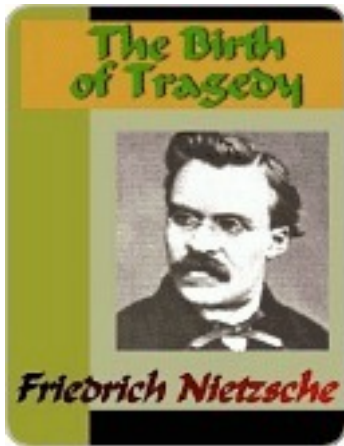


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# Friedrich Nietzsche

## The Birth of Tragedy



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S9: [Prometheus in a poem by Goethe:]

Here I sit, forming men  
in my own image,  
a race to be like me,  
to suffer, to weep,  
to delight and the rejoice,  
and to defy you,  
as I do.”

....In himself, the Titanic artist found the defiant faith that he had the ability to create men and at least destroy Olympian gods, by means of his superior wisdom which, to be sure, he had to atone for with eternal suffering. The splendid “ability” of the great genius for which even eternal suffering is a slight price, the stern pride of the artist...

S18: It is an eternal phenomenon: the insatiable will always finds a way to detain its creatures in life and compels them to live on, by means of an illusion spread over things. One is chained by the Socratic love of knowledge and the delusion of being able thereby to heal the eternal wound of existence; another is ensnared by art's seductive veil of beauty fluttering before his eyes; still another by the metaphysical comfort that beneath the whirl of phenomena, eternal life flows on indestructibly - to say nothing of the more vulgar and almost more powerful illusions which the will always has to hand. These three stages of illusion are actually designed for the more nobly formed natures, who actually feel profoundly the weight and burden of existence, and must be deluded by exquisite stimulants into forgetfulness of their displeasure. All that we call culture is made up of these stimulants and according to the proportion of the ingredients, we have either a dominantly Socratic or artistic or tragic culture: or if historical exemplifications are permitted, there is either an Alexandrian or a Hellenic or a Buddhistic culture.

...But now that the Socratic culture can only hold the sceptre of its infallibility with trembling hands; now that it has been shaken from two directions - one by the fear of its own consequences which it at length begins to surmise, and again because it no longer has its former naive confidence in the eternal validity of its foundation - it is a sad spectacle to see how the dance of its thoughts rushes longingly towards ever new forms, to embrace them,... the theoretical man, alarmed and dissatisfied at his own consequences, no longer dares entrust himself to the terrible icy current of existence: he runs timidly up and down the bank. ... Our art reveals this universal distress: in vain does one accumulate the entire “world literature” around modern man for his comfort: in vain does one place oneself in the midst of the art styles and artists of all ages, so that one may give names to them as Adam did to the beasts: one still remains eternally hungry, the “critic” without joy and energy, the Alexandrian man, who is at bottom a librarian and corrector of proofs, and wretchedly goes blind from the dust of books and from printer's errors.

S23: But without myth every culture loses the healthy natural power of its creativity: only a horizon defined by myths completes and unifies a whole cultural movement. Myth alone saves all the powers of the imagination... The images of the myth have to be the unnoticed omnipresent demonic guardians, under whose care the young soul grows to maturity and whose

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signs help the man to interpret his life and struggles. Even the state knows no more powerful unwritten laws than the mythical foundation that guarantees its connection with religion and its growth from mythical notions.

By way of comparison, let us now picture the abstract man, untutored by myth; abstract education; abstract morality; abstract law; the abstract state: let us imagine the lawless roving of the artistic imagination, unchecked by any native myth; let us think of a culture that has no fixed and sacred primordial site but is doomed to exhaust all possibilities and to nourish itself wretchedly on all other cultures - there we have the present age, the result of that Socratism which is bent on the destruction of myth. And now the mythless man stands eternally hungry, surrounded by all past ages and digs for roots, even if he has to dig for them among the remotest antiquities.... who would care to contribute anything to a culture that cannot be satisfied no matter how much it devours, and at whose contact the most vigorous and wholesome nourishment is changed into "history and criticism"?

Rowland Bismark: As *The Birth of Tragedy* was Nietzsche's first published book, it is a rather awkwardly written representation of his early ideas. Nietzsche lamented as much in a supplementary preface, which he wrote fifteen years later in 1886. The older Nietzsche looks back, as we all do, with embarrassment on his younger self. He writes, "*Today I find it an impossible book: I consider it badly written, ponderous, embarrassing, image-mad and image-confused, sentimental, in places saccharine to the point of effeminacy, uneven in tempo, without the will to logical cleanliness, very convinced and therefore disdainful of proof, mistrustful even of the propriety of proof, a book for initiates...*" (section three). Writing with the benefit of hindsight and with many great philosophical successes at his back, the older Nietzsche can afford to laugh at himself. However, he also clearly shows in this later preface that the questions he dared to pose in *The Birth of Tragedy* are still entirely relevant to him, as is the importance of Schopenhauer, under whose influence he wrote the book. The ideas contained in this small first treatise persisted in his more sophisticated works.

*The Birth of Tragedy* is divided into twenty-five chapters and a forward. The first fifteen chapters deal with the nature of Greek Tragedy, which Nietzsche claims was born when the Apollonian worldview met the Dionysian. The last ten chapters use the Greek model to understand the state of modern culture, both its decline and its possible rebirth. The tone of the text is inspirational. Nietzsche often addresses the reader directly, saying at the end of chapter twenty, "*Dare now to be tragic men, for ye shall be redeemed!*" These kinds of exclamations make it more difficult to take his text seriously. However, if we look beyond the flowery words, we find some very interesting ideas. At the same time we confront Nietzsche's enormous bias, particularly when deciding when something is or is not "art." Nietzsche forms a very strict definition of art that excludes such things as subjective self-expression and the opera. Despite his criticisms of human culture, however, Nietzsche has great faith in the human soul and urges us to drop our Socratic pretenses and accept the culture of Dionysus again.

Nietzsche describes the state of Greek art before the influence of Dionysus as being naive, and concerned only with appearances. In this art conception, the observer was never truly united with art, as he remained always in quiet contemplation with it, never immersing himself. The appearances of Apollo were designed to shield man from the innate suffering of the world, and

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thus provide some relief and comfort.

Then came Dionysus, whose ecstatic revels first shocked the Apollonian man of Greek culture. In the end, however, it was only through one's immersion in the Dionysian essence of Primordial Unity that redemption from the suffering of the world could be achieved. In Dionysus, man found that his existence was not limited to his individual experiences alone, and thus a way was found to escape the fate of all men, which is death. As the Dionysian essence is eternal, one who connects with this essence finds a new source of life and hope. Nietzsche thus shows Dionysus to be an uplifting alternative to the salvation offered by Christianity, which demands that man renounce life on earth altogether and focus only on heaven. For, in order to achieve salvation through Dionysus, one must immerse oneself in life now.

However, while man can only find salvation in Dionysus, he requires Apollo to reveal the essence of Dionysus through his appearances. The chorus and actors of tragedy were representations, through which the essence of Dionysus was given voice to speak. Through them, man was able to experience the joys of redemption from worldly suffering. These Apollonian appearances also stood as a bulwark against the chaos of Dionysus, so that the viewer would be completely lost in Dionysian ecstasy. Nietzsche emphasizes that in real tragic art, the elements of Dionysus and Apollo were inextricably entwined. As words could never hope to delve into the depths of the Dionysian essence, music was the life of the tragic art form.

Music exists in the realm beyond language, and so allows us to rise beyond consciousness and experience our connection to the Primordial Unity. Music is superior to all other arts in that it does not represent a phenomenon, but rather the "*world will*" itself.

Nietzsche sees Euripides as the murderer of art, he who introduced the Socratic obsession with knowledge and ultimate trust in human thought into the theater. By focusing entirely on the individual, Euripides eliminated the musical element that is crucial to the Dionysian experience. Euripides threw Dionysus out of tragedy, and in doing so he destroyed the delicate balance between Dionysus and Apollo that is fundamental to art. In the second half of his essay, Nietzsche explores the modern ramifications of this shift in Greek thought. He argues that we are still living in the Alexandrian age of culture, which is now on its last legs. Science cannot explain the mysteries of the universe, he writes, and thanks to the work of Kant and Schopenhauer, we must now recognize this fact. The time is ripe for a rebirth of tragedy that will sweep away the dusty remains of Socratic culture. Nietzsche sees German music, Wagner in particular, as the beginning of this transformation. While German culture is decrepit, the German character is going strong, for it has an inkling of the primordial vitality flowing in its veins. Nietzsche has great hope for the coming age and has written this book to prepare us for it.

Leah: an outstanding advent to Nietzsche. for you to comprehend him at all, you need to comprehend the stress and stability among the Apollonian and Dionysian forces and this can be the place he essentially explains that dynamic. this can be the ebook that all started my love affair with all issues Nietzsche.

Riku Sayuj: Apollo Vs Dionysus: A Darwinian Drama Nietzsche by no means struck me as a true philosopher. He used to be an excessive amount of the story-teller. This is perhaps his so much

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a-philosophical (?) work. however it is my favorite. It was once the main obtainable to me and it used to be the main suitable of his works. It helped me shape my very own convictions. It was once common and but no longer choke filled with platitudes. It was once forceful yet now not descending into loud (almost incomprehensible) invectives. (you recognize which goes I subtly allude to)'Birth of Tragedy' used to be his first significant paintings and to me (in contradiction of the former paragraph) his such a lot philosophical. it sort of feels to me to be the very soul of his philosophy - that was once then sophisticated and reformed within the fireplace of his (self-imposed?) suffering. The later philosophy is the 'Nietzschian' one - grand and too robust to ignore. But, this past middle is, to me, the genuine attractiveness that livens the entire later fury.Nietzsche, already in this, his first paintings (ostensibly at the resource of Greek tragedy), set Dionysus (the god of vitality, ecstasy, thriving life, and of wine) opposed to Apollo (the god of tranquillity, logic, and of contemplation). in response to Nietzsche, in Greek tragedy as in life, it's the unruly refrain who represented Dionysus and used to be a crying-out of humanity (the species) itself. Apollo, at the different hand, was once represented via the human actors and expressed himself in the course of the orderly dialogue. Apollo used to be designed to be spotted - the wide awake story. Dionysus was once designed to be evoked - the collective unconscious?In this early center of Nietzschian philosophy, a philosophy of species vs individuals, of species evolution pitted opposed to human vanity, Dionysus is the power of the human race, of existence itself (vide Darwin) yet manifests in simple terms as mere historical past to any given human drama (but nonetheless the resource of all drama and is the particular Drama). Apollo, in contrast, is expressed in any given human drama (composed or lived) - vital and represented and inspiration about. But, continually approximately mere individuals, vulnerable and mortal. With this early paintings Nietzsche leapt into the depths and the entire later advancements was once a climb again and proclamations of the truth of the Deep. or perhaps makes an attempt to reconcile with it. it really is tragic that it advanced right into a darker, crueller negation clothed as an affirmation. a minimum of during this work, he loved and embraced the tragic sensibility that's the for guy - of adoration of lifestyles and of its merciless laws, regardless of all of the weak point of the person - the genuine genesis of the Superman.Disclaimer #1: Written greater than a yr after the unique analyzing and after just a cursory re-reading/re-glancing. Please belief the reviewer whilst he asserts that the paintings is robust sufficient to stick fresh-to-review even after a 12 months has passed.Disclaimer #2: Required growth of Essay: 'The Superman because the Buddha: The Inevitable Evolution of Tragic Consciousness'

Matthew Hartley: 'Only as a cultured phenomenon that lifestyles and the realm are perpetually justified.' within the beginning of Tragedy, Nietzsche's first book, he describes what he believes are the 2 primary forces in paintings and the way they merged to shape Greek tragedy. the 2 forces are the Dionysian and the Apolline. The Dionysian is wild, formless and is linked to music, the need and breaking via cultural norms. The Apolline bargains with sculpture, dreams, poetry, restraint and the individual.The historical Greeks wanted Apolline myths, which have been born from dreams. They took shape because the Olympian pantheon and served as a stunning veil to hide the discomfort and discomfort of life. The Greeks received energy from those Olympian Gods and got here to work out them as robust and gorgeous reflections of themselves. Nietzsche says, 'the gods supply a justification for the lifetime of guy by way of dwelling it themselves.'The Dionysian force however, which was once a part of non secular rites, was once very different. within the gala's guy got here nose to nose with nature and the

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person was once consumed. The gala's have been joyous, musical, sexual and intoxicating. They gave a real glimpse into the character of life, with its undercurrent of continuous striving, prepared and breaking via of cultural norms. Nietzsche describes how the Apolline and Dionysian forces merged in Attic tragedy, after at the beginning being at odds. He believed the performs of Aeschylus and Sophocles have been either Apolline and Dionysian. With the musical refrain (representing the will) in tragic drama, one had perception into the genuine nature of the world. regardless of the dying of the tragic hero, the viewers used to be consoled as a result of Apollonian imaginative and prescient ahead of them and the truth that the underlying will in all lifestyles lives on. This perfect creative nation was once to not final however. alongside got here the thinker Socrates who was once basically highbrow and was hoping to get to the reality in regards to the ordinary order of the realm utilizing cause and discarding instinctual feeling. He believed 'virtue is knowledge,' and the medical procedure killed tragedy and severed guy from the fit Dionysian state, and Apolline paintings died there with it. This used to be visible by way of Nietzsche to be disastrous, as the challenge with technological know-how is that it can't properly clarify the realm and provides it meaning, so this may usher in in an age of nihilism. At this aspect paintings is then wanted back to provide the realm meaning. Nietzsche on the time of writing BOT believed his modern Richard guess used to be going to bring in within the modern type of Greek Tragedy of their local Germany. He fell out with Wagner though, presently after penning this e-book and altered a lot of his former views. In conclusion, it is a strong ebook so as to understand extra approximately art, Greek culture, the price of fable and the capability difficulties of clinical and rational inquiry. I'd recommend even though that the reader first have a few wisdom of the Greek classics ahead of they try and learn this book.

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