Philosophy in Pieces:

The Aphorisms of

Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human* and

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This thesis considers the philosophical importance of the literary form of two aphoristic works of philosophy: *Nietzsche's Human, All Too Human* and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. Though both these German-speaking philosophers are widely thought to be aphorists, there is little consensus about what exactly is aphoristic about their individual or shared literary forms. While their philosophies and forms of aphorisms are quite different in practice, this thesis argues that Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's modes of aphoristic expression are essential to their philosophical projects in these works. This thesis also explores the particular challenges of interpreting aphorisms in a philosophical context. Though aphorisms have various literary qualities, their status as discrete pieces of philosophy is of greatest interest here. Nietzsche and Wittgenstein match their piecework form of writing to various philosophical goals they set themselves. Their success as highly stylized, aphoristic philosophers is particularly remarkable in light of conventional philosophical writing, which is generally conducted in a much less "fragmented" form. By examining the styles, forms, structures, rhetorics, and interpretations of these two works, this thesis investigates the necessity and practice of their intriguing and difficult modes of expression.

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An aphorism, properly stamped and molded, has not been "deciphered" when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its exegesis, for which is required an art of exegesis.

--Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals,* Preface §8

Do I really see something different each time, or do I only interpret what I see in a different way? I am inclined to say the former. But why?

--Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* II 181

The aphorism is interpretation and the art of interpreting.

--Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 31

Chapter 1: Introduction

There is a remarkable, still remarkable, pattern in the scholarship on Friedrich Nietzsche: introductions to scholarly texts frequently remind us that "Nietzsche's thinking is inseparable from his writing and that coming to terms with his style is essential to understanding him at all" (Nehamas 13). While the community of interpreters of fellow German-language aphorist Ludwig Wittgenstein has not adopted such truisms to the same extent, he is widely thought to be a "writer of unusual powers," despite "uncertainly about whether Wittgenstein's writing is essential to his philosophizing" (Cavell 21). For both philosophers, the first place that scholars often look to evoke the power, particularity, and difficulty of their writing is in their aphorisms (or in a highly preliminary definition of the term, short and wise sayings). The concept of the aphorism plays an important role, even a central role, in characterizing the form or style of writing in many of their best known works. And the aphorism has received attention, for each philosopher individually, in arguments concerning the necessity of his writing to his philosophy. Yet their philosophies, held to be part of two rather different traditions of thought, are manifestly and often deeply divergent on mainstream topics of comparison. The most promising strategy to invite these estranged philosophers into dialogue – on the level of writing, thought, and what will emerge as a dense continuum between these two poles – is to consider their "antiphilosophy".

Antiphilosophy, a term that Alain Badiou deploys to bind these two aphoristic "antiphilosophers" together, is indeed "what Nietzsche and Wittgenstein share in common" (75). Both are bent on "unraveling the pretentions of philosophy to constitute itself as a theory" while "each in his own turn, [has] set the tone for the twentieth century in terms of a

certain form of philosophical contempt for philosophy" (75,74). Though this thesis will not

broach the vastness of this accusation across their texts, we will locate a great deal of

"philosophical contempt for philosophy" in the *writing* (styles, forms, rhetorics) of two of

their aphoristic works. The main texts under consideration will be Nietzsche's first book of

aphorisms, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits* (1886), and Wittgenstein's

posthumous magnum opus, *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). In these two books we see

Nietzsche and Wittgenstein attack bedrock conceptions and practices of their discipline,

blowing conventional philosophy *into* pieces as they simultaneously deliver their own

philosophy *in* aphoristic pieces. While aphorisms have intriguing traits as a loose-knit genre,

this thesis is most interested in their status as *pieces* of philosophy, an interest that both

philosophers openly invite in these works. In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche asks us to

reflect on its *Stückwerk* quality– its status as piece-work, part-work, patchwork, piecemeal, or

as often alleged in a somewhat pejorative manner against aphoristic texts – *fragmentary*.

Taking seriously Nietzsche's insecurity about the wholeness of his work along with similar

Stückwerk thoughts expressed by Wittgenstein in his preface, we will investigate the means

and ends of "philosophy in pieces" in *Human, All Too Human* and *Philosophical*

Investigations. Badiou's pairing of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, though polemically driven, is

one of the most incisive perspectives for bringing these works together. Largely defanging

the polemical spirit of his antiphilosophical accusation for our more expository purposes, we

will return to it on the occasions when Nietzsche and Wittgenstein most plainly violate

conventional philosophical practice.

This thesis is an unconventional study of *Human, All Too Human* and *Philosophical Investigations* in that is not fundamentally concerned with their exegesis or philosophical positions on a certain topic (which might, given this pairing of texts, conceivably fit into the philosophy of language or metaphysics). It is more concerned with the *possibility* of their exegesis. This possibility, which appears bound up with their curious aphoristic modes of expression, will be filtered through the texts' practice – and espousal – of style, form, method, and interpretation. We will see these aphorists flaunt conventions of philosophical argumentation, structure, and systematic writing, often presenting their remarks in a tantalizingly incomplete state, making their utterances challenging, sometimes impossible, to interpret in a manner that reliably extracts a singular intention from their quotable, all too quotable sayings.

This discussion is best thought of as an analysis rather than a conventional interpretation. Instead of pursuing a classic (thematic or synoptic) approach such as "Nietzsche on Religion" or "Wittgenstein on Rule-Following", we will analyze the textual machinery that these sorts of interpretations take for granted. One such underappreciated textual system is argumentation. It is sometimes alleged that Nietzsche and Wittgenstein do not make conventional philosophical arguments: we will see this to be true in *Human* and the *Investigations* (but in rather different, almost complementary ways). While this discussion *does* make conventional academic arguments, it willingly and intermittently suppresses the usual goal of a singular reading of these texts. It must sometimes settle for "raising questions": traditionally, a euphemism for a less-than-persuasive case. As a rejoinder, however, it should be said that the tone and methodology will be proper to the landscape of

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aphoristic philosophy that will emerge. While all major philosophers admit *some* degree of differing interpretation, Nietzsche and Wittgenstein reside together on a pluralistic, hyper-interpretive extreme. In her preface to *(Over)interpreting Wittgenstein*, Anat Biletzki distinguishes what is strikingly different about the scene of Wittgenstein interpretation as compared to most philosophers. Figures such as Plato, Kant, Hume, and Descartes have a *mainstream* interpretation; while the various interpretations admit disagreements, they do not feature the incredible, radically divergent understandings that characterize Wittgenstein scholarship (7). As Biletzki explains, it is impossible to read Plato, "hero of the forms," as a materialist: yet "Wittgenstein is different" (7) – fundamentally different – from these four classic philosophers.

And from this discussion's point of view, so is Nietzsche. We will see exceptionally divergent interpretations which seemingly do the impossible and systematize this master of unsystematic aphorisms, rendering him as strangely as a materialist Plato. The exceptional breadth of interpretation that is so characteristic of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, which arguably joins these two aphorists into a rather small and elite club of remarkably (over)interpretable philosophers, should be examined in light of their challenging form of writing. We should not fully attribute the difficulty of their interpretation to their chosen aphoristic forms, or their style in general: this would be unjust to their thought. However, the *writing* of *Human, All Too Human* and *Philosophical Investigations* certainly emerges in this thesis as essential site of interpretative richness (and frustration). Discarding the dream of a classic thematic or synoptic reading for these texts, we better appreciate the literary stimulants of their philosophical vigour and the ensuing scholarly fervor.

So far we recognize that Wittgenstein and Nietzsche share a certain contempt for conventional philosophy along with a reputation for being difficult to interpret – but what about their aphoristic careers and their roles in these challenges? Though we will see that demarcating Nietzsche's exact "aphoristic" texts is a more difficult enterprise than it first seems, the term has been applied with varying degrees of rigour and to varying parts of *Human, All Too Human, Daybreak, The Gay Science, Beyond Good and Evil, Twilight of the Idols,* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Nehamas 18). This thesis will tackle what is widely considered to be his first book of aphorisms: *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*. He first published a book by this title in 1878. Somewhat confusingly for Nietzsche's readers he then followed it with *Assorted Opinions and Maxims* (1879) and *The Wanderer and His Shadow* (1880), but eventually joined these three books in 1886 into a single work *also* called *Human, All Too Human* (Heller vii). What this discussion subsequently means by *Human, All Too Human* is the complete trio of volume I, comprising the first text, and volume two, which contains *Assorted Opinions and Maxims* (referred to here as II$_1$) and *The Wanderer and His Shadow* (referred to here as II$_2$). This reference scheme comes from the main translation used, which is R.J. Hollingdale's. While the total corpus of Nietzsche's aphorisms is too vast for our considerations, *Human, All Too Human* is certainly sufficient site to observe Nietzsche's styles in action.

Moving on to Wittgenstein, we should note that his two most famous works – the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* – have often been identified as aphoristic, yet rarely as such simultaneously. The *Tractatus* was completed in 1918 and first published with great difficulty in 1921 in German, while *Investigations* was still incomplete when Wittgenstein

died in 1951. It was translated into English by G.E.M. Anscombe, seeing its first publication

in 1953. Though the history of its composition is long, discontinuous, and varied, it is worth

noting that remarks §§1-188 – which include the most interesting content for our discussion –

were already in typescript form in 1937 (von Wright 488). The third (Blackwell) edition of

Philosophical Investigations (2001) with its side-by-side English and German pages is used

here. The *Investigations* will be the central site of Wittgenstein in this discussion, though

many comparisons will be made back to the *Tractatus* and its more systematic style. For each

philosopher the primary consideration will be a single book. That said, we should not hesitate

to filter our understanding through some of their other texts and a few biographical details.

The question of which texts constitute these philosophers' authoritative or essential

thought is contentious. Both groups of their readers face similar challenges in assessing the

relative, fluctuating significance of deliberately published versus unpublished texts. For

instance, Badiou scorns Wittgenstein's non-*Tractatus* texts (162-163), while for Heidegger,

Nietzsche's "philosophy proper was left behind as posthumous, unpublished work" (qtd. in

Van Tongeren 46). Nietzsche is generally held to be the more fragmentary philosopher of the

two. Yet in terms of publication, we should remember that in Nietzsche's several

deliberately-published books of aphorisms he is a more "complete" philosopher than

Wittgenstein. The later aphorist only finalized and made public a single and very short book

of philosophy in his lifetime. Though this discussion scarcely has space to consider detailed

textual histories, both of their *Nachlasse* are ripe for a *critique génétique* that would assess

their fragments of text and thought in genesis and subsequent genetic development.

Beyond these philosophers' individual textual sagas, what of proper history? We should reconsider the gut-feel reaction to the initial pairing of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein on historical grounds. For most readers they are not an intuitive pair for topical and disciplinary reasons. Can we detect any direct influence at all of Nietzsche (1844-1900) on Wittgenstein (1889-1951)? On account of Ray Monk's widely-read biography of Wittgenstein, he is commonly known to have read Nietzsche's *The Anti-Christ,* a text that Monk argues influenced Wittgenstein's views on Christianity (121-123). Bound in the same volume of *The Anti-Christ* were *The Case of Wagner* and *Twilight of the Idols,* and based on the similarity of a certain aphorism (the famed "whereof, thereof") there is evidence to suspect that Wittgenstein may have read *Human* (Westergaard 242). Furthermore, Wittgenstein refers to an idea that "Nietzsche writes somewhere" which in fact comes from *Human* (*Culture and Value* 59, *Human* §155,I). The possibly of Nietzsche's influence on Wittgenstein has received attention concerning their shared assessment of Wagner's (lack of) talent and Nietzsche's challenge to Wittgenstein's faith. However, there has been a scarcity of comparisons on conceivable philosophical topics such as how Nietzsche anticipated Wittgenstein in rooting the errors of metaphysics in the use language (one of several metaphysical problem areas for Nietzsche). This thesis will touch on these points, but it is still fundamentally concerned with the written substrates of their (anti)philosophies in *Human* and the *Investigations*. For our endeavour perhaps the most interesting biographical note is that Wittgenstein held Nietzsche to be the "most impressive" *author* among the philosophers (Westergaard 242). Even though this discussion avoids largely questions of

direct philosophical or aesthetic influence, Wittgenstein's esteem for Nietzsche's *writing* is worth keeping in mind as we see them spurn stylistically normative philosophy.

Besides the antiphilosophy of *Human* and the *Investigations*, there is at least one other conceivable framing narrative for our investigation. The sheer literariness of Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's aphorisms invite a duel between philosophy and some form of non-philosophy (perhaps, so to speak, its other). Badiou, who is today perhaps Plato's most prominent friend, accuses antiphilosophy of often delving "into the resources that sophistics exploit" and traces its origins to the (aphoristic) philosopher Heraclitus (75). It is certainly not our task to render Nietzsche and Wittgenstein as sophists. Yet Badiou is right to frame them rhetorically. Both of these aphorists, it is often said, avoid making classic philosophical *arguments*, inviting suspicion regarding our compliance with them as readers. Nietzsche is one of the most obviously rhetorical modern philosophers and thus has invited a sizable number of rhetorical readings. This is unsurprising when we consider his many associations with rhetoric. These include his: professorship in philology, study of Greek and Roman rhetoric and the ensuing lecture notes he produced, many styles and authorial guises across his texts, and remarkably high valuation of style *itself* (a valuation quite evident in *Human).* For this discussion, Nietzsche's most important rhetorical dimension in *Human* concerns the *character* of the philosopher. We will see Nietzsche adopt the *ethos* of an aphoristic anti-systematiser, attacking metaphysics through his ad-hominem jabs at metaphysicians and their followers.

Wittgenstein's rhetoric, though less manifest, can be seen in his many pedagogical tactics of the *Investigations*. We might say that Wittgenstein is *schooling* us in "grammar" –

one of his more nuanced and extended terms to sure, but still worth considering as a subject that is largely taught by example more than explained by theory. His manner of delivery is quite curious in the broader context of philosophical writing; philosophy's *instructive* dimensions still appear underappreciated. Though famous readings have brought rhetoric to bear on philosophy in the registers of persuasion (eg. Jacques Derrida on Plato's persuasive *writing*) and trope (eg. Paul de Man on figural language in Nietzsche), its deployment in pedagogy-rich philosophy such as the *Investigations* has not achieved such notoriety. Even beyond pedagogy, Wittgenstein must rhetorically juggle his precarious proclamation that philosophy should not advance theories, theses, or explanations with the audience's suspicion that he may be advancing these very things. Though "Wittgenstein's rhetoric" appears at first blush an uncomfortable term, understanding him rhetorically seems less heretical when we think of it in terms of (grammatical) teaching rather than (sophistical) persuasion.

Both aphorists, as we will see, share an oracular rhetoric which alleviates the burden of accountability to their remarks when compared to more traditional modes of philosophizing. However, the act of examining the *rhetoric* of the *Investigations* and *Human* should not be construed as depicting them as non-philosophers or mistaken philosophers. Even with the invitation of Nietzsche's training in rhetoric, the cause is not to make a "rhetorical reading," in the destructive sense, of these two aphoristic texts. That is say, just because they are thoroughly rhetorical does not necessarily make them misguided, or any less philosophical. The rhetorical approach endears itself by exposing the tight textual-philosophical connections of the *Investigations* and *Human*, particularly in regards to their

aphoristic units of Stückwerk philosophy. It in this respect, the coherence between writing and thought, that our investigation is a rhetorical one.

Plato's enduring differentiation of rhetoric (and/or sophistry) versus philosophy as instituted in *Phaedrus*, *Gorgias*, and *Protagoras* has quarantined "philosophy's rhetoric" to a less than comfortable category ever since. Yet we should not forget that Plato also exiled literature (under the name of poetry) from his republic. The aphorism, with its long literary history, is in a double bind against this powerful ancient vision of philosophy. Not only un-dialectical, it flourished historically as a potent form of literary expression. Many aphorists fall into a crossover category between philosophy and literature. The Nietzsche of *Human* is certainly one of them. While this discussion is concerned with this text's most philosophical pole, many of its aphorisms would be readily anthologized into a book of maxims or life-wisdom. This is evident in how *Human, All Too Human* – "the most Gallic of all his writing"– represents what has been called a "metamorphosis" of the French aphorism (Faber 207). Nietzsche read and admired François de La Rochefoucauld's *Sentences et Maximes* during his writing process, and credits him in (§35,I) (Faber 206-207). Though Faber examines how Nietzsche repurposed the French aphorism to *more* traditionally philosophical ends, Nietzsche's utterances still bear the literary influence and residue of the French *moraliste* tradition. While our aphoristic investigation seeks the Stückwerk Nietzsche more than the literary Nietzsche, we cannot forget his reputation as an ineradicably *literary* philosopher. For decades there have been foreboding warnings of his literary wiles, such as his status as a "literary rather than academic philosopher" and "the specific difficulty of

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Nietzsche's works: the patent literariness of texts that keep making claims usually associated with philosophy rather than with literature" (Russell 789, de Man 119).

On the level of interpretation, the literariness of Nietzsche endures in some of his most famed interpreters associated with French Theory. The literary Nietzsche is gigantic: works such as *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (1962), *Nietzsche et la métaphore* (1972) , *Éperons: les styles de Nietzsche* (1978), and *Allegories of Reading* (1979) from Giles Deleuze, Sarah Kofman, Jacques Derrida, and Paul de Man barred his philosophical thought in a cage of metaphor, style, and rhetoric. Though a generalization to be sure, Nietzsche's figural cage implies that even the most extreme and provocative statements that could be made about his aphorisms have already been anticipated. In effect this means that asserting the philosophical importance of Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's aphorisms is conceivably met with drastically different reactions from their conceivable groups of readers. Having read the aforementioned four books, the conceivable reaction is "so what?". Yet to Wittgenstein interpreters, the claim is likely a more weighty and contentious one. The natural compromise to appease both audiences is to target the text themselves, bringing a degree of naiveté about their literary extremes.

Scholars are still assessing the latent, literary Wittgenstein. He is younger, smaller, weaker, but palpably alive: there is now for instance the anthology *The Literary Wittgenstein* (2004). The literary Wittgenstein -- or at least stylistic Wittgenstein -- commonly inhabits the introductions to scholarly books on the *Tractatus* or the *Investigations*. In these introductory remarks or chapters authors see fit to prepare readers for, or brace them against, his incredibly peculiar forms of expression (which differ greatly between these works). A

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considerable amount of literary interest in Wittgenstein was set off by his remark in *Culture and Value* that "Philosophie düfte man eigenlich nur *dichten.*" Roughly translatable as "philosophy ought really to be written as one writes poetry," all known translations are problematic to the extent that *dichten* can evoke something fictional but perhaps non-poetic (Perloff 716 n3). However, this thesis is not particularly interested in Wittgenstein-as-*dichter* nor a poetic *Philosophical Investigations*. A better maxim for the current approach to the *Investigations*: philosophy ought really to be written only as one writes *pedagogy.* Wittgenstein's six years as a troubled elementary school teacher should not be underestimated in examining his philosophical and methodological shift between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* (Savickey 50). Rather than locate a poetic Wittgenstein in the *Investigations*, this discussion pursues the textuality and textbook-ness of his eccentric curriculum. That said, we should be mindful of the shifting guises of each German-language philosopher as *Aphoristiker*, *Dichter, Schriftsteller,* and *Autor* – the latter terms, "writer" and "author", being ones that Nietzsche attempts to polarize: "The best author will be he who is ashamed to become writer" (§192,I).

Though we ought to focus on the texts themselves, there are several irresistible biographical details that illuminate, at least on a figurative level, their aphoristic careers and Badiou's antiphilosophical charge. Nietzsche's turn to aphorisms coincided with a major life change: leaving his professorship at Basel in 1879 due to ill health and beginning a period of wandering (van Tongeren 67). According to his friend Lou Salomé, his later tendency towards aphorisms was "forced upon [him] by his illness and the way he lived" (qtd. in van Tongeren 67). Three potential factors here – a shift away from the formalities of the

academy, poor health that caused impediments in reading and writing at length, and a transitory lifestyle – are at least *correlated* with his aphoristic turn. For much of his career, Wittgenstein like Nietzsche had sour ties with academic philosophy, poor (mental) health, and a shifting address. Certain biographical commonalties have been directly identified by scholars; particularly salient for us is that both were in a "perpetual search for exactly the right conditions in which to work" (Heller, *The Importance of Nietzsche* 143). Since this discussion eventually seeks the philosophical necessity of their writing patterns, it is unwise to invest in too much weight in these biographical details. However, there is certainly an evident figurative parallel between their restless, rather un-academic lives and their sporadic writings which attacked the traditional of philosophy. Juxtaposed against the stereotypical scholarly life in a fixed place, Nietzsche and Wittgenstein were truly philosophers on the lam. Kant, it is often said, never once went far from Königsberg.

As a last aim for this introduction, an extended metaphor will outline the spirit of this approach. The figure is drawn from the same well of scientific metaphors that Nietzsche often employs in *Human*. It presents the workings of a certain widespread scholarly process which this thesis finds absolutely imperative but still distinctly unsatisfying. This pervasive process happens in philosophy classrooms and in the writing of books and articles (thus perhaps in philosophy *itself*). The activity in question is a conceptual distillation, which begins when a philosopher's complete works are tossed into a great distilling flask. As heat is applied, with Nietzsche as our example, something in these works becomes vaporous and rises up and out of the flask, then trickles out into a jar with a label such as "The Eternal Return". The temperature jumps up, and then another substance – the atoms or instances of

the concept – rises up, out, and into another jar with a label such as "The Will to Power".

Sooner or later, we have Nietzsche's "thought" separated into a finite number of jars, even an

A-Z list, of his most important ideas, his Key Concepts. Authors, editors, and publishers

gather up these jars and sell them as a certain kind of book such as *Nietzsche: The Key*

Concepts. The philosopher's ideas, particularly his or her *key* ideas, are vaporized and then

condensed into separate liquids, easy to package, distribute, and consume.

To accomplish this distillation, these great ideas have been fundamentally liberated

from their texts. Certain obvious things are at risk of being lost in such a distillation, such as

stylistic variations between texts or historical nuances, though this is not yet the point – but

here it comes. Moonshiners and chemists, more than the writers of these concept-guidebooks,

will realize a problematic presupposition of this metaphor. The process just described did not

involve *azeotropes*: mixtures of liquids that cannot be separated by normal distillation. In

reality, even if we are repeatedly distilling the most ancient and desirable of mixtures – water

and ethyl alcohol – the maximum percentage of ethanol we can ever obtain is only 95.6% by

weight. Similarly, while we may go a long way in extracting the ethanolic concepts out of a

philosopher's aqueous texts, we may eventually find ourselves at the point of azeotropy,

where we can never eradicate the water from the more desirable alcohol. The reason to

consider Nietzsche and Wittgenstein together is that their formidably unique styles, rhetorics,

and forms of expression – and most perhaps centrally, their Stückwerk, aphoristic approaches

– have forced their concepts into a profoundly azeotropic relation to their texts. Their jars of

thought always appear to contain textual impurities. This metaphor is not meant to serve in a

polemic against the philosophical guidebook – as with ethanol, distillation takes us a long

way to an often-useful purification – but only to realize how far we can ultimately go with our conventional techniques. One can distill an azeotrope, and boil it entirely, but its proportions never change. An azeotrope is a dead-end for conventional distillation, but not for analysis. It can still be measured, characterized, illuminated, quantified, and otherwise interrogated: that is what this thesis aims to do.

Ideas of various inseparabilities such as the azeotrope just described are not new in philosophy, rhetoric, literature, and discourse in general (eg. form from content, style from substance, medium from message). For instance, Roland Barthes famously says that we should treat texts like onions, which have an "infinity" of layers, instead of apricots, which have a pit (the content) surrounded by flesh (the form) (99). Yet there is something seemingly new here: realizing the alarming and particular extent to which a certain inseparability is manifest in aphoristic philosophy as represented by two radically different figures. This issue is undoubtedly of interest from a literary point of view since aphorisms indeed have a rich and ancient *literary* history well suited to study in a literature department. However, the assertion here is that Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's azeotropes are a *philosophical* problem, rather than merely a curious eccentricity of how they packaged their thoughts. Form versus content is an incredibly useful distinction in studying philosophical texts, and it is certainly used in our discussion. Yet perhaps, in its pervasiveness and utility, and in its very ability to *differentiate* aspects of discourse, it severs an important continuum between writing and thought, between text and philosophy. So it is our ultimate task here, at least in the Stückwerk *Human* and *Investigations*, to thoughtfully evaluate the question we

started with: the necessity of the aphorism in Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's philosophizing

and the interpretive challenges this form poses.

Chapter 2: From Essence to Exegesis

Though this thesis will eventually raise questions about the methods and interpretation of aphoristic philosophy, often taking on a speculative rather than persuasive tone, its purpose in the present chapter is to decisively defuse a certain conventional approach to aphorisms and aphoristic texts. This approach is largely rooted in an essentialist, genre-based, almost metaphysical strategy of examining *the* aphorism in *itself*. The approach often isolates the aphorisms from their source texts while considering *this* or *that* aphorism. At the same time, it typically avoids the structural or contextual interrelations between the plural aphorisms in the source text. Though this strategy can yield intriguing results, particularly on a literary level, it is poorly suited for *Human* and *Investigations*. In particular, it is poorly suited for a specific, side-by-side understanding of these two works' interpretive conditions and the necessity of their textual form. In the discourse on their literary qualities of their works, we will see how the term "aphorism" is capacious in a largely undesirable manner, and how "aphoristic" fails to capture the particularity of their fascinating styles.

Rather than hold up scholars and writers to an absolute measuring stick of "true" aphorisms – whether this truth was determined historically, etymologically, by first usage, by expertise, or by philosophical essence – this discussion will take shifting, contextual measures and then largely discard the question of the *essence* of an aphorism altogether. Without proposing a better family of questions than "what is an aphorism in itself" and its kin, we are confined to a richly literary but philosophically unsatisfying scenario. In this singular aphorism situation, it will be unclear how a series of weakly connected or unconnected Stückwerk units can ultimately constitute a "philosophy" (or as Badiou might

have it, a full on anti-philosophical assault). However, in terms of interpretive clarity and not of essence, we will soon have good reason to refer to the numbered units of *Human* as aphorisms, and of the *Investigations* as remarks. This distinction is invited by these philosophers' own references to their writing as well as the typical practices in their scholarly traditions. Referring to both philosophers' units together, we will term them remarks; when only referring to Nietzsche, we will "upgrade" his term to aphorism. Such a convention is useful because of the latent confusion in the discourse on aphorisms and Wittgenstein's predilection for the term *remarks* (Bemerkungen) instead of aphorisms.

Pursuing *the* aphorism in itself is an affront to the great art of arrangement, one of the classical canons of rhetoric but of underappreciated significance to philosophical texts. In particular, extracting Wittgenstein's remarks from his texts and labeling them as timeless and seemingly separate aphorisms is an exegetical misrepresentation, perhaps a travesty, of the *Investigations*. Though the text is often held to have a complicated structure, a certain figure can be calculated to evoke the written and interpretive vastness of its remarks and their interrelations. There are 693 numbered remarks in Part I of the *Investigations* (and more than double this figure across the parts I, II$_1$, and II$_2$ of *Human*). How *effectively*, or how *deliberately,* were these remarks arranged? We should consider the enormity of Wittgenstein's options. If he had put each remark on a separate piece of paper, he would have more than 3×10^{1669} ways of arranging (technically, *permuting*) these pieces. This inconceivably vast number of distinct remark-sequences is more than a thousand orders of magnitude greater than the number of atoms in the universe. We will see sequences of his remarks that clearly must follow certain orders, while other remarks appear free-standing, as

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is typical for *Human*. Few scholars have the stamina and familiarity with Wittgenstein's manuscripts to truly justify his specific *sequence* in a philosophical or rhetorical sense, and we will not have the means nor cause to here. However, given that the *Investigations* has meaningfully sequential stretches, and faced with the numerical vastness of his hypothetical arrangements, attempting to *isolate* his remarks into free-standing aphorisms evidently does disservice to the particular composition of the text.

Nietzsche's aphorisms, as we will later see in comparison, are considerably easier to extract from their particular arrangement in *Human*. Across his aphoristic works, though, he spent considerable time arranging. It has been proposed that he follows Cicero's five *quinque officia* in his aphoristic composition process, beginning with the *inventio* of pre-aphoristic quotes and ideas, refining them in the intermediate stages till he finally ends with the *memoria* of readily remembered aphorisms (van Tongeren 69). Nietzsche indeed wanted to be *remembered*: as *Zarathrustra* claims, "Whoever writes in blood and aphorisms does not want to be read, but rather to be learned by heart" (35). Though aphorisms are often "randomly" pulled out of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein for consideration, little was random about their creation. We should forget neither that our Nietzschean aphorisms under discussion come from a finished *book,* nor that Wittgenstein's unfinished work, constituted by what he calls remarks, has a high degree of order.

Shifting from the written arrangement of the texts to their scholarly study, one further numerically-driven concern should be raised. Works on aphoristic texts are an art of selection: an art of picking-and-choosing, of assembling aphorisms together for particular purposes (a bit like Wittgenstein's true philosopher, whose work is "assembling reminders

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for a particular purpose" (§127)). Of course, all scholars must selectively quote passages from their texts of study. Yet aphorisms, being typically unbound to an overarching, explicit thesis, are particularly ripe to be plucked out and juxtaposed in all sorts of combinations. In comparison to the staggering number of arrangements mentioned for Part I of the *Investigations*, it features (a mere) 239,778 possible *pairings* of remarks for scholars to pursue, versus (a still-approachable) 973,710 in *Human*. The art of exegesis for these aphoristic texts is truly an art of selection: we must remember this in general and for our own purposes.

Nietzsche voices this point best: "The worst readers are those who behave like plundering troops: they take away a few things they case use, dirty and confound the remainder, and revile the whole" (§137,I). Plundering this aphorism from Nietzsche is not meant to accuse anyone of poor reading any more than the present writer: only to emphasize that the individual, "representative" aphorism, here as elsewhere, risks excluding its outspoken neighbours and perhaps sullying the whole original work. The *structure* of aphoristic works is imperative. Wittgenstein says of the famous decimals that structure the *Tractatus*: "they give the book lucidity and clarity and it would be an incomprehensible jumble without them" (qtd. in Monk 181). Recognizing the original place and particularly of the utterances is prerequisite for steering the discourse on aphorisms from essence to exegesis.

Beyond its source texts, the aphorism as a category of textual classification is in disrepair. This assessment is confirmed on a general level by the recent work on the aphorism (2003, 2012) by Gary Saul Morson, likely the foremost contemporary scholar of

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this genre, and we will see it to be especially true for Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's texts. Calling certain texts or utterances aphoristic often fails to *distinguish* them from one another: an amusing problem since the aphorism, tracing back to the ancient Greek ἀφορισμός, means a distinction or definition (*OED* "aphorism, n"). For our purposes this state of disrepair is most evident when "aphoristic" fails to classify texts in routine scholarly situations. For instance the phrase "Nietzsche's aphoristic texts" appears unclear; to which publications (or notebooks) does "Nietzsche's aphoristic texts" refer? These texts, as we shift between commentators, actually refer to different publications. Thus at face value they fail to denote a definite set of Nietzsche's writings. We can imagine this issue causing unnecessary disagreement or confusion among readers who privately envision different sets of "aphoristic texts" in their minds, and it has already obscured the art and instance of the German aphorisms under discussion. Yet in asking this question of "to which?" we have already fallen victim to a grammatical confusion present in the discourse on aphorisms. Taking a cue from Wittgenstein's grammatical methods in the *Investigations*, we see that some of the aphorism's taxonomic obscurity originates in how adjectives are used in German and English.

Consider the following remark, almost a truism of Nietzsche interpretation, taken from the start of the Nietzsche section in a book called *Postmodernism and Its Critics*:

> Even if we grant that every "strong" writer remakes the work of his predecessors, the diversity of ways in which Nietzsche has been "misread" in our century is astonishing. The fragmentary, nonsystematic, and often downright contradictory

thoughts presented in Nietzsche's aphoristic texts have helped make his work all

things to all people. (McGowan 70)

Ponder the grammar of "aphoristic" here as we sketch out its potential restricting and non-restricting usage in this passage. This writer is introducing Nietzsche, his work, and his interpretation. He thus aims to treat Nietzsche's texts in general. In one perspective, he intends "aphoristic" to be a non-restricting modifier; he slips in "aphoristic" to evoke this curious feature of this proto-postmodern philosopher; he might have made other obviously non-restricting usages like "copious texts" instead. Yet from another perspective, concerning these unrestricted texts perhaps he does not want to say that "fragmentary" thoughts are presented in Nietzsche's finely crafted essays and rigorous philological activities. Only four of his published books are what might be called strict aphorism books (Nehamas 18). Thus we are inclined to apply "fragmentary" and "nonsystematic" to discussing his manifestly discontinuous texts such as *Human*. So we should consider the "aphoristic texts" to be only texts that are aphoristic in nature, i.e. a restrictive usage. Yet "aphoristic" cannot be simultaneously restricting and not restricting: the two outlined perspectives are ostensively divergent. Whether or not there is a strict contradiction here is not the main concern; the point is that "aphoristic," *even at the level of grammar and not of essence,* has a problematic usage in the discourse on aphorisms. Though we may find clues as to its usage, we cannot always go back and correctly replace "aphoristic texts" with "those texts that are aphoristic" (restrictive) or "texts, which are aphoristic" (non-restrictive). This grammatical ambiguity is generally true of adjectives in both English and German. We might be inclined to say that this is not a fundamental problem of the aphoristic, since it could be prevented with diligent

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grammatical hygiene. Yet it has undoubtedly made the adjective less rigorous over its history, since any deliberating restricting usage holds the author accountable to an explicit referent, a usage thereby open to scrutiny.

The preceding analysis, which curiously considered aphoristic grammar without establishing an aphoristic essence, takes several cues from the *Investigations*. The first cue is to consider grammar in the first place. Secondly, we examine the *usage* of the word instead of attempting to house its meaning in some sort of philosophical *essence*. Thirdly we note that "aphoristic", figuratively and perhaps even in accordance with his scheme, inhabits what Wittgenstein might call two "regions of language". One region concerns the adjective as *colouring*, the other as *pointing*. Wittgenstein's investigation indeed aims to clear:

> Misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language. – Some of them can be removed by substituting one form of expression for another; this may be called an "analysis" of our forms of expression, for the process is sometimes like one of taking a thing apart. (§90)

Though this discussion will cease *applying* Wittgenstein to aphorisms for now, and much later shift to his philosophical *use* of them, invoking this spirit of "taking a thing apart" is wise in the face of the arresting obscurity we encounter when hunting the overall essence of the Nietzschean or Wittgensteinian aphorism across their works.

Beyond the abstract grammar of "aphoristic", its actual taxonomic use in Nietzsche and Wittgenstein scholarship cautions us against an essentialism of the aphorism. In the case of Nietzsche, "aphoristic works" or "aphoristic texts" is sometimes tossed off as if the reader

had consumed his entire corpus and casually recognized which ones are aphoristic. The texts these phrases might refer to range from a small set that includes *Human* (his purportedly first aphoristic work) to a great number published since (plus his *Nachlass*). Given the enormity of his manuscripts and the interpretive dilemma of what exactly constitutes his thought, this is particularly challenging (is Nietzsche's notorious umbrella part of his aphoristic utterances?) . In the latter case, when the majority of Nietzsche's total output is "aphoristic," this reference hinges on the existence of an *aphoristic property* beyond short, deliberately type-set expressions. To make this point clear, consider *Human, All Too Human* in comparison to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* The first is composed of numbered and titled remarks, ranging in length from a single sentence to a large paragraph; the second is written as a narrative. In his introduction to *Human, All Too Human*, Erich Heller claims "With the aphorisms of *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche who had never been a 'systematic' thinker, has found the form that best suits his intellectual nature. He was not to abandon it again, not even in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*" (xvii). Despite *Zarathustra* essentially being a narrative (and manifestly not composed of short numbered, i.e. deliberately separated remarks), in Heller's view Nietzsche continues to use the "form" of aphorisms. Thus he must necessarily mean a kind of trait that extends beyond the discrete, explicitly contained units commonly known as "aphorisms."

However, this inclusive classification is not a consensus view of the Nietzschean aphorism. In the work *Nietzschean Narratives*, primarily concerned with the narrative elements of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Gary Shapiro argues "it would be a mistake to suppose that all of Nietzsche's works are aphoristic, or that individual aphorisms themselves cannot

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have a narrative form" (22-23). Shapiro would disagree with the claim that *Zarathustra* is aphoristic (or is *in essence* aphoristic). This comparison emphasizes that the aphoristic (having the form of aphorisms) cannot always rigidly designate a subset of Nietzsche's works. Since we can often unambiguously refer to various periods in the works of philosophers and writers – such as early, middle, and late – it is not, at first glance, unreasonable to want the same degree of precision for the classification of aphoristic works. Our discussion cannot dictate nor classify his true aphoristic texts, but we can certainly try to steer the conversation towards his philosophical motivations for writing Stückwerk philosophy.

Given that Wittgenstein's own deliberately published works are considerably less in number than Nietzsche's, one might expect that the subset of these that are aphoristic might be easier to identify. Or, as a seemingly easier task, merely consider the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*. Due to their drastically different manners of writing, surely the question of which is (more) aphoristic is as obvious as the two texts' stylistic, structural, and formal contrast. Yet a brief survey reveals that this is not the case. Rarely do we find statements that explicitly say the one work is aphoristic whereas the other is not; more commonly, the author is preoccupied with the stylistics or method of the aphoristic, and focuses on the *Investigations* while neglecting the *Tractatus*, or vice versa. He or she is preoccupied with the "aphoristic" particularities of one of the works and fails to interrelate it to the other, implicitly asserting the priority of one work over the over as far as the aphorism is concerned. For Badiou (172) and Morson ("The Aphorism" 426-428) the aphoristic core appears to be the *Tractatus*, while this core shifts to the *Investigations* for Stanley Cavell

(172) and Wittgenstein's *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry. Perhaps Wittgenstein's

aphoristic heart lies in the *Investigations* because its remarks are so distinct from the

systematic propositions of the *Tractatus* – or must it be in the *Tractatus* with its formidably

brief and potent sayings, so different than the slow, drawn out passages of his later work?

The more one reads articles on Wittgenstein's method, style, or literariness, the less

obvious his consummate aphoristic work of philosophy becomes. Of course, we might say

that both works are equally aphoristic, but this is an unsatisfying evaluation due to their

striking differences in systematicity, structure, method, and assertion (*Tractatus*) versus

interrogation (*Investigations*). Furthermore, one of the most concerning things about

classifying Wittgenstein's "aphorisms" is his own hesitance to label them as such.

Wittgenstein was born into a Vienna where aphoristic expression reached considerable

heights (Gray 85), and much has been made about his literary and philosophical relationships

with aphorists Karl Krauss and Georg Lichtenberg. It suffices to say that he was quite well

acquainted with the term and genre of aphorism, yet chose to refer to his units of writing

largely as "remarks" (Bemerkungen), such as in the preface to the *Investigations* (ix). And

when he discusses Krauss alongside himself, he uses "aphorisms" for Krauss's work and

"remarks" for his own (*Culture and Value* 66). Whether Wittgenstein wanted to avoid the

pretense of upgrading his remarks to aphorisms (an approbation Nietzsche did not hesitate to

make of his own units) or whether he thought the term to be ill-fitting, extracting a precise

literary (generic) classification of the *Tractatus* or the *Investigations* as constituted by

aphorisms through his own professed intentions and understanding of the aphoristic genre

appears difficult. As we will see later, though, it will be fortuitous to consider the *Investigations* in a structurally "aphoristic," Stückwerk sense.

Up until this point we have approached the aphorism in a deliberately circuitous and potentially irritating way by targeting the seemingly secondary usage of "aphoristic" instead of the aphorism head-on. Conventionally, we could expect that researching the aphorisms of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein should have a fairly simple two-step process. First we find what "the aphorism" is all about, its definition, its essence, and so on; then we would apply this knowledge of the aphorism in comparing and contrasting Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's purportedly aphoristic texts. This sort of process could be abstracted to learning about all sorts of literary forms and devices and then interpreting them in textual action. However, if we proceed with an overly elegant, essentialist understanding of the aphorism, an understanding that has become increasingly metaphysical in recent years, then the *Tractatus,* the *Investigations,* and *Human* cannot *all* be said to be composed of aphorisms at once in any particularly coherent sense. The stylistic, structural, and hermeneutic differences between these three texts stretch out our tidy definitions, as we will see in the next chapter. The whole point here is not to bicker over "true" aphorisms and aphorists, but to examine what Nietzsche and Wittgenstein are up to philosophically when they write books of numbered remarks – remarks that have a curious and underappreciated relation to each other and to their philosophical projects, in addition to whatever adherence or deviance they bear to their supposed aphoristic form.

Wittgenstein tells his readers: "What *we* do is bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use" (§116). And this, in a sense, is what "we" are doing too:

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bringing the word "aphorism" back from its metaphysical history to its non-metaphysical function as the constitutive unit of *Human* and the *Investigations*. Though aphorism is not an "everyday" sort of word, Gordon Baker makes the case that Wittgenstein uses everyday to mean non-metaphysical instead of truly ordinary ("Metaphysical/Everyday Use" 92). Important to the Wittgenstein's use of "metaphysical" is that metaphysics concerns the essence or nature of things, and expresses conditions of necessity and possibility (97). This thesis will take a (at least figurative) cue from Wittgenstein here, and reconstitute the aphorism around its practical deployment and neighbourly relations. We are looking for the *philosophical* "grammar" of aphorisms.

Perhaps thus far in our discussion the spectre of an essentialist understanding of the aphorism is overly abstract or appears an empty threat. To demonstrate how such an understanding of the aphorism will get us into trouble with Wittgenstein and Nietzsche, we can turn to the work of Gary Saul Morson, who is likely the world's leading scholar of short sayings. While his recent book *The Long and Short of It: From Aphorism to Novel* (2012) resolves some of the classification problems that will be outlined shortly, it is instructive to examine his article "The Aphorism: Fragments from the Breakdown of Reason" (2003) since it amply illustrates the difficulties scholars have encountered in pinning down the essence of the aphorism. Recently, he writes "I do not aspire to be the Northrop Frye of short genres and offer the definitive classification to supplant or forestall all others. ... Choose a different set of questions and you will arrive at a different classification" (5). He is well aware of the muddled state of terminology for short sayings, so he aims to first group the sayings and then apply a term out of convenience (4). In the discussion of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, we will

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be indeed choosing a "different set of questions": yet not with the aim of re-classifying their short sayings, but of eventually dissolving the problem of classification altogether as we turn to interpretation in Chapter 3 and their antiphilosophical projects in Chapter 4.

Morson articulates "the basic worldview of the aphorism by contrasting with an opposite form, the dictum" (411). For Morson, the aphorism is, in essence, mysterious: "The aphorism, like god's sign, does not contain but points beyond itself, step by potentially endless step. It is a mystery" (413). Later, he presents the dictum: "Unlike aphorisms, dicta see no mystery. They precisely resemble the solution to a riddle ... The dictum announces the discovery and specifies its essential nature. Its sense is: mystery is at last over. ... In direct contrast to the aphorism, the dictum typically tells us that things are not so complex as people have thought" (416). Summarizing more of Morson's remarks, the dictum is certain and totalizing, aiming for clarity and axiomaticity (417-418). He provides many examples of aphorisms and dicta, seemingly setting us up with useful tools for extracting the essence of the aphoristic in Nietzsche and Wittgenstein. Morson even devotes considerable attention to the *Tractatus*; its concluding remarks "precisely exhibit the aphoristic consciousness" that his article is forwarding (425). He sees the book's "propositions turn into aphorisms" (426) and picks out 6.41, 6.42, and 6.421 for further attention. Indeed the famous last two remarks of the *Tractatus* may in fact "be taken to apply to the aphorism as a genre" (428).

Unfortunately, Morson's early model (2003) breaks down when faced with the "ordinary use" of "aphorism" as it relates to Nietzsche. If our language concerns the history of the aphorism, then according to Wittgenstein's conception of *meaning*, we will perhaps find "the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (§43). Nietzsche, likely the most

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philosophically influential "aphorist" of all time, is conspicuously absent from his paper. Perhaps this is because Nietzsche, in Morson's two-part model, would be a writer of dicta and not of aphorisms. Many remarks of *Human* are rather unmysterious judgments and criticisms, straightforward instances of praise, blame, and moralistic assertion. Nietzsche, even to the lay person, is renowned for loudly pronouncing where things went wrong (with religion, morality, and so on). This is not Morson's mode of the aphoristic, which is a rather mystical one. For example, he cites as aphorisms: "The heart has its reasons, which reason knows nothing of" (Pascal), "Is it possible to perceive as shape what has no shape?" (Dostoevsky), and Wittgenstein's famous mystical statement of the *Tractatus*, "There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical." (6.522) (qtd. in Morson 420). While we could turn up a few mystical statements from Nietzsche, they are not representative of his general tone.

Beyond the issue of which philosopher is the more archetypical aphorist, there is also the early Wittgenstein versus the later. For Morson, the aphoristic core of Wittgenstein appears to be at the end of the *Tractatus* (compare this to Cavell, who locates it *Investigations*). Morson even ends his article – which is written as a series of numbered remarks – with the Wittgensteinian saying-showing "aphorism":

19. The dictum says Something. The aphorism shows Something Else. (428)

In his book *The Long and the Short of It*, Morson elegantly tidies up some of these classification problems. He essentially replaces the aphorism with the apothegm, so that the apothegm and the dictum form an opposing pair. The aphorism becomes, instead of a highly specific type of saying, a family of sayings that includes the apothegm and the dictum. In this

new model, since aphorism is a more inclusive category, we could say that Nietzsche and Wittgenstein *both* wrote aphorisms. However, Morson actually treats *Human* in his section on "the thought," a genre he opposes to "the summons" (195,199). Ultimately Morson's classification process is as intriguing as it is interminable. His system – which to be fair makes no claims of rigorous systematicity or authoritativeness – cuts across philosophy and literature. Yet it seems a system born of aphorisms already extracted from their source texts; it does not consider the aphorism's interrelations with its original neighbours. Certainly one could classify each entry in *The Oxford Book of Aphorisms* into a variety of different species, but this project does not necessarily contribute to the exegetical dilemmas in texts such as *Human* and the *Investigations*, dilemmas that their unitized and quasi-aphoristic structures have made all the more difficult.

By this point it should be clear that we have reason to avoid a certain kind of conventional confrontation with aphorisms that investigates *the* aphorism in itself while loosely using its adjective. Though an *aphoristic style* is still an intriguing prospect, we ought to consider the adjective in a structural, philosophical register beyond literary tone. Ultimately, we must avoid being zoologists who claim to find the same species of animal on two continents without studying the specimens' local ecosystems and communal behaviour: if the first location's specimen is a herding creature, and the second location's specimen is a lone hunter, could they really be of the same species at all? We will soon observe Wittgenstein's remarks herding together in familial packs while Nietzsche's aphorisms hunt out metaphysical beliefs, each of his predatory aphorisms largely on its own.

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Chapter 3: Two Arts of Exegesis, One Rhetoric of Incompleteness

Nietzsche asks for an "art of exegesis" for the aphorism; Wittgenstein invests in questions of interpretation in *Investigations* (as such, and as rule-following). From the outset, their individual concerns with interpretation appear to anticipate their subsequent plurality of scholarly interpretations. Despite the broadness of this scene, progress can be made towards the specific interpretive conditions of *Human, All Too Human* and *Philosophical Investigations* by means of a striking contrast between them. Aphorisms are often held to be context-free utterances: this chapter will explore the palpable but contrasting limitations of this generalization for these two works. The essential hermeneutic difference between *Human* and the *Investigations* can be largely abstracted away from the books' professed subject matters – i.e. we could infer this difference without a deep understanding of the texts – yet has important rhetorical-philosophical consequences for determining Nietzsche and Wittgenstein's methods. The difference is as follows: while Wittgenstein's remarks are semantically and grammatically contingent on their immediate predecessors, Nietzsche's are not.

In interpretive practice, this distinction will mean that if we are randomly handed one of Wittgenstein's remarks with nothing else to go on, we are at grave risk of not *mis*understanding it, but simply *not* understanding it. For instance, we will have no idea *for what* a certain pronoun stands in, or *with what* a seemingly contrasting remark is contrasting. If we are handed §538 for instance, which begins "There is a related case," we ask – a related

case *to what*? On the other hand with Nietzsche, every numbered aphorism forms a complete grammatical universe, free of ambiguous pronouns, except in quite rare cases when Nietzsche directly continues a thought across numbered remarks (most conspicuously, in §§35-38, §§132-135, §§629-637, I). If we were only to read Nietzsche's odd-numbered remarks, skipping the even ones, the result would simply be *less* Nietzsche, but not Nietzsche gravely disfigured: the same cannot be said of Wittgenstein. Though certainly *Philosophical Investigations* is not an outright *continuous* philosophical work, the sometimes-direct continuity of its remarks and its back-references make it more like a pedagogical lesson in terms of its textual-temporal contingency and less like Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human*, which is more akin to an anthology of poetry, since instead of developing contingently, its apprehension starts again and again with each remark.

One almost needs a linguistic or psychological theory of reading to make this hermeneutic difference rigorous and clear, but a reasonable ad-hoc distinction between the interpretative approaches necessary for the *Investigations* and *Human* should suffice. Consider the two following definitions for a text passage's *context sensitivity*, where in our case the passage in question is always a numbered remark:

Conceptual context sensitivity: a general knowledge of the topics of discussion surrounding the passage is question, which is derived from past learning outside the given text: in particular, knowing something about the proper nouns.

Textual context sensitivity: A specific knowledge of what immediately precedes the passage in question in the text along with its grammatical interrelations: in particular, knowing the pronoun substitutions and past textual examples.

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The first task here will be to argue that *Human, All Too Human* primarily demands conceptual context sensitivity while *Philosophical Investigations* primarily demands textual context sensitivity. There is a parallel to what is called *exophoric* and *anaphoric* and reference in linguistics. Roughly speaking, exophora references outside-the-text, while anaphora references inside-the-text. Though tenable, for our purposes this distinction is a bit too linguistically technical, and it is a distinction drawn more from *semantics* than from *hermeneutics*. To give these two claimed contexts an easier connotation: the *conceptual context sensitivity* ideal for Nietzsche is best associated with history; the *textual context sensitivity* ideal for Wittgenstein is best associated with the text's internal pedagogy.

Let us begin with history. If an intelligent person attempted an exegesis of *Human, All Too Human* without an encyclopedia or the like, fluent in English or German but with little knowledge of European intellectual, cultural, and religious history, he or she would have a fundamental problem. The naive exegete would not recognize Beethoven, Calvin, Democritus, Demosthenes, Diogenes, Don Quixote, Electra, Erasmus, Hesiod, Horace, Goethe, Kant, La Rochefoucauld, Machiavelli, Plato, Schopenhauer, Thucydides, Voltaire, Wagner, or Xerxes. This exegete would not have the religious context necessary for understanding Nietzsche's rebellion in his chapter "The Religious Life" nor the philosophical context for his anti-metaphysical thinking that we will pursue in our next chapter. Historical context, particularly when it comes to philosophy, is indeed imperative for interpreting *Human, All Too Human*, just as it was for Nietzsche as he was writing it. He claims "lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers" (§7), a remark that anticipates his later and enormously influential concept of the genealogy. Nietzsche, whose career began as

a classical philologist, is widely regarded as a particularly *historical* philosopher. This assessment is particularly striking in comparison to Wittgenstein and his erratic, largely non-academic philosophical education. Though the reading-lists of these two German-speaking philosophers overlap on certain key figures such as Schopenhauer, identifying historical influences –especially pre-nineteenth century influences – is a relatively fruitless endeavour in the *Investigations* when compared to *Human*.

Wittgenstein's network of external references is indeed far less extensive than Nietzsche's. Out of the 693 remarks comprising Part I of the *Investigations*, only eleven reference specific philosophical texts (Fischer and Ammereller xiv). Though a highly challenging and complicated work, it is *elementary* in a way that most contemporary philosophy is not: it begins with elements (rudiments) so that a sufficiently dedicated reader can plough through it (few would expect a textbook called *Elementary Calculus* to be an easy read for a beginner in the subject, yet it should be adequate in itself to foster learning). Thus understanding Wittgenstein is an intrinsically accumulative process. Unlike many contemporary philosophy articles, an amateur reader need not give up in the face of unfamiliar jargon and undefined terms. Wittgenstein's style and philosophy have indeed been called "pedagogical" (Peters and Burbules). Of course, this does not mean that *Philosophical Investigations* has all the usual helpful aids of a textbook (such as lucid definitions, chapters, and formatting). Its stretches of continuity are broken by new "chapters," though never typographically indicated as such (according to the preface, he is apt to "sometimes make a sudden change, jumping from one topic to another"). However, just as with a textbook, his student gains proficiency by answering a series of questions – more than 800 of them, for

very few of which Wittgenstein provides answers (Peters and Burbules). Wittgenstein did in fact refer to the work as "a textbook, however, not in that it provides knowledge, but rather in that it stimulates thinking" (qtd. in Savickey 1). In the way that the *Investigations* eschews extensive historical reference in favour of its own, largely accumulative pedagogical scheme, we see its aim of being understood on its own, everyday terms. This is a markedly different scenario than *Human*, in which Nietzsche both commands *and* requires historical proficiency in philosophy and European culture.

Though this discussion is articulating a pedagogical hermeneutic for *Investigations*, it should pointed out that at the beginning of Wittgenstein's formal philosophical career in the *Tractatus*, he was a bad teacher despite his palpable brilliance. The pedagogical thrust of *Investigations* is marked change from the *Tractatus*, which immediately in its preface claims that it is "not a textbook" (3). While Wittgenstein believed that the *Investigations* "stimulates thinking," the *Tractatus* famously speculates in its preface that it "perhaps will only be understood by those who have themselves already thought the thoughts which are expressed in it – or similar thoughts". In terms of its accessibility around the time of its publication, the *Tractatus* was the opposite of a textbook: it was effectively a code-book, in the sense that even a genius would need Wittgenstein's own key to unlock it. As he wrote to Bertrand Russell in 1919:

> "in fact you would not understand it [the *Tractatus*] without a previous explanation as it's written in quite short remarks. (This of course means that nobody will understand it; although I believe it's clear as crystal. But it upsets all our theory of truth, of classes, of numbers, and all the rest.)" (qtd. in Nordman 96)

The aims of his writing being (publically) *understandable* and being *clear* were evidently different things for the early Wittgenstein. In a pragmatic sense, a work is not *understandable* if its original – and in this case, brilliant – audience missed the point. His instance on the ultra-short remarks in the *Tractatus* is all the more striking in the face of this difficulty, and we will see him increase their length, number, and verbosity *Investigations*. Though many scholars have variously identified "aphoristic" qualities in one work or the other, to insist that both works are both composed of aphorisms may blunt the force of what is fair to call the pedagogical improvement in the manner of his philosophical delivery.

The change in how Wittgenstein envisioned the receptions of his two canonical works, his pedagogical turn, is manifest in many rhetorical and written categories of the *Investigations*. These include his increased willingness to expand on points, dwell on mistaken perspectives, intersperse the interrogative with the declarative, and furnish his reader-student with examples. Though Terry Eagleton characterizes the *Investigations* as a "thoroughly dialogical work," Wittgenstein writes in *Culture and Value* that the dialogues of Socrates were a "waste of time" because they "clarify nothing" and use key words in an exceptional rather than an ordinary way (qtd. in Peters and Burbules). Rather than the classically dialectical, push and pull forces which reveal the necessary and sufficient conditions of a thing, it can be suggested that Wittgenstein's pedagogy follows a strategy of "family resemblance" [Familienähnlichkeit]. This famous term, "crucial to Wittgenstein's attack on essentialism," may oddly be traced back to Nietzsche who uses it in *Beyond Good and Evil* (Glock 120). Wittgenstein uses the term to describe, like the traits of a real family,

"a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" (§66).

While family resemblance is typically bound to his *concept* of language-games, it also figuratively characterizes his written and rhetorical patterns on the level of each remark. In the preface he refers to his "criss-cross" patterns of his thought in the context of his un-united "philosophical remarks". In a typical sequential grouping of remarks, we indeed often see a "network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing" though we are rarely sure if they are "overall similarities" or "similarities of detail". Though perhaps a tendentious application of Wittgenstein's thought to the structure of his remarks, it seems a more reasonable metaphor in light of Nietzsche's aphorisms. Nietzsche's units in *Human* present the interpretive confidence that each aphorism begat itself, versus Wittgenstein's remarks where we cannot be as sure of their familial relations to their neighbours in a given sequence. Without help from his manuscripts, his student is not quite sure where his examples can "broken off", a property that he claims his examples have in §133.

Despite this obscurity, we should be sure to note the improvement from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations* in the area of accessibility. Through its distinctive form of "ordinary" dialogue and grammar-rich, ostensive pedagogy, the *Investigations* is a less elitist work than the *Tractatus* in the sense that its form of expression allows entry for the philosophical novice – not a gentle entry, but certainly a possible opportunity to "stimulate thinking." We can see a parallel between the elite logical skill required to understand the *Tractatus* near its publication and what Sarah Kofman regards as the "rigorous philological art" required to understand Nietzsche. She claims "aphoristic writing also aims to discourage the *common* by

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requiring a reader to be equipped with a rigorous philological art. Aphoristic writing wants to make itself understood only by those who are linked by having the same refined impressions in common; it wants to banish the *profanum vulgus*" (114-115). Yet shifting from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations*, the prerequisites for understanding Wittgenstein relaxed from the demands of having "already thought the thoughts expressed" in the work -- from already "having the same refined impressions in common" -- as he developed a more inclusive and dialogical procedure. Yet owing to this turn, textual context sensitivity becomes all the more important for interpreting Wittgenstein's philosophy in the *Investigations*. Instead of approaching each remark at an elite level of logical skill as with the *Tractatus*, we can rely upon certain continuities *across* the "curriculum" of the *Investigations* which allow us to slowly accumulate an understanding. With the help of an astute pattern analysis by Gordon Baker, we can see one such continuity, an important example of textual context sensitivity, weaving its way through the work.

A grasp of *scope* – that is, the extent to which is discussing the *same* concept, usage, or sense across remarks– is imperative for the *Investigations*. Baker's incisive article "Italics in Wittgenstein" is a remarkable instance in Wittgenstein scholarship where a seemingly textual or "rhetorical" feature – in the sense that italics often serve as an *emphatic* gesture – turns out to be of philosophical importance. Going back to the metaphor of this discussion's introduction, we might say this is an important "azeotrope" of *Philosophical Investigations*. Through this pattern analysis he differentiates four different types of italic usages, which can hypothetically "generate four readings for *any* italicized expression in *any* italicized remark" (*Wittgenstein's Method* 246). According to Baker's analysis, the remark "Following a rule is

a *custom*" (a paraphrase of §199) could be parsed in four ways (246). An example of this scheme is as follows. Consider the sentence "Following a rule is, [X], a custom" and substitute one of the four phrases for X:

     1. *really*   2. *in our sense*   3. *in a certain sense*   4. *as it were*

Though Baker does a much more thorough job of explaining these differing italicizations and their implications than this brief example can hope to capture, what is important for our purposes is that these usages have weighty implications for interpreting Wittgenstein *across* his remarks. While usage (1) is emphatic, (2) and (3) are sensitive to the scope. For example, in the discussion on reading in §§156-71, Wittgenstein fixes a certain sense of "read" through his italicizations in §§156-62; without this back-referencing the discussion would not make sense (Baker 229). This is case (2), where Wittgenstein is developing reading *in our sense*, a sense that spans many remarks. By pinning down one of the four italic usages, we come to understand the *sameness* of reading in Baker's exegesis.

Wittgenstein's patterns of italics are a specific interpretive tool, but they have general significance in exemplifying how very textual modern philosophy can be. In an interesting juxtaposition of Wittgenstein's italics and Derrida's frequent practice of striking through words (putting them *sous rature*), Baker emphasizes the importance of a deeply textual Wittgenstein (226). This is not to suggest that scholars have ignored the letter of his texts. Wittgenstein is surely far less flamboyant and textually playful than Derrida: yet here we have a (stylistically conservative) scholar analyzing the typeface of philosophy. To borrow Richard Rorty's phrase for Derrida, Baker's devotion to Wittgenstein's italics illuminates "philosophy as a kind of *writing*" (emphasis added).

While it might be problematic to lay out a full set of criteria for an "adequate" exegesis of a certain remark, the general point so far is this: for Wittgenstein, we must generally look back in the text, understand his examples, attempt his questions, and so on – yet for Nietzsche, no amount of close reading of *Human, All Too Human* will reveal all its cultural, intellectual, and religious prerequisites if we are not already familiar with them. That is not to say that we should never situate a Wittgenstein remark in front of a certain historical backdrop, or never backtrack while looking for threads of continuity in Nietzsche. Only that the texts themselves ask this of us in their construction, and what was *withheld* in their construction. The art of withholding will grow into a major theme of this thesis for both philosophers, and will take on several guises. We will soon see that Wittgenstein already began a process of withholding in the *Tractatus*.

Stanley Cavell writes a piece called "The *Investigations'* everyday aesthetics of itself" which argues that the text's "literariness" and "aesthetics" cannot be understood from outside the work (21). Though the aesthetic of the *Tractatus* is rather contrary to the "everyday," his first work was conceived with an interiority equally formidable to the one Cavell investigates. The *Tractatus* was to be understood in its minimalistic selfhood, a work in Wittgenstein's words "philosophical and at the same time literary, but there is no babbling in it" (qtd. in Monk 177). Despite writing supplementary remarks for the *Tractatus* – extra comments that his peers would have eagerly accepted – Wittgenstein resolutely refused to have them printed: "The supplements are exactly what must *not* be printed. Besides THEY REALLY CONTAIN NO ELUCIDATIONS AT ALL" (qtd. in Monk 207). Though historicized interpretations of Wittgenstein's philosophy have emerged, his tenacity for

demanding to be understood *ahistorically* and *internally* to his texts is unforgettable, and all the more striking in comparison to Nietzsche's urging towards "historical philosophizing" (§276, I) and the autobiographical details of his suffering in *Human, All Too Human*.

As is evident even by flipping through the many pages of the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein eventually relaxed the austerity of his writing by being vastly more thorough and ostensive (though we should partially attribute this to his editors on account of its posthumous publication and the controversial status of its second part). However, Wittgenstein also enormously loosened the *structure* of the *Investigations* when compared to the *Tractatus*, and this structural shift poses considerable interpretive challenges. The question of how to interpret the remarks of *Philosophical Investigations,* with their complicated, contingent logic, can be approached by means of an imaginary hypothetical diagram. A truly thorough exegesis of the work might include an intricate diagram that continues down the margin of each page and onto the next, showing the accumulation of key conceptual threads from their textual inception to their end (something like the various epochs in geological diagram).

If we had such a diagram, we could readily determine which "layer" a given remark is buried in, i.e. the *scope* of textual context – then we could interpret each remark with respect to a definite textual expanse. The *Tractatus*, unlike the *Investigations*, has a something of a natural visualization: we simply "tab in" with each decimal place added, and "tab out" when they are removed. At the very least, in the *Investigations* it would be fortuitous to realize when we "drop into" and "step out of" each lesson (a hypothetical language-game: upon reading a remark in *Philosophical Investigations*, decide whether it is a "drilling down" or a

"fresh start" with respect to the previous remark). However, if it true that sequences of remarks have a property of "family resemblance" as suggested earlier, a great difficulty emerges. We could not possibly impose a Tractarian structure on the *Investigations,* since the familial interrelations obscure the necessary and sufficient conditions for a remark to be directly subordinate to its predecessor.

Thus far in the discussion, Nietzsche and Wittgenstein's remarks have been distinguished along the lines of the context-sensitivity from the perspective of a reader or interpreter. Yet they themselves demonstrate a palpable interest in interpretive imbroglios. In particular, they both respect the opportunity of interpreting a remark that has an incomplete context and execution. The issue of how to approach sentences or short ideas that have *no proper context* is imperative in aphoristic philosophy, for it is a distinctive burden placed on the reader. No proper context, in this discussion of aphorisms and their kin, should be taken to mean that the context is not explicit: that is, the aphorism *and* its ideal context are up for interpretation (our aims thus far have indeed been to sketch out such ideal contexts). However, as we will see in examples from the *Investigations* and *Human*, the art of discovering context is not just one of research, but of invention. Consider the following pairing of remarks from the two philosophers, both concerned with interpretation. Wittgenstein begins the following remark with a dropped-in quote, which has no previous context or relevance to *Philosophical Investigations*:

525. "After he had said this, he left her as he did the day before." – Do I understand this sentence? Do I understand it just as I should if I heard it in the course of a narrative? If it were set down isolation I should say, I don't know what it's about. But

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all the same I should know how this sentence might perhaps be used; I could myself

invent a context for it.

(A multitude of familiar paths lead off from these words in every direction.)

And here is Nietzsche:

178 .*The effectiveness of the incomplete*. – Just as figures in relief produce so strong

an impression on the imagination because they are as it were on the point of stepping

out of the wall but have suddenly been brought to a halt, so the relief-like, incomplete

presentation of an idea, of a whole philosophy, is sometimes more effective than its

exhaustive realization: more is left for the beholder to do, he is impelled to continue

working on that which appears before him so strongly etched in light and shadow, to

think it through to the end, and to overcome even that constraint which has hitherto

prevented it from stepping forth fully formed.

As might be expected, Wittgenstein's concern with incompleteness is more semantic, and

Nietzsche's is more aesthetic or artistic. The scope of Wittgenstein's statement operates on

the level of a sentence, while Nietzsche's scope ranges from "an idea" (perhaps an aphorism)

to "a whole philosophy". Yet both aphorists realize the fortuitousness of ambiguity, or at

least that they are not in an impasse: while Wittgenstein could take the unknown sentence

and "invent a context for it," Nietzsche is "impelled to continue working on that which

appears before him." Both remarks are lucid anticipations of the reception of their

originator's aphoristic works. Each philosopher has left behind him a monumental project of

understanding his isolated "sentences" (remarks), of leaving scholars to place them "in the

course of a narrative," perhaps studiously or tendentiously "invent[ing] a context" for these isolated ideas.

Applied to the case of *Philosophical Investigations'* "incomplete presentation", Nietzsche is correct that "more is left for the beholder to do" – more work is left for the interpreter – and perhaps as a partial consequence, we are left with the monumental heap of interpretations we know today. In *(Over)interpreting Wittgenstein* Biletzki does not bestow much blame on Wittgenstein's style or "incompleteness" for the vast divergences between the many readings he has received. Yet by juxtaposing the interpretive immensity of her reading-of-readings with the specific textual and contextual challenges we have already seen in the *Investigations*, we have a preliminary, intuitive reason to suggest such a linkage. That said, it is a more difficult attribution to make for Wittgenstein than for Nietzsche: the earlier philosopher and his interpreters are far more comfortable with interpretive pluralism and the "perspectivism" of his styles.

Can we as readers even hold these aphorists accountable for clarifying what they mean? Perhaps the phrase "what they mean" is a poor one, since both these philosophers are more concerned with the (therapeutic or rhetorical) *activity* of philosophy and its practitioners than with the dispensing of determinate philosophical *meaning*: for the antiphilosopher, philosophy is not a theory but an "act" (Badiou 75). We might still ask, though, that they be held accountable to cutting down the blatant misunderstandings of their texts. The value of interpretive pluralism aside, there are better and worse ways of discovering what they "mean" by their statements that supplant philosophical *theory* with *act*. In pursuing this accountability, the rhetoric of incompleteness in Nietzsche's and

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Wittgenstein's remarks should not go unmentioned. One might say that at work here is a kind of oracular rhetoric, or riddle rhetoric, in which the speaker impresses the importance of the message through the necessity of its careful interpretation or extension. Indeed solving a riddle is a bit like "invent[ing] a context" for a sentence: discovering where the phrase "walks on four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon, and three legs in the evening" is intelligible (in man, as Oedipus replies to the Sphinx). Similar to a riddle, the act of simply reading or hearing the remark does not inherently decipher it. As Nietzsche warns us, "An aphorism, properly stamped and molded, has not been 'deciphered' when it simply has been read; rather, one has then to begin its exegesis" (*GM* preface §8). When an isolated sentence or remark is presented, the speaker can thereafter go silent on the issue, leaving the interpreter with at least three conceivable options. Firstly, one could understand the remark *in and of itself* – if such a thing is even possible (can even we picture a remark with no context *whatsoever*?). Secondly, one could work within the immediate textual context, as with Wittgenstein, and thirdly, with an extra-textual historical context, as with Nietzsche. Yet all three are problematic in that the speaker is not immediately nor inherently accountable for clarifying or justifying the remark, particularly in regards to an overarching (essayistic) thesis that could be attached on the holistic, totalizing level of a chapter or book.

The status of our philosophers as conventional *authors* should be brought into question to the extent that an author has *authority* and consequent accountability. As Sarah Kofman notes on Nietzsche in a pluralistic, poststructuralist vein: "it is not the fault of the 'author' if his aphorisms fail to be understood" (116). In *Human*, Nietzsche dashes off many one-sentence aphorisms and quickly leaves the scene, immediately shifting the burden of

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understanding to the reader since no further clarification is possible. In the next chapter, we will witness him making hit-and-run attacks at metaphysics and systematic philosophy. Nietzsche's aphoristic form, so short and nimble, prevents his thought from being interrogated for an *understanding* in the same way as, for example, Kant. In both *Human* and the *Investigations*, we can certainly read a long series of numbered remarks, attempt to distill a thesis from them, and then hold the remark in question accountable to that overarching thesis. Yet because of this circularity, the speaker who voices the remark is not accountable to its letter: only to the spirit, which someone else has extracted.

Kofman goes so far as to posit that aphoristic expression eventually "deconstructs the idea of author as master of the meaning of the work and immortalizing himself through it" (116). Toning down her claim for our purposes, we should note the very practical uncertainty among Wittgenstein interpreters concerning who is "the master of the meaning" of the *Investigations*. Consider the case of Saul Kripke, whose book *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language* is widely regarded as one of the greatest interpretations that the *Investigations* has ever received. Kripke's interpretation has been dubbed "Kripkenstein" – a portmanteau -- a Frankenstein-ing of these two philosophers' names. Yet the name of this hybrid philosopher, it seems, expresses an uncertainty about how much of Kripke's brilliant interpretation was "there to begin with" in Wittgenstein: perhaps "Kripkenstein" might only be "Wittgenstein" had the first philosopher accompanied his remarks on rule-following with a statement of "this is what I'm trying to do; this is my theory; this is my explanation". We will see, however, that this kind of (thesis-based) accountability is antithetical to

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Wittgenstein's spirit of philosophy's putting-everything-before us, as famously advanced in §§126-128.

While evaluating the fidelity of Kripke's interpretation is here an impossible task, one might be inclined to suggest that there are *two* great "masters of the meaning" at work in "Kripkenstein" – and two rival masters, in a sense, means no master at all. Scholars have been persuaded to read books such as *Human* and the *Investigations* on account of the authors' palpable intelligence and the utility of the (plural) interpretations they generate. However, it appears that readers are simultaneously hailed into a rhetorical relationship with Nietzsche and Wittgenstein where their multifarious richness of interpretative possibility conceals a certain philosophical lack of accountability. While they allow for *great* readings, perhaps *consistent* readings, in this hyper-interpretive scene we should wonder who is really doing more philosophizing: the aphorist or his Kripke figure.

The art of antiphilosophical unaccountability is eloquently evoked in *Human*. Nietzsche, further speaking on the merits of incompleteness, explains that the aim of a eulogy "requires precisely an enticing incompleteness as an irrational element which presents to the hearer's imagination the illusion of a dazzling sea which obscures the coast on the other side, that is to say the limitations of the object to be eulogized, as though in a fog" (§199). On the other hand, a "complete" eulogy of someone "gives rise to the suspicions that these are his only merits." Though this aphorism was perhaps voiced in an aesthetic register, it begs to be turned around at pointed at our often-cryptic aphorists. Were we to call upon Nietzsche and Wittgenstein to complete their remarks we might be very disappointed with the limitations that emerge. While perhaps we did not *mis*understand the small initial remark, the

completion of the remark might not go as far as we want it to go (as Wittgenstein says in his first remark on Augustine and apples, "explanations come to an end somewhere"). The "fog" over certain famous remarks is perhaps not only an uncertainty over what they meant, but actually an optimism that the philosopher *could have gone further* with the thought in question – and for each interpreter, that they could have gone further in precisely the direction his or her reading is headed. While aphorisms are often held to be a brief flash of insight – a *contribution* of wisdom – in this sense the greatest aphorisms are those that entice us with their incompletion, and are hence a kind of deliberate withholding.

The act of withholding is a powerful force in both philosophers and in the respective presentations of their philosophies. Following Badiou's invitation, this force could certainly be polemically framed as anti-philosophical: at this juncture, it suffices to say it is something they share. This assessment of withholding is initially beckoned by Wittgenstein's most famous aphorism: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" (*Tractatus* 7). Compare this great aphorism to its vastly more obscure, but distinctively Nietzschean predecessor: "One should speak only when one may not stay silent; and then only of that which one has *overcome* – everything else is chatter, 'literature', lack of breeding" (Preface, §1, II$_1$). While much has been written on Wittgenstein's silence, his "quietism," Nietzsche advances an underappreciated art of withholding, which could be taken in an either philosophical or literary vein. In *Human* he withholds masterfully, espousing the merits of an incomplete presentation while simultaneously adhering to his mantra, sending out frequent volleys of ultra-short remarks, the best of which beg to be fleshed out. Nietzsche aphorizes concisely: "When his work opens its mouth, the author has to shut his" (§188, II$_1$) -- in itself

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a statement that merits elaboration. In this aphorism, entitled *Shutting his mouth,* he achieves exactly that. Yet beyond the philosophical or creative necessity of withholding for Nietzsche, laying out one's thoughts excessively is simply poor style, poor writing. In *Thinkers as stylists*, he aphorizes that "Most thinkers write badly because they communicate to us not only their thoughts but also the thinking of their thoughts" (§188, I). The source book of this aphorism plainly and readily adheres to its aesthetic. Such a claim is also a good way of differentiating the style of the *Tractatus* from the *Investigations*.

While it can be suggested that the *Tractatus* somehow withholds its "thinking" while the *Investigations* lays out its thinking in a verbose and pedagogical manner rife with grammatical examples, it is not clear in the first place what this distinction means between thoughts and the thinking of thoughts. Is it even possible to *withhold* the thinking of our thoughts? What is this "thinking" that manifests itself in philosophical writing: the thought-presentation or the thought-development over time? Interpreting this aphorism as recommending a kind of highly refined, condensed, minimalistic presentation, then certainly the early Wittgenstein was a not a bad writer at all in Nietzsche's aesthetic. And in the sense that thinking in a text is the writer's process of developing thoughts over time that leaves self-evident historical traces in the work, then the *Tractatus* is a work stripped of its thinking, due to Wittgenstein's insistence on removing the notes and eschewing a biographical introduction.

However, we do not need to fix a single meaning to *Thinkers as stylists* to make two general and salient points on their writing. Firstly *the espoused* aesthetics and stylistics of withholding found in *Human, All Too Human* evidently *reflect* its own writing. Secondly

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Wittgenstein – who held Nietzsche to be the greatest *author* among the philosophers and who possibly adapted Nietzsche's aphorism on silence into the last and most famous proposition of the *Tractatus* – was an equally masterful withholder. While after the *Tractatus* he progresses towards a more thorough and verbose presentation in the *Investigations*, in the next chapter we will see him reanimate his art of withholding in the *Investigations* as he eschews the very constituents of conventional philosophy: theses, theories, and explanations.

In conclusion to this chapter, we can attempt to sum up the interpretive contrast between *Human* and the *Investigations* by reflecting on some generally held wisdom about the aphorism. In her synoptic article "Nietzsche and the Art of the Aphorism," Jill Marsden states that in general "Aphorisms are essentially modular assertions which function independently of narrativity" (27). We have seen this to be largely true in *Human*, but because of the continuities and family resemblances we have identified in the remarks of the *Investigations*, either this statement fails to hold or this work is not truly a book of aphorisms. Marsden also states that across Nietzsche's works, "for the most part, the context of the aphorism is no broader than its terms" (27). This is true semantically and grammatically of *Human*. On the interpretive level, however, the interpretive context – the texts or concepts that we attempt to relate to the work – can be rather immense. This potential set includes philosophical and cultural history, the texts Nietzsche read, and Nietzsche's own texts. Yet depending on our interpretive aims, we could conceivably heed Nietzsche's belief in *The effectiveness of the incomplete* and essentially *invent* a context that his aphorisms inspire. In academic or philosophical writing, we can generally attempt to distinguish between "using" a quote – deploying it for some aim – and "interpreting" a quote – explaining what it might

mean. However, both Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's frustrate this distinction to the practical extent that trying to "use" their remarks constitutes an interpretation: perhaps one of many possible "completions" of the "incomplete".

Admittedly, our discussion does not always make such a distinction in its own quotation of their texts. In this chapter, to enrich the interpretive context of their remarks we generally look to *Human*'s historical network of references and to the *Investigations*' own pedagogical method. Yet these are not the only options. Another approach, for instance, would entail putting the *Investigations* into dialogue with Wittgenstein's *Brown Book* or *Philosophical Grammar,* noting how his examples remained intact or were transmuted as they passed to the *Investigations*. There is certainly expository and interpretive value in this. However, the strategy taken in this chapter attempts to extract interpretive frameworks from the two primary books' *own* logic that is allegedly proper to them: a logic thoroughly historicized and externally referenced Nietzsche, and textually internal and pedagogically astute for Wittgenstein. While we have not delved much into their biographies, it is certainly fitting to mention that these two logics coincide rather naturally with two of their famed careers: Nietzsche the philologist and Wittgenstein the elementary school teacher.

Chapter 4: The Reasons for Raisins: The Necessity of Stückwerk Philosophy

Despite Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's major associations with the forms of aphorisms (*Human*), propositions (the *Tractatus*), or remarks (the *Investigations*) – essentially, with small philosophical pieces – both acknowledged the limitations of philosophy as written in pieces. In the well-known preface to the *Investigations* which was written in 1945, Wittgenstein mentions the failure of his thoughts to "proceed from one subject to another in a natural order without breaks" and to follow a "single direction." He professes his inability to unite his thoughts into a conventional philosophical whole in this work. Yet in a more obscure remark from 1948, Wittgenstein articulates a general expression of what we could call his problem of raisins, a problem that will emerge in this chapter in both philosophers' texts:

> Raisins may be the best part of a cake; but a bag full of raisins is no better than a cake; and he who is in a position to give us a bag full of raisins, cannot necessarily bake a cake with them, let alone do something better.
>
> I am thinking of Krauss & his aphorisms, but of myself too & my philosophical remarks.
>
> A cake is not, as it were, thinned out raisins. (qtd. in Perloff 724)

While raisins represent (discrete) remarks in this baking metaphor, it is less clear to what the cake corresponds. Certainly something like "a (whole) philosophy," "a (holistic) philosophical method," or "a philosophical system" could stand in for "a cake." Or perhaps,

on a more textual level, he is concerned with the relation between the parts and whole of a piece of writing. So we could read this metaphor as: "Wise, quotable sayings may be the best part of a work; but a collection of such sayings is no better than a unified work; and he who is in a position to give us a collection of sayings cannot necessarily form a unified work with them, let alone do something better."

This metaphor has at least two conceivable interpretations for piecewise works, one more philosophical and the other more textual and literary. Yet as we will see in this chapter in both *Human* and the *Investigations*, such interpretations are deeply and often inextricably linked together when we evaluate the philosophical necessity of Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's "raisins". We will see Nietzsche strain under the tension of critiquing the "cakes" of systematic and metaphysical philosophy while simultaneously yearning for his thought to constitute its own kind of philosophical whole. He seeks a unity on a deeper level than that of his allegedly fragmented aphorisms. We will then take a close look at Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical remarks, particularly §§126-128, to see how his style of writing aligns with his anti-dogmatism and grammatical methods.

An intuitive question about Wittgenstein's practice of philosophy emerges from the cake metaphor and the preface to the *Investigations*. Why can't Wittgenstein bake himself a cake, that is, a kind of philosophical or textual whole? Is the failure simply due to poor technique, a problem that could be eliminated with sufficient practice, or is the barrier an ineradicably philosophical one? Given unlimited resources – such as a (truly rare) disciple who understood his work to his liking – could Wittgenstein have reformulated the *Investigations* into a unified work, or would this revision inherently undermine his

philosophical project? In his preface, we find a preliminary clue to suspect this *is* a

philosophical problem, in addition to whatever potential biographical or aesthetic aspects it

may have. Wittgenstein tantalizingly suggests that his failure to "weld [his] results together

into such a whole" – i.e. a book whose thoughts "proceed one from subject to another in a

natural order and without breaks" – is "connected to the very nature of the investigation".

That is to say, perhaps, the form of writing is fundamentally connected with the philosophical

content. Yet this connection, if it exists, is likely a less obvious and less studied linkage when

compared to Nietzsche's philosophy and its relation to his writings. Thus we will begin with

Human after a general observation about the necessity involved in such connections.

These connections, whether in Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, or other philosophers, suggest

an essential question when we concern ourselves with philosophical style -- or more

accurately the stylistics of a specific philosophical text. It is a question of the form: does the

style of writing *align* with the content? This alignment connotes a mirroring, correspondence,

reflection, or symbiosis of the two levels. If the answer is yes, and it is indeed yes for a great

many commentators on the *Tractatus*, the *Investigations*, and Nietzsche's aphorism books,

then it can be followed by a more difficult and divisive question: is the style philosophically

necessary to deliver the content? We will see that "philosophically necessary" is a tricky

term: this might merely mean that an unsuitable style might "undermine" or "go against" the

content, or in a more extreme view, renders the text effectively meaningless or entails

rejecting the conclusions it reaches. The extreme view amounts to throwing out, for instance,

a systematically-written *Human, All Too Human*. The perspective of this chapter is somewhat

more moderate: Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's chosen form of philosophy-in-pieces is

necessary in that we could fairly accuse them of hypocrisy had they reformulated certain key ideas about philosophy into a highly coherent textual form. While reformulated versions of these texts would certainly be worth reading, they would be disfigured by a divergence between what is *shown* versus *said*. In other words, this chapter holds our aphorists accountable to *practicing* what they *preach* -- to the unity of application with espousal.

4.1 Nietzsche's Anti-Systematic Aphorisms and his Taste for Cake

What is likely the most general and fundamental alignment between style and content that Nietzsche's readers have identified is as follows. Nietzsche distrusts (philosophical and metaphysical) systems in his content; his manner of writing, and particularly his aphorisms, are unsystematic in his style. This generalization regarding this alignment, built around unsystematicity, is fairly uncontroversial (particularly in the wake of his poststructuralist readers). Yet the *strength* of the alignment, and the question of its necessity, varies immensely. At the very least, his unsystematic style can be regarded as a successful ornamentation of his distrust of systems; taking a stronger view, Nietzsche would utterly undermine his anti-systematic message had he delivered the content of his aphorisms in systematic manner.

However, we cannot yet evaluate this alignment faithfully until we have a clear view of what Nietzsche and his readers mean by systems – a rather multifaceted term. We should note that Nietzsche was an anti-systematic thinker in senses beyond the purely philosophical one, since he certainly attacks entities such as religious systems, but we will not have opportunity to consider them here. Moving to its philosophical use, let us keep in mind that

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the word "system" is often used to describe manifold entities, inviting at least three aspects of philosophical systematicity that Nietzsche could conceivably reject: (1) the structural, arranged, and taxonomical (2) the complete, totalizing, and whole (3) the functional and methodological. So it is not clear in merely labeling him as anti-systematic whether his objection is to architectonic systematicity in the Kantian sense or a different kind of holistic, perhaps more textual systematicity. Thus we will first turn to history.

Beyond the uses of the word "system," in understanding *Human* as anti-systematic there should also be a historical conception, whether specific or general, of a systematic philosophical work. In his chapter on metaphysics Nietzsche readily reminds us of the need for "historical philosophizing" (§276, I). For Nietzsche, the obvious model is the formidable German tradition of systematic philosophical writing which preceded him. A summary such as this one provides the backdrop of idealism:

> The ideological consequence of such a [non-systematic] form [of aphorisms] must, I
> believe, been attractive to Nietzsche, for an ostensibly casual collection of truths
> corresponds exactly to Nietzsche's philosophical position at this time [of *Human*].
> His idealistic predecessors in philosophy had conceived the search for truth as the
> construction of a system for explaining the world. One cannot turn to any page in
> Kant or Hegel and expect to find a self-sufficient thought, for all is conceived as a
> great, interdependent system. (Faber 208)

Similarly, Erich Heller's introduction to the Hollingdale translation to the work situates Nietzsche's form of writing against a German backdrop, claiming that "Nietzsche was too intelligent and too much of a latecomer in the history of German philosophy, a history both

glorious and disastrous, to build a system in the manner of their misguidedly fondest ambition" (xvii). In this understanding, Nietzsche did not turn against systematic philosophy *in himself* so as much as witness the movement run its course from his somewhat historically removed vantage. Nietzsche was in a radically different position than Wittgenstein, who wrote a first work that in his own words "is quite strictly speaking the presentation of a system" (qtd. in Monk 177). Wittgenstein's system was one that he later dismantles in the *Investigations* – extensively in form, and to a controversial degree in content. We will eventually see Nietzsche ruthlessly attack the *character* of the systematizer and of systematic belief: already a conceivable and non-hypocritical option since he never produced a great systematic work like Kant or Wittgenstein.

Let us prime ourselves with one of the most familiar examples of philosophical systematicity, drawn from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. There is no reason here to argue that this is Nietzsche's specific model of systematic philosophical writing nor the exact sort philosophical system he attacks in *Human*. Indeed we will see that Nietzsche does not engage systems such as Kant's on their own *internal* terms. That said, there is evidence suggesting Nietzsche read the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Judgment* some years before writing *Human*, and he is known to have closely read the *Critique of Practical Reason* some years after; across Nietzsche's texts, Kant is the second most mentioned modern philosopher after Schopenhauer (Hill 20). Here are two particularly system-friendly passages from the *Critique of Pure Reason* that are among the best prototypes for classic systematizing:

Transcendental philosophy is only the idea of a science, for which the critique of pure

reason should trace an outline architectonically, i.e. from principles, thereby

guaranteeing the completeness and reliability of all the parts of which this edifice

consists. It is a system of all principles of pure reason. (54, Introduction, VII)

By an architectonic I understand the art of constructing systems. As systematic unity

is what first raises common knowledge to the dignity of a science, that is, turns a

mere aggregate of knowledge into a system, it is easy to see that architectonic is the

doctrine of what is scientific in our knowledge (652, II, Chapter 3, "The Architectonic

of Pure Reason")

These passages exemplify the usual aspects of philosophical systematicity mentioned earlier:

strivings toward structure, unity, and method. However, as we will soon see, Nietzsche does

not pick a conventionally fair fight with philosophical systems that engages these aspects

head-on.

Nietzsche makes one attack on precisely "philosophical systems" in *Human*; the rest

of his anti-systematic bent needs to be inferred from his aphorisms on metaphysics and

various social and religious "systems" which may not use the term as such. His explicit uses

of "system" are often ordinary, such as "voting-system" [Stimmsystem] (§276, II$_2$), and

"system [System] of all that which humanity has need of for its continued existence" (§186,

II$_1$). Yet when placed behind "philosophical," the word takes on an unusual sense:

31. *In the desert of science*. – To the man of science on his unassuming and laborious

travels, which must often enough be journeys through the desert, there appear those

glittering mirages called 'philosophical systems' [philosophische Systeme]: with

bewitching, deceptive power they show the solution of all enigmas and the freshest

draught of the true water of life to be near at hand; ... (§31, II$_1$)

Nietzsche continues this aphorism by claiming that other sorts of people, beyond just the

scientific man, may eventually reject these mirages of philosophical systems. These

"apparitions," as he calls them, leave a salty taste in the mouth, summoning a "raging thirst"

without bringing us any closer to water. In this desert metaphor the philosophical system,

more than being any particular kind of structural or methodological whole like Kant's, is

rendered as a "solution," a deceptive quenching of the thirst for truth.

Curiously, this aphorism's sense of philosophical solution is closer to the *Tractatus*

than to the quoted passages of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Wittgenstein's preface to the

Tractatus states "the truth of the thoughts communicated here seems to be unassailable and

definitive. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the problems [of philosophy] have in essentials

been finally solved." Though the *Tractatus* is widely regarded as a systematic work – at the

very least, in its structure – the sense of "philosophical system" that irritates Nietzsche in this

aphorism is solutional rather than structural. Thus regardless how the "aphoristic"

arrangements of the *Tractatus* and *Human* compare, it appears that what Nietzsche would

have most disliked about the *Tractatus* is its confidence that it has figured out the enigmas of

philosophy (though to be fair to Wittgenstein, the *Tractatus* shows "how little has been done

when these problems have been solved"). While Nietzsche was familiar with German

idealism and not the *Tractatus*, in turning to his distinctive manner of writing we will see an

anti-systematic *ethos* in Nietzsche that transcends the specifics of the philosophical systems in question.

Nietzsche's chosen form of aphorisms in *Human* cultivates an *ethos* that is fitting for an anti-systematic and anti-metaphysical philosopher. Why should he persuade us if he *systematically* explained the flaws of philosophical systems? Or if he methodically outlined, in the formal manner of metaphysical explanations, what is wrong with metaphysics? There would certainly be a rhetorical conflict, and arguably a philosophical conflict, between what is practiced and what is preached. Nietzsche was in fact a specialist in ancient rhetoric, remarkably expert in the field and adept in its application when compared to most philosophers (and particularly Kant, who has received scant praise as a philosophical stylist). Some years before starting *Human* he produced lecture notes on rhetoric, which have been dated to 1872 or 1874 (Blair 94).On account of his rhetorical study and his palpable eloquence across his works, Nietzsche has invited a number of rhetorical readings (while Paul de Man's is likely the most famous, Paul van Tongeren's is more classically and aphoristically astute). It suffices to say that Nietzsche was familiar with rhetoric's finer, more philological points, and he certainly knew his basics well. To illuminate the claim of his anti-systematic *ethos*, his own explanation of the term is quite fitting:

> The true orator speaks forth from the *ethos* of the persons or things represented by him ... The listener will believe in the *earnestness* of the speaker and the *truth* of the thing advocated only if the speaker and his language are adequately suited to one another: he takes a lively interest in the speaker and believes in him -- that is,

that the speaker himself believes in the thing, and thus is *sincere*. ("Lecture Notes

on Rhetoric" 114)

Simply put, Nietzsche's style in *Human* is necessary for him to be *sincere* in his attack on

philosophical and metaphysical systems. A later aphorism from *Twilight of the Idols*

reiterates that his issue with philosophical systems is not intrinsic to them so much as about

the *character* of the systematiser:

26. I distrust all systematisers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of

integrity.

Instead of attacking systems based on their internal flaws – i.e. on the internal terms of a

work such as the *Critique of Pure Reason* -- we observe that Nietzsche seeks out their

weaknesses in production (through a lack of integrity) and their reception (as illusory water

in the desert). Instead of the several architectonic aspects of systematicity he could have

evoked, here again he seeks the human (all too human) flaws of systematicity. To be fair to

Kant and his fellow systematisers, we should remember that this aphorism – drawn from a

section called "Arrows and Epigrams" – is a classic ad hominem attack, and not even a

particularly ingenious one by Nietzschean standards. It clearly runs contrary to the standard

argumentative practices of modern philosophy, practices that we will eventually see both

Nietzsche and Wittgenstein defy in dramatic but distinctive manner. However, we should

already note this preliminary (rhetorical) success in reframing the error of systematic

thought, in the message and form of his aphorisms, to be one of *character*.

Nietzsche's anti-systematic strategies are particularly evident in his aphorisms

concerning *metaphysical* systems. Though many aphorisms of *Human* touch on moralistic,

religious, and artistic topics that have manifestly little to do with traditional philosophy (or

the main themes of *Investigations*), the most interesting philosophical aphorisms of *Human*

are about metaphysics. In the first and most metaphysical chapter of *Human* entitled "Of

First and Last Things" Nietzsche wonders, in the context of Kant and Schopenhauer:

"Perhaps the *scientific demonstration* of the existence of any kind of metaphysical world is

already so *difficult* that mankind will never again be free of a mistrust of it. And if one has a

mistrust of metaphysics the results are by and large the same as if it had been directly refuted

and one no longer had the *right* to believe in it." (§21, I). In this aphorism, as with the other

anti-systematic attacks we have already seen, Nietzsche operates with the language of

skepticism and *human* mistrust rather than attempting to destroy systems on their own

philosophical or architectonic terms (that is, from within). Etymologically speaking, he turns

metaphysical *truth* from un-concealment (*a-letheia*) of the world to a matter of truth as trust

and verification (*veritas*) of fallible human philosophers. Nietzsche's attack on metaphysics

is so often expressed through human attributes:

> All that has hitherto made metaphysical assumptions *valuable, terrible, delightful* to
>
> [people], all that has begotten these assumptions, is passion, error, and self-deception.
>
> ... When one has disclosed these methods as the foundation of all extant religions and
>
> metaphysical systems, one has refuted them!" (§9, I).

Marion Faber, another one of *Human*'s translators, also detects Nietzsche's allegations of

dishonesty against metaphysical philosophy and his consequent textual strategies against it.

In particular, she relates Nietzsche's anti-systematic form to distrust of metaphysical systems

as represented by Schopenhauer, who Nietzsche turned against in the period encompassing

the first volume of *Human* (208). She states "the unsystematic form of the aphoristic work is perhaps the only one truly able to reflect this anti-systematic ideology of the Nietzsche of 1876. For him, it must have seemed the only honest form of philosophy" (208). The notion of his aphorisms as an "honest form of philosophy" is an apt phrase for our discussion, fitting well with his ethos outlined earlier.

The obvious point should be made that while honest *for Nietzsche,* his form is radically *dishonest* if one holds that philosophy be practiced with classic arguments that avoid fallacious reasoning. It has been noted that Nietzsche's (overall) critique of metaphysics is not conducted with the usual argumentation of traditional critical philosophy, but with "pragmatic and demagogical value-oppositions [such] as weakness and strength, disease and health, herd and 'the happy few,' terms so arbitrarily valorized that it becomes hard to take them seriously" (de Man 119). While the present task concerns his critique of metaphysics with respect to his *writing* more than classic ideals of philosophical argument, we can observe certain quasi-political moves to discredit his opponents in what he terms this "melancholy-valiant" book (Preface §2). Metaphysicians, according to Nietzsche, keep a "knapsack" of embarrassing byproducts of metaphysics "concealed behind their back" (§12, II_1). Our great philosophical showman eagerly tugs this knapsack open without resorting to real critical argument, appearing hopeful that his revelation of the metaphysicians might be "attended by their blushes" (§12, II_1).

Nietzsche's contempt for the *human* error of metaphysics becomes less surprising in light of his preoccupation with psychology that weaves its way throughout the chapters. He states: "That reflection on the human, all too human – or, as the learned expression has it:

psychological observation – is among the expedients by means of which one can ... pluck useful maxims from the thorniest and most disagreeable stretches of one's own life" (§35,I). In the midst of his own grave physical and mental ills, Nietzsche turned to aphorisms as an "honest form" for decrying the psychological beliefs in (and of) metaphysicians and systematisers. One can certainly depict Nietzsche's *human* reframing of metaphysical systems as flagrantly evading, say, a proper anti-architectonic argument. However, defeating Nietzsche's art of textualizing and rhetoricizing his philosophy on its *own* terms – an art that sinks its tendrils deep into his aphoristic form –is a far more formidable challenge.

Though Nietzsche's distaste for philosophical systems is manifest in his writing, we should not go too far and construe this distaste to also include all sorts of philosophical "cakes." Thus far we have moved towards disunity with Nietzsche, but we ought to also assess a curious holistic tendency in how he seeks to be read. In typical discussions of the difficulties of Nietzsche's writing we find claims such as this: "There is not a single respect in which Nietzsche's thought forms a sound system, for it is too aphoristic, fragmentary and contradictory" (Ijselling 104). It is not our cause here to refute this claim; doing so in a satisfying way would likely involve sketching out some kind of system for his thought. However, we should remember that Nietzsche at least *believes,* on certain occasions, that his work is not deeply fragmentary. We will see this directly in *Human* and in the preface to *On The Genealogy of Morals*, where he reflects back on his first book of aphorisms. Nietzsche asks us in a typical translation from *Human*:

Against the shortsighted. – Do you think this work must be fragmentary [Stückwerk]
because I give it to you (and have to give it to you) in fragments [Stücken]? (§128,
II₁)

This aphorism's question seemingly begs to be answered negatively by prompting the reader
to posit a deeper way which the work is not "fragmentary," despite being presented as textual
"fragments." In this statement we should caution ourselves about the terms we use -- and
Nietzsche's terms -- for his writing. The usual translation of "Stückwerk" into "fragmentary"
evokes a brokenness and shatteredness that is not ideal and that Nietzsche himself, as we
shall soon see, does not consider to be characteristic of his thought in *Human* and its
subsequent development. Translating more directly we should consider Stück-werk to be
piece-work, patch-work, a work of pieces/parts: a way of emphasizing that his work, though
made up of components, exists as intended and was not broken into fragments as if fallen
from its higher form and smashed into lowly shards.

Long after writing *Human*, Nietzsche reflects upon this particular book of aphorisms
with a remarkably holistic attitude for a putatively "fragmentary" philosopher. These
reflections should be considered against Derrida's looming warnings over Nietzsche's
umbrella: that he lacks "not even a fragmentary or aphoristic" sort of totality (Derrida 135).
In the preface to *On The Genealogy of Morals* (1887) Nietzsche gives an incredibly
optimistic sketch of how his "ideas on the *origin* of our moral prejudices," first expressed in
the aphorisms of *Human*, underwent a process of cohesion, having "entwined and interlaced"
over the years. He then expresses a belief in unity which is difficult, but not quite

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impossible, to reconcile with the fragmentary Nietzsche that many scholars recognize. Nietzsche proclaims his:

> joyful assurance that they [these thoughts on morals first expressed in *Human*] might have arisen in me from the first not as isolated, capricious, or sporadic things but from a common root, from a *fundamental will* of knowledge, pointing imperiously into the depths, speaking more and more precisely, demanding greater and greater precision. For this alone is fitting for a philosopher. We have no right to *isolated* acts of any kind: we may not make isolated errors or hit upon isolated truths.

Nietzsche's strategy here is to exchange his thoughts' manifestly fragmentary presentation for a deep unity. Though he could propose different forms of unity, of a "common root," such an exchange between surface and depth is essentially his only strategy, lest he contradict himself in the obvious manner as a prolific writer of manifestly "isolated, capricious, or sporadic" aphorisms.

Explicit here in this passage, and implicit in his aphorism asking whether *Human* is fragmentary, is his desire to be understood coherently despite the appearance of his work. These two unity-seeking statements are interesting to ally with the central figure of the book, the free-spirit, who has "truth on his side, or at least the spirit of inquiry after truth" (§225, I). In this alliance we should express caution with the most popular Nietzsche: the fragmentary and the truth-distrusting Nietzsche. Though for many commentators, his aphoristic form, many styles of writing, and enormously influential unpublished essay "On Truth and Lies" advance a multifarious philosophical mosaic – perpetually eschewing unities and monumental truths – Nietzsche (a certain Nietzsche) at least *asks* us piece him back together

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on occasion. In this passage, it appears that Nietzsche wishes to be unified around a highly perspicuous "*fundamental will* for knowledge". While attempting to read this unity in Nietzsche is too vast a topic for this discussion, we can turn to his some of his major interpreters to see how they heeded or ignored Nietzsche's curious and possibly hypocritical call to unity.

While many of his poststructuralist readers embraced the fragmentary Nietzsche, Heidegger's earlier, highly influential interpretation reflects the thrust of conceptual unification espoused in the passage from *On The Genealogy of Morals*. Heidegger indeed bound Nietzsche's philosophy into a limited number of concepts (the eternal recurrence, the will to power, and so on) while suppressing the many formal variations of his writings (such as the aphorism book), ultimately resulting in a single Nietzsche doctrine (Stegmaier 10). Though in works such as *Human* Nietzsche attacks both metaphysics and systematic philosophy, Heidegger renders Nietzsche's overall attempted overcoming of metaphysics *as* systematic and doctrinal. Paradoxically, according to Heidegger, "Nietzsche's doctrine does not overcome metaphysics: it is the uttermost unseeing adoption of the very guiding project of metaphysics" (qtd. in Stegmaier 10). In this manner, Heidegger's interpretation fulfils (yet perverts) Nietzsche's wish for a "common root" to his thought. While evaluating the success of Heidegger's cohesion of Nietzsche is beyond our scope, Heidegger's Nietzsche interpretation certainly raises spectres of Nietzsche's latent systematicity: who are the greater systematisers, the philosophers or their interpreters?

Moving to Nietzsche's major French interpreters who were associated with poststructuralism, we are confronted with a sizable reading list. The list becomes truly vast

when Nietzsche is filtered through the existing body of French Theory, and certain traditions

of literary theory that have become attached to it. Though impossible to synopsize, we can

turn to Deleuze for a somewhat representative French interpretation of Nietzsche's textual-

philosophical interrelations. Given the interpretive challenges that we have already seen

aphorisms pose, and considering the general poststructuralist enthusiasm for pluralism and

hermeneutics, Deleuze's treatment of the aphorism is fairly unsurprising:

> The poem and the aphorism are Nietzsche's two most vivid means of expression but
>
> they have a determinate relation to philophy. Understood formally, an aphorism is
>
> present as a fragment; it is the form of pluralist thought; in its content it claims to
>
> articulate and formulate a *sense*. The sense of a being, an action, a thing – these are
>
> the objects of the aphorism. ... Only the aphorism is capable of articulating sense, the
>
> aphorism is interpretation and the art of interpreting. (*Nietzsche and Philosophy* 31)

In *A Thousand Plateaus* – itself a work deeply concerned with philosophical and

epistemological structures – Deleuze pursues this fragmentary tendency (in himself, and in

Nietzsche). He claims: "Nietzsche's aphorisms shatter the linear unity of knowledge, only to

invoke the cyclical unity of the Eternal return" (6). Though a grandiose statement to be sure,

this sentence embodies the two forces under tension we have already seen in Nietzsche: the

first pushing towards anti-systematic fragmentation, the second pulling towards a deep unity

of his thought.

 Beyond Deleuze's own interpretation of Nietzsche's aphorisms, his thought is readily

applied retroactively. For instance, there is a Deleuzian characterization of Nietzsche's

aphorism books as a form of "nomadic philosophy," a mobile, pluralistic army and a kind of

antithesis to "imperial philosophy" which insists on "first principles, generalizable method, and systematic form" (Shapiro, "Nietzschean Aphorism" 427). We might also make a distinction between Nietzsche's *rhizomatic*, pluralistic *Human* and, for instance, Kant's *arborescent*, systematic *Critique of Pure Reason* (or the *Tractatus*, which is more literally a textual tree of seven branches, organized around its decimal numbering system).

Though we cannot do justice to all of Nietzsche's French interpreters or even Deleuze, these examples do a fair job of representing how Nietzsche's aphorisms have become associated with fragmentary thought and interpretive pluralism. With the hindsight afforded by several decades' distance from the birth of the French Nietzsche and the height of French Theory, it should not be too surprising that Nietzsche's aphoristic *writing* dovetailed with the textualizing and hyper-interpretive forces of this movement. Yet we should recognize that beyond the specifics of a Nietzschean aphorism's *own* cornucopian interpretative possibility, the entire *role* of his aphorisms is readily interpretable and adaptable to large-scale trends in 20th-century intellectual history. While the present concern is the means and ends of the aphorism in *Human*, we should note that the discourse on Nietzsche's overall aphoristic expression is rife with statements where his collective aphorisms are *doing* something philosophical – participating in a gigantic undertaking such as "shattering the linear unity of knowledge".

Summarizing what we have seen of Nietzsche's form-content relations, we should note three major points. Firstly, his Stückwerk form of writing in *Human, All Too Human*, and the *ethos* it cultivates, are consistent with his anti-metaphysical and anti-systematic messages. Nietzsche does not *trust* systematisers, and we as readers should at least trust him

to the extent that he successfully avoids systematic writing. His strategy is largely *external* to the systems: he does not duel with systems such as Kant's and Schopenhauer's from within their frameworks; instead, he elects to frame the human errors of their creators and beholders. Secondly, as an essential and often neglected companion to this anti-systematic point, Nietzsche asks us to stop short of taking the fragmentary reading as far down as it will go. He claims that we must (somehow) avoid "isolated truths." That is to say, while his "raisins" counteract systematic philosophical writing, he still has a taste for some kind of philosophical "cake". Thirdly and finally, the big old scene of Nietzsche interpretation offers ways of both unifying and forcing apart his philosophical pieces. As mentioned in the introduction, this discussion is more concerned with the problems and possibility of interpretation more than persuasive or synoptic interpretations of philosophical texts. Thus we are not in a position to effectively assess whether Nietzsche's pieces *can* be unified. However, we now have reason to believe that, at least in *Human*, his writing *is* essential to his philosophizing.

4.2 Wittgenstein's Art of Reminders

Having presented Nietzsche's anti-systematic alignment of form and content along with his curious desire to still be read coherently, we will look for corresponding alignments in the *Investigations* between its form of remarks and anti-traditional content. With Nietzsche's anti-systematic attacks still in mind, we might be inclined to look for an anti-systematic Wittgenstein. While feasible, we should perhaps avoid the term *systematic* as such: this would require deftly severing the later Wittgenstein from the early Wittgenstein, lest any residual systematicity from the *Tractatus* creep into the *Investigations*. A better

parallel for the anti-systematic Nietzsche in *Human* in terms of form and content would be

the *anti-dogmatic* Wittgenstein in *Investigations*. We will locate him in §§126-128 and take a

close look at this famous sequence of remarks that arguably encapsulates a certain big picture

of philosophy. Badiou, though more interested in the *Tractatus* than the *Investigations*,

would likely take issue with the Wittgensteinian vision that will soon ensue, since it conveys

an anti-philosophical "unraveling of the pretentions of philosophy to constitute itself as a

theory" (emphasis added, 75). It will become readily apparent that Wittgenstein distrusts

precisely what is *theoretical* – new, explanatory, deductive, thetical – about philosophy.

 Termed more respectfully, Wittgenstein's "metaphilosophical" sequence §§126-128

is frequently quoted and interrogated to understand both his general philosophical views and

his specific aims in this work. Yet in our particular pursuit of the possible necessity of his

textual form, this sequence of remarks takes on a new significance:

> 126. Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces
>
> anything.— Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is
>
> hidden, for example, is of no interest to us.
>
> One might also give the name "philosophy" to what is possible *before* all new
>
> discoveries and inventions.
>
> 127. The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular
>
> purpose. [Die Arbiet des Philosophen ist ein Zusammentragen von Erinnerungen zu
>
> einem bestimmeten Zweck.]
>
> 128. If one tried to advance theses in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate
>
> them, because everyone would agree to them.

Let us begin with §127, which will be our main focus point for examining the form of *Investigations*. Eventually we will examine how "assembling reminders" coincides with assembling *remarks*. Yet firstly we can notice the apparent radicalism of the statement in *itself*. When §127 is isolated from the text and considered against the historical backdrop of philosophy –modern, ancient, continental, or otherwise – both words of "assembling reminders" appear strikingly odd choices. Surely the work of a typical philosopher is, *prima facie*, along the lines of "discovering theories" or "finding explanations". However, considered with its surrounding remarks §126 and §128, and the later Wittgenstein's general anti-theoretical bent, the pairing becomes quite intelligible. Given that Wittgenstein's true philosopher could not advance things like theories, explanations, and theses (§109, §126, and §128), something more ordinary and perhaps everyday is required: "reminder" is one of the *least* philosophical terms, in a traditional sense, that could stand in for a product of philosophical inquiry.

 Since Wittgenstein believes philosophy to be "what is possible *before* all new discoveries and inventions" (§126), it is indeed fitting he used "assembling" [Zusammentragen] in place of a word such as *creating* that invokes newness. Zusammentragen does not necessarily involve new things; similar terms – collating, compiling, collecting, amassing, gathering, rounding up, and bringing together – do not conjure something *new* like inventing, innovating, discovering, creating, and conceiving. Appropriately, "reminders" [Erinnerungen] are revisitings of the past (a more typical, out-of-context translation would be "memories"). A philosopher, conventionally conceived, surely lives in the present of his or her ideas more so than a past of already-made things; surely the

ideal product of philosophical inquiry is something *new*. Yet both Zusammentragen and Erinnerungen, in their own ways, avoid what is new and what is theoretical. Thus in this statement, he counteracts a certain traditional glory that many philosophers are held to possess: the greatness of new ideas. His apparently humbly language here, as we will see elsewhere, is proper to his anti-dogmatism: what he *says* about philosophy is largely consistent with how he *shows* it in *Investigations*.

In a relatively obscure remark from a 1930 manuscript, Wittgenstein shares a similar task to §127:

"I am so to say collecting [sammle] meaningful sentences about tooth-ache. This is

the characteristic procedure of a grammatical investigation." (qtd. in Pichler 222)

Again we notice Wittgenstein in a process of bringing together (assembling, collecting) certain important pieces (reminders, meaningful sentences). Yet in the manuscript he goes so far as to call this the "characteristic procedure" of a grammatical investigation: an intriguing commentary on his method. And it is *his* method: this remark is an important supplement to §§126-128, because instead of speaking about "philosophy" and "the philosopher" in a general way, it is clear here that Wittgenstein himself is doing the collecting. Thus his form of writing, as an art of philosophical gathering, becomes essential to his grammatical investigation.

The message of §§126-128 aligns with the overall literary tone of the remarks in the *Investigations*. If we are inclined to label Wittgenstein's remarks as aphorisms, then having witnessed his process of "collecting meaningful sentences" and "assembling reminders" they are certainly unusual ones. That he believes he is gathering seemingly *pre-existing,* somehow

ordinary pieces is remarkable in the face of his genre of aphoristic writing. Since aphorists are generally thought to produce brief flashes of insight – such as Nietzsche with his "brilliance of sudden illuminations" (Heller xvii) – Wittgenstein's humble gathering becomes all the more distinctive. Though obviously an artful and intelligent writer, he is not as witty as Nietzsche, nor as witty as the many aphorists who could routinely produce brilliant one-liners. Yet given the limits to philosophy he seeks to enforce, he should *avoid* being witty, in the sense that wit is a marker of inventive prowess and newness: for Wittgenstein, philosophy is "what is possible *before* all new discoveries and inventions" (§126).

Just as Nietzsche would be hypocritical to systematically disseminate his anti-systematic, anti-metaphysical message, Wittgenstein's philosophical manner would chafe against his claims about the possibility of philosophy were he give his remarks the lustrous sheen of wit. While brilliant in their perspicuousness, Wittgenstein's remarks in the *Investigations* generally avoid the same heights of enviable, quotable wit that some of the greatest aphorists achieve. This is a good thing as far as his anti-dogmatism is concerned, since in comparison to a writer like Nietzsche, he largely the avoids bold, too-quotable maxims that are vessels for pithy theses and explanations (Nietzsche's most famous utterance – "God is dead" – is something of a philosophical thesis, but certainly not one that in Wittgenstein's words "everyone would agree to").

Beyond the character of his remarks, their plurality and (partial) arrangement is also entirely fitting for the metaphilosophy of §§126-128. Wittgenstein's writing, given §126, should have the form of putting "everything before us" – a manner of *exhibition* – instead of explanation or deduction. Indeed it must "do away with all explanation" (§109) . We will see

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that it does have (something close to) this form. Taking this remark to the extreme, we might

ask if Wittgenstein precludes himself explaining or deducing anything in the *Investigations* at

all. If he wants to eschew explanations his writing should, in a certain philosophical sense,

avoid the *continuity* of storytelling. Throughout the *Investigations*, he of course tells very

small "stories" of certain dialogues, games, and thought processes. These are really more like

philosophical scenes, since they are so short and in themselves lacking the criteria to be

stories (Wittgenstein begins his first remark with a certain Augustinian "picture of the

essence of human language" -- we cannot do justice here to the special Wittgensteinian term

"picture", but we can note its static, discontinuous character).

    Wittgenstein's scenes when taken together constitute various philosophical projects

(according to different interpretations, such as the therapeutic one). Yet taken together these

scenes are surely not a plot, for they are broken apart far too easily: this is by design.

Wittgenstein claims he demonstrates "a method, by examples; and the series of examples can

be broken off" (§133). We might say that a conventional story, and a conventional

explanation, are little good if they are so easily broken off: how do we get from here (now,

the premises) to there (then, the explanatory conclusion)? Generally speaking a successful

explanation or story has continuities that fundamentally *prevent* it from being "broken off"

since both these forms are arguably constituted by certain logical, causal, and temporal

linkages. Furthermore, Wittgenstein's strategy does not react to a single, perhaps central,

conflict as in a conventional plot: in his approach he believes that "problems are solved

(difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem" (§133). His metaphilosophical remarks, and

the outlining of his method of grammatical examples that can be *broken off,* are an essential

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site of correspondence between his message and aphoristic medium. Eschewing conventional explanations via the peculiar structures of his remarks, Wittgenstein displays a remarkable consistency between his pronouncements about what philosophy should be and the instance of his practice.

This discussion's own views on the alignment between Wittgenstein's writing and his philosophy in the *Investigations* can be supplemented with a piece by Stanley Cavell, who makes what is likely the boldest argument that Wittgenstein's writing is essential to his philosophizing in his essay "The *Investigations'* Everyday Aesthetic of Itself". He does this through what he terms "the aphoristic": a form of "ordinary words" that satisfies the conditions of "completeness, pleasure, and the sense of breaking something off (the chief marks of perspicuous representation) – words that epitomize, separate a thought, with finish and permanence, from the general range of experience" (28). Then, essentially aligning this form of expression with the grammatical "content" of the *Investigations*, he claims the aphoristic is "a mode of reflecting the clarity brought by grammatical methods, one that *in itself, as itself, exhibits this clarity*, together with a satisfaction or acknowledgment of the obscurity from which clarity comes" (emphasis added, 29). He adds that in *Investigations* this aphoristic form, rather than inhabiting free-standing aphorisms, is largely targeted at "reflecting details of its methodicalness, its searching out criteria, articulating grammar, spelling out fantasies, calling attention to a fixated pictured, [and] presenting intermediate cases" (29).

According to Cavell, the aphoristic *in itself* and *as itself* reflects the *Investigations'* grammatical methods. Though what he calls aphoristic has a specialized, Wittgensteinian

meaning, it suffices to say that it amply describes much of Wittgenstein's literary form in *Investigations*. We might also say that Nietzsche's own mode of the aphoristic, his particular literary form, *in itself* and *as itself* reflects *Human*'s anti-systematic and anti-metaphysical project. Though we have seen several aspects of their remarks diverge, they share an important philosophical achievement in the aphoristic "sense of breaking something off." They gainfully employ their forms against their respective systematic and dogmatic foes, carefully housing their thought in "broken off" pieces so that systematic and dogmatic thought cannot *fit* into their individual structures, nor into the overall structures of their books.

4.3 The Anti-Argumentation of Antiphilosophy

Beyond the structural form of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein's (philosophically worthy) antiphilosophy, one of their shared contrarian dimensions is argumentative. They are often charged with not making classic philosophical *arguments*. If they are indeed "anti-philosophers" as Badiou claims, then this is a seemingly natural charge, especially having already seen their contempt for standard conceptions of philosophy and its practice. Yet this is a fascinating accusation in our context, since we will see that *Philosophical Investigations* and *Human, All Too Human* effectively eschew argument in two opposite yet complementary ways. The books constitute two radically different aberrations from philosophical "best practice." If we accept a basic division between claims and evidence, it can be said that the argumentative structure of a typical remark is evidence-without-claim in the *Investigations*, and claim-without-evidence in *Human*. Or put into different but sufficiently parallel terms,

Wittgenstein provides proofs without theses, and Nietzsche theses without proofs. These terms of claims, evidence, theses, and proofs have difficult philosophical histories that cannot be done full justice here, but they can be employed at face value to evoke a striking (though generalized) difference in the way Nietzsche and Wittgenstein argue their cases -- if they can be said to argue in a normative philosophical sense at all.

This discussion made earlier allegations that Wittgenstein masterfully withholds the "completions" of his remarks – but this charge does not even begin to cover all of his conceivable omissions from standard philosophical practice. The *Investigations*, in relative and perhaps absolute terms, scarcely *tells* us what it is doing *while* it is doing it. According to one estimate, the indicative mood is used by less than half of the sentences from Part I (Fischer and Ammereller xii). Indeed the *Investigations* "contains remarkably few sentences grammatically suited to express a claim of any kind, premise or conclusion" (Fischer and Ammereller xii). Wittgenstein fails to *signpost* the workings of his thought. Yet the work contains plentiful grammatical examples and case-by-case analyses of the use and misuse of words. There is no lack of *evidence* – however, the work's novice and even experienced readers are inclined to ask: what is this evidence for? Badiou amusingly describes this phenomenon, in less kind terms, as he characterizes the later Wittgenstein's style:

> Between the questions that nobody would dream of raising, the paradoxical and promptly contradicted answers, the transformation of each answer into a question and vice-versa, the "concrete" examples that are especially abstract, [and] the rhetoric of agitated uncertainty: in short, the hystericization of the whole discourse, pushing

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every supposed reader to the point of vertigo ... the text in the end imposes less a

position than a *deposition*. (emphasis added 171)

On the other hand, Nietzsche is rarely shy to take a *position* – to loudly voice his claims. The slew of evidence and scarce claims in the *Investigations* contrasts with *Human*, where we can often find a claim in the first (and sometimes only) sentence of Nietzsche's numbered aphorisms. Unlike Wittgenstein, Nietzsche titles his remarks. We can even get the gist a potential claim from the title alone: in reading the title "*Science furthers ability, not knowledge*" (§256, I) we can almost be certain Nietzsche will make a claim along these lines, and indeed he does. When the titles are noun phrases, as they most often are, the claim generally acts upon these phrases.

Beyond the structural fit of the claim into the aphorism, Nietzsche's tendency to make claims is also evident in a more literary-rhetorical register. His writing is "irreducibly hyperbolic" in general, and the hyperbolic style is particularly apt for aphorisms since it is startling and draws attention (Nehamas 22, 23). In *Human*, he is inclined to use words such as: "*Every* girl ... charms *alone* ... *entire* life ... has *precisely* ..." (emphasis added §404, I). In his sweeping language, Nietzsche reveals his indebtedness to the French style of *maximes:* a hesitant, unassertive maxim that is shy to generalize is not much of a maxim at all. This style of confidence is far bolder than Wittgenstein's fixation with particularity and specificity. Summing up all of this argumentative contrast, we most typically see Nietzsche asserting grand claims with a scarcity of evidence – and *zero* evidence is his shortest aphorisms – while Wittgenstein provides heaps of questions and examples with few explicit claims in sight.

With this distinction in argumentation made here, a Nietzschean Wittgenstein – if we can temporarily allow this absurd term –might conceivably be a full-blown conventional philosopher. He would boldly and obviously make a grand claim, as Nietzsche often does immediately in his aphorisms, yet would grow quieter as he lays out his grammatical remarks, his "reminders for a particular purpose," his "meaningful sentences about a tooth-ache". He would *say* what he intends to do philosophically (as the hyperbolic Nietzsche is never shy to do) and then *show* us how (with Wittgenstein's perspicuous grammatical examples). Though truly developing this strange Nietzsche-Wittgenstein hybrid would undoubtedly be fraught with problems, this fiction elucidates that their argumentative "deficiencies" are on opposite end the spectrum.

Ultimately, this complementary quality of their argumentative aberrations appears a valuable lesson when set against the ancient question of what is *proper* philosophical writing. If talented imitators of their philosophical style from *Human* and the *Investigations* submitted articles to mainstream journals, they would be likely rejected on profoundly different grounds. When it comes to the communal question of how philosophy ought to be presented, this contrast in aphoristic argumentation suggests we discard the model of having an ideal standard with various rungs below it. Pitting Wittgenstein contra Nietzsche, the argumentation of philosophy reveals something more like a left-to-right political spectrum, with perhaps a hyper-evidence "left" and a hyper-assertion "right". Thinking back to Badiou's palpable irritation with Wittgenstein's methodological extremism, and the regular demands that Nietzsche prove his thought, it is safe advice to write closer to the centre of the rather vast continuum between them. Ultimately, however, we see why Wittgenstein and

Nietzsche, each in his own aphoristic manner, must stick to his guns. If Wittgenstein believes that philosophy "simply puts everything before us", and Nietzsche cannot give conventional anti-systematic evidence lest he become entrapped in systematic philosophy, then each aphorist is ultimately pursuing the proper means to his destructive ends. In the *Investigations*, the aphoristic form allows Wittgenstein to assemble his ordinary reminders, his grammatical lessons-by-example, without broaching the explanatory, theoretical *newness* of philosophy which he holds in contempt. In *Human,* Nietzsche's aphorisms render metaphysical and systematic philosophy as follies of human psyche, character, and belief, all while being deliberately incommensurate in form and style with systematic philosophizing. While these aphorists cheat classic argumentation to achieve these ends, they do what they *must* do: for otherwise, their eager readers and students will accuse them of not practicing what they preach.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Running through our discussion has been a theme of philosophical authenticity, though it has not been explicitly identified previously as such. Yet before arriving at this exactly, something should be spelled out about our investigation, which considers two philosophers of rather different backgrounds and communities. Regardless of the specifics of tradition and allegiance, it is intuitive and uncontroversial to ask that Wittgenstein and Nietzsche be held accountable: they must *practice what they preach.* This request, in a way, is merely a norm of communal discourse to which most will agree. Though we observe the aphoristic form essentially *lessening* their accountability to helping readers understand their remarks and to recover their intentionality, their individual forms of writing passed various tests of being coherent with their thought.

However, "coherent" is an understatement: we should really say their writing is *authentic* to their thought. In the *Investigations* and *Human*, despite radically deviating from conventional philosophical argumentative and stylistic norms, our aphorists largely achieve this unity between espousal and application. Yet they have no absolute success as antiphilosophers: their destructive achievements must be measured according to the specific *rules* to which we hold them. These rules might conceivably exclude classically fallacious reasoning (i.e. the ad hominem Nietzsche) and failing to signpost (Wittgenstein's refusal to *say* what he is doing *while* he is doing it). These are "deviant" practices: an objector who holds traditional argumentation to be essential to philosophy will therein discover a strategy for vaporizing *Human, All Too Human* and *Philosophical Investigations* into wisps of

sophistical smoke. Imposing a specific set of philosophical standards of discourse upon these texts can readily *preclude* them from being "properly" philosophical.

Yet simultaneously, according to the present view, this same objector will be rebuffed by the formidable consistency of their writing with their thought. The far more challenging attack on these texts is that one catches Nietzsche red-handed in the act of philosophical systematizing and apprehends Wittgenstein resolutely advancing a philosophical theory. This loftier strategy is one that, instead of branding Nietzsche and Wittgenstein as deviants from the "ideal" practice of philosophy, would find their views radically *inauthentic* with their methods. We have seen possible points of entry into such a campaign. However, even the detractors of these aphoristic philosophers should acknowledge that regardless of these aphorists' purposes, they seemingly exhibit the virtuosity of form harmonized to content. In our analysis of the *authenticity* of their methods, measured with respect to their specific aims, we discover a way suppressing the question of divergent traditions. Instead of viewing either Nietzsche or Wittgenstein as the *true* deviant from a fixed reference point – such as the typically-analytic philosophy departments or the continentally-savvy literature departments of North American universities – we ought to evaluate and appreciate their considerable *internal* coherence.

At the same time, though, our discussion frames them together through their aphoristic philosophical, literary, and rhetorical form. Aphoristic expression almost predates Western philosophy itself – and thus potentially predates questions of philosophy's ideal practice. Indeed Nietzsche, ever the philosophical historian, knew well the ancient age of aphoristic thought. In a sketch he made for his unpublished book on Pre-Socratic philosophy,

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he places a "sporadic-aphoristic" phase of philosophy *before* a chronological list of philosophers running from Thales through Heraclitus to the Pythagoreans and Socrates (*Early Notebooks* 95). It is fitting that both of our "antiphilosophers" returned to this form since the aphorism seemingly predates philosophical *propriety* – and perhaps with it, the often-oppressive disciplinarily of modern and contemporary philosophy and its multi-departmental guises.

Practicing what they preach: what could be more proper to a philosopher, even an antiphilosopher? The symbiotic affinity of form with content, style with substance – this mirroring that we are wont to seek in philosophical, literary, and rhetorical texts – survives even Badiou's drastic severing of philosophy and antiphilosophy. The sophist, just as well as the dialectician, knows to align means with ends. Even the most critical or destructive readings of these texts, which might fairly attack their views on the ends of philosophy, should acknowledge their successes in such an alignment. Given the valorization just bestowed on the alignment of writing with thought and form with content, it is perhaps unsurprising to arrive back at the beginning of our discussion: the question of "philosophy in pieces", of Stückwerk philosophy. While we have seen instances of "fragmentary" thought in their writings, by and large they achieve a *unity* of their respective aphoristic forms with their chosen anti-philosophical projects -- and that, as we have seen, is *saying* something. Faced with the spectre of perhaps the original antiphilosopher, the ancient aphorist Heraclitus whose fragmented thought still exists only to the extent that other ancients quoted it, Nietzsche and Wittgenstein are in rather fine and holistic form today.

Ultimately, in the most literary register of style, we have seen Wittgenstein's remarks clash against Nietzsche's aphorisms: the philosophical indispensability of their form has much greater affinity. Yet in discussions of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, the greatest rift of all is the stylistic chasm between object-text and interpretive-text. While the present approach falls not too far from the centre of stylistic normativity, it is *profoundly* removed from the two works under consideration. It is true that this stylistic chasm could have been widened a bit: In *Wittgenstein's Antiphilosophy,* Badiou's reading of the *Tractatus* has all the stylistic contrast of a Heideggerian reading of a car repair manual; some of Nietzsche's famed readers rival or exceed his stylistic decadence in their own writings. Yet it must be remembered that Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's readers, and the present approach, all have something of a common, non-fragmentary model of writing. It should be suggested that every perspective on *Human* and the *Investigations* in the guise of an essay, thesis, scholarly book, or article, might begin "misreading" these works the instant it applies its own interpretive glue to their Stückwerk remarks with the goal of something approximating an essayistic study. These are "misreadings" -- largely excellent readings -- in the most affirmative and least pejorative sense. The chosen glues for our discussion, the catalysts of our misreading, have been roughly historical for Nietzsche, and roughly pedagogical for Wittgenstein. Yet if our conclusions are correct on the immense importance of their aphoristic *writing*, any such quasi-essayistic readings from scholars or this discussion must be *Hineininterpretierung,* for they *interpret into* the works unities that were deliberately and resolutely left out. To Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's omissions we ascribe a measure of philosophical and artistic success, and in doing so, give some peace to their own doubts about their methods.

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Lastly. In the remark where Wittgenstein introduces the possibility of his examples being "broken off" – in a way, the possibility of his Stückwerk method – we might extract a final piece of classically aphoristic wisdom. Aphorisms, after all, are so often held to be particularly wise. Though neither Nietzsche nor Wittgenstein appeared to heed this pacifying wisdom in their overall careers, the wisdom of halting, stopping, and desisting, its voice and message are rather fitting for the practice of aphoristic philosophy and how we now might apprehend it. As a largely discontinuous expression of philosophy housed in small pieces, this ancient form offers many natural opportunities to *cease* writing and reading. We have seen Nietzsche and Wittgenstein *withhold* from us, but that is their art. They stop writing, and we too can stop reading. Aphoristic philosophy: for both philosopher and interpreter, both writer and reader, its peculiar form gives evident breaks, obvious endpoints, and natural stops – blank spaces in text and thought that evoke the sense of an ending and the peace that may follow. Aphoristic philosophy, being a Stückwerk form, must halt again and again. It *stops*. Or at least offers this opportunity. Wittgenstein aphorizes:

> The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to.---The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question. (§133)

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