needs to become ‘elevated’ (ein Gehobener) and not merely ‘sublime’ (ein Erhabener): “He has subdued monsters, he has solved riddles: but he should also redeem his own monsters and riddles, and transform them into heavenly children” (ibid., KSA 4.151). In his interpretation of this discourse in his magisterial study of Z, Robert Gooding-Williams maintains that what is being criticised in it is the sublime as we encounter it in Kant and Schopenhauer, namely the idea of a supersensible subject.⁵⁴ Whilst this is relevant I think that the criticism developed in this discourse is, in fact, a self-criticism. Nietzsche is directing his thinking on the need to conquer the gloomy sublime with the gracious beautiful at himself and as a task which needs to inspire his own philosophical practice. (Ansell-Pearson, “Nietzsche, The Sublime, and the Sublimities of Philosophy: An Interpretation of Dawn”, pp.230-231)

¹²⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.2211-2240

passage lies in its reconciliation of the ascetic sublime and the beautiful in the overhero's willing and only through this reconciliation, can the overhero be 'elevated' not only through transcendence but rather by descending into view or through the Apollonian *principium individuationis*. Here, we observe the reconciliation of the sublime and the beautiful of the idealists in Nietzsche's Dionysian ideas of self-overcoming, self-creation and finally the *Übermensch*. This passage defining sublimity as the initial elevation of man through his overcoming of the ethical-cultural-social reality, and beauty as his necessary descent into the aesthetic-earthly reality¹²⁶ confirms Nietzsche's understanding of elevation (or transcendence) as a bidirectional aesthetic transition between *ethos* and *phusis*. It also shows that, in his *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche continues to employ the beautiful-sublime duality in his description of *Übermensch* and his transformation.

The sublimity and beauty or the metaphysical and aesthetic substance of this transition is determined by how well the hero has understood or how deep he has travelled into *phusis* as well as his very own *phusis*, instead of whether or not he could transcend or rise above the contingent reality of so-called appearances to employ pure rationality and become a purely moral agent following a definitive and pre-determined *telos*. The depth of his apprehension of *phusis* depends on his experience of the metaphysical-aesthetic idea-criterion Nietzsche proposes against Kant's moral, linear and finally (in the third *Critique*) aesthetic-natural teleology, namely the idea of *eternal recurrence*. The overcoming of Kant's linear moral teleology, his idea of ethical progress as well as his idea of the necessity of a detached reasoning and unchanging state of

¹²⁶ Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* later adds, "we do want to enter the kingdom of heaven at all: we have become men – and so we want the kingdom of the earth" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 4959) Inspired by this thought, Heidegger, in his *Letter on Humanism*, says: "Thinking builds upon the house of Being, the house in which the jointure of Being fatefully enjoins the essence of man to dwell in the truth of Being. This dwelling is the essence of 'being-in-the-world'...Hölderlin's verse, 'full of merit, yet poetically, man dwells on this earth', is no adornment of a thinking that rescues itself from science by means of poetry. The talk about the house of Being is no transfer of the image 'house' to Being. But one day we will, by thinking the essence of Being in a way appropriate to its matter, more readily be able to think what 'house' and 'to dwell' are" (Heidegger, Martin. 'Letter On Humanism' in *Basic Writings* ed. Krell, Routledge: London, 1978, pp.259-260) Here, Heidegger confirms the poetic essence of man's dwelling on earth or the aesthetic *ethos* as the only type of *ethos* where human *is* actually on earth, and not one of its replicas. Heidegger further discusses this understanding of human dwelling on *earth* or *ethos* situated on and within *phusis* in *The Origin of the Artwork* as follows: "the Greeks called this coming forth and rising up in itself and in all things *phusis*. At the same time, *phusis* lights up that on which man bases his dwelling. We call this the *earth*. What this word means here is far removed from the idea of a planet. Earth is that in which the arising of everything that arises is brought back – as, indeed, the very thing that it is – and sheltered. In the things that arise the earth presences as the protecting one". (Heidegger, Martin. 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Off The Beaten Track*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p.21)

mind (for the thinking agent to become aesthetically disinterested and morally free and autonomous) were some of Nietzsche's targets when he decided to revive the Heraclitean notion of *panta rhei* in his idea of eternal recurrence. In *Zarathustra*, by calling the path of eternity 'crooked',¹²⁷ he confronts the very idea of moral progress and the Enlightenment's ideal of the universal individual free of social-historical contingency and ethnic limitations. In this sense, the eternal recurrence represents the idea of history as cyclical change, which, according to Nietzsche, needs to be the force-idea that shapes and reshapes human nature, so far defined as something unmoved, sated and everlasting (which he calls misanthropic).¹²⁸ However, the very acknowledgment of the force-idea of eternal recurrence entails the transformative suffering (namely the Dionysian), and the acceptance and affirmation of life as it is (*amor fati*)¹²⁹. This is the only anthropic, aesthetic and becoming way to understand human nature which is why Nietzsche describes Zarathustra as "the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering, the advocate of the circle" whose most abysmal thought is the idea of the eternal recurrence¹³⁰ and whose ultimate *telos* is to impart the *Übermensch* as the full discovery and overcoming of being-human.¹³¹ The new human being, he says, is the highest soul that "loves being, but submerges into becoming [and] *wants* to rise to willing and desiring – the soul that flees itself and catches up to itself in the widest circle [...] in which all things have their current and recurrent and ebb and

¹²⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3595-3601

¹²⁸ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.1807-1813

¹²⁹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.1807-1813 Nietzsche puts this as follows: "Oh my brothers, am I perhaps cruel? But I say: if something is falling, one should also give it a push! Everything of today – it is falling, it is failing: who would want to stop it! But I – I *want* to push it too! Do you know the kind of lust that rolls stones down into steep depths? - These people of today; just look at how they roll into my depths! I am a prelude of better players, my brothers! An exemplary play! Act according to my example! And whomever you cannot teach to fly, him you should teach - *to fall faster!*" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3483)

¹³⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3578

¹³¹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3546 In another passage, Zarathustra converses a similar idea as follows: "Beware! The time approaches when human beings no longer launch the arrow of their longing beyond the human, and the string of their bow will have forgotten how to whirl! I say to you: one must still have chaos in oneself in order to give birth to a dancing star. I say to you: you still have chaos in you" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 893-899) And he continues, "I want to teach humans the meaning of their being, which is the overman, the lightning from the dark cloud 'human being.'" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 938) Nabais confirms this by arguing that Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, as the ultimate culmination of the Dionysian experience, becomes an eternal and unconditional necessity converging the actual and the unchangeable in the idea of eternal recurrence while still positing it within the actual motion of nature or *physis* (Nabais, *Nietzsche and the Metaphysics of the Tragic*, p.83)

flow”¹³² While the submerging into becoming is an affirmation of the Dionysian as a cosmological-tragic principle, the coming back into being through willing and desiring power (*Wille-zur-Macht*) is an affirmation of the formal artistic and earthly Apollonian self-creation. And the entirety of this process of eternal recurrence is a drill penetrating into the static abyss of non-being dragged forward by human will-to-power through its yearning for *fire* (as the element representing relentless change, destruction and regeneration) which, Nietzsche predicts, will in turn lead humanity to new beginnings, towards the great noon of the blessed isles¹³³. Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that the element of fire (represented in such metaphors as the great noon and the blessed islands of the hottest south) brings together the Heraclitean notion of *panta rhei* (underlying Nietzsche’s idea of eternal recurrence) and the Dionysian art of self-overcoming (underlying his idea of will-to-power).

Nietzsche repeatedly brings forward in *Zarathustra* the sublime and beautiful ideals of the new beginnings, the great noon, the hottest south and the blessed isles¹³⁴ in relation to his ideas of eternal recurrence and will-to-power which constitute his ultimate *Weltanschauung*. This worldview is not entirely new but stems from the *not-yet-metaphysical* or namely cosmological ancient origins (particularly Heraclitean notion of *panta rhei*). As a result of the *Übermensch*’s creative activity of drilling (into the depths of the past) the new beginnings and new wells will eventuate and their untouched waters will be used to grow new cultures,¹³⁵ cultures that embrace change, fire and eternal recurrence. The great noon (preceded by the pillars of fire in cities¹³⁶) and the hottest

¹³² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3470-3476.

¹³³ Nietzsche puts this as follows: And *soon* they shall stand there before me like parched grass and steppe, and truly, weary of themselves – and yearning for *fire* more than for water! Oh blessed hour of lightning! Oh secret before noon! – Wild fires I want to make of them some day and heralds with tongues of fire – some day they shall proclaim with tongues of fire: It is coming, it is near, *the great noon!*” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 2972) He later comments on this in *Ecce Homo* with reference to the Dionysian as follows: “One of the preconditions of a *Dionysian* task is, most crucially, the hardness of the hammer, the *joy even in destruction*. The imperative ‘become hard!’, the deepest certainty that *all creators are hard* is the true sign of a *Dionysian* nature” (Nietzsche, ‘*Ecce Homo*’, pp.134)

¹³⁴ Nietzsche is particularly convinced about the existence of “the blessed isles” which can be interpreted as the future realm of thought that is completely unaffected by or purified from Christian and European metaphysics and morality: “‘But all is the same, nothing is worth it, searching does not help, and there are no blessed isles anymore!’ Thus sighed the soothsayer; but at his last sigh Zarathustra became bright and certain once more, like someone who comes from a deep chasm into the light. ‘No! No! No! Three times no!’ he cried in a strong voice, stroking his beard. ‘*That I know better!* There are still blessed isles! Be silent about that, you sighing sadsack!’” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3893-3899)

¹³⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3516

¹³⁶ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3061

south (which have not yet been discovered for mankind¹³⁷) are the metaphors Nietzsche uses to describe this necessary destruction of established but lifeless or exhausted metaphysical ideas and ideals of the “world-weary cowards and cross spiders”¹³⁸ followed by the necessary deification of change and fire. On the blessed isles of the hottest south, fire, change and cyclicity are embraced and affirmed as the greatest signs of life, and the ceremonies, dances and social events are held to represent them aesthetically. The blessed isles are the lands (the great distant human empire far away from the rabble and the remnants of its ideals) and the great noon (filled with the reflection of the Sun’s bliss¹³⁹) is the time of Nietzsche’s ideal “higher, stronger, more victorious, more cheerful” and beautiful new species or *laughing lions*¹⁴⁰ dancing and playing with new colorful shells¹⁴¹ purified not by rationality and transcendence nor by metaphysical deities, but by the affirmation of the element of fire and the cyclical change it represents. These islands are the lands,

“where dancing gods are ashamed of all clothing...Where all becoming seemed the dance of gods and the mischief of gods... Where all time seemed to me a blissful mockery of moments, where necessity was freedom itself, which played blissfully with the sting of freedom: Where I once again found my old devil and arch-enemy, the spirit of gravity, and everything he created: compulsion, statute, necessity and consequence and purpose and will and good and evil...It was there too that I picked up the word ‘overman’ along the way, and that the human is something that must be overcome, - that human being is a bridge and not an end; counting itself blessed for its noon and evening as the way to new dawns: - the Zarathustra-words about the great noon”¹⁴²

¹³⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.2594

¹³⁸ This is how Nietzsche describes the so-called selfless idealists and moralists referring to altruists, humanists and ascetics: “And ‘selfless’ – that is how they wished themselves, with good reason, all these world-weary cowards and cross spiders! But for all of them now the day is coming, the transformation, the judgment sword, *the great noon*: then much shall be revealed! And whoever pronounces the ego hale and holy and selfishness blessed, indeed, he tells what he knows, this foreteller: ‘*Look, it is coming, it is near, the great noon!*’” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3229-3237)

¹³⁹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.793-806

¹⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.4466-4478 In another place, Nietzsche describes this new species as follows: “You should love your *children’s land*; let this love be your new nobility – the undiscovered land in the furthest sea! For that land I command your sails to seek and seek! You should *make it up* in your children that you are the children of your fathers; *thus* you should redeem all that is past! This new tablet I place above you!” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3405)

¹⁴¹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.1945

¹⁴² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.3306-3326

This passage plainly shows that Nietzsche's ideals are indeed reactions against 'the spirit of gravity' (Christian and normative ethics) and its creations such as the Kantian ideals of free willing individual¹⁴³ and moral, progressive and civilized humanity. It also substantiates our earlier argument that the only way to overcome these ideals that *clothe* the reality and necessity of change is by willing the aesthetic *ethos* where the inexhaustible sun of the 'great noon' while illuminating and beautifying, at the same time, heats, moves, alters, and makes sublime every thing, idea, belief and tradition. This is the *topos* where the beautiful and sublime *Übermensch* will ideally dwell, regenerate, and create their new values, ideals and heroes. Such is the picture that Nietzsche had in mind when he reconciled the sublime and the beautiful in his description of the ideal human nature or the aesthetic *ethos*. Nietzsche also mentions these semi-fictitious islands in *The Gay Science* to criticize idealism in general for its fear and denial of the senses as the grounding of ethics as follows:

“*Why we are not idealists.* – Formerly, philosophers feared the senses: is it possible that we have unlearned this fear all too much? Today we are all sensualists, we philosophers of the present and future, *not* in theory but in *praxis*, in practice. The former, however, saw the senses as trying to lure them away from *their* world, from the cold kingdom of ‘ideas’, to a dangerous Southern isle where they feared their philosophers’ virtues would melt away like snow in the sun”¹⁴⁴.

This reveals how steadfastly Nietzsche defends this aesthetic ideal against Kant's moral teleology. Unlike Kant's, Nietzsche's philosophy remains *non-essentialist* as it does not attribute a certain and unchanging set of characteristics to human nature. Rather along with its valuations, ideas and concepts (e.g. good, evil, just, unjust), human nature is also in *flux*.¹⁴⁵ And the very affirmation of this fact and the Heraclitean doctrine of *panta rhei*, together with the negation of the duality between essence and appearance, constitute the primary *telos* of Nietzsche's aesthetic ethics.

¹⁴³ In Zarathustra, Nietzsche explicitly defines the idea and ideal of freedom as delusion as follows: “There is an old delusion called good and evil. So far the wheel of this delusion has revolved around soothsayers and astrologers. Once people *believed* in soothsayers and astrologers, and *therefore* they believed ‘Everything is fate: you should, because you must!’ Then later people mistrusted all soothsayers and astrologers, and *therefore* they believed ‘Everything is freedom: you can, because you want to! Yes, my brothers, so far we have merely deluded ourselves, but not known about the stars and the future, and *therefore* we have merely deluded ourselves, but not known about good and evil!” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3373-3379)

¹⁴⁴ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p.237

¹⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 3359-3373 Moreover, Nietzsche makes Zarathustra say: “...good and evil that would be everlasting – there is no such thing! They must overcome out of themselves again and again” (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.2204)

CONCLUSION

Kantian and Nietzschean aesthetics aim to look beyond the forms of objects to provide substantial explanations for the concepts of beauty, nobility and sublimity of human art, life and nature. However, in doing so, they take different ways to affirm human life: the main difference lies in their very conceptualization of the idea and ideal of humanity deriving from the way they relate aesthetic judgment (e.g. the judgment on the picture of humanity within a greater landscape of nature), and ethical judgment (e.g. the judgment on whether an action fits into this picture or whether it is *becoming*). According to Nietzsche, the transformation of aesthetic taste and judgment through the tragic is the first step in the justification of nature and of existence as a whole. The metaphysical Greek deity Dionysus should be regarded as an *active* category for all works of art including the art of self-transformation and self-overcoming. In contrast, in the third *Critique*, Kant conceives the sublime as a *passive* phenomenon to be sensed. He claims that the ultimate significance of the sublime lies in its consequential ethical value in attaining the finally acquired consciousness of the sublimity of human rationality and of the moral justification of human existence. But, Kant adds, the value of the sublime and the tragic is never as significant as the beautiful for the *aesthetic* judgment. Moreover, according to Kant, the aesthetic experience of the beautiful or the sublime cannot transform one's life-experience and *Weltanschauung*, but rather assures the person of the elevated nature of human morality and of the purposefulness of human existence. This crucial discrepancy substantiates the argument that while Kantian aesthetics is essentially ethical and moral, Nietzschean ethics is a reaction against this moralizing tendency and remains essentially aesthetic. Although both attempted to provide novel justifications for human life and art or *ethos*, their justifications differ with regard to the function they attribute to the faculty of aesthetic judgment which is partly determined by the way they construe the dynamic (constantly diverging and converging) dualities of the beautiful and sublime, and the Apollonian and Dionysian. In the last analysis, both Kant and Nietzsche define aesthetic judgment as the human faculty that transforms the movements in/of the phenomena of nature and represents them as the appearances taking place as part of the unity of nature based on the always-underlying principles of human nature and human *ratio*. Therefore, the discrepancies between their definitions derive neither from their understanding of art nor from their views on the faculty of judgment, but rather from their construal of the real and ideal human nature which determines their essential *telois* and influences their treatment of the so-called duality between the beautiful and the sublime. Against Kant's linear affirmation and deification of the human intellect, reason and morality confirmed via his teleological construal of the feelings and ideas of the beautiful and sublime (still posited as dualistic in the third *Critique*), Nietzsche

proposes the cosmological/physiological (or namely *phusis*-based) affirmation of human life, art and nature through the very unity of the Apollonian and Dionysian (joy and suffering¹⁴⁶) within the post-metaphysical principle of becoming. On the one hand, Kant provides a moral *re*-definition of the beautiful and the sublime based on their positive (mostly in case of the beautiful) and negative (mostly in case of the sublime) consequences on the perceiving and intuiting individual. Consequently, he advocates the beautiful as a potentially moralizing and liberating universal idea, and disqualifies the sublime as a culturally dependent and less universalizable feeling which unsuccessfully tries to make sense of the senseless forces or determine the indeterminate concepts. On the other hand, in late Nietzschean philosophy, the category of the Apollonian submerges into the aesthetic idea of the beautiful, while the Dionysian is further developed into a metaphysical (both cosmological and ontological) idea-principle which aesthetically manages to represent the very origins of the familiar concepts of *ethos* in the indeterminate *motion*. The transformation of these post-dualistic ideas coincides with Nietzsche's aesthetic reformation of metaphysics and ethics in *The Gay Science* and *Zarathustra* where he draws an aesthetic picture of human nature using natural imagery and metaphors. In the end, Nietzsche seems to argue that the *Übermensch*, as the ultimate purpose of human existence, aesthetically affirms the earth and life as it is and as it appears by means of embodying the beautiful through the beauty of its purpose (*Übermensch*), the sublime through the sublimity of its constitution (*phusis*) and the ethical through its aesthetic links to *phusis* or motion. This is why he defines the new origin of virtue as an abundant human will (of the *Übermensch*) making itself a necessity by flowing broad like a river commanding, affecting, liberating, changing and revaluing all things and values around it¹⁴⁷ thereby becoming a moving

¹⁴⁶ Here is how Nietzsche reconciles joy and suffering in *Zarathustra* through his notion of 'eternal recurrence': "Pain says: 'Refrain!' Away, you pain!" But everything that suffers wants to live, to become ripe and joyful and longing, - longing for what is farther, higher, brighter. 'I want heirs,' thus speaks all that suffers, 'I want children, I do not want *myself* - But joy does not want heirs, not children - joy wants itself, wants eternity, wants recurrence, wants everything eternally the same" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 5043)

¹⁴⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.1657-1663 Nietzsche puts this as follows: "When your heart flows broad and full like a river, a blessing and a danger to adjacent dwellers: there is the origin of your virtue. When you are sublimely above praise and blame, and your will wants to command all things, as the will of a lover: there is the origin of your virtue...When you are the ones who will with a single will, and this turning point of all need points to your necessity: there is the origin of your virtue. Indeed, it is a new good and evil! Indeed, a new, deep rushing and the voice of a new spring! It is power, this new virtue; it is a ruling thought and around it a wise soul: a golden sun and around it the snake of knowledge" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc.1657-1663) And then Nietzsche continues, "Like me, guide the virtue that has flown away back to the earth - yes, back to the body and life: so that it may give the earth its meaning, a human meaning! ... Let your spirit and your virtue serve the meaning of the earth, my brothers: and the value of all things will be posited newly by you! Therefore you shall be fighters! Therefore you shall be creators. There are a thousand paths that

force whose affirmation comes from its very existence. In contrast, Kant's ideal of enlightened humanity glorifies the beautiful through its universality, sublimity through its consequential justification of human morality, and the aesthetic through its ethical links to human faculties of understanding and reason. This is why Kant expresses the need for the introduction of an end that has an *unconditional* value or an end-in-itself beyond the indeterminate and organic teleology of nature. And this ultimate end-in-itself, argues Kant, is humanity itself with its moral-rational capacity (and not merely human virtue), which also exists in nature¹⁴⁸ but as an already-transcended and already-elevated state of being with its unique faculty of reasoning, a self-justificatory and self-affirmative purpose of all existence.

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have never yet been walked; a thousand healths and hidden islands of life. Human being and human earth are still unexhausted and undiscovered" (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, loc. 1669-1675)

¹⁴⁸ Guyer, "Editor's Introduction", p.xxxviii

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