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Nietzsche and Novalis on Language as Trope

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Abstract

For M.A. Thesis: "Nietzsche and Novalis on Language as Trope"

A critical comparison of the theories of language of Friedrich Nietzsche and the Early German Romantic Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg) based on their models of language as trope. Six forms of trope are used to show how language functions for each thinker and to provide a precise framework for comparison. It is found that both present similar notions of language as tropic in nature, that is to say as fundamentally creative and subjective, but that while for Novalis this underlies the possibility of genuine knowledge and communication, for Nietzsche it undermines these. Novalis' acceptance of trope in language allows him to present a model of the human subject in communion with other human beings, nature, and the divine, while Nietzsche's rejection of the validity of trope results in his essentially negative and isolating philosophy of the subject.

Anna Ezekiel, Ottawa, Canada, 2006

Contents

Introduction

This thesis is situated in the context of a debate over the relationship of Nietzsche's thought to Romanticism, in particular to Early German Romanticism. Nietzsche's earliest works, including *The Birth of Tragedy*, are considered by most commentators and by Nietzsche himself to be Romantic. However, Nietzsche later claimed to have overcome his early Romanticism,[1] and opinion is divided as to whether his later texts really do so successfully, or whether he continues to share affinities with the Romantic movement throughout his life. Nietzsche's many unfavourable comments regarding Romanticism are largely directed, at least explicitly, at Wagner, Schopenhauer, and Rousseau, leaving the question open as to whether his negative opinion of Romanticism in general is founded upon a conflation of other forms of Romanticism (such as Early German Romanticism) with the Romanticism of these three figures.

Among those who claim that Nietzsche is a Romantic and, in particular, a Romantic of the same ilk as the Early German Romantics, are Karl Jaspers,[2] Ernst Behler,[3] Paul de Man,[4] Andrew Bowie,[5] Azade Seyhan[6] and Adrian del Caro.[7] On the other side of the debate are Walter Kaufmann[8] and Judith Norman,[9] who suggest that any

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Gay Science* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974) preface, s.1 (hereafter 'GS').
[2] Karl Jaspers: *Nietzsche: Introduction to an Understanding of His Philosophical Activity* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965)
[3] Behler: "Nietzsche's Challenge to Romantic Humanism" in *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, vol. 5, 1978; "On Truth and Lie in an Aesthetic Sense" in Clark: *Revenge of the Aesthetic: The Place of Literature in Theory Today* (Berkeley, C.A.: University of California Press, 2000)
[4] Paul de Man: "Nietzsche's Theory of Rhetoric" in *Symposium*, 28:1, 1974.
[5] Andrew Bowie: *From Romanticism to Critical Theory: The Philosophy of German Literary Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
[6] Azade Seyhan: *Representation and its Discontents: The Critical Legacy of German Romanticism* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992).
[7] Adrian del Caro: *Nietzsche Contra Nietzsche: Creativity and the Anti-Romantic* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989)
[8] Walter Kaufmann: *From Shakespeare to Existentialism: Studies in Poetry, Religion and Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959); *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, N.J.:

similarities are superficial and misleading. While this thesis does not provide an answer to the question of whether or not Nietzsche was a Romantic, it does attempt to contribute to this debate insofar as it closely examines affinities between the theories of language of Nietzsche and the Early German Romantic, Novalis. In explaining clearly and in detail some of the parallels and oppositions between these theories, we hope to provide part of a basis for a more nuanced appreciation of the relationship between Nietzsche and Romanticism.

This thesis is, in part, a response to Judith Norman's article "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism", in which she argues that the similarities between the thought of Nietzsche and of the Early German Romantics are only superficial. She claims that an underlying preoccupation with truth and God is present in the writings of the Romantics but not in those of Nietzsche, and that this entails that their philosophies are totally opposed to one another. We agree that the representation of a spiritual reality or the divine is a central concern of the Romantics, and that this can certainly be argued to form a major difference with Nietzsche's thought. However, it strikes us that rather than demonstrating that all similarities between the thinkers are meaningless, this opposition might form a rich source of insights into the reasons why these systems of thought, which initially contained so many similarities, developed in the directions they did. Furthermore, it occurs to us that such insights might provide a new angle from which to assess the relative merits of these systems.

Of the Romantics, we chose to focus on the writings of Novalis, largely because of the striking nature of the similarities of his thought with that of Nietzsche. Parallels

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Princeton University Press, 1974).

[9] Judith Norman: "Nietzsche and German Romanticism" in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 63:3, 2002.

exist in, among other places, their critiques of epistemology and their claim that knowledge needs to be supplemented with art, their emphasis on creativity and play, their conception of the poet, their models of language, their notion of the human as fundamentally embodied and part of nature, their idea of nature as interconnected and in flux, their denial of traditional Christian ideas regarding the sinfulness of the flesh and particularly of sexual urges, and the fragmentation of the subject entailed by their philosophies. We restrict our study to an investigation of the theories of language of these two philosophers, since we perceive these as central to their thought and as relatively straightforward and uncontroversial areas upon which to base a comparison.

We use a notion of language as trope in order to provide a model of the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis that is capable of identifying detailed areas of convergence in their conceptions of how language functions. The use of six forms of trope enables us to examine several areas within these theories of language in which parallels or oppositions exist. In particular, this model proves useful in drawing out a difference that we believe is more important than, and in fact underlies, the difference pointed out by Norman in Nietzsche's and Novalis' attitudes towards truth. This difference is the positive reaction of Novalis, and the negative reaction of Nietzsche, to the discovery that language functions by trope; that is to say to the discovery that language is a creative and subjective enterprise. Our emphasis on the tropic nature of language also highlights some internal inconsistencies regarding Nietzsche's application of his perspectivism to the subject, or between his tropic, expressive notion of language and his attempts to present language as a surface in which truth and meaning are created through the interrelationships of words.

Immediately following this introduction is a literature review, in which we give a brief account of several of the most important contributions to the discussion of the relationship of Nietzsche's philosophy to that of Novalis or of the Early German Romantics in general. Of these, only the works of Seyhan and del Caro deal explicitly with the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis, and del Caro's *Nietzsche Contra Nietzsche* is of particular interest to our study. Before investigating the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis themselves, we also provide, in chapter 3, an account of language as trope, suggesting how it might make sense to claim that language as a whole can be tropic, given our usual understanding of trope as dependent on a pre-existing literal sense to language. In this chapter, we define six tropes (metonymy, synecdoche, metaphor, analogy, allegory and irony) which will be of use to us in the subsequent discussion, and describe how each of these could be seen to characterize language in general. In chapter 4, we suggest an interpretation of Nietzsche's writings in which we identify and explain the presence of all six of these tropes in his theory of language. In particular, the discussion of allegory proves interesting, as it illuminates internal contradictions within Nietzsche's philosophy. We also discover that Nietzsche has difficulties with the self-referential paradox, based on his inability to accept the validity of language as trope. In chapter 5, we apply our definitions of the six forms of trope to Novalis' theory of language, discovering that all except metaphor can be used to help explain how Novalis perceives language as functioning.

Our critical comparison of the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis takes place in chapter 6. We argue that all the tropes used in our account, except metaphor, occur in the theories of language of both Nietzsche and Novalis, although sometimes

in different forms. The differences in how these tropes function within their theories of language, as well as their radically divergent reactions to their discovery of trope in language, indicate a major difference of temperament in the philosophies of the two thinkers. While Novalis bases the possibility of genuine communication and knowledge on trope, for Nietzsche trope undermines these capacities of language. We suggest that Novalis' philosophy is nihilistic by Nietzsche's account, insofar as it attributes value to human existence based on a hidden divine or spiritual nature to the universe, which the human being is capable of drawing out through a creative, or poetic, use of language. However, it is a coherent position, coping with the self-referential paradox by accepting the possibility of genuine knowledge and communication through trope and, furthermore, is an extremely positive and optimistic philosophy. For Novalis, the human being is capable of self-affirmation through creativity and communion with others, with nature, and with God. This affirmation takes the form of a perpetual rethinking of language, through which human imagination and creativity can represent the universe in such a way as to bestow ever-increasing spiritual significance upon it. Meanwhile Nietzsche, whose goal it is to provide an affirmative philosophy in order to counteract nihilism, presents a model of the human being as isolated, incapable of knowledge, and trapped by her own cognitive systems. The tropic nature of language renders it inadequate to traditional ideals of truth, while its social origins mean that it is a poor tool for affirming the individual or for liberating the subject from the imposition of false and stifling conceptual categories. Nietzsche's response to this catch-22 is to advocate a constant re-evaluation of temporarily accepted tactics for communicating and for interacting with the world. However, this strategy is fundamentally negative in nature,

since in each stage the human being remains falsely represented, cut off from all others, and stifled by her linguistic categories. These weaknesses are in addition to problems with the self-referential paradox and internal contradictions resulting from his failure to consistently apply his perspectivism to the human subject, both of which are in turn caused by his unwillingness to accept the validity of trope in language. Our ultimate conclusion is that, despite being subject to some of Nietzsche's criticisms of Romanticism, Novalis presents a more positive and more successful theory of language than does Nietzsche.

A Note on References

In order to facilitate easy tracking of citations, I have referenced Novalis' essays collected by Margaret Stoljar by giving the essay title, rather than the year of publication and an assigned number. For example: 'Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.7'; *not* 'Hardenberg (1997:3) *op. cit.*, s.7'. I have referenced Nietzsche's works with an abbreviation for the title, instead of the year and an assigned number, for those cases where more than one work was published in the same year. For example: 'Nietzsche GM essay 1, s.13'; *not* 'Nietzsche (1989:1) *op. cit.*, essay 1, s.13'. The following abbreviations have been used for Nietzsche's works:

A	The Anti-Christ
BGE	Beyond Good and Evil
CW	The Case of Wagner
EH	Ecce Homo
HH	Human, All Too Human
GM	On the Genealogy of Morality
GS	The Gay Science
NB	Notebook 19, Unpublished Writings from the Period of the Unfashionable Observations
NCW	Nietzsche Contra Wagner
P	The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge
PTG	Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks
RL	Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language
TI	The Twilight of the Idols
TL	On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense
WP	The Will to Power

Review of Existing Literature

In this chapter, we present an overview of some existing work that discusses similarities between the thought of Nietzsche and Novalis, or of Nietzsche and the Early German Romantics in general. In this context, we will be looking at texts by Kaufmann, Norman, Jaspers, del Caro, Seyhan, de Man and Ernst Behler. We will pay particular attention to those accounts which deal specifically with the theories of language of Nietzsche and the Early German Romantics, as well as to Norman's article, which can be seen to form an interlocutor for the present study.

In "Nietzsche's Challenge to Romantic Humanism", Ernst Behler suggests that Nietzsche's negative view of Romanticism is based largely on his association of the movement with an obsession with the past and a break with reason and the ideals of the Enlightenment. Behler claims that Nietzsche perceives the artistic ideals promoted by the Romantics as founded on weakness and lack, aiming to realize either calm and peace or intoxication, and in either case an escape from the present time and the world of everyday human experience. In opposition, Nietzsche places the Dionysian artistic ideal, which he believes stems from overabundance and the affirmation of life in all its aspects. Behler claims, however, that Nietzsche's 'Dionysian classicism', while ostensibly a negation of the Romantic, only masks Nietzsche's affinity with the very characteristics he identifies as belonging to Romanticism. Behler suggests that many of the internal contradictions found within Nietzsche's writings are the result of his claim to have overcome the Romanticism

which remains at the root of his thinking, and that this paradoxical element is a further manifestation of Nietzsche's Romantic side.[1]

The notion that Nietzsche's self-proclaimed attempt to overcome his Romantic tendencies results in a position which actually incorporates Romanticism is echoed in the accounts of other writers. For example, Peter Heller claims that in his middle period, in reaction to his early Dionysian Romantic phase, Nietzsche advocates an asceticism which understands everything to be illusion, before, in his later works, overcompensating for his own ill-health by celebrating the full immanence of humanity. According to Heller, Nietzsche's dialectical method means that each of his phases assimilates and includes, as well as supercedes, the last, while pointing to its own overcoming, with the result that Nietzche's thinking always includes Romantic pessimism, despite seeking to move beyond it.[2] A similar interpretation is evident in Del Caro's treatment of the subject, which will be explored below.

Karl Jaspers is another commentator who appears to find similarities in the work of Nietzsche and the Romantics, and describes Nietzsche's philosophy in terms strongly reminiscent of Early German Romanticism. He suggests that Nietzsche advocates a *via negativa* as a possible approach to truth, and that Nietzsche does not so much argue rationally for his position as attempt to communicate with his readers through a 'sudden illumination', where readers must retrace his thought processes to arrive at his conclusions for themselves.[3] Jaspers also claims that Nietzsche describes all physical existence, as well as images and concepts, as signs, meaning that Nietzsche perceives the whole world as a kind of speech. This speech, which constitutes phenomenal

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[1] Behler: (1978) *op. cit.*, pp.51-52.
[2] Peter Heller: *Studies on Nietzsche* (Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1980).
[3] Jaspers: *op. cit.*, p.176.

reality, communicates the inner essence of things; thus Jaspers claims that Nietzsche "hears the language of being through nature".[4]

While these claims seem to echo the thought of Novalis, they need serious substantiation before they can be applied without qualification to Nietzsche. For instance, Jaspers' claim that, for Nietzsche, truth cannot be understood directly but that "Only by speaking negatively can one transcend to it",[5] while close to the Romantic notion of irony, ignores Nietzsche's insistence that no transcendental truth or reality exists. In addition to arguing against the existence of any kind of transcendental realm behind the realm of appearances, or a 'true' world, Nietzsche also denies the possibility of real communication between individuals. Unlike the Romantics, who have a notion of genuine communication founded on the fundamental unity and the analogous construction of all phenomena, for Nietzsche language always simplifies, omits, and vulgarizes what it describes and, as a result, true communication is not possible - even by 'sympathetic vibration'. In the course of this thesis, it will emerge that the above notions, which Jaspers attributes to Nietzsche, actually characterize the thought of Novalis and are missing from Nietzsche's philosophy. In fact, we will claim that a large part of the difference between the two theories of language under discussion is their opposed beliefs regarding the possibility of authentic communication, whether between human beings, or between humans and the world in which they live.

An important opponent of the association of Nietzsche with Romanticism is Walter Kaufmann, who reacts strongly to Jaspers' portrayal of Nietzsche, claiming that "Jaspers has romanticized Nietzsche".[6] While this claim may be justified, Kaufmann's own claims that Nietzsche is *not* a Romantic are also subject to suspicion. As Norman

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[4] *Ibid.*, p.372.

points out, Kaufmann bases his denial of Nietzsche's Romanticism largely on Nietzsche's own insistence that he was not a Romantic and that his attempt to overcome the Romanticism of *The Birth of Tragedy* was successful.[7] But Kaufmann goes even further. Not only does he accept Nietzsche's evaluation of himself as opposed to Romanticism; he also accepts Nietzsche's reasons for claiming so; i.e. that Romanticism is self-hating and unhealthy, while his own philosophy is self-affirming and robust. Kaufmann follows Nietzsche in characterizing Romanticism as sickly, death-obsessed, world-hating, anti-rational, subservient to religious authority, and denigrating of the present moment. For example, he claims that:

> [T]he romantics' praise of suffering is, most typically, a repudiation of the present, akin to their escape into the past or the future: it is, at bottom, praise of another world or of a brief ecstasy that, while it lasts, lifts the poet out of this world.[8]

This claim overlooks a fundamental aspect of Romanticism that is pronounced in Novalis. As will become evident in our discussion of Novalis' theory of language in chapter 5, Novalis uses the exotic and distant, or the 'other', not as an escape from the present or as a lost or unattainable ideal, in contrast to which the here-and-now seems worthless, but as a means of understanding the true inner nature of the familiar and the self. Similarly, the apparent denigration of the self in the desire to become one with nature reflects a profound self-love. The natural world forms a macrocosm of the human subject, without which the subject is totally cut off from itself. As a result, union with nature represents the subject's return to wholeness. Rather than formulating a negative and reactionary philosophy, Novalis presents the goal of the

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[5] *Ibid.*, p.220.
[6] Kaufmann: (1959) *op. cit.*, p.311.
[7] Norman: *op. cit.*, p.506.

human subject as an increasing self-awareness and integration into the loving community of nature, the divine, and her fellow human beings.

This goal suggests that Kaufmann's acceptance of Nietzsche's interpretation of Romanticism may be justified in one respect. Because of its attribution of value to the physical world on the basis of the divine inner nature of all phenomena, and to the human on the basis of the human beings' task as mediator of this divine nature, Novalis' philosophy can be claimed to be nihilistic, in Nietzsche's sense of the word. Nietzsche attempts to dispose of any form of extrinsic value for ordinary human experience, on the premise that nothing real exists outside this experience and, consequently, that belief in such a value eventually undermines itself. Kaufmann's discussion implies that he accepts that Nietzsche's philosophy is successful in this venture, and thus symptomatic of strength and health, and affirming of the human being and of life in general. During this thesis, it will emerge that Nietzsche's response to the critique of epistemology present in his theory of language results in an essentially negative and nihilistic conception of human existence. Despite correctly identifying nihilistic tendencies in Early German Romanticism, Kaufmann's argument is undermined by his uncritical acceptance of Nietzsche's claims to avoid nihilism by providing intrinsic reasons for affirming the human, as well as by his unjustified interpretation of Romanticism as a negative and life-denying philosophy.

A more rigourous and convincing argument against the association of Nietzsche and Early German Romanticism is made by Judith Norman. Norman claims that despite a shared concern with the validity of traditional notions of truth and with the illusory nature of reality and language, Nietzsche and the Romantics pursue different projects.

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[8] Kaufmann: (1959) *op. cit.,* p.231.

The Romantics aim to explore and express the transcendental subject, while Nietzsche has no interest in such a ground and affirms the immanent. In fact, Norman claims, the preoccupation with the transcendent places the Romantics in direct philosophical opposition to Nietzsche.[9]

Norman identifies what we perceive as the main difference between Nietzsche and Novalis: Novalis believes in a transcendent unity of spirit underlying nature and humanity; Nietzsche insists that nothing exists beneath the world of experience. However, this thesis disagrees with Norman on three substantial points. Firstly, we argue that while Nietzsche is firm in his denial of a transcendent spiritual realm, he is not consistent in his rejection of a realm of things in themselves, frequently making claims that presuppose an underlying human subject. Secondly, we claim that it is not the case that Nietzsche escapes the preoccupation with truth that Norman attributes to the Romantics. In fact, we argue that it is Nietzsche, rather than Novalis, who is unable to relinquish the value he attributes to a correspondence notion of truth, and that this inability is largely responsible for the negative and critical tenor of his thought. Thirdly, we do not believe that the significant differences between the philosophies of Nietzsche and Novalis, especially regarding the transcendent, render the parallels in their thought meaningless. Rather, we maintain that the theories of language of these two thinkers are remarkably similar, and that any differences are the consequence of their opposite reactions to their characterizations of language.

Having defined the terms of the broader debate in which this thesis is situated, let us now take a brief look at some areas of correspondence that have been suggested between the theories of language of Nietzsche and the Early German Romantics.

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[9] Norman: *op. cit.*, p.506.

Azade Seyhan identifies similarities in several areas of Nietzsche's and the Romantics' theories of language, including their discontent with the notion of philosophical certainty and their claims about the impossibility of unmediated truth, their idea that language creates an autonomous world beside the real world, and the conception of knowledge as the making familiar of the unfamiliar.[10] Seyhan's discussion tends to focus on Nietzsche's early works, especially *The Birth of Tragedy*, thus placing large portions of her investigation outside the context of the current debate. In this thesis it emerges that many of her claims can also be applied to Nietzsche's later writings, and provide grounds for maintaining that genuine similarities exist between his theory of language and that of Novalis. In particular, we will provide a detailed analysis of the relationship between the two thinkers' ideas regarding truth, as well as their different reactions to the role of language in creating the world of which human beings have experience.

Paul de Man also draws parallels between Nietzsche and the Early German Romantics, claiming that both perceive language as essentially deceptive and use the tropes irony and allegory to embody their critique of language and cognition.[11] In our investigation, we will discover that both irony and allegory play a role in Nietzsche's notion of language, but that this role differs from the Romantic use of these tropes. For Nietzsche, irony is language's critique of its own ability to communicate truthfully; however, unlike for Novalis, this critique does not enable language to represent the truth through a *via negativa*, but only presents a demand for the continual re-creation of linguistic categories, in order to avoid becoming trapped by one particular set of falsehoods.

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[10] Seyhan: *op. cit.*, pp.136-140.

In "On Truth and Lie in an Aesthetic Sense", Ernst Behler claims that: "Nietzsche's 'On Truth and Lie' is surely the most intensified expression of the romantic theory of language",[12] drawing parallels with Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis in particular. He argues that the Romantics and the early Nietzsche see language as fundamental to our relationship with the world, and therefore as both enabling and limiting the possibilities of knowledge. In both cases, he claims, this assertion leads to the challenging of the domination of scientific discourse in the realm of knowledge. However, according to Behler, for the Romantics this takes the form of a rejection of rational discourse, while for Nietzsche it leads to the suggestion that the approach to truth found in poetic and mythical language should be used as a supplement, rather than a replacement, for more 'rational' means.[13]

This thesis presents a different interpretation of their positions. We agree that both Nietzsche and Novalis critique the ability of ordinary language to describe the world - at least according to usual standards of epistemological adequacy - and that both want a more creative usage to replace faith in the representative ability of language. However, we argue that it is Nietzsche who suggests that a creative use of language must replace the traditional goal of truthful representation, while Novalis claims that language is able to mediate truth, not just in spite of, but because of, its creative and subjective character. This difference illuminates the concern with a correspondence notion of truth that pervades Nietzsche's thought, and helps us to address Norman's claims regarding the divergent projects of Nietzsche and the Romantics.

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[11] De Man: *op. cit.*, pp.42-43.
[12] Behler: (2000) *op. cit.*, pp.76-77.
[13] *Ibid.*, p.89.

The account that is closest to the interpretation presented in this thesis is that of Adrian del Caro, who describes Nietzsche as the "last Romantic".[14] Del Caro claims that Nietzsche supercedes Romanticism in overcoming his own Romantic 'sickness', evident in his earliest works, and that his final position represents a sublimation of Romanticism.[15] Del Caro argues that both Nietzsche and the Romantics believe that human rationality is not in itself sufficient for the full expression of humanity's creativity, and are engaged with the same problem: "to plot a course for man's creative and cognitive energies in order to achieve his potential for expression".[16] The recognition of the human limits of language and cognition causes both Nietzsche and the Romantics to embrace human creativity in an attempt to transcend the rigid categories of ordinary discourse. However, there are differences. Del Caro contrasts the Romantics' democratic ideal of human creativity in relation to nature with Nietzsche's essentially elitist and individualistic conception.[17] For the Romantics, the underlying unity of humanity and the natural world empowers their goal of human beings mediating the transcendent to nature, transforming the world and enabling it to realize its spiritual potential.[18] For Nietzsche, there is no such intimate relation of humans and nature, and human creativity is to be directed solely towards human beings themselves. With no transcendent goal available, humans are directed to realize their creative potential in full immanence; any attempt to reach beyond themselves is perceived as impossible and thus as eventually leading to nihilism.[19]

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[14] Del Caro: *op. cit.*, p.5.
[15] *Ibid.*, p.194.
[16] *Ibid.*, p.5.
[17] *Ibid.*, p.187.
[18] *Ibid.*, p.207.
[19] *Ibid.*, p.299.

This thesis largely agrees with del Caro's identification of the differences between the theories of language of Nietzsche and the Romantics, at least insofar as these can be said to apply to the relationship of Nietzsche to Novalis. We add to del Caro's account an analysis of several aspects of this relationship that he either overlooks or does not investigate in detail. Our focus on the tropic nature of language enables us to identify several ways in which language functions similarly in the models formulated by our two thinkers, providing support for the claim that many of the differences in Nietzsche's and Novalis' philosophies are the result of their radically different responses to these discoveries. Del Caro's claims regarding the democratic tendencies of Romanticism as opposed to the elitism of Nietzsche are also supported by our presentation of the two models of communication, which in Nietzsche's case is undermined by his notion of trope in language. In addition, this thesis critiques Nietzsche's own failure to counteract nihilism, and suggests that the reasons for this failure lie in his inability to accept the subjective nature of language and knowledge. As a result, our study provides an interesting perspective on Nietzsche's notion of creativity, which he hopes to use as the basis of an affirming philosophy, but which we argue actually undermines itself to produce a negative and nihilistic philosophy.

Before we investigate these claims in detail, in the next chapter we present an account of language as trope, including definitions of the six tropes that will be used in this study. These tropes will be fundamental in our attempt to illustrate the nature of the affinities between the two theories of language under consideration, and to demonstrate that the major differences in the two philosophies are largely the result of opposite reactions to essentially the same model of language.

Language as Trope

This paper compares Nietzsche's and Novalis' theories of language, focussing on their common representation of language as figurative in order to aid the identification of areas of common ground and to pinpoint the exact nature of any differences. To clarify the analysis of the following chapters, this chapter explains how it is possible to characterize language, as a whole, as trope, given the common-sense and traditional understanding of figurative language as dependent on pre-existing literal meanings. It emerges that if all language is pervaded by trope, then the figurative-literal distinction disappears, but the usual understanding of how tropes work can usefully be retained in order to describe the functioning of language in general. In this context, the most important difference between tropic and literal language is the contrasting means of signification: denotation, or direct signification, in the latter, and connotation, allusion or indirect signification in the former. A notion of language as trope maintains that all language functions through suggestion rather than through rule-bound correspondences between words and things, thus introducing a creative element into all communication. This thesis argues that the divergent reactions of Nietzsche and Novalis to this subjective element constitutes the most important difference in their philosophies of language.

In addition to clarifying the application to language of trope in general, this chapter focusses on the six forms of trope which we have found most appropriate in our characterization of Nietzsche and Novalis' theories of language. These tropes are metonymy, synecdoche, allegory, analogy, metaphor and irony. The question of

whether and how these tropes apply to Nietzsche's and Novalis' conceptions of language forms the subject matter of the following two chapters.

Traditional definitions of trope depend on a distinction with literal language, upon which it was once usual to consider it parasitic. A typical definition of figurative language runs something like this: it "deviates from what we apprehend as the standard significance or sequence of words, in order to achieve special meaning or effect".[1] The literal meaning of an utterance was traditionally thought to be prior to the figurative meaning which, in many accounts, is signalled within language by the incongruity of a literal interpretation.[2] Tropes were characterized by their ability to effect an extension of meaning of linguistic terms - a characterization which defines trope in relation to an original, non-tropic sense of language. In these terms, the 'standard significance' or literal meaning of language is perceived as fixed by conventions which specify a strict relationship of signification between words or sentences and objects or events in the real world. Trope, by contrast, requires these rules to be flouted in the application of a term which by convention refers to one thing, to something not usually covered by these rules of use. Immediately, trope can be seen to introduce a creative element into language. Rather than following rules, the language-user is required to actively perform or, in the case of the audience, retrace the derivation of the trope in order to uncover its meaning. Bernard Dupriez describes the trope metaphor as "A transfer from one meaning to another through a personal operation based on an impression or interpretation which readers must discover or

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[1] M. H. Abrams: *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (New York and Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971) p.60.

[2] Max Black: "Metaphor" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol. 55, 1955, pp.274-275.

experience for themselves".[3] This is a complex, individual and creative process, and often leaves room for more than one interpretation. The same is true of trope in general. Instead of depending upon a necessary or direct correspondence between words and things, meaning in trope is a result of the connotations certain words have for particular language-users. As a result, a degree of freedom of interpretation is allowed in deciphering the meaning of trope, introducing a subjective element into communication. Since the acquisition of genuine knowledge is traditionally considered to be dependent on a level of objectivity, it has sometimes been argued that trope provides an inadequate basis for communicating anything but opinions and, in short, cannot mediate an understanding of truth.[4]

More recent attempts to comprehend trope, often focussing on the trope metaphor, suggest that figuration is much more widespread in language than was once believed, throwing into doubt many widespread opinions about the value and availability of objectivity. Many accounts now claim that figurative and literal language differ not so much in kind, as in degree.[5] Dead metaphors are often pointed to as paradigms of language formation, and as indicating the figural nature of language as a whole.[6] Donald Davidson argues that the metaphorical and literal meanings of a term are both dependent on the grouping of objects (or events) according to perceived similarities,

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[3] Bernard Dupriez: *A Dictionary of Literary Devices: Gradus, A-Z* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991) p.276.

[4] See, for instance, Black regarding the old taboo that "whereof one can speak only metaphorically, thereof one ought not to speak at all." Black: *op. cit.,* p.273.

[5] Nelson Goodman: *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merril Co., Inc., 1968) p.80; Paul Ricoeur: "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling" in Sacks: *On Metaphor* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978) p.147; Umberto Eco: *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) p.88; Paul Cantor: "Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of Metaphor" in Miall: *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, and New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982) p.72.

[6] F. C. T. Moore: "On Taking Metaphors Literally" in Miall: *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*

and that these similarities are subjectively constructed in all language. For instance, to say that a particular baby is an infant is to claim that the baby has characteristics of the group 'infant'. Likewise, to say that Tolstoy is a "great moralizing *infant*" is to claim that Tolstoy has characteristics of the group 'infant'.[7] Which properties they share is a matter of individual judgement, in the case of both metaphorical and literal speech. Other writers reach similar conclusions. Paul Ricoeur, for example, claims that imagination plays a crucial role in the process of understanding and meaning-creation. Rather than being merely a "residue of perception" - a faint reproduction of experience - imagination actively constructs and posits similarities.[8] Concepts are created from particulars by grouping them according to perceived similarities. Another influential writer, Nelson Goodman, describes a similar process. He claims that the creation of language involves the categorization, weighting, ordering, deletion, supplementation, and deformation (especially simplification) of data. Conceptualization is, in short, the systematic organization of our experience. For Goodman, these conceptual systems "are products of stipulation and habituation in varying proportions".[9] A given object could be placed in a category with any number of other objects, and what we think of as 'natural' kinds are just those groupings that we are accustomed to 'picking out'.[10] For Goodman, metaphors are unusual or novel groupings, meaning that 'metaphorical' concepts differ from 'literal' ones only in the degree to which we are accustomed to them. Literal language is thus constituted by dead metaphors - figures of speech that

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(Sussex: The Harvester Press, and New Jersey: Humanities Press, 19820 p.3.
[7] Donald Davidson: "What Metaphors Mean" in Sacks: *On Metaphor* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 19780 pp.31-32.
[8] Ricoeur: *op. cit.*, p.153.
[9] Goodman: *op. cit.*, p.40.
[10] *Ibid.*, p.32.

we have forgotten are figures of speech and that we instead believe function by directly designating pre-existing aspects of the world.

From the above examples it can be seen that some recent writers undermine the notion of a literal sense to language by claiming that meaning is never an inherent property of language but always a subjective interpretation. If that is the case, then the literal-figurative distinction is undermined, and the claim that there exists a tropic sense to language would appear to be redundant. However, our common-sense understanding of language retains the literal-figurative distinction along with its privileging of the literal. The use of the term 'trope' to characterize language thus has value as a means of counteracting the view that language functions by direct denotation, and remains helpful in conceptualizing the kind of relationship with the external world that these more recent accounts suggest that language has.

In the next three chapters, we will investigate in detail the theories of language put forward by Nietzsche and Novalis, arguing that, like some modern writers, these two philosophers perceive language as functioning by trope. In order to provide a detailed argument for this claim, as well as a firm ground for comparison, we will investigate the appearance of six tropes in their theories of language. We turn now to a definition of these tropes, and to an account of how these particular kinds of figurative language can be argued to be ubiquitous in language.

Our first trope, metonymy, is defined as the use of a word to refer to something other than that to which it usually refers. The transference normally occurs between things which are related, as it usually involves the replacement of a term with another

which, through association in experience, calls the former to mind[11] - for instance, in the case of the use of 'Downing Street' instead of 'the Prime Minister of the U.K. and his aides'. Metonymy is extremely common, and comes in many forms. Types include using the term for a tool to refer to its user or the term for a type of work for the worker, terms regarding physical phenomena for moral ones, a place or sign for something associated with it, objects for people related to them in some way, or the term for a cause to refer to its effect and *vice versa*.[12] As we will see in the next chapter, this last form of metonymy is emphasized by Nietzsche in his characterization of language.

Our definition of metonymy as 'the use of a word to refer to something other than that to which it usually refers' seems to depend on the literal-figurative distinction which, if that is the case, renders problematic the suggestion that it is helpful (or even possible) to describe language as a whole as involving a metonymic element. However, the characterization of language as a whole as metonymic relies not on the replacement of one linguistic term by another, but on the substitution of linguistic terms for non-linguistic entities. Paul Cantor, as well as Lakoff and Johnson, claims that in allowing one thing (words) to stand for another (objects, events), language is by definition metonymic.[13] It would be more accurate to say that a similar relation to that which holds between words in our ordinary understanding of metonymy can also be seen to hold between language and that which it purports to describe. Rather than naming directly, language, like metonymy, brings to mind certain states of affairs

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[11] Chris Baldick: *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) p.154.
[12] Dupriez: *op. cit.*, p.281.
[13] Cantor: *op. cit.*, pp.71-72; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson: *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980) p.35.

through custom and association. In the following chapters, we will see that the particular form of metonymy which involves the substitution of cause for effect is evident in the theories of language of both Nietzsche and Novalis.

Synecdoche is classified by some writers as a kind of metonymy, since it involves a similar substitution of the name of one thing for the name of something else. On the other hand, the two are sometimes distinguished, often on the basis of a closer relationship between terms in the case of synecdoche.[14] Like metonymy, various kinds of synecdoche exist and are widespread in language, but the most important kind for our purposes is the use of the term for part of something to refer to the whole - as in 'sail' for 'ship', or 'wheels' for 'car'. When I refer to synecdoche in the rest of this thesis, it will be in this sense of 'part for whole'. In this case, certain aspects of an object or event are picked out and emphasized to the extent that they are allowed to substitute, in language, for the entire object or event. A conception of language such as Goodman's (above) suggests that the creation of any concept or linguistic term relies on a process similar to that involved in synecdoche. Lakoff and Johnson, for example, claim that "categorization is a natural way of identifying a kind of object or experience by highlighting certain properties, downplaying others, and hiding still others."[15] In the formation of words and concepts, certain features of experiences are selected as salient, used for classification, and named; others are ignored. The result is that part of an experience is allowed to represent the whole, as in the form of synecdoche with which we are concerned.

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[14] Dupriez: *op. cit.*, p.282.
[15] Lakoff and Johnson: *op. cit.*, p.163.

Irony is usually defined as the use of language to deliberately communicate the opposite of what is ostensibly said. Once again, the definition of this trope appears to be dependent on the existence of a literal meaning for language. In the following chapters, our investigation will uncover two senses of irony which modify the traditional definition and characterize irony as a fundamental component in language. For Novalis and the Romantics, language is nonsensical unless it is used ironically, in which case its self-awareness of its inadequacy to reality - or, in the terminology of the current chapter, of its failure to directly designate actually existing objects and events beyond itself - allows it to suggest the existence and characteristics of that reality according to a *via negativa*. In other words, the literal meaning of language is empty - it does not have a referent - but if we understand language as ironic we resist falling into the trap of speaking nonsense. For Nietzsche, the literal use of language is similarly meaningless but, rather than an awareness of its inadequacy to reality, irony is language's awareness of its meaninglessness, of its necessary lack of reference due to the absence of any reality.[16] In both cases the literal-figurative distinction is presupposed, but as opposing views of language as a whole, rather than as two aspects of language existing side by side. It is then argued that while most people believe that language operates sincerely - that is, literally - in fact it functions figuratively, by undermining its literal sense through its ironic awareness of its own inadequacy, thus intimating either another meaning or the impossibility of meaning.

Metaphor is often considered the dominant trope in language,[17] and it is probably the trope with which most people are the most familiar. Simply put, it is "A figure of

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[16] In fact, Nietzsche sometimes appears to present this notion of irony, and sometimes one closer to Novalis' conception. This issue is discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 6.

[17] Baldick: *op. cit.*, p.153.

speech in which one thing is described in terms of another".[18] A metaphor may be a single word, or it may include several related terms borrowed from one concept (the 'source') and used to structure our notion of another (the 'target'). In both cases, metaphor is fundamentally the use of language to evoke our beliefs and feelings about one concept in order to affect our beliefs and feelings about another. For example, in their influential book *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson suggest that many expressions that we use to describe arguments ('she *won* the argument', 'he *defended his position*' etc.) are based on the metaphor 'argument is war'. They claim that: "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another."[19] Metaphorical understanding, they explain, "involves being able to superimpose the multidimensional structure" of one concept onto another.[20] Aspects of the target concept are identified with aspects of the source concept, thus specifying the types of relations which are thought to obtain between parts of the target concept. This means that mapping one part of a concept onto another carries with it other elements of the source concept - what Lakoff and Johnson call 'metaphoric entailments'.[21] Many other writers present similar explanations of how metaphors function. Max Black claims that all our concepts carry with them a 'system of associated commonplaces', which it is possible to transfer between concepts through the use of metaphor. For instance, in our culture, the term 'wolf' is usually associated with savagery and predatoriness; to call someone 'a wolf',

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[18] J. A. Cuddon: *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 3rd edition (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1991) p.542.
[19] Lakoff and Johnson: *op. cit.*, p.5.
[20] *Ibid.*, p.81.
[21] *Ibid.*, p.96.

therefore, transfers these associations to that person.[22] Josef Stern's 'thematic' and 'inductive' networks present a similar conception,[23] as does Goodman's claim that a metaphor organizes a new conceptual realm by "carrying with it a reorientation of a whole network of labels".[24] Stern gives as an example a verse of T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, which uses the concept 'cat' to influence our conception of 'fog':

> The yellow fog that rubs its back against the window-panes [...] Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening [...] Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap [...] Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.[25]

As may already be obvious from the above examples, the characteristics attributed to the target concept by the use of metaphor need not be inherent to the event or object itself, but may exist only in relation to the structure imposed by the metaphor.[26] For example, structuring the concept 'argument' according to the concept 'war' entails that there can be winners and losers in an argument; categorizing it instead as a journey would lose this entailment. Furthermore, these characteristics may not even be inherent to the *source* concept: cultural and personal experiences mean that the associations different people have with the same concept may vary. Umberto Eco gives as an amusing example the description of a beautiful woman in the Song of Songs, who is said to have a 'nose like the Tower of Lebanon' and 'teeth like a flock of sheep'. These descriptions obviously mean something very different to us now

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[22] Black: *op. cit.*, pp.287-289.
[23] Josef Stern: *Metaphor in Context* (Cambridge, M.A. and London: MIT Press, 2000) pp.170-175.
[24] Goodman: *op. cit.*, pp.71-73.
[25] T. S. Eliot, cited in Stern: *op. cit.*, p.174.
[26] Lakoff and Johnson: *op. cit.*, pp.81-83.

from what they meant to members of the distant culture in which they were created.[27] We tend to think of sheep as being woolly, dirty, and stupid; Eco points out that in this culture they must have been thought of primarily as white and identical in appearance. The ability to communicate using metaphor is premised on speaker and audience associating similar things with the source concept in question; however, slight variations in interpretation are common, increasingly so the more distance in time and place exists between language-users, or the more novel a metaphor is, and the less time it has had to develop a standardized meaning.[28] The meaning of metaphors can thus be seen to be largely dependent on imagination or judgement in determining which aspects of the compared fields are to be transferred - in the case of the wolf as source concept, we usually transfer images of violence and rapaciousness to the target concept, but some people might also transfer images of pack-like behaviour or hairiness. Context is also important in determining which aspects of the source we apply to the target. As Eco points out, in the example above, the realization that the description in the Song of Songs is supposed to be of a beautiful woman causes us to conclude that it is the attributes of whiteness and identity that are to be applied to this woman's teeth, rather than those of woolliness, stupidity, or smelling strongly.[29] Our attempts to interpret metaphorical utterances, therefore, involve not just our own tendencies to associate certain characteristics with particular concepts, but also our beliefs about which characteristics the speaker is likely to attribute to these concepts. Conversely, when formulating a metaphor, the speaker must consider the network of associations her audience may have concerning the source concept.

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[27] Eco: *op. cit.*, p.100. These are similes, of course, but with regard to this point the difference is unimportant.

[28] Goodman: *op. cit.*, pp.66-68.

The claim that all language is metaphorical presents language as functioning, not according to rules, but according to the creative and imaginative efforts of individual language-users. In this respect, it is paradigmatic of trope in general. As in the case of metaphor, communication using trope relies on the subjective associations that the utterance in question holds for its speaker and audience. This makes tropic language context-based, rather than rule-based, and sensitive to the cultural and personal backgrounds which provide the various connotations that language has for its users.

Our next trope, analogy, can be defined as the pointing out of a similarity between things that are otherwise dissimilar, in order to make a comparison. Usually, analogy has the purpose of providing an explanation of how something works or an illustration of how it is constituted, by comparing it to something with which the audience is already familiar. Analogy may also attempt to influence the kind of conception the audience forms of its subject-matter by using source concepts regarding which the audience is likely to have strong feelings. It does so in the same way as metaphor, by invoking the audience's associations with the source concept and transferring them to the target. For instance, it makes a difference to our conception of the idea 'cops don't snitch on cops' whether we perceive it as analogous to the phrase 'honour among thieves', 'the code of silence in the Mafia', or 'loyalty to one's friends'. Analogy stresses the ways in which the things it is used to characterize function, placing less emphasis than metaphor on description. Its frequent use as an explanatory tool is due to its ability to posit parallels in the relationships between aspects of the source and target concept, suggesting similar roles for these aspects.

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[29] *Idem*. See also: Black: *op. cit.*, p.277.

To claim that language as a whole is an analogy is to make the assertion that essential to language is the ability to posit similarities between things that are otherwise dissimilar. For Nietzsche, human beings explain the world to themselves on the basis of an analogy to their understanding of what it is to be human. Language is largely responsible for the form this analogy takes: the need to present a communicable picture of the world means that language presents the human as essentially simple and regular. This scheme of interpretation is then used to mould the perceptions of the rest of the world. Both because their self-understanding overlooks the complexity and individuality of human existence, and because the existence of a real analogy between human beings and nature is indemonstrable, human beings can never obtain knowledge of the world as it is in itself. Novalis, by contrast, bases the possibility of gaining knowledge of the world on what he perceives as the genuinely analogous structure of human beings and natural phenomena, and claims that the ability to communicate about both humans and nature is a result of the fact that language is constituted in such a way as to be analogous to both.

Our final trope, allegory, is sometimes hard to distinguish from metaphor and, in fact, rhetoricians often describe it as an 'extended metaphor'.[30] Like metaphor and analogy, it posits similarities between objects and events normally considered disparate, which is related to the ability to organize experiences conceptually through invoking the associations of the audience with one concept with respect to another. Two differences with metaphor can be drawn out, however. The first is one of scale. As the term 'extended metaphor' suggests, while a metaphor may consist of a word or

[30] See, for example, Margaret Drabble: *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 19950 p.18.

a phrase, and usually relates to the description of one object or event, an allegory can be quite long, and may include within its structure several instances of figurative language which, considered separately, might be described as metaphors. An emphasis on language as allegorical, such as is found in Novalis' theory of language, studies the creation of meaning by the relationships of words or concepts to each other, and consequently emphasizes the holistic nature of language. An emphasis on language as metaphor would be more likely to focus on the relation of individual concepts and their corresponding words to the things that they are usually thought to describe - although this conception is not necessarily incompatible with a model of language as allegorical. The second difference, according to traditional models of rhetoric, is that, while the literal meaning of a metaphor is usually nonsensical, an allegory very often retains a perfectly coherent literal meaning in addition to its figurative sense. An ordinary conception of allegory maintains that allegorical language connotes or intimates a second (and possibly a third or fourth) meaning in addition to its literal interpretation. This meaning can be uncovered through retaining the structure of the allegorical story, but understanding that the words and concepts within the allegory also indicate objects and events other than those they directly denote. If all language is allegorical, however, then the connoted meaning cannot be *additional* to a literal meaning but must exist *instead* of it. As in the case of 'trope' in general, this appears to make the term 'allegorical' redundant. Also as with 'trope', it is useful for our purposes to retain the term 'allegory', since it characterizes a particular kind of relationship between language as a whole and that which it aims to describe. To claim that language is allegorical is to assert that it functions by presenting a structure of meaning which reflects something beyond itself, but without

direct description. The audience is required to involve themselves in an active process of interpretation in order to discover the signification of an utterance.

The case of allegory is useful in illuminating the entailment of discarding a literal sense for language with which we are the most concerned: the introduction of creativity into the process of knowledge acquisition and the corresponding undermining of an objective link between words and things. If language functions literally, then meaning is a property of words that emerges from a stipulated relation between language and states of affairs existing beyond it. To understand a piece of language is to be able to follow the rules in order to determine to which states of affairs it refers. The result is that meaning is standardized, and language communicates about pre-existing objects and events beyond itself by making claims about them that are either true or false. If language is tropic, however, then meaning is not something presented by language, but something attributed to it by the language-user. As in allegory, where the story must be interpreted by the audience and its structure applied to different concepts from those described directly, the correspondence of words to things is not a function of conventional connections, but occurs only in the minds of language-users. In other words, this correspondence is not entailed by anything within language, but is a mental association performed by the subject. As we saw in the case of metaphor, the creative interpretations of various subjects may differ, meaning that the capacity of language to reflect the world it describes in an objective sense is undermined.

In fact, understanding language as any of the six tropes discussed in this chapter forms a challenge to traditional ideas about the possibility of communicating objective truths about the world in language. If the ability to talk or think about the world is

based on an analogy between language, world and human, then these three realms will always appear to be reducible to one another, whether or not that is in fact the case. Understanding and communication will always be processes of applying existing knowledge to new experiences, rather than learning or talking about these new experiences as they are in themselves; in other words, our earlier experiences will inform our conceptions of later ones, making knowledge of and communication about things largely dependent on the character of the knowing subject.

To claim that language functions according to metonymy places a strong emphasis on the lack of direct correspondence between words or concepts and things in the world. Rather than referring to states of affairs by denotation, words suggest them by connotation. Which precise states of affairs a word or phrase connotes for a particular subject is, as we have seen, at least partly a result of that subject's past experiences, and the association of linguistic term and extra-linguistic object in those experiences. Consequently, the objects or events a given utterance calls to mind, as well as the feelings and attitudes towards these objects or events, will vary between subjects. As substitution of cause for effect, language as metonymy suggests that instead of being derived from states of affairs through a causal relation, and thus corresponding to pre-existing real objects and events, words and concepts are themselves responsible for the world appearing to us in the way it does, and thus for the form taken by any comprehensible aspects of such objects and events. Objectivity is thus not only alien to language in fact, but is necessarily absent from any use of either concepts or words.

The notion of language as synecdoche emphasizes the creative nature of the language-world relation. This model suggests that instead of representing its object as it is in itself, language picks out a few aspects which call it to mind through

association in experience. Which aspects are chosen to represent the whole experience is not determined by necessity, but depends upon the interpretation of the experience by the language-user. Some aspects are necessarily overlooked in this process, with the result that language can only mediate a partial awareness of things. Furthermore, since it is individual subjects who choose which parts of an experience to isolate and identify with language, it is possible that while many language-users may use a word or phrase to refer to the same actual state of affairs, which parts of this state of affairs have relevance for them may vary. Consequently, the meaning of linguistic elements is not standardized between language-users, and even the partial knowledge mediated by language contains a subjective element.

Irony also indicates the inability of language to describe anything directly, pointing out its inadequacy according to normal standards of objectivity, and suggesting its ability to function instead through intimation and allusion. Instead of capturing and mediating information about states of affairs, language is connected with its object through an association which allows linguistic terms to point the human imagination towards these states of affairs. Only by realizing the inability of language to function in a directly representative way can human beings avoid falling into the trap of believing that they can successfully grasp and transmit knowledge of things objectively and in full.

The essence of the characterization of language as any of these six figures is the assertion that there is no direct relationship between the world in itself, on the one hand, and the realm of language and conceptual thought on the other. The correspondence between words and things is not a rule-bound connection such as is traditionally considered essential for the mediation of knowledge, but rather a

subjective association based on cultural and personal experiences. In other words, language does not mediate knowledge of things to the subject, thus providing access to things in themselves and linking human beings to their world; rather, it is the subject who provides the link between language and things. The nature of this correspondence as imaginative and creative, rather than causal and necessary, undermines our usual conceptions of knowledge and communication as founded on an inherent meaning to language derived from its referential function. Both Nietzsche and Novalis believe that this points to the need for traditional notions of epistemology to be revised. This paper maintains that the response to this challenge is at the root of both the similarities and the differences between their theories of language.

Nietzsche: Theory of Language

Nietzsche's theory of language, in its demand for a creative reappropriation of conceptual and linguistic categories as much as in its ruthless critique of the limitations of language, is an expression of Nietzsche's perception of the human condition as one of isolation, fragility and fearfulness. For Nietzsche, human beings can never understand themselves, let alone communicate honestly with, or reveal themselves to others; nor can they truly grasp what is happening around or within them. Focusing on the tropic aspects of Nietzsche's conception of language reveals his struggle to reach a positive conclusion to his argument that the basic relationship of human consciousness to its world is arbitrary and unstable. I argue that Nietzsche's notion of language can be characterized as synecdochal, analogical, metonymical, and metaphorical, and that irony, insofar as it occurs within Nietzsche's philosophy, is not the same trope as Romantic irony. The investigation of the trope allegory in Nietzsche's writings illuminates inconsistencies within his philosophy; in particular, contradictions between his simultaneous claims of perspectivism and expressivism. I claim that it is Nietzsche's refusal to accept trope as a valid means of epistemological access that causes him to have these difficulties, as he struggles between a representational notion of knowledge and a desire to affirm the world of surfaces.

Nietzsche's critiques of language and epistemology rest largely on his claim that the physiological reasons behind the development of language mean that the imperative to represent the world truthfully is completely alien to it.[1] For Nietzsche, language and

[1] "In order for a particular species to maintain itself and increase its power, its conception of reality must comprehend enough of the calculable and constant for it to base a scheme of behavior on it. The utility of preservation - not some abstract-theoretical need not to be deceived - stands as the motive

consciousness developed together in response to the need for human beings to operate as a group:

> The emergence of our sense impressions into our own consciousness, the ability to fix them and, as it were, exhibit them externally, increased proportionally with the need to communicate them to *others* by means of signs.[2]

The association of language with social interaction means that it is neither necessary nor possible to communicate the experiences of individual human beings in all their richness and detail; the fact that consciousness developed only in order to facilitate this communication means that it also has no need of detailed or precise correspondence to individual experiences. The world humans can have conscious awareness of is a world bearing a parallel structure to that of language,[3] and thus one that reflects a world beyond it only to the extent that language does. According to Nietzsche, all conscious knowledge, all reasoning, and anything that can be communicated, is a vulgarization of individual life, presenting a falsely simple picture of human experience:

> Fundamentally, all our actions are altogether incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual; there is no doubt of that. But as soon as we translate them into consciousness *they no longer seem to be*. [...] Owing to the nature of *animal consciousness*, the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface- and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner; whatever becomes conscious *becomes* by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd-signal; all becoming conscious involves a

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behind the development of the organs of knowledge". Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Will to Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968) s.480 (hereafter 'WP'). See also: Friedrich Nietzsche: *Human, all too Human* (Cambridge, New York & New Rochelle: Cambridge University Press, 1986) vol. 1, s.517 (hereafter 'HH').

[2] Nietzsche: GS s.354.

[3] Friedrich Nietzsche: *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) s.209 (hereafter 'RL').

> great and thorough corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization.[4]

Following from this claim is the implication that humans can never understand themselves fully. The social nature of language means that human beings can only ever become conscious of those aspects of themselves that they have in common with other members of their species. Furthermore, even these aspects are understood only schematically; the processes underlying all aspects of conscious thought, whether decisions, judgements, or likes and dislikes, are not revealed - and, in fact, are even obscured - by the concepts we use to represent them to our conscious selves.[5] Before we move on to investigate these issues, we will take a more detailed look at how the association of consciousness and language limits the possibilities of knowledge.

In his early notebooks and the essay *On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*, Nietzsche presents a view of language in which its tropic nature results in a false representation of the world. This occurs primarily due to the necessarily selective and perspectival character of language. In order to render experiences general and communicable, language distorts them in two ways. Firstly, it expresses only those aspects of the world which it is necessary for the human to grasp in order to flourish, and in such a way that these become calculable. Secondly, these aspects are not expressed as they truly are, but only insofar as they relate to humans. Consequently,

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[4] Nietzsche: GS s.354, also ss.179, 189, 236+244. Also: "Our true experiences are not garrulous. They could not communicate themselves if they wanted to: they lack words. We have already grown beyond whatever we have words for. In all talking there lies a grain of contempt. Speech, it seems, was devised only for the average, medium, communicable. The speaker has already *vulgarized* himself by speaking." Friedrich Nietzsche: "Twilight of the Idols" in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ* (London, New York & Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990) 'Expeditions of an Untimely Man' s.26 (hereafter 'TI').

[5] "[B]y far the greatest part of our spirit's activity remains unconscious and unfelt." Nietzsche: GS s.333. See also: Friedrich Nietzsche: "Notebook 19 (Summer 1872-early 1873)" in *Unpublished Writings from the Period of Unfashionable Observations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999)

language is symptomatic of the physiological and psychological needs and capacities of the language-user rather than representative of what it purports to describe:

> That a unity, e.g. a tree, appears to us to be a multiplicity of properties and relations is something doubly anthropomorphic: in the first place, this delimited entity, 'tree,' does not exist; it is arbitrary to carve out a thing in this manner [...]. Furthermore, each relation is not the true, absolute relation, but is again anthropomorphically colored.[6]

The former of these limitations immediately introduces a tropic element into Nietzsche's conception of language - that of synecdoche. To facilitate action, our conception of the world is, and needs to be, partial and very much simplified. We need to be able to make judgements and predictions, and doing so requires us to identify and find similarities between things: "only when we see things coarsely and made equal do they become calculable and usable to us."[7] To this end, language simplifies, divides up and categorizes raw experience. Nietzsche maintains that it is a distortion to pick out one set of features from our experience and name them as an object, action or event separate from other objects, actions or events. Without this dividing activity, however, the human being would be overwhelmed by the chaotic influx of sense impressions.[8] Objects and events are constructed within consciousness

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ss.48-49 (hereafter 'NB').

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche: "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge" in Breazeale (ed.): *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 1990) s.150 (hereafter 'P'). Also: "Every word instantly becomes a concept precisely insofar as it is not supposed to serve as a reminder of the unique and entirely individual original experience to which it owes its origin; but rather, a word becomes a concept insofar as it simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases - which means, purely and simply, cases which are never equal and thus altogether unequal. Every concept arises from the equation of unequal things". Friedrich Nietzsche: "On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" in Breazeale (ed.): *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (Amherst, New York: Humanity Books, 1990) p.83 (hereafter 'TL').

[7] Nietzsche: WP s.515. Also: "for there to be communication something has to be firm, simplified, capable of precision [...]. For it to be communicable, however, it must be experienced as adapted, as 'recognizable.' The material of the senses adapted by the understanding, reduced to rough outlines, made similar, subsumed under related matters." WP s.569.

[8] "The only way to subdue the manifold is by constructing classes". Nietzsche: P s.141.

by selecting and grouping into separate entities only a few features of experience, which are then allowed to stand for these artificial entities.[9] Focussing on only a few characteristics of these artificially delineated entities makes it possible to overlook differences between them and arrange them into classes. Words refer to these classes, rather than to individual events or objects; consequently our concepts of things necessarily overlook what is individual in them:

> Just as it is certain that one leaf is never totally the same as another, so it is certain that the concept 'leaf' is formed by arbitrarily discarding these individual differences and by forgetting the distinguishing aspects.[10]

The result of this artificial positing and categorization of identities is that it becomes possible for the language-user to learn, predict, judge, and reason. Thus language forces upon human cognition an illusion, but one necessary for survival. Language simply did not evolve in order to enable human beings to acquire true knowledge: the ability to access things as they are in themselves is not connected to the survival chances of a form of life, and thus of its particular modes of thought.[11]

The second reason Nietzsche gives for claiming that language cannot represent things in themselves is based on his claim that all knowledge is situated; awareness of something can only ever be awareness of how that thing appears from a particular perspective. Those characteristics of a thing that we can come to know are dependent on the capabilities of our own perceptual apparatus and, therefore, are not

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[9] "Language never expresses something completely, but stresses the most outstanding characteristic." Nietzsche: RL p.57. See also: Nietzsche: P.s.150.

[10] Nietzsche: TL p.83.

[11] "[I]nnumerable beings drew inferences in a way different from that in which we do now perished; nonetheless, they might have been closer to the truth! He, for instance, who does not know how to find 'identity' often enough, both with regard to nourishment and to hostile animals [...] had a slighter probability of survival than he who in all cases of similarity immediately guessed that they were identical." Nietzsche: GS s.111.

characteristics of the thing in itself, but products of the relationship between subject and object: "The properties of things considered in themselves are no concern of ours; we are concerned with them only to the extent that they affect us."[12] Consequently: "It is not the things that pass over into consciousness, but the manner in which we stand towards them."[13] According to this conception of knowledge, a thing is always what it is *for* something else, and therefore always interpreted. The interpretive scheme within which an object or an event is constructed from effects on the interpreter is one which is shaped according to the needs, and in order to promote the interests of, the interpreter. As a result, what something appears to be to a particular subject is largely a factor of how it needs to appear in order to facilitate its mastery by the subject. Interpretation, therefore, is linked in Nietzsche's thought to domination.

Understanding the world according to categories constructed artificially and in response to subjective needs enables human beings to isolate those aspects of their experience which are relevant to their flourishing, and to respond to them on the basis of things of which they already have experience, and thus to which they already know how to respond.[14] According to Nietzsche, all instances of inductive reasoning are instances of applying past experiences to new ones, entailing that our understanding of events around us is primarily a translation of the unfamiliar into familiar terms, or an assimilation of the new to the old. This is much more efficient than attempting to make decisions about new experiences based on raw data:

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[12] Nietzsche: P s.101, also ss.99+114. See also: Friedrich Nietzsche: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* (Chicago: Henry Regnrey CO., 1962) s.11 (hereafter 'PTG').
[13] Nietzsche: RL p.23.
[14] "It is more comfortable for our eye to react to a particular object by producing again an image it has often produced before than by retaining what is new and different in an impression". Friedrich Nietzsche: *Beyond Good and Evil* (London, New York & Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990) s.192 (hereafter 'BGE'). Also: "As soon as we see a new picture, we immediately construct it with the help of all the old experiences we have had". Nietzsche: GS s.114.

> [T]here is one thing alone we really care about from the heart: 'bringing something home'. Whatever else there is in life, so-called 'experiences' - which of us has sufficient earnestness for them? Or sufficient time?[15]

This simplification facilitates a mastery of the subject over her environment. According to Nietzsche, the urge to acquire knowledge is just this desire for power over one's surroundings: "To trace something unknown back to something known is alleviating, soothing, gratifying and gives moreover a feeling of power. Danger, disquiet, anxiety attend the unknown."[16] As a consequence of this theory, what we call understanding is, for Nietzsche, only the description of one thing in terms of something else, in order to achieve a sense of comfort, safety and control. Since according to this model, the 'something else' in question is also not understood but only described in terms of yet another thing, the notion that we can ever really know or explain anything is undermined.[17]

Tim Murphy claims that, for Nietzsche, no descriptive schema or domain of meaning is privileged in this process, but rather each conceptual category is understood by turn in terms of another, without ever reaching a final ground.[18] It seems clear to me, however, that Nietzsche believes that human beings *do* draw their

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[15] Friedrich Nietzsche: "On the Genealogy of Morals" in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989) preface, s.1 (hereafter 'GM').

[16] Nietzsche: TI 'The Four Great Errors' s.5. Also: "I asked myself: What is it that the common people take for knowledge? What do they want when they want 'knowledge'? Nothing more than this: Something strange is to be reduced to something *familiar*. And we philosophers - have we really meant *more* than this when we have spoken of knowledge? What is familiar means what we are used to so that we no longer marvel at it, our everyday, some rule in which we are stuck, anything at all in which we feel at home. Look, isn't our need for knowledge precisely this need for the familiar, the will to uncover under everything strange, unusual, and questionable something that no longer disturbs us? Is it not the *instinct of fear* that bids us to know? And is the jubilation of those who attain knowledge not the jubilation over the restoration of a sense of security?" Nietzsche: GS s.355. See also: Nietzsche: WP s.423; BGE s.230.

[17] Nietzsche: GS ss.29, 112, 348+355; WP s.628; TL p.94.

[18] Timothy Murphy: *Nietzsche, Metaphor, Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press,

descriptions back to something foundational, but that he does not think that this constitutes an adequate basis for knowledge. For Nietzsche, humans base their understanding of the new ultimately on those things with which they feel most familiar and comfortable - their most basic experiences of being human.[19] As a result, language, and cognition itself, operates by describing all experiences by analogy to the human. Nietzsche claims that our most basic explanatory notions - cause and effect, substance, and properties - are based on an analogy to the human experience of being an ego that wills. This makes conceptual thought an appropriative and self-affirming process, as we project ourselves onto the world around us:

> Man projected his three 'inner facts', that in which he believed more firmly than in anything else, will, spirit, ego, outside himself - he derived the concept 'being' only from the concept 'ego', he posited 'things' as possessing being according to his own image, according to his concept of the ego as cause.[20]

Nietzsche then undermines this basis to cognition, arguing not only that knowledge of the ego and the will is impossible, but that they are artificial, linguistic constructions that do not, in fact, exist. According to Nietzsche, we feel that we have immediate experience of being a subject and of the efficacy of the will, and that this means that describing things in these terms constitutes an explanation, resulting in genuine knowledge of how things really are. Nietzsche maintains, however, that such a thing as immediate experience is impossible: "I shall reiterate a hundred times that

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2001) p.12.

[19] Nietzsche: NB s.237.

[20] Nietzsche: TI 'The Four Great Errors' s.3. Also: "Language belongs in its origin to the age of the most rudimentary form of psychology: we find ourselves in the midst of a rude fetishism when we call to mind the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language - which is to say, of *reason*. It is *this* which sees everywhere deed and doer; this which believes in the 'ego', in the ego as being, in the ego as substance, and which *projects* its belief in the ego-substance onto all things - only thus does it *create* the concept 'thing'...Being is everywhere thought in, *foisted on*, as cause; it is only from the conception 'ego' that there follows, derivatively, the concept 'being'...At the beginning stands the great fateful error that the will is something which *produces an effect*". Nietzsche: TI "Reason' in Philosophy' s.5. See

'immediate certainty', like 'absolute knowledge' and 'thing in itself', contains a *contradictio in adjecto*."[21] For Nietzsche, knowledge involves a perspective, and a relationship with that which is known. The demand for immediate knowledge, or knowledge of something as it is in itself, is the demand for knowledge without such a perspective - to "know without knowledge".[22] For Nietzsche, not only is 'willing' not immediately understood by human beings, but it is actually constructed synecdochally in the same way as are all other aspects of experience that enter consciousness.[23] Like all our concepts, the concept of the will is the result of an arbitrary isolation of some aspects of the world from others. In this case, a small part of the immensely complex and interconnected processes by which events take place within the human body and mind enters consciousness and is labelled 'will'.[24] Nietzsche describes this as: "Merely a surface phenomenon of consciousness, an accompaniment to an act, which conceals rather than exposes the *antecedentia* of the act."[25] He makes a similar claim in the case of the subject:

> [I]t is a *falsification* of the facts to say: the subject 'I' is the condition of the predicate 'think'. *It* thinks: but that this 'it' is precisely that famous old 'I' is, to put it mildly, only an assumption, an assertion, above all not an 'immediate certainty'. For even with this 'it thinks' one has already gone too far: this 'it' already contains an *interpretation* of the event and does not belong to the event itself. The inference here is in accordance with the habit of grammar: 'thinking is an activity, to every activity pertains one who acts, consequently -'.[26]

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also: Nietzsche: WP ss.478, 483, 522, 627+664.

[21] Nietzsche: BGE s.16, also s.281. See also: Nietzsche: WP s.483; P ss.99, 101+114.

[22] Nietzsche: P s.114, also ss.101+109. See also: Nietzsche: GS ss.57+374; GM essay 3, s.12; WP s.555.

[23] Nietzsche: WP s.477.

[24] Nietzsche: GS s.127. See also: Nietzsche: BGE ss.16, 19+281.

[25] Nietzsche: TI 'The Four Great Errors' s.3. See also: Nietzsche: GS s.112; WP ss.664-665; Friedrich Nietzsche "The Anti-Christ" in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ* (London, New York & Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990) s.14 (hereafter 'A'). For more on this point, see Alexander Nehamas: *Nietzsche, Life as Literature* (Cambridge, M.A. and London: Harvard University Press, 1985) p.78.

[26] Nietzsche: BGE s.17, also ss.16+34. See also: Nietzsche: GM essay 1, s.13.

Our most fundamental explanatory categories - those of will and ego - which we use to describe every other experience we have, emerge as concepts that are as arbitrarily defined, shallow, and biased as all other concepts. As with our other concepts, those of the will and the ego are formed by carving up and simplifying the chaos of undifferentiated experience, in order to facilitate communication between members of the herd. Thus not only does the subject-predicate structure of language reflect these basic concepts; the fact that we understand the world according to such concepts is actually a result of language's need to divide up the world in that way, and is perpetuated by our continued adherence to its categories:

> [W]e find ourselves in the midst of a rude fetishism when we call to mind the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language - which is to say, of *reason*. It is *this* which sees everywhere deed and doer; this which believes in the 'ego', in the ego as being, in the ego as substance, and which *projects* its belief in the ego-substance onto all things - only thus does it *create* the concept 'thing'.[27]

The basic categories with which we describe the world - subject, predicate, cause and effect - are, underneath it all, only descriptions in terms of the human being's conscious interpretation of what it is to be human. The world is understood - and misunderstood - as analogous to the human being.[28] The simplification and schematization demanded by the need for communication result in both a language and a consciousness that operate through synecdoche and analogy, and aim at achieving a sensation of power, not at truth.

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[27] Nietzsche: TI "Reason' in Philosophy' s.5. See also: Nietzsche: BGE, preface; HH 'The Wanderer and His Shadow' s.11.

[28] "Only very slowly does man discover how infinitely complicated the world is. At first he considers it to be something quite simple, i.e. something as superficial as he himself is. [...] Man is acquainted with the world to the extent that he is acquainted with himself; i.e. its depth is revealed to him to the extent that he is astonished by himself and his own complexity." Nietzsche: P s.80. See also: Nietzsche: TL p.86.

The above model of language posits consciousness as a late development which emerged in order to facilitate social interaction, and thus survival, in groups of human beings. Prior to the emergence of language, the human being functioned without consciousness of its behaviour; decisions, feelings, and judgments all occurred without self-awareness.[29] Our conscious self-awareness is a gross simplification and distortion of what really goes on within the human being; underlying what we know and are able to know of ourselves is a world of drives, instincts, and sense perceptions which constitutes the basic state of human existence. This is what the human being represents to itself firstly in images, and then labels and ranks as concepts and words.[30] According to Nietzsche, the basic human experience and the starting point of all knowledge is the nerve stimulus, or sense impression. The images that present themselves to consciousness are constructed from these stimuli and are of a completely different nature - nerve impulses are of a different material as well as form from, for instance, colours in a visual field. Also of completely different form and material are the concepts and words used to schematize these otherwise meaningless and confusing images. Nietzsche describes the transition between these different realms as 'metaphorical':

> To begin with, a nerve stimulus is transferred into an image: first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overleaping of one sphere, right into the middle of an entirely new and different one.[31]

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[29] "We could think, feel, will, and remember, and we could also 'act' in every sense of that word, and yet none of all this would have to 'enter our consciousness' [...]. The whole of life would be possible without, as it were, seeing itself in a mirror. Even now, for that matter, by far the greatest portion of our life actually takes place without this mirror effect; and this is true even of our thinking, feeling, and willing life". Nietzsche: GS s.354, also s.179. See also: Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.10.

[30] Nietzsche: TL pp.84-85.

[31] *Ibid.*, p.82.

Because the transference from nerve stimulus to image to language is one between completely incommensurable realms, Nietzsche claims that there can be no causal relation between them. The translation is instead accomplished indirectly, by the subject, who joins two incommensurable things together through association:

> [B]etween two absolutely different spheres, as between subject and object, there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression; there is, at most, an *aesthetic* relation: I mean, a suggestive transference, a stammering translation into a completely foreign tongue - for which there is required, in any case, a freely inventive intermediate sphere and mediating force.[32]

Since it is neither logical nor causal, the relationship between linguistic categories, or the images which they schematize, and human sensory experience cannot be a necessary one. Nietzsche claims that things could, in theory, appear differently to us than they actually do, and that our concepts could divide up and organize these appearances in other ways.[33] However, because we are unaccustomed to viewing the world outside our current conceptual categories, human beings believe that these are the only ones possible, and that this is so because they reflect things as they are in themselves. In other words, human beings believe that they perceive things as they really are, and that language refers directly to these perceived and pre-existing objects and events. Nietzsche claims, by contrast, that the metaphorical and creative nature of the true relationship between nerve impulses, images, and speech does not guarantee correspondence even between basic human sensory experience and the words and concepts used to describe it.

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[32] *Ibid.*, p.86.

[33] "[T]he relationship of a nerve stimulus to the generated image is not a necessary one. But when the same image has been generated millions of times and has been handed down for many generations and finally appears on the same occasion every time for all mankind, then it acquires at last the same meaning for men it would have if it were the sole necessary image and if the relationship of the original nerve stimulus to the generated image were a strictly causal one." *Ibid.*, p.87. See also: Nietzsche: WP s.409; HH vol. 1, s.11; BGE ss.20+268.

If this is the case, still less does the relationship ensure correspondence between either concepts or images and objects beyond the realm of human experience. Nietzsche maintains that our awareness of our sense impressions does not justify an inference to the existence of separately existing objects outside the human being: "From the very beginning we see the images in the eye only *within ourselves*, we hear the sound only *within ourselves* - it is a considerable leap from this to the assumption of an external world."[34] We make this leap because we believe a causal relation holds between things in themselves and our sense impressions, which are then faithfully transcribed into images and then thoughts. Our belief in this causality leads us to believe that actual objects and events correspond to specific concepts. Nietzsche calls the belief that things in themselves are the ultimate cause of our concepts 'metonymy', which he defines as 'confusion of cause and effect'.[35] He argues that it is our linguistic structure, which describes a world organized according to substances, predicates, and causes, that leads us to make the unwarranted inference from concepts to corresponding things in themselves, by designating "the stone itself as hard, the tree itself as green - that is to say, by taking for cause that which is effect."[36] It is not the hardness of the stone that causes us to feel the stone as hard; it is our sensation of hardness that, combined with our use of the explanatory categories subject, predicate, and causality, leads us to attribute the property of hardness to an object, the stone. The attribution of an object causing our sensations is an abstraction; consequently, our concept of the object is an effect of our neural impulses; we, however, believe that our neural impulses are effects of the object. Thus we allow effects on our nervous

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[34] Nietzsche: NB s.217.
[35] *Ibid.*, s.204. See also: Nietzsche: RL p.59; P. s.152.

system to stand for an object that does not exist or, at least, that we have no way of knowing whether it exists or not.[37]

Nietzsche emphasizes the creative and subjective aspects of the translation from nerve stimulus to image to concept and word, and of the extrapolation from nerve stimulus to separately existing thing in itself. For Nietzsche, the lack of causality, logic, or necessity in these movements undermines the ability of language to accurately depict reality:

> One can imagine a man who is totally deaf and has never had a sensation of sound and music. Perhaps such a person will gaze with astonishment at Chladni's sound figures; perhaps he will discover their causes in the vibrations of the string and will now swear that he must know what men mean by 'sound.' It is this way with all of us concerning language: we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things - metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities. In the same way that the sound appears as a sand figure, so the mysterious X of the thing in itself first appears as a nerve stimulus, then as an image, and finally as a sound. Thus the genesis of language does not proceed logically in any case, and all the material within and with which the man of truth, the scientist, and the philosopher later work and build, if not derived from never-never land, is at least not derived from the essence of things.[38]

Nietzsche's critique of language is simultaneously a critique of the cognitive capacities of human beings which, he feels, tend to be vastly overrated.[39] He aims to undermine major explanatory categories by claiming that our conception of the world does not meet, and cannot meet, the standards by which knowledge claims are normally assessed. However, he is clear that in itself this claim is not necessarily a criticism. In fact, as we saw above, Nietzsche explicitly asserts that an illusory

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[36] Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.39.
[37] Lawrence Hinman: "Nietzsche, Metaphor and Truth" pp.179-200 in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43:2 1982, p.188.

relationship to reality is required for survival, and logically necessary.[40] Instead, Nietzsche criticizes the tendency to believe in the epistemological adequacy of language on the grounds that it has negative consequences for the kind of life we are able to lead.[41] The most basic categories that underlie language encourage us to seek causes, an acting agent, and ultimately responsibility and meaning, behind events, none of which Nietzsche believes inhere in the world beyond our conception of it.[42] Nietzsche anticipates that the advent of atheism in Europe will lead to the collapse of these traditional systems of meaning, upon which we have based our sense of the comprehensibility and justness of our existence, and without these he fears that despair and nihilism will follow.[43] In response to this threat, Nietzsche attempts to formulate a philosophy that requires belief in no ultimate significance to events, but allows human beings both to accept the incomprehensibility of the world and to affirm their own existence for its intrinsic worth, rather than for the sake of an illusory transcendent goal.[44] As the main culprits in the perpetuation of the gestalt that seeks meaning and responsibility, the notions of thing in itself and cause and effect need to be overturned - and that, Nietzsche thinks, requires language to change.[45]

Despite its current state of degeneracy, Nietzsche believes that language does have the potential to promote his goal of affirming the immanent and the human. At first glance, it appears to do so already. Language is designed to promote not just the

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[38] Nietzsche: TL pp.82-83. Also: "Logic is merely slavery within the fetters of language. But language includes within itself an illogical element: metaphor, etc." TL p.94. See also: Nietzsche: NB s.75; PTG s.3; WP s.523.
[39] Nietzsche: BGE s.5.
[40] Nietzsche: GS s.107.
[41] Nietzsche: BGE s.4. See also: Nietzsche: A. s.58.
[42] Nietzsche: GS ss.109, 112+121.
[43] *Ibid.*, s.125. See also: Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.16; GM essay 1, s.13; TI 'Morality as Anti-Nature' s.5 and "Reason' in Philosophy' s.1; A s.25.
[44] Nietzsche: GS ss.346-347.

survival of the language-user, but also her dominance over her surroundings and her interpretation of them in terms of herself, thus affirming her needs and her existence. Additionally, language is a creative enterprise. The construction of linguistic categories, which involves placing emphasis on selected aspects of experience and downplaying others, is described by Nietzsche as a creative operation.[46] The interpretive activity of the subject also takes effect in the metaphorical and metonymical transferences fundamental to the creation of language, and of a world of things in themselves, from the brute data of sensory experience. Since Nietzsche counts not just creativity in general, but also the ability to operate metaphorically, as fundamental human drives,[47] affirming the human would appear to be fostered by the exercise of these capacities. However, the notion that language corresponds to pre-existing things in themselves, in addition to fostering nihilism, also frustrates the potentially liberating capacity of language. Nietzsche maintains that our belief in the adequacy of concepts to reality precludes the formation of new concepts and categories, thus stultifying rather than exercising the fundamental human drive for creativity.[48] Furthermore, since for Nietzsche language is created in accordance with the needs and abilities of particular forms of life, it affirms that form of life - but the adoption of a conception of the world formed according to our ancestors' needs does not necessarily affirm our own existence, with its particular requirements.[49] In fact, since language evolved in accordance with the needs of societies of humans, rather than of individuals, it expresses and affirms only what is common to the herd, actually

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[45] Nietzsche: TI "Reason' in Philosophy' s.5.
[46] Nietzsche: P s.55. See also: Nietzsche: RL p.21.
[47] Nietzsche: TL p.89.
[48] Friedrich Nietzsche: "Ecce Homo" in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989) 'Why I am a Destiny' s.4 (hereafter 'EH').
[49] Nietzsche: WP s.319.

repressing what is individual.[50] Additionally, since we have only a warped and selective awareness of our own being, Nietzsche maintains that the belief that we genuinely conform to how we appear to ourselves results in the suppression of those aspects of our humanity of which we are unconscious.[51] In order to affirm one's own existence, rather than that of others, one needs both to impose one's own conceptual structure on the world, and to ensure that that structure is not so rigid as to deny the expression of some parts of one's subconscious nature.

Having presented a model of language as tropic, Nietzsche is left with three possible stances to take towards language. He could claim that the kind of relationship that language holds to the things it claims to describe - that is, a relationship characterized by the creative activity of trope - is epistemologically valid; i.e. it can lead to knowledge of a real world of pre-existing things in themselves, it just cannot do so in the way we normally think it does. He could maintain that human cognition and creativity are inadequate to the world they attempt to understand, but retain the ideal of doing so, thus devaluing thought, language, and the human. Or, he could claim that human cognition and creativity are valuable despite their inability to impart knowledge of a world beyond themselves, thus devaluing the world previously thought to be indicated by language or, more radically, allowing such a world to be disposed of altogether. It is this last course of action that Nietzsche takes, downplaying the importance of the world supposedly indicated by cognition - perhaps even disposing of it entirely - and emphasizing the value of surfaces.

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[50] Nietzsche: GS s.347.
[51] Nietzsche: EH 'Why I am a Destiny' s.4.

The early Nietzsche asserts that language is necessarily incapable of representing things in themselves; as a result, he claims, the characteristics - or even the existence - of things in themselves are completely irrelevant to human beings.[52] Nietzsche's attitude towards the 'real' world is, even at this stage, stronger than merely dismissing its relevance. As we saw above, Nietzsche believes that human beings construct the 'real' world metonymically, using information from their sense impressions to create concepts, to which they attribute actual existence. In the early Nietzsche, the world of appearances, traditionally held to be formed of biased and limited - and hence epistemologically inadequate, or 'illusory' - impressions of an underlying world of real essences, is maintained to be the only world. Later, however, Nietzsche asserts that, since this 'apparent' world is the only one that exists, it cannot be merely apparent after all.[53] In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche claims that "'Reason' is the cause of our falsification of the evidence of the senses. In so far as the senses show becoming, passing away, change, they do not lie [...] The 'apparent' world is the only one: the 'real' world has only been *lyingly added*".[54] The ideal of a world of which knowledge without the interference of interpretation and bias is possible has caused people to devalue the empirical world represented to them by their sensory perceptions. However, the ideal offered by our conceptual abstractions is an empty one. What a thing is is never an objective matter, or a question of discovering an essence behind the perceived properties, but always a construction by an interpreting subject. Instead of denoting actually existing things to which its categories correspond, conceptual knowledge - and thus language - is responsible for the construction of things.

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[52] Nietzsche: TL pp.82-84; HH vol. 1, s.9; GS s.58.
[53] Nietzsche: TI 'How the 'Real World' at last Became a Myth'.
[54] *Ibid.*, "Reason' in Philosophy' s.2. See also: Nietzsche: WP ss.562, 567-568.

Nietzsche's claim is that nothing exists apart from the perspectival interpretations of knowing subjects - no text underlies the various readings.[55] According to Alexander Nehamas: "The unity of each thing, that thing itself, is to be found in the genealogical account that connects one set of phenomena to another."[56] Thus, each 'thing' has its existence only within the perceptions of the various subjects which are related to it.[57] Furthermore, the subject is also constructed artificially at the same time as the object, in the act of perception.[58] Nietzsche hopes that his perspectivism entirely disposes of the thing in itself,[59] thus undermining both our notion that concepts reflect pre-existing realities and our belief in subjects responsible for their actions, which he thinks will lead ultimately to nihilism.

Nietzsche's perspectivism is subject to a number of criticisms,[60] of which the most immediately relevant to our discussion of language as trope is the fact that it comes into contradiction with other statements he makes which seem to indicate that he holds an expressive notion of language and consciousness. If things are the sum total of their effects on other things, then the way they are 'expressed' is not a tropic reflection of what they really are; it *is* what they really are. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to an attempt to make sense of this inconsistency.

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[55] "A 'thing-in-itself' just as perverse as a 'sense-in-itself,' a 'meaning-in-itself.' There are no 'facts-in-themselves,' for a sense must always be projected into them before there can be 'facts.'" Nietzsche: WP s.556.

[56] Nehamas: *op. cit.*, pp.82+104.

[57] Nietzsche: WP ss.556-558. See also: Peter Poellner: *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) p.279f.

[58] Daniel Breazeale: "The Word, the World, and Nietzsche" pp.301-320 in *Philosophical Forum*, 6:2-3, 1974-1975, p.303. Nietzsche claims, for instance, that: "[W]hen I analyse the event expressed in the sentence 'I think', I acquire a series of rash assertions which are difficult, perhaps impossible, to prove - for example, that it is *I* who think, that it has to be something at all which thinks, that thinking is an activity and operation on the part of an entity thought of as a cause". Nietzsche: BGE s.16. See also: Nietzsche: WP s.556

[59] Nietzsche: BGE s.12.

Daniel Breazeale presents Nietzsche's position in the following way: having analysed language in such a way as to undermine its adequacy according to traditional epistemological criteria, Nietzsche is left with four possible courses of action. He can: 1) propose to invent a new language that is adequate to the facts; 2) abandon language as a source of knowledge; 3) assert that the realization of our dependence on language to mediate knowledge mitigates this dependence; 4) accept this dependence.[61] Breazeale claims that Nietzsche eventually accepts option 3). According to Breazeale, Nietzsche bases his rejection of 1) on the impossibility of private language, but it seems to me that this choice is precluded not only by Nietzsche's belief in the necessity of rendering our own experiences equal to those of others in order to communicate, but also by his conviction that language necessarily simplifies and divides up experience even before this 'vulgarization'. The possibility of inventing a language that represents its object fully, without the distortion entailed by the metaphorical and metonymical relationships inherent in language, also seems beyond the bounds of the possible within Nietzsche's philosophy. Option 2) is also unavailable to Nietzsche - as we have already seen, since consciousness emerged in order to enable communication, it mirrors the structure of language and, therefore, cognition is not possible without language.

I agree with Breazeale that Nietzsche tries to model his solution on 3) - for instance, he claims that an illusion that does not deny its illusory nature is less damaging and deceitful than illusion that pretends to mediate truth. As we have seen, Nietzsche's critique of language is motivated by the claim that belief in the adequacy of its

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[60] Maudemarie Clark: *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp.118-119; Poellner, *op. cit.*, p.279.
[61] Breazeale: *op. cit.*, pp.309-310.

conceptual categories has negative repercussions.[62] However, a problem that immediately arises whenever someone makes a claim about the inability of language to mediate truth is the question of the status of the claim itself. Breazeale asks how Nietzsche thinks it is possible to become aware of the limitations of language without in the process exceeding them.[63] If no knowledge is possible beyond language, how can Nietzsche claim to know that language does not correspond to reality? How can he use language to claim as much? This paradox renders questionable many other statements that Nietzsche makes during his argument: that creativity is a fundamental human drive; that human beings are more complex than they appear to themselves; that the world in itself is not divisible into objects and events; that causality, things in themselves and properties do not actually exist, and so on. Space does not allow this issue to be explored thoroughly here; despite the large amounts of discussion it has engendered, no consensus as to a solution (or to the impossibility of a solution) is in sight. One proposed answer that is relevant to Breazeale's argument, and helps elucidate the perspectivism-expressivism problem, is offered by Paul de Man, who suggests that, rather than making its point about the limitations of language directly, Nietzsche's writing does so through an allegorical and ironic repetition of the same mistakes that its actual statements critique. In trying to make language express what is beyond its capabilities to express, Nietzsche's text mirrors the error he claims is commonly made about language's ability to represent really existing things, thus providing an allegory for the way language, and our beliefs about language, function. The self-conscious use of this technique, the text's awareness of its own inadequacy,

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[62] Nietzsche: GS s.295.
[63] Breazeale: *op. cit.*, p.313.

and the self-refuting nature of its argument, mean that Nietzsche's writing is also characterized by irony:

> A non-referential, repetitive text narrates the story of a literally destructive but non-tragic linguistic event. We could call this rhetorical mode [...] an ironic allegory - but only if we understand 'irony' more in the sense of Friedrich Schlegel than of Thomas Mann.[64]

However, Nietzsche's perspectivism seems to entail that this technique is alien to his philosophy; his insistence that there exists no 'real' world to which language could potentially point, whether directly or figuratively, should render language necessarily autonomous and self-referential.[65] Nietzsche's attempt to dispose of a world which could be falsified by human experience means that he presents a model of meaning in which meaning does not operate by reference, but is holistic and relational. Aesthetic considerations are introduced by which to gauge the ability of particular kinds of self-expression to foster an affirmative life-view.[66] That Nietzsche's affirmation of the immanent results in a conception of language which focuses on the relationships within language, rather than between language and things beyond it, is indicated by his late work *The Case of Wagner*. In this text, Nietzsche emphasizes the rhythmic, stylistic and melodic aspects of music at the expense of the dramatic, by which he means the tendency, noticeable in Wagner, to use music in order to signify things beyond it. According to Nietzsche, Wagner "repeated a single proposition all his life long: that his music did not mean mere music. But more. But infinitely more. - '*Not*

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[64] De Man: *op. cit.*, p.43.
[65] Norman: *op. cit.*, pp.515-517+519.
[66] "One thing is needful. - To 'give style' to one's character - a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye". Nietzsche: GS s.290. See also: Nietzsche: BGE s.28.

mere music' - no musician would say that."[67] Nietzsche feels that the value of the music itself is lessened by its use as a means to suggest something else:

> I can no longer breathe with ease when this music begins to have its effect upon me; that my foot soon begins to feel indignant at it and rebels: for what it needs is time, dance, march: even the young German Kaiser could not march to Wagner's Imperial March [...]. But does not my stomach, my heart, my circulation also protest? Are not my intestines also troubled? Do I not become hoarse unawares? [...] And then I ask myself, what is it that my whole body must have from music in general? for there is no such thing as a soul . . . I believe it must have relief: as if all animal functions were accelerated by means of light, bold, unfettered, self-reliant rhythms; as if brazen and leaden life could lose its weight by means of delicate and smooth melodies. My melancholy would fain rest its head in the haunts and abysses of perfection: for this reason I need music. But Wagner makes one ill[.][68]

Instead of allowing music to express itself, to simply be a surface, Wagner requires music to mediate concepts, in much the same way as we believe language does, thus replacing the intrinsic worth of the melody with value as a means.[69] Nietzsche ends *The Case of Wagner* with three 'demands', the last of which is: "That music should not become an art of lying."[70] Nietzsche desires that music should retain its non-representational characteristics, in order not to falsely claim to indicate anything beyond itself. According to Nietzsche, our current conception of language as mediating extra-linguistic truth results in a false understanding of the real nature of the world, which is in fact entirely relational and constructed through interpretation.

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[67]Friedrich Nietzsche: "The Case of Wagner" in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner* (New York: Random House, 1967) s.10 (hereafter 'CW').

[68] Friedrich Nietzsche: "Nietzsche Contra Wagner" in Levy: *The Case of Wagner* (New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1964) 'Wherein I Raise Objections' (Hereafter 'NCW'). See also: Nietzsche: GS s.368.

[69] "Wagner was *not* a musician by instinct. He showed this by abandoning all lawfulness and, more precisely, all style in music in order to turn it into what he required, theatrical rhetoric, a means of expression, of underscoring gestures of suggestion, of the psychologically picturesque. Here we may consider Wagner an inventor and innovator of the first rank - *he has increased music's capacity for language to the point of making it immeasurable.*" Nietzsche: CW s.8.

[70] *Ibid.*, s.12.

In order to retain its intrinsic worth, rather than a spurious extrinsic value, perhaps language should not be expected to convey truth, but should instead be free to create meaning in the interplay of words.

To return to de Man's claim that Nietzsche's text forms an 'ironic allegory' for the mistakes about language that he wishes to point out, it would appear that Nietzsche's insistence on the value of non-signifying surfaces and his denial of the adequacy of trope to mediate knowledge makes it unlikely that he chooses to use either allegory or Romantic irony as a form of expression. On the other hand, Nietzsche's model of language includes not one, but three realms of human experience, and the realm of language certainly seems to signify something human, however inadequately. For Nietzsche, the worlds of human sensory experience and subconscious imagistic representation pass into consciousness and language through metaphor. Furthermore, Nietzsche's apparent intention that language should be treated as something entirely self-referential and aesthetic comes into contradiction with his evaluation of this surface-language on the basis of the kind of life it expresses. The following claim, made by Nietzsche, suggests an expressive slant to the notion of language as a surface in which meaning is created through rhythm:

> To communicate a state, an inward tension of pathos, by means of signs, including the tempo of these signs – that is the meaning of every style [...]. *Good* is any style that really communicates an inward state, that makes no mistake about the signs, the tempo of the signs, the gestures[.][71]

A closer look at Nietzsche's theory of language reveals that language, for Nietzsche, is fundamentally expressive, and is so on a tropic basis. If, as we saw above, language constitutes a metaphorical representation of an imagistic subconscious realm, itself a

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[71] Nietzsche: EH 'Why I Write Such Good Books" s.4.

metaphor for sense impressions, language can be seen as a metaphorical expression of the human perceptual and sensory apparatus.[72] If this is the case, then de Man's claim that language represents by allegory may turn out to be compatible with Nietzsche's thought after all, if it is perceived as the idea that the rhythm of words may reflect the interrelationships of unconscious human existence.[73] Unfortunately, this expressive notion of language does not reconcile easily with Nietzsche's perspectivism.

Some commentators suggest that Nietzsche's move away from traditional metaphysical models in which conceptual thought allows us to abstract from inadequate perceptual experience to a true realm of things in themselves results in his claim that no world of things in themselves exists and, consequently, that perceptual experience is basic and conceptual thought - and language - build a false world.[74] The metaphorical relationship between concepts and sensory experience is not an adequate basis upon which to ground knowledge of the latter which, Nietzsche insists, is of a different character to how it appears in thought. As Clark points out, this interpretation of Nietzsche shows him to retain a correspondence notion of truth, only between concepts and sensations, rather than between concepts or sensations and an external world of things in themselves. Clark believes that, because on Nietzsche's model sensory experience is constituted by relations rather than things in themselves, Nietzsche does not think that this realm constitutes a metaphysical, or 'real' world and,

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[72] See Sarah Kofman: *Nietzsche and Metaphor* (London: The Athlone Press, 1993) pp.26-27+138-139; Claudia Crawford:*The Beginnings of Nietzsche's Theory of Literature* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988) p.x.

[73] Nietzsche's notion of style does not refer exclusively to linguistic self-representation, but to actions in general. Speech is considered one of many forms of self-actualization or externalization.

[74] Stephen Houlgate: *Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (Cambridge, London, & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986) pp.51-57.

therefore, that questions of truth are irrelevant.[75] Despite this, it would appear that Nietzsche has merely substituted a real world of human perceptions, characterized by dynamism, for one of external objects, characterized by atomism. More importantly for us, the question remains as to the relationship between the realms of human experience. Even if there is no extra-human world to be falsified, the self-referential paradox has not been solved: if thought is not possible outside linguistic concepts, how does Nietzsche know that the more basic spheres of image or sensory experience differ from how they appear to us?

According to Stephen Houlgate, Nietzsche believes that an intuitive awareness of the inadequacy of concepts to the complexities of sense data is possible, and that knowledge can point towards this 'metaphorically'.[76] This claim warrants a number of comments. First of all, we know that Nietzsche does not believe that immediate awareness - even of their own unconscious natures - is available to human beings. Houlgate insists that 'intuitive awareness' is not identical to 'immediate knowledge', but it is not clear to me what the difference is. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine how else Nietzsche is able to realize the essential inadequacy of concepts to more basic human experience. There does not seem to be an escape from this difficulty. The latter part of Houlgate's claim is just as problematic and, moreover, appears to contradict the first by invoking a completely separate form of knowledge - representation - from that of intuition, in order to explain how Nietzsche may be able to indicate the epistemological gap between thought and sensation. Still more problematically, although Nietzsche certainly does claim that the conceptual realm contains a metaphorical image of the realm of perceptual experience and, as such,

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[75] Clark: *op. cit.*, pp.88-89.

points towards it tropically, it is for this very reason - because the world of concepts can only indicate the world of sense data metaphorically - that Nietzsche criticizes it as inadequate.[77] The metaphorical knowledge available to us can hardly be responsible for pointing out the inadequacies of its own metaphoricity.

In any case, it would appear that we must modify our claim that Nietzsche maintains that language is only a surface, which improvises within itself rather than mirroring something beneath, behind, or beyond it. Since Nietzsche is clear that the connection between language and the subconscious substratum of human experience is characterized by trope, we must conclude that he believes it is possible - and desirable - for human beings to express their subconscious natures tropically through their conscious selves. Nietzsche's belief that this tropic expression is necessarily inadequate to its object explains his advocacy of a constant revision of conceptual structures, and thus of forms of self-expression. To avoid suppressing aspects of one's personality, one should not rest for too long in any one role:

> Everything habitual draws around us an ever firmer net of spider-webs; and soon we notice that the threads have become cords [...]. That is why the free spirit hates all habituation and rules, everything enduring and definitive, that is why he sorrowfully again and again rends apart the net that surrounds him.[78]

At first, the idea that the forms of expression adopted by human beings function like masks seems to give weight to the suggestion that the relationship between linguistic - or other - expression and subject is allegorical. However, Nietzsche maintains that the

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[76] Houlgate: *op. cit.*, p.52.

[77] "However, there are no 'real' expression and *no real knowing without metaphor*." Nietzsche: NB s.228;P s.149.

[78] Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.427, also s.483. Also: "Convictions are prisons [...] Freedom from convictions of any kind, the *capacity* for an unconstrained view, *pertains* to strength [...]". Nietzsche: A s.54; "Profound aversion to reposing once and for all in any one total view of the

subject is not only represented by the mask it wears; it actually *is* that mask: "It is a sign of a broken instinct when man sees the driving force and its 'expression' ('the mask') as separate things".[79] Nietzsche's perspectivism entails that human beings are constituted by how they are perceived by others - the subject is no more than the sum of its actions. Consequently, who one is is a question of what mask one is wearing. If that is the case, it makes no sense to claim that communicating with others, or any other form of self-expression, fails to represent one's humanity in all its individuality and complexity. However, Nietzsche's insistence on a continual recreation of conceptual systems, if anything, becomes even more important, as remaining within one conceptual system does not just fail to reveal aspects of the subject; it actually results in the subject itself being limited by the form in which it currently appears. Irony, therefore, can be seen to characterize Nietzsche's thought whether or not this paradox can be resolved; however, it does not take the form of Romantic irony as indicated by de Man. The subject's awareness that it a) can never express itself adequately, or b) constructs itself in its own self-expression, and its consequent refusal to be trapped within one role, constitutes the ironic moment in Nietzsche's philosophy. Irony, in Nietzsche's theory of language, forms an incentive to continually reassess and creatively alter conceptual categories - not in order to approach an underlying truth (such a thing is logically impossible) - but in order to avoid becoming trapped by any one particular falsehood.[80]

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world. Fascination of the opposing point of view: refusal to be deprived of the stimulus of the enigmatic." Nietzsche: WP s.470, also s.452. See also: Nietzsche: TI 'Maxims and Arrows' s.423.

[79] Nietzsche: WP s.377. See also: Nietzsche: GM essay 1, s.13; GS s.58.

[80] "He who has attained to only some degree of freedom of mind cannot feel other than a wanderer on the earth - though not as a traveller *to* a final destination: for this destination does not exist. But he will watch and observe and keep his eyes open to see what is really going on in the world; for this reason he may not let his heart adhere too firmly to any individual thing; within him too there must be something

As regards allegory, however, the combination of Nietzsche's perspectivism with his expressivism provides an interesting paradox. He appears to claim that the subject is as it expresses itself, and yet that there exist hidden depths which it can never perceive or express. The trope allegory can only apply to Nietzsche's theory of language if his expressivism is allowed to overshadow his perspectivism. If his perspectivism is emphasized, language is not only not allegorical, but it cannot be tropic in any sense other than that of irony, since trope presupposes representation, signification, and meaning, all of which require an underlying object to be represented, signified, and meant.

Where does this leave us? We have discussed six tropes, four of which - synecdoche, analogy, metaphor and metonymy - Nietzsche uses to characterize language; but we must add the caveat that this results in a model of language incompatible with Nietzsche's later perspectivism. I will here summarize how Nietzsche believes these four tropes operate in language:

For Nietzsche, language is synecdochal because of its selectivity; only certain aspects of experience are used to construct categories within consciousness, thus creating a part-whole relationship between concepts, or words, and the artificially delineated objects or events which they are supposed to represent. From its very beginnings, therefore, language is essentially incapable of mediating understanding of how things really are.

The use of experiences with which we are familiar to describe and assimilate new experiences in order to increase our feeling of control means that the world is

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wandering that takes pleasure in change and transience." Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.637; "That there should be a 'truth' which one could somehow approach -!" Nietzsche: WP s.451.

understood by analogy to our conscious comprehension of what it is to be human. This comprehension is, however, as partial and inadequate as our comprehension of any other aspect of the world.

Nietzsche presents language as metaphorical insofar as he maintains that no causal relation inheres between language and sensory images, or between these images and original sense perceptions. Instead, he claims, this relationship is one of connotation, or 'suggestive transference', which he equates with metaphor. For Nietzsche, a metaphorical link does not constitute a firm ground for knowledge.

The metonymical nature of language stems from its use of concepts, constructed from basic sensory data, to extrapolate to the existence of separately existing things in themselves corresponding to these concepts. Nietzsche holds that this inference is unjustified.

These four tropes contribute to Nietzsche's belief that our knowledge-claims are inadequate, which results in his emphasis on surfaces and his refusal to remain limited by any one interpretation of our experiences. Unfortunately for a clear understanding of Nietzsche's intentions, he does not relinquish his denial of the ability of language to completely or accurately express the individuality and complexity of the language-user despite his extension of his dynamism to the subject, thus both implying and denying that a pre-existing subject exists beneath its actions. The investigation of de Man's claim that Nietzsche's writings are allegorical illustrates this difficulty.

Although the impossibility of integrating Nietzsche's perspectivism with his expressivism introduces complexities into the characterization of Nietzsche's theory of language, it does not undermine the claim that Nietzsche sees language and consciousness as a tropic expression of the subconscious human being. This notion

exists side by side with his perspectivism, and Nietzsche himself seems unaware of the paradox. Our conclusion that Nietzsche characterizes language as trope must, therefore, include the caveat that Nietzsche's notion of language is not a stable one, but is beset by internal contradictions. Worse, from a Nietzschean point of view, it does not appear to offer a genuinely affirmative model of human existence; in fact, quite the contrary; it suggests that human beings are necessarily alienated from themselves, each other, and the world. Nietzsche draws the conclusion from his tropic conception of language that the partiality and incommensurability of any linguistic mask to the one who wears it means that complete expression, self-revelation or genuine communication is impossible. Human beings are essentially misunderstood and, consequently, isolated. Eventually, Nietzsche's attempt to formulate an affirmative philosophy of the surface is reduced to the call for an acceptance of, and rejoicing in, one's own impenetrable individuality:

> A great man - a man whom nature has constructed and invented in the grand style - what is he? [...] he wants no 'sympathetic' heart, but servants, tools [...]. He knows he is incommunicable: he finds it tasteless to be familiar; and when one thinks he is, he usually is not. When not speaking to himself, he wears a mask.[81]

[81] Nietzsche: WP s.962. Also: "Every profound spirit needs a mask: more, around every profound spirit a mask is continually growing, thanks to the constantly false, that is to say *shallow* interpretation of every word he speaks, every step he takes, every sign of life he gives." Nietzsche: BGE s.40.

Novalis: Theory of Language

Like Nietzsche, Novalis' conception of language is closely tied up with his critique of traditional forms of epistemology. In this chapter, we will investigate how Novalis sees knowledge as dependent on a system of signs which partially represent their objects, thus making our understanding of the world both linguistic and tropic. According to Novalis, not just human speech, but every aspect of nature functions as a tropic language: objects and events are signs of themselves, each other, and the absolute spirit within them. Human language, as a natural phenomenon, also signifies this divine essence; additionally, it expresses the inner being of the language-user, which in turn forms another expression of the absolute. As a result, language expresses the human, the natural world, and the divine, and can be said to do so through trope - specifically, through the tropes metonymy, synecdoche, allegory, irony and analogy. We will find that Novalis believes that language is capable of functioning successfully as communication through trope, but that the dominance of a literalistic notion of language disguises both the ability of language to mediate truth and the unity and divine inner essence of human beings and nature.

Novalis' model of the world is one in which every phenomenon is a communication. Natural phenomena are signs both of their own inner essence, and of the essence of the absolute spirit that Novalis believes lies behind all physical phenomena, and which he sometimes calls God.[1] Human beings, animals, plants, rocks - in short, every aspect of the physical world - symbolize and signify a spiritual reality hidden within them, and thus form a natural and universal language. The

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[1] Friedrich von Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.27; Hardenberg: "General Draft" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.31.

tropic nature of this universal signification can be clarified with reference to the medieval Christian tradition of Biblical exegesis. According to the medieval scholastics, the events described literally in the Bible themselves have meaning, referred to as their spiritual meaning:

> The outer Scripture is the literal sense, which is more obvious, since it is signified immediately through the words; the inner Scripture is the mystic or spiritual sense, which is more hidden, since it is designated through the things signified by those words.[2]

Human beings can signify things using language but, according to this exegetical tradition, God can also signify using natural phenomena.[3] God speaks to human beings through the events of the Bible which are, consequently, revelations of and communications from God. The words of Scripture describe actually occurring historical phenomena; it is these phenomena which, interpreted allegorically, morally, and anagogically, respectively describe characteristics of Christ, provide guidelines for Christian living, and prefigure the events of Christian eschatology.[4]

At its height, this tradition of exegesis held that not only the events described in Scripture, but all natural events as well as objects, held spiritual meaning and could be interpreted in these three figurative senses. Umberto Eco refers to this as a 'panmetaphorical attitude', and explains this philosophy as claiming that:

> In a universe that is nothing other than an emanative outpouring from the unknowable and unnameable One down to the furthest ramifications of matter, every being functions as a synecdoche or metonymy of the One.[5]

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[2] Nicholas of Lyra, cited in Henri de Lubac: *Medieval Exegesis, vol 1: The Four Senses of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, and Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998) p.34.

[3] A.J. Minnis: "*Quadruplex Sensus, Multiplex Modus*: Scriptural Sense and Mode in Medieval Scholastic Exegesis" in Whitman (ed.): *Interpretation and Allegory: Antiquity to the Modern Period* (Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2000) p.233.

[4] These three spiritual senses were the most frequently used by the medieval scholastics, although there were alternative schemes. See de Lubac, *op. cit.*, ch.2: 'The Opposing Lists'.

The relationship of the world to God is thus that of a trope, mirroring aspects of spiritual and divine reality in physical form. This model is adopted by Novalis, who also describes the physical universe as a tropic communication: "The world is a *universal trope* of the spirit - a symbolic picture of it".[6] Because a direct and unmediated awareness of absolute spirit is impossible, knowledge of the divine can only take place through the things of the physical world, which can be used to stand for it in understanding. According to this model, therefore, the most fundamental characteristic of the phenomenal world is that of a metonymical revelation of the divine. For Novalis, the language of nature was originally legible to human beings.[7] It was once possible, or is ideally possible, for humans to understand the spiritual meaning of the sign-language of physical objects and historical events. For reasons which we shall explore later in this chapter, Novalis believes we have lost this ability:

> Everything we experience is a *communication*. Thus the world is indeed a *communication* - a revelation of the spirit. The age has passed when the spirit of God could be understood. The meaning of the world is lost. We have stopped at the letter. As a result of the appearance we have lost that which is appearing.[8]

This loss has serious implications for humanity, not least because, as physical phenomena, human beings are also a part of this sign-language.[9] The inability to read and understand nature thus entails a loss of self-understanding. In their departure from the universal revelatory dialogue, humans have become cut off from the rest of nature and from themselves, and so from communication with the divine.

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[5] Eco: *op. cit.*, p.103.
[6] Hardenberg: "Teplitz Fragments" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.25.
[7] Hardenberg: *The Novices of Sais* (New York: Archipelago Books, 2005) pp.112-113.
[8] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.54. Also: Hardenberg (2005) *op. cit.*, pp.3-5.
[9] "What is a human being? A perfect trope of the spirit". Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.5.

Novalis believes that misunderstandings about the workings of reason and language are largely responsible for this alienation, and he constructs an alternative conception of epistemology and language. He discovers serious problems in traditional attempts to ground understanding in direct awareness of pre-existing metaphysical objects. According to Novalis, all human knowledge takes the form of knowledge of the representations of things; consequently, cognition operates at a remove from the object.[10] In order to know something, it is necessary to represent it to oneself as an object of consciousness. We do not have an awareness of how things are beyond ourselves; we are aware only of how they appear to us as a result of our sensory information, as images before our mind. Only the properties of things effect our senses, and it is only these properties that we can know; the inference from properties to an essence underlying them is an abstraction: "Only an *exposition* of essence is possible. Essence is absolutely not cognizable".[11] Furthermore, these properties do not exist in themselves, but are the results of effects upon the subject's sensory apparatus, and thus constituted not by the object alone, but by the relation of subject to object: "A thing thus affects in virtue of its original properties - Its properties of this sort are, however, only the common products of the thing in itself and of the subject".[12] What we seek when we look for knowledge of a thing is thus not how it is in itself but how it appears to us, and as such is a question about our understanding of an object, rather than the object itself: "When I ask what a thing is, I am asking about its representation and intuition - *I* am wondering only about *myself*."[13]

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[10] Hardenberg: *Fichte Studies* (Cambridge, New York & Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2003) s.522.
[11] *Ibid.*, s.438. See also ss.437+454-455.
[12] *Ibid.*, s.472.
[13] *Ibid.*, s.373, also s.566.

Since objects are understood as representations within the subject, the world is known to the subject not as an external thing, but as part of itself. The ability to extrapolate from these representations to externally existing objects is one which Novalis claims is present in all conscious beings. He calls this ability 'genius': "When we speak of the external world, when we depict real objects, then we are acting as genius does. Thus genius is the ability to treat imaginary objects like real ones, and to deal with them as if they were real as well."[14] Similarities to Nietzsche's claim that conceptual knowledge is 'metonymical' are evident here, although Novalis does not use this term. This area of apparent convergence will be discussed in the next chapter.

According to the model put forward by Novalis, knowledge is necessarily both appropriative and disjunctive. It is not possible to have knowledge of something as it is in itself; rather, objects are known as representations which exist within the subject. Nature's revelation of the divine is thus a revelation which, insofar as it appears to the subject, does so as a part of the subject. This means that, as signs which indicate something beyond themselves, our representations of natural phenomena are themselves linguistic. Additionally, it means that knowledge of the object requires its appropriation by the subject, as it brings it within itself as representation.[15] Finally, it means that self-knowledge is necessary for knowledge of the non-self: "We dream of traveling through the universe - but is not the universe *within ourselves*? The depths of our spirit are unknown to us - the mysterious way leads inwards."[16]

On the other hand, since knowledge requires representation, self-knowledge also requires that the self represent the self to itself as object; as not-self:

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[14] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.22.
[15] Hardenberg: (2003) *op. cit.*, s.568.

> Only through representation does anything become *clear*. One understands a thing most easily if one sees it represented. In this way one understands the self only in so far as it is represented by the nonself. The nonself is the symbol of the self, and serves only for the self-understanding of the self. Conversely, one understands the nonself only in so far as it is represented by the self and as this becomes its symbol.[17]

As a result, knowledge requires the disjunction of the known from the knower as well as its appropriation by the knower. A separation between the knowing subject and its representations of the world is logically necessary for contemplation to be possible. The same applies to the subject's knowledge of itself. For Novalis, at the same time as the object appears within the subject as part of itself, the subject also appears in nature as object. The activity of human beings in the world expresses their own spirit and, if they had not lost the ability to do so, they would be able to read the meaning in these actions in the same way as they could read the meaning of the things of nature:

> Various are the roads of man. He who follows and compares them will see strange figures emerge, figures which seem to belong to that great cipher which we discern written everywhere, in wings, eggshells, clouds and snow, in crystals and in stone formations, on ice-covered waters, on the inside and outside of mountains, of plants, beasts and men, in the lights of heaven, on scored disks of pitch or glass or in iron filings round a magnet, and in strange conjectures of chance. In them we suspect a key to the magic writing, even a grammar, but our surmise takes on no definite forms and seems unwilling to become a higher key.[18]

Because each represents the other within itself, subject and object, human and nature, are analogous constructions, or mirror-images of each other.[19] Novalis claims that:

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[16] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.17. Also: "We shall understand the world when we understand ourselves, because we and it are integral *halves*." Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.71.

[17] Hardenberg: "General Draft" *op. cit.*, s.1.

[18] Hardenberg (2005) *op. cit.*, p.3. See also: Géza von Molnár: "The Composition of Novalis' Die Lehrlinge zu Sais: A Reevaluation" pp.1002-1014 in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 85:5, 1970, p.1005.

[19] Géza von Molnár: *Romantic Vision, Ethical Context: Novalis and Artistic Autonomy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) p.195; Alice Kuzniar: "Reassessing Romantic Reflexivity: The Case of Novalis", pp.77-86 in *The Germanic Review*, 63:2, 1988 p.80.

> Our inner world must thoroughly correspond to the outer world, down to the smallest detail - because they are set up in opposition to each other in the whole. What is opposed to itself in the one case is reversed in the other[.][20]

Nature is: "An encyclopedic systematic index or plan of our spirit",[21] while: "The human being is a source of analogy for the universe".[22] Consequently, not only the shape of our own lives as they emerge through our self-expressive activity in the world, but also the forms of nature, are analogues of our inner spirit. Understanding nature, therefore, leads to a revelation not only of the divine, but also of the self.[23] The ability to achieve true understanding either of oneself or of nature thus results in the realization of the profound indivisibility of subject and object, which are both expressions of the absolute unity of spirit that lies behind all phenomena.[24]

Currently, however, we are unable to read the language of nature or decipher the figures of our own lives inscribed in the natural world. Novalis claims that the prevailing scientific and empirical mindset means that people do not realize that their knowledge is of images of things, rather than of things themselves, and results in their conviction that their conceptual categories relate to real divisions and distinctions between objects and events. The forms of knowledge usually accepted by human beings as valid represent a deception as to the real characteristics of nature:

> All the superstition and error of all ages, peoples, and individuals rests on confusion of the *symbol* with what is symbolized - on regarding them as identical - on the belief in genuine, complete representation - and the relation between the image and the original - the appearance and the substance - on inference from external resemblance - on generally acknowledged inner

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[20] Hardenberg: (2003) *op. cit.*, s.653.
[21] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.27.
[22] Hardenberg: "Teplitz Fragments" *op. cit.*, s.43. See also: Hardenberg: "On Goethe" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.32; Hardenberg: *Henry von Ofterdingen* (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1992) Klingsohr's Tale, p.140.
[23] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.2.
[24] Von Molnár (1970) *op. cit.*, p.1005.

> agreement and connection - in short, on repeated confusion of subject and object.[25]

The mistaken belief that the images that we use to represent the world to ourselves are in fact the things themselves is linked to the equally erroneous belief that spoken and written language designates actually existing aspects of an external world. Our representations, which are only images of the properties of things, themselves created by the relationship between subject and object, present the world in the form of rigidly categorized, enduring separate entities, rather than as a living, changing organism. Novalis claims that this dismemberment is a result of the inability of human beings to cope with the fluidity of nature as it is in itself.[26] For Novalis, nature is a unity that cannot be divided into enduring objects and discrete events. In seeking knowledge of the world, we have taken a wrong turn: "scientists have cut into the inner structure [of nature] and sought after the relations between its members. Under their hands friendly nature died, leaving behind only dead, quivering remnants".[27] In language, humans name aspects of their experience, perpetuating the illusion that nature reflects their conceptual categories. As a result, it is difficult for human beings to perceive the fundamental unity of the world, or their own participation in this unity. The belief that their relationship to concepts is a relationship to the objects of nature has caused humans to become alienated from the real world in which they live.[28] Because of the analogous construction of self and world, this alienation precludes both self-understanding and knowledge of the absolute, of which self and nonself are tropes.

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[25] Hardenberg: "General Draft" *op. cit.*, s.36.
[26] Kenneth Scott Calhoon: "Language and Irony in Novalis' Die Lehrlinge zu Sais" pp.51-61 in *The Germanic Review*, 56:2, 1981, pp.51 + 54-55.
[27] Hardenberg: (2005) *op. cit.*, pp.25-27.
[28] Von Molnár (1970) *op. cit.*, p.1006.

Since the conceptual categories isolated and identified by language are artificial divisions of the integrated totality of the universe, it would seem that they must be useless for communicating knowledge of the world. Novalis is clear that if we try to take language literally - that is, if we expect words to directly designate actually existing objects and discrete events - we will only succeed in perpetuating our alienation from, and ignorance of, nature: "One can only marvel at the ridiculous mistake that people make when they think - that they speak for the sake of things."[29] The attempt to use language to directly communicate specific things about the world is doomed to failure.[30] The fact that language does not refer directly is not, in itself, a criticism. Rather, the problem occurs when people fail to realize this inability, and believe that the things described by language are real objects of which it is possible to have knowledge.

Despite its inability to directly represent actually existing things, Novalis claims that language is capable of mediating knowledge and that it does so through trope. The Romantics' use of irony and allegory to communicate is well known, and we will discuss these tropes in a moment. Before we do so, I would like to present an argument for the claim that synecdoche also plays a role in Novalis' conception of successful communication through language. According to Novalis, knowledge is mediated through association, rather than direct reference, and he claims that the range of possible associative relationships is unlimited. The result is that every natural phenomenon is capable of acting as a synecdoche for the whole of nature:

> In our mind everything is connected in the most particular, pleasing, and vivid way. The strangest things come together through one place, one time, one

[29] Hardenberg: "Monologue" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997).
[30] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.15.

> strange resemblance, a mistake, some kind of chance. Thus strange unions and peculiar combinations arise - and one thing reminds us of everything - it becomes the sign of many and is itself signified and called forth by many.[31]

Novalis is committed to the validity of such associative connections, and consequently believes that the representation of any part of the universe provides access to the world as a whole, indicating that in his opinion, language functions successfully through synecdoche. This is the case in human language as well as in the symbol-language of nature: in using words for some parts of experience, language is capable of calling to mind every other part. However, usually language-users make a mistake about the capabilities of speech, believing that they use signs to represent isolated parts of the universe rather than realizing that the true nature of these signs is to be synecdochal representations of the whole. A true understanding of the nature of language reveals that, while a literal interpretation perpetuates the artificial division of the universe into separately existing objects and events, a figurative interpretation of a piece of speech or writing is actually capable of overcoming these divisions and mediating knowledge of the fundamental interconnectedness of all things. In other words, the true object of a piece of language is not a limited group of objects and events existing within the world, but the universe as a whole.

For Novalis, language's capacity to reveal truths is a result of its ironic and allegorical nature. In his short essay, "Monologue", he makes the following claim:

> The particular quality of language, the fact that it is concerned only with itself, is known to no one. Language is such a marvelous and fruitful secret - because when someone speaks merely for the sake of speaking, he utters the most splendid, most original truths. But if he wants to speak about something definite, capricious language makes him say the most ridiculous and confused stuff. [...] If one could only make people understand that it is the same with language as with mathematical formulae. These constitute a world of their

[31] Hardenberg: "Last Fragments" in Stoljar (ed.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1997) s.34.

> own. They play only with themselves, express nothing but their own marvelous nature, and just for this reason they are so expressive - just for this reason the strange play of relations between things is mirrored in them. Only through their freedom are they elements of nature and only in their free movements does the world soul manifest itself in them and make them a sensitive measure and ground plan of things.[32]

Novalis presents language as self-referential, autonomous, and self-expressive. It is in this self-expression, rather than in denotation, that language is able to communicate truths. Kristin Pfefferkorn claims that, for Novalis: "human language, having been created in the image of God's spirit as man himself was created in His likeness, reflects the essential being of the world as it was established by God's world-creating word."[33] As part of the world, language possesses the same internal structure as does the universe and, consequently, is able to express the divine in the same way that other natural phenomena do. Furthermore, because language is an activity of the subject in the realm of the object, language also forms an externalization, and thus an expression, of the language-user: "Every person has his own language. Language is the expression of the spirit."[34] Language, in other words, provides analogical access to the speaker, the physical world, and the absolute spirit behind it. Attempting to use language literally, or referentially, disguises this ability. One should be careful not to make language "disappear in what it signifies", but rather allow it "to say (itself) in letting (itself) be said"[35] and, in doing so, say what cannot be said literally.

Since the capacity of language to represent truthfully is not related to its ability to designate, Novalis sees meaning as emerging from the position of words within a whole. As with music, the sense of the whole comes from the relationships between

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[32] Hardenberg: "Monologue" *op. cit.*

[33] Kristen Pfefferkorn: *Novalis: A Romantic's Theory of Language and Poetry* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1988) pp.60-61.

parts, while the parts derive significance from their relation to the whole.[36] The rhythm, sound, or style of language - its form, rather than its content - is what gives it meaning and allows it to express the inner essence of human, nature, and spirit:

> [A]nyone who is sensitive to its [language's] fingering, its rhythm, its musical spirit, who perceives within himself the delicate working of its inner nature, and moves his tongue or his hand accordingly, will be a prophet[.][37]

By contrast to the empirical mindset which, in artificially dividing up and categorizing the world, obscures its meaning as a revelation of the divine, a poetic understanding of language imposes no rigid references on words, thus enabling the free self-expression through language of human, world, and spirit:

> If the philosopher only orders everything, places everything, the poet would loosen all bonds. His words are not common signs - they are sounds - magic words which move beautiful groups around themselves [...] For the poet language is never too poor but always too general. He needs words that often recur and are played out through use. His world is simple, like his instrument - but it is just as inexhaustible a source of melodies.[38]

As with Nietzsche's statements regarding the inability of language to directly mediate truth,[39] Novalis' claims about language immediately beg the question of the status of the "Monologue" itself, or of any other piece of Novalis' writing which contains propositions about the way the world is. As a piece of language, "Monologue" should not, according to Novalis, be able to signify literally - and yet it directly describes this

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[34] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.,* s.91. Also: "Poetry is *representation* of the *mind* - of the *inner world in its entirety*. Its sole medium, words, indicate this, for they are indeed the outer revelation of that inner realm of energy." Hardenberg: "Last Fragments" *op. cit.,* s.33.
[35] Maurice Blanchot: "The Athenaeum" pp.163-172 in *Studies in Romanticism*, 22:2, 1983, p.170.
[36] Jon Neubauer: *Novalis* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980) p123; Andrew Bowie: "'The Philology of Philosophy': The Early Romantic Heritage and Contemporary Literary Theory" pp.116-135 in *Publications of the English Goethe Society*, 65, 1996 pp.122-123.
[37] Hardenberg: "Monologue" *op. cit.* The ability of natural forms to signify the divine unity behind them is based on the same principle of analogy: "*Musical relations* seem to me to be actually the basic relations of nature." Hardenberg: "Last Fragments" *op. cit.,* s.10.
[38] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.26.
[39] This similarity will be explored in detail in the next chapter.

very inability. Novalis himself was not only aware of this paradox; he explicitly asserts it as part of his theory of language within the "Monologue":

> Even if in saying this I believe I have described the essence and function of poetry in the clearest possible way, at the same time I know that no one can understand it, and I have said something quite foolish because I wanted to say it, and in this way no poetry comes about.[40]

Steven Schaber claims that, since Novalis believes that language cannot describe things directly, but only mediates truth insofar as it expresses it allegorically, his purpose in "Monologue" is to embody the very inadequacy it describes in language, thus communicating its truth by analogy, rather than literally.[41] Pfefferkorn agrees: "Novalis has given us in the *Monolog* a statement about language that is a representation of language and therefore succeeds in capturing 'Saying,' but does so only insofar as it is icon rather than statement".[42] In its repetition of the mistakes made about language, Novalis' work both mediates allegorically to the listener an awareness of these mistakes, and acts as an instance of truly meaningful language, which signifies through trope and connotation rather than direct designation.

In addition to being allegorical, this use of language embodies Romantic irony, which Novalis perceives as language's ability, through an awareness of its own limitations, to transcend these limitations.[43] This concept is dependent on a logical necessity regarding representation: signs are not what they signify. Novalis begins his *Fichte Studies* with the claim: "We abandon the *identical* in order to present it".[44] Although representation struggles to represent fully, it must necessarily always fail,

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[40] Hardenberg: "Monologue" *op. cit.*
[41] Steven Schaber: "Novalis' 'Monolog' and Hofmannsthal's 'Ein Brief': Two Poets in Search of a Language" pp.204-214 in *The German Quarterly*, 47:2, 1974 p.209.
[42] Pfefferkorn, *op. cit.*, p.74. See also: Bowie: (1997) *op. cit.*, p.79.
[43] Ernst Behler: *German Romantic Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) p.273.
[44] Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.*, s.1.

since a complete representation of an object would in fact be that object.[45] Instead, Novalis claims: "All representation rests on making present that which is not present".[46] The representation of something, by its very nature, does not indicate the presence of that which it represents, but rather its absence.[47] Ironic representation thus functions negatively. Since all knowledge requires relation and representation, it is not possible to know how things are in themselves, and language provides instead an image of what its object is not.[48] Ironic language mediates truth by presenting a falsehood and, in drawing attention to its own falsity, pointing beyond itself. The listener is compelled by this linguistic self-awareness to search for a more adequate expression of the object in question, thus asymptotically approaching understanding. It is not possible to communicate truth; it is possible, however, to point the listener in the direction of truth, encouraging her to avoid resting content with any false conception of the objects of understanding. Only falsehoods are available, but these, if they are used in the right way, can be employed in the service of knowledge: "An illusion is an essential to the truth as the body is to the soul - error is the necessary instrument of truth. With error I make truth".[49]

One of the results of the notion that language only mediates truth by pointing out its own inadequacies is that the goal of knowledge shifts from the acquisition of truth to the process of inquiry itself:[50]

> Should the highest principle include the highest paradox in its function? To be a proposition that would allow absolutely no peace - which would always attract and repel - always become impenetrable again, no matter how often

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[45] Seyhan: *op. cit.*, p.4.
[46] Hardenberg: "General Draft" *op. cit.*, s.40.
[47] Seyhan: *op. cit.*, p.4.
[48] "[W]e represent it through its 'not-being' [what it is not], through a 'not-identical' [what is not identical to it]". Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.*, s.1.
[49] Hardenberg: "General Draft" *op. cit.*, s.29. See also: Hardenberg: "On Goethe" *op. cit.*, s.30.
[50] Bowie (1997) *op. cit.*, p.87. See also: Blanchot, *op. cit.*, p.170.

> one had already understood it? Which would ceaselessly arouse our activity - without ever tiring it or becoming familiar? According to old mystical legends God is something like that for the spirits.[51]

Gaining genuine understanding of truth, or of things as they really are, becomes a regulative idea, rather than a realizable goal and, instead of perceiving illusory phenomena as obstacles to understanding, they are granted value as the means to an ever-increasing consciousness of truth. Coupled with Novalis' notion of the whole of nature as a communication of the divine, this means that the objects of the world can act either as spurious replacements for the divine, or as an incentive to look beyond them to what they signify. Similarly, words should not be used as replacements for things, but as invitations to the listener to look for those things. Novalis' conception of communication is based on this principle. The tropic nature of the connection between language and what it represents entails that, for Novalis, meaning is something that is constructed creatively. Words call to mind their objects not through a direct or necessary designation, but through a decision to associate a sign with a certain object of the understanding: "All language is a postulate. It has a positive, free origin. One must agree to think of certain things at certain signs, to construct something definite within oneself intentionally."[52] The connection between sign and signified thus occurs only within the signifying agent - that is, within the language-user: "They are thus the same in the one who is doing the signifying - otherwise completely different".[53] Novalis goes on to state that "both [signified and signifier] are there in mutual relationship only for the signifying [agent], and neither of them is necessarily related to the other for a second signifying [agent]."[54] As with Nietzsche,

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[51] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.9.
[52] *Ibid.*, s.83.
[53] Hardenberg: (2003) *op. cit.*, s.11.
[54] *Idem.*

Novalis presents the connection between sign and signified as dependent on the creative activity of the subject. However, unlike Nietzsche, Novalis believes that authentic communication using signs is possible between two language-users:

> In order to communicate, the first signifying [agent] need only choose such signs as have a well-grounded necessary relationship to the signified in the homogeneous being of the second signifying agent. The homogeneity of the alien being with that of its own [being] in this relationship will have to be studied by it in this communication.[55]

In other words, in order to communicate, the first signifying agent needs to anticipate the response of the second, and to choose its sign carefully in order to elicit the desired reaction: "The first signifier finds an original schema in the second signifier - and it chooses the signs to be communicated accordingly."[56] Both signifying agents are involved in a creative effort in communication: the first posits a relationship between sign and signified according to an anticipated response in the second; the second bases her interpretation of the sign on her own disposition to associate certain things with it, according to the wishes of the first: "The first agent orients himself to the second in the sign, the second to the first in the signified - a *quasi*-free contract."[57] Thus, for Novalis, communication is not the passing of information through the medium of language, but the use of language to stimulate a response in the listener:

> The letter is only an aid to philosophical communication, the actual essence of which consists in arousing a particular train of thought. Someone speaking thinks and produces - someone listening reflects - and reproduces.[58]

Steven Schaber refers to the communicative relationship between first and second signifier as 'sympathetic vibration',[59] but Novalis' term 'homogeneous being' is

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[55] *Idem.*
[56] *Idem.*
[57] *Idem.*

perhaps more helpful. In essence, communication depends on the existence of an analogous structure of understanding between human beings. Rather than rigidly laying down dogmatic constructions of meaning, communication is an invitation by the speaker for the listener to participate in the process of creating meaning; mutual understanding depends on the fact that they will create this meaning in a similar way.

Novalis states many times that the interpretation of someone's words is as creative an act as that of making the words in the first place, usually expressing this claim in terms of written, rather than spoken, language.[60] In such a model, a certain amount of control is sacrificed by the author over the results of the communication - in other words, what the reader comes to understand. Novalis happily accepts this lack of rigidity, and its implication that the true meaning of an utterance does not pre-exist interpretation, but emerges in the interaction between reader, text and author: "The reader places the *accent* at will - he really makes of a book what he will. Is not every reader a philologist? There is no *generally valid reading*, in the usual sense. Reading is a free operation."[61] On the other hand, the reader should try to understand what the author originally intended to signify with the text. According to Novalis, the best interpretations currently available do not attempt to repeat texts word for word, but to express the idea - the author's original intention - that lies behind them. Still better, but impossible for individuals in this day and age, are interpretations which read the spiritual ideal behind the author's intention. In keeping with Novalis' notion that reading or listening is as creative an act as writing or speaking, and that understanding a speaker involves a sympathetic re-traversing of the thought processes of that

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[58] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.3. See also: Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.*, s.567.
[59] Schaber: *op. cit.*, pp.207-209.
[60] For example: "The true reader must be an extension of the author." Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.125.
[61] Hardenberg: "Teplitz Fragments" *op. cit.*, s.42.

speaker, Novalis claims that: "I show that I have understood a writer only when I can act in his spirit, when, without constricting his individuality, I can translate him and change him in diverse ways."[62] Someone who truly understands what a writer is trying to express can herself try to express that idea in accordance with her own personality. Thus 'modifying' translations, as Novalis calls them, enable the translator simultaneously to express her own understanding of an idea, and the understanding of the original author:

> Modifying translations, if they are to be genuine, demand the highest poetic spirit. [...] The true translator of this kind must indeed be an artist himself and be able to produce the idea of the whole at will in one way or another. He must be the poet of the poet and thus be able to let him speak according to his own and the poet's idea *at the same time*.[63]

Because the whole world is, for Novalis, a linguistic revelation of the divine, his claims about the translation of texts apply equally to the interpretation of the things of the world: "Not only books but everything can be translated in these three ways."[64] A poetic understanding of the world, one which attempts to translate into words not physical phenomena, but the meaning behind physical phenomena, enables language to simultaneously express the language-user, the natural world, and the absolute spirit within both of these.

Novalis believes that the act of interpretation, which he usually refers to as criticism or translation, when done properly is a higher act than the original setting down of an idea. This rests on Novalis' notion of 'raising', which, in the context of interpretation, means that a creative reworking of something already created is able to go further, express more, than creation working only with raw materials. The creative activity of

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[62] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.29.
[63] *Ibid.*, s.68.
[64] That is, grammatical (word for word), modifying, or mythical. *Idem.*

the poet on the world, which perceives the absolute that speaks through it, results in the imposition of a spiritual meaning on the world, thus simultaneously mediating spirit and nature to humanity[65] and conferring a higher, spiritual meaning on natural phenomena. For Novalis, this 'poeticization' or 'Romanticization' is an extension, or higher expression, of the task of all human beings: "precisely in this delight of revealing in the world what is beyond the world, of being able to do that which is really the original motive of our being here, therein lies the fountainhead of poesy."[66] In our ordinary perceptions of the world, we impose our own meaning and structure on events, thus expressing ourselves through the creative act of perception. The task of the poet is to perceive in these events a structure which, in addition to expressing her own spirit, also expresses that of the divine which lies within all natural phenomena.[67] Furthermore, she must do so in such a way as to encourage her audience to perceive this same spirit.[68] Kristen Pfefferkorn points out correctly that, although poetry is a creative use of language, the poet is bound in three ways: by the spiritual meaning she sees behind 'life's fortuitous events'; by the absolute as it is expressed in herself, as a mirror image of its expression in natural phenomena; and by the anticipated reaction of her audience.[69]

The poet's creative mediation of the divine occurs through the ordering of natural and historical events so that, instead of appearing to be merely random and confusing occurrences, their inner meaning is revealed: "A novel writer performs a kind of *bouts rimés* - when he makes a well-ordered, regular series out of a given number of chance

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[65] Diana Behler: *The Theory of the Novel in Early German Romanticism* (Bern: Lang, 1978) p.88.
[66] Henry, in Hardenberg (1992) *op. cit.*, p.116. See also: Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.32; Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.8; Diana Behler, *op. cit.*, pp.85+104.
[67] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.17; Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.96.
[68] The poet "knows how to stir those secret powers in us at will, and by means of words he enables us to perceive a glorious unknown world." The merchants in Hardenberg (1992) *op. cit.*, pp.31-32.

incidents and situations".[70] This creation of meaning, when expressed in poems or novels, allows the reader to perceive the spiritual absolute behind natural phenomena; in other words, to read the text of nature and understand what it is communicating: "When we read and hear true poems, we feel the movement of nature's inner reason".[71] As Géza von Molnár points out, this is not a result of perceiving another world through the veil of the phenomenal world, but of a change in perspective,[72] in which the things of this world are spiritualized and imbued with the divine. Novalis is a pantheist rather than a panentheist; the universe is not only a physical manifestation of the divine; it actually *is* the divine. Perceiving the spiritual reality behind natural phenomena is not a question of seeing past objects and events to a separate divine reality, but of understanding these objects and events as the emanations of absolute spirit that they are. As with human language, which is meaningful only when used allegorically and ironically, the meaning of the natural world is created by combinations of signs, which signify through the musical quality of their interrelationships rather than by denoting something beyond themselves: "Poetry elevates each single thing through a particular combination with the rest of the whole".[73] In both cases, a system of signs creates meaning within itself which, while inviting the audience to look beyond the surface, remains limited to its own conditionality: "We *seek* the absolute everywhere and only ever *find* things."[74]

Novalis' tropic conception of language is an attempt to address the problems he perceives in traditional models of epistemology. For Novalis, immediate knowledge of things in themselves is unattainable; nor is it possible to represent objects and

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[69] Pfefferkorn, *op. cit.*, pp.58-59.
[70] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.24.
[71] Hardenberg (2005) *op. cit.*, p.25. See also: Hardenberg (1992) *op. cit.*, p.114.
[72] Von Molnár (1987) *op. cit.*, p.97.
[73] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.25.

events fully in order to arrive at an accurate understanding of their real nature. Moreover, our conviction that the latter is not only possible, but is actually reflected in our linguistic and conceptual categories, has the effect of preventing us from improving our knowledge and results in our alienation from the world, ourselves, and God. In response to these difficulties, Novalis formulates a model of communication based on trope, in which he argues that the suggestiveness of irony and allegory allow us to transcend the logically necessary limitations of signification and approach truth. Representation, as a metonym for its object, is seen as a veil that simultaneously hides reality from view and invites us to look beyond it.[75] Finally, the possibility of successful communication is posited by Novalis on the basis of the analogous nature he believes exists between subjects, and between human beings and the world they wish to understand. As a result, his conception of language claims not only that the inadequacy of language by traditional epistemological standards does not preclude communication, but that it is this very inadequacy which allows the creative, empathic, and fundamentally tropic act of communication to take place.

In the course of this chapter, five tropes - metonymy, synecdoche, allegory, irony, and analogy - have been used to provide an account of Novalis' theory of language. Irony and allegory characterize the Romantic use of language in a self-consciously self-referential way, in order to allow the rhythmic, musical quality of words to create meaning and express the inner spirit of the language-user, the world, and the divine, of which the former are emanations. Language's ability to do so is premised, first of all, on the analogous natures of language, subject, object and the absolute sphere in which all these exist and, secondly, on language's ironic awareness of its own

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[74] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.1.
[75] Pfefferkorn: *op. cit.*, p.125.

inadequacy, which invites the audience constantly to overcome existing linguistic categories in an attempt to approach more closely to the essence of things. Complete awareness of things in themselves is, however, a logical impossibility, and an intimation of essence is only possible negatively, through abstracting from representation. The logical necessity of representation for knowledge[76] means that objects are never known in themselves, but always only by signs, introducing a metonymical element into language. This is the case both in human language, where words are used to represent phenomena, and in the universal communication of nature, which uses physical objects and concretely occurring events to represent the divine, of which these objects and events are manifestations.

These five tropes: metonymy, synecdoche, analogy, irony and allegory, along with metaphor, will form the basis of our comparison of Novalis' theory of language with that of Nietzsche. Focussing on these aspects of Novalis's philosophy should enable us to draw very clearly the limits of the common ground he has with Nietzsche, as well as pinpoint the differences, and allow us to formulate an answer to Judith Norman's claims that Nietzsche's demand for complete immanence renders his thought incommensurable with Romantic conceptions of language as ironic and allegorical, and demonstrates his liberation from the need for truth.[77]

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[76] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.72.
[77] Norman: *op. cit.*, pp.515, 517+519.

Nietzsche and Novalis on Language as Trope

In the last two chapters, we gave an account of the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis, and demonstrated how these can be explicated with reference to various kinds of trope. In the current chapter, we will compare these two conceptions of language, and reach a conclusion as to which areas of correspondence in their thinking form genuine similarities, and which reveal differences. We will also come to a decision regarding the respective merits of each. Basing our comparison on the six tropes discussed in the previous three chapters, we discover that Nietzsche and Novalis have similar conceptions of language as metonymic, and that both see understanding and language as closely connected and as based on an analogy to the human, resulting in an anthropomorphic and appropriative conception of the world. Synecdoche occurs in different forms in the theories of language of each thinker. Similarly, irony occurs in the philosophies of both thinkers, but takes different forms: for Novalis, it aims to encourage the audience to approach closer to truth, while for Nietzsche it has the effect of destabilizing linguistic and conceptual systems, which he views as an important stage in helping to prevent creativity becoming stultified. We compare allegory as it occurs in Novalis' writings with Nietzsche's use of metaphor, suggesting that the combination of Nietzsche's claim that language forms a metaphor for a subconscious realm of images with his emphasis on the creation of meaning by the interrelationships between linguistic terms may provide grounds for the notion that Nietzsche espouses an allegorical notion of language, or a notion of language as an extended metaphor. Our comparison reveals that, while Nietzsche and Novalis present similar models of language, their divergent reactions

to the belief that language functions through trope result in very different conclusions regarding language's potential as a mediator of truth. This discovery assists us in responding to Judith Norman's claim that Novalis is obsessed with truth while Nietzsche has overcome the need for truth. We suggest that it is Nietzsche, rather than Novalis, who continues to value the traditional notion of truth as correspondence. We conclude that Novalis' conception of language, while subject to Nietzsche's criticism of Romanticism as nihilistic, is more successful than that of Nietzsche in coping with the self-referential paradox, contains fewer inconsistencies, and provides a more positive alternative to traditional models of epistemology.

The models of language put forward by Nietzsche and Novalis are closely tied up with their critiques of epistemology. Due to their perception of the correspondence of words and concepts, both see language as closely associated with understanding. In Nietzsche's case, the physiological causes underlying the development of language and consciousness ground the claim that language and cognition are inseparably linked. For both, understanding is seen as linguistic insofar as it is a system of signs commonly held to have meaning in relation to an actually existing world, and both claim that the subject interacts with these signs, or representations, of objects rather than with such a world. Novalis has the protagonist of *Henry von Ofterdingen* state that: "Language [...] is really a little world in signs and sounds. As man is lord over it, so he would also like to be lord over the great world and be able to express himself freely in it."[1] Nietzsche claims that: "mankind set up in language a separate world beside the other world, a place it took to be so firmly set that, standing upon it, it could lift the rest of the world off its hinges and

make itself master of it."[2] The use of a linguistic or symbolic system of understanding for the purpose of mastering one's environment is seen by Nietzsche and Novalis to furnish no guarantee that direct correspondence obtains between the symbol-world and the world it is meant to represent. For Nietzsche, this constitutes an inadequacy, based largely on the invalidity of the inference from the existence of sense impressions, which underlie our concepts of objects, to objects corresponding to these concepts responsible for causing the sense impressions. In fact, Nietzsche claims, rather than objects causing nerve stimuli, our concepts of objects are abstractions from, and thus effects of, sensory data. He calls the false inference from concept to object 'confusion of cause and effect', or 'metonymy', and believes that his identification of this tropic relation demonstrates the impossibility of epistemological access to anything beyond ourselves.

Novalis also claims that the existence of objects corresponding to our concepts of them is an abstraction, but he does not use the term 'metonymy', instead referring to the ability to perform such an abstraction as 'genius'.[3] For Novalis, human beings construct concepts and then behave as if these concepts have corresponding real objects with which it is possible to interact. As a result, the world that human beings can come to know is a product of their own creative activity. This conception has similarities to Nietzsche's, but we must ask whether it is justified to claim that it involves metonymy. Near the beginning of our chapter on Novalis, we asserted that, in his philosophy, physical phenomena act as metonymic representations of the divine: it is not possible to know the divine directly; it can only be known through natural phenomena which stand in its place.

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[1] Hardenberg: (1992) *op. cit.*, p.116.
[2] Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.11.

In the same way, the manner in which human beings represent things to themselves and use language to communicate about them involves the use of one thing (concepts, or words) to stand for another (things in themselves), suggesting a metonymic relation. 'Metonymy' is thus an appropriate term for describing the sign-signified relation as it occurs in Novalis' theory of language, both in the case of human language and in that of the symbol-language of nature. Nietzsche, however, uses a specific kind of metonymy - confusion of cause and effect - and not metonymy in general to characterize the projection of spurious objects constructed from nerve stimuli. This specific form of metonymy is also appropriate to Novalis' notion of representational knowledge. Novalis as well as Nietzsche believes that things in themselves are abstractions, constructed negatively from experienced 'properties' and, furthermore, that these properties do not inhere in an object, but are functions of the relationship of subject to object. Concepts of things are not caused by things themselves, but are imposed on the world following their creation on the basis of relative and partial experiences.[4] 'Confusion of cause and effect' thus applies to Novalis' theory of language in the same way that it applies to Nietzsche's.

As his use of the term 'genius' indicates, Novalis has a positive view of the role that creativity plays in positing an external world.[5] Both he and Nietzsche believe that comprehensibility and significance are bestowed upon the world by human beings, through their creative interpretation of their experiences. Nietzsche uses this conclusion to claim that the 'real' world is an illusory construction, and to undermine the notion that

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[3] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.22.

[4] "Being stands in relation to properties. Thus it *is* no Thing further for us than the totality of the properties known by us." Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.*, s.454. Also: "an object arises out of the interaction of two non-objects". *Ibid,* s.16. See also *Ibid.*, s.566.

existence is meaningful or can be grasped by human cognition. He perceives models that claim that the world possesses some form of higher meaning as damaging illusions that will eventually need to be discarded. By contrast, Novalis concludes that it is the task of humanity to grant significance and coherency to the universe. In doing so, he believes, the world is actually given meaning, and spiritualized and raised towards the divine.[6]

For both thinkers, since our conceptual awareness of the world is a construct based, not on the perception of things in themselves, but on the perception of things as they affect us, our understanding of the world – and its reflection in language - is fundamentally an understanding of our own needs and abilities, and an appropriation of existence according to these.[7] For Nietzsche, understanding is based on the human being's conscious awareness of what it is to be human - that is, on the experience of being a subject that wills. Language mirrors this awareness in its subject-predicate structure. Nietzsche believes that because no immediate knowledge is possible, self-awareness is as artificial and partial as awareness of the rest of the world. 'Understanding' is thus based on an analogy to something we do not understand and, consequently, is always misunderstanding. Explanations turn out to be mere descriptions, aiming to make something new and unfamiliar appear safe by suggesting that it bears a resemblance to something with which we are already comfortable.

The impossibility of understanding the self entails that the characteristics usually ascribed to human beings are as artificial as those projected onto the rest of the world.

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[5] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.,* s.99.
[6] Hardenberg: "On Goethe" *op. cit.,* s.19; Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.,* s.26; Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.,*s.76; Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.,* s.647.
[7] Nietzsche: BGE s.20; Hardenberg (2003) *op. cit.,* s.373.

Consciousness developed in order to promote communication; consequently, it bears the same structure as language, which requires a simplified and communicable picture of the world. Our understanding of the human conforms to these categories, as does our understanding of the rest of experience, whether or not the reality of being human reflects this structure. Adrian del Caro suggests that Nietzsche's intention that one should 'become what one is' is the call for a re-creation of the human being without the imposition of the categories which consciousness has mistakenly interpreted as being fundamental to human existence.[8] The determination continually to rethink the categories by which our world is structured is thus the determination to avoid forcing the human to adopt a form alien to its underlying, unconscious nature. The participation of language in the development of these categories means that the creative use of language is fundamental to this project. The role of analogy in understanding is thus an instance of Nietzsche's use of trope to undermine belief in the possibility of knowledge, in order to motivate the development of new modes of communication and cognition.

Novalis approaches analogy differently. According to Novalis, since knowledge always requires representation, knowledge of the self involves a necessary schism. The subject must simultaneously be knowing subject and object of its knowledge. As von Molnár points out, the subject comes to know itself through its self-expression in the world of the object - through its actions in the world.[9] The existence of the individual manifests as a shape, or figure, which forms part of the universal language of nature, and can be read in the same way. Since, once projected into the realm of the object, the

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[8] Del Caro: *op. cit.*, pp.213-219.
[9] Von Molnár: (1987) *op. cit.*, pp.52-53.

subject is legible to itself only within itself, as representation, an infinite regress occurs, with self-knowledge dependent on knowledge of the other and knowledge of the other dependent on knowledge of the self. Novalis is aware of the circular nature of this process, and accepts it, claiming that rather than searching for an ultimate foundation for knowledge, we must 'begin in the middle': "The Whole rests rather like people who play the game of sitting down in a circle, without a chair, with each just sitting on the knee of the other".[10] As a result, true knowledge is approached asymptotically, through a dialectical revelation of self and world. This possibility is dependent on a genuine analogy between human beings and the world in which they are situated. Novalis believes that, because each contains a representation or mirror-image of the other, and because both represent the same absolute, the subject is a microcosm of the object: "The universe is a complete analogue of the human being in body, mind, and spirit. The latter is the abbreviation, the former the elongation of the same substance."[11]

For Novalis, this analogical structure constitutes a valid basis for knowledge, and the undermining of a final foundation for epistemology merely points to the necessity for a continual reappraisal of existing knowledge in order to move closer to the truth. Meanwhile, Nietzsche's lack of a transcendental theory upon which to base the validity of analogical knowledge means that within his philosophy, knowledge can be neither possessed nor approached. Nietzsche's demand for a constant re-creation of conceptual and linguistic schemes thus has a different basis from that of Novalis. Rather than attempting to approach truth, Nietzsche's call for continual re-evaluation of structures for

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[10] Hardenberg, cited in Bowie: (1997) *op. cit.*, p.83.
[11] Hardenberg: "On Goethe" *op. cit.*, s.32.

used to describe the world aims to prevent the language-user becoming trapped and stifled by her own conceptual scheme. The notion that an analogy between human beings and the world forms the basis of our ability to communicate about and understand our environment undermines the possibility of knowledge. According to Novalis, by contrast, language possesses a structure genuinely analogous to both human and world, and this underlies the ability to communicate about human beings, the world, and the divine.

Nietzsche and Novalis both claim that the linguistically organized sign-world with which we interact cannot mediate knowledge of a real world beyond it in the way it is usually thought to. For both, linguistic categories are constructed by artificially dividing up and labelling the world of experience. In chapter 4, the synecdochal character of this dismemberment was explained in the case of Nietzsche, who maintains that only a few aspects of experience enter consciousness and stand as shorthand for experiences in all their richness and variety. For Nietzsche, the fact that language operates through synecdoche presents another reason why it cannot mediate truth; it entails that language always represents things as more simple and crude than they really are. For Novalis, similarly, an incomplete and artificially divided picture of the world is given in language. However, unlike Nietzsche, Novalis believes that partial representation of its object underlies the capacity of language for communication; any inadequacies are the result of the mistake made about language's ability to represent literally and fully. The inter-connectedness of all aspects of the universe means that linguistic signs, while ostensibly designating isolated aspects of the world, are capable of calling to mind the world as a whole. It is only when we fail to realise that language only represents selected aspects of

its object that the status of words (in the case of human language) or specific phenomena (in the case of the language of nature) as synecdoches for the whole is overlooked.

Although they both identify a part-whole relation between linguistic units and what they describe, the conceptions of synecdoche present in the philosophies of Nietzsche and Novalis differ. While for Novalis, each individual thing, or each word, is a synecdoche for the whole universe, for Nietzsche words form synecdoches for discrete units of experience, albeit artificially delineated ones. As a result, synecdoche in Nietzsche's thought enforces the artificial divisions imposed upon experience by cognition, while for Novalis it potentially counteracts this tendency.

In both cases, the claim that concepts do not present a full or accurate picture of the things they are meant to symbolize is based on the belief that the world is fundamentally interconnected and in flux. Both thinkers use metaphors of death and dissection to describe the division of this living, organic experience into manageable chunks capable of being communicated in language:

> [S]cientists have cut into the inner structure [of nature] and sought after the relations between its members. Under their hands friendly nature died, leaving behind only dead, quivering remnants.[12]

> They think they are doing a thing *honour* when they dehistoricize it, *sub specie aeterni* - when they make a mummy of it. All that philosophers have handled for millennia has been conceptual mummies; nothing actual has escaped from their hands alive.[13]

As their terminology indicates, both maintain that belief in the adequacy of conceptual categories has negative implications. For Nietzsche, faith in traditional forms of

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[12] Hardenberg (2005) *op. cit.*, pp.25-27. Also: Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.13.

epistemology undermines the human capacity for creativity, and thus for self-affirmation, and will eventually result in nihilism. Novalis believes that the harmful effects of such beliefs lie in the separation of human beings from nature, from nature's communication of the divine, and from their own self-revelation. In pointing out the tropic and anthropomorphic nature of understanding and the impossibility of knowing things in themselves, both Nietzsche and Novalis aim to discourage satisfaction with existing conceptual categories, and to promote a never-ending process of re-creating knowledge systems. A major difference is evident in their treatments of this notion. For Nietzsche, the negative effects of too much faith in language's ability to mediate truth are a direct result of the complacency this engenders. On the one hand, inquiry, creativity, and self-expression are repressed while, on the other, the realization of the inadequacy of language, if one is not prepared for it, leads to the undermining of one's belief system and a loss of faith in the worth of existence. For Novalis, the damaging effects of the belief in linguistic adequacy to reality are instead dependent on the value he places on a genuine understanding of the unified and universally communicative nature of existence. The errors of language perpetuate the separation of humanity from this universal discourse and the divine spirit it reveals. The emphasis on creativity in language and understanding has the effect, in the philosophies of both thinkers, of drawing the value of existence away from transcendent goals towards the human process of creating meaning. However, for Novalis, the notion of genuine knowledge forms an ideal, the ever-closer approximation to which grants the creative process its value, while for Nietzsche, no direction to the process is given, and value can only come from the belief that creativity itself is the ultimate desideratum.

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[13] Nietzsche: TI "Reason' in Philosophy' s.1.

This difference is reflected in the two types of irony which occur in the thought of Nietzsche and Novalis. Romantic irony, like the *via negativa* of older forms of mysticism, relies for its effectiveness on the positing of an absolute truth existing beyond the limits of possible speech or knowledge. In its awareness of its own inability to communicate this truth, Romantic irony calls for the perpetual revision of linguistic and conceptual strategies for representing the divine. When used properly, the ironic nature of language thus mediates the absolute by indicating its absence. Irony as it is found in Nietzsche, however, does not aim to indicate the inadequacy of language to truth, but to retain an awareness of its lack of signification despite its ostensible definition as symbol. The effect, Nietzsche hopes, is to open up the horizons of possibility for how the world is understood, in the process multiplying the ways in which it is possible to live.

The use of irony draws attention to a central problem in this kind of thinking about language. In chapter 4, we touched briefly on the so-called 'self-referential paradox' as it occurs in Nietzsche's philosophy. We found that if language and cognition are unable to adequately mediate knowledge of reality, then the ability of Nietzsche's text to claim as much is itself undermined. Nietzsche's theory of language encounters difficulties in this respect whether we view his statements as maintaining that there can be no knowledge of things in themselves due to the subjective nature of language and consciousness, or that there is no realm of things in themselves of which knowledge might be possible. Either way, the impossibility of adequate communication renders questionable the ability of Nietzsche's text to explain anything to the reader.

Since Novalis' theory of language also undermines traditional conceptions of language and thought, it would seem that it must be subject to the same criticisms. However, Novalis does not claim that language in itself is unable to mediate knowledge, but only that it is unable to do so in the literal, directly referential and objective way in which it is usually thought to. Unlike Nietzsche, Novalis claims that language is capable of adequately communicating truths about the world, through the operation of trope. As a result, it is possible both to become aware of and to communicate about the non-conformity of the world to the divisive and artificial categories present in literal language. Novalis' acceptance of the validity of tropic knowledge and language thus enables him to escape the difficulties Nietzsche encounters with regard to the status of his own claims.

If we look at de Man's position, examined in chapter 4, we see that he maintains that Nietzsche uses irony in order to indicate the status of his text as embodiment, rather than description, of the point he wishes to make. If that is the case, then this would appear to be a demonstration of his use of the trope allegory in a manner similar to that found in "Monologue", where Novalis invites the reader to observe first hand the paradox of trying to communicate literally the truth about the incommunicability of truth. It would, furthermore, be an example of the successful use of trope to communicate, and thus stand out in relation to Nietzsche's generally negative reaction to his discovery of the tropic nature of language. In order to determine whether or not it is justifiable to describe Nietzsche's text as allegorical, we will consider the relation of allegory to Nietzsche's more explicit use of metaphor to characterize language, with the help of an account of Novalis' more straightforward position on the issue.

Nietzsche and Novalis are both clear that the concepts reflected in language do not denote actually existing things, and that the realization of this inadequacy is a necessary step in averting the dangers of too much faith in cognition. Language, they explain, has no literal meaning or direct reference, and they provide alternative notions of meaning, which in both cases involves emphasizing the rhythmic, musical aspects of language at the expense of its ability to signify. Novalis presents language as a surface in which meaning is created by the interplay of words, rather than by their connection to the things they are usually thought to represent. If it is not taken literally, language is capable of communicating truths by acting as an allegory for the language-user and the natural world. As we saw above, Novalis believes that language bears an analogous structure to both subject and object, forming simultaneously an expression of the subject in the realm of the object and, due to the nature of the subject as a microcosm of the object, a mirror-image of the object within the subject. Since the two realms of human and nature act as communications of the absolute, language is able to reveal the divine indirectly, as well as directly through its own status as part of the world of physical phenomena. This capacity of language to mirror the structure of reality enables it to mediate truth, despite its lack of direct correspondence to individual objects and events.

We encountered difficulties when we tried to incorporate a similar notion of allegory into Nietzsche's theory of language in chapter 4. In particular, it proved difficult to reconcile Nietzsche's notion of language as a surface with his claim that the beauty of a particular use of language is symptomatic of the strength and health of the language-user. Nietzsche attempts to maintain both that the masks with which the subject attempts to

express itself always falsify and misrepresent the subject, and that it is an error to believe that a separate subject exists behind or beyond its manifestation in language and in other actions. In the case of the latter statement, it makes no sense to claim that language is tropic (except insofar as it can be interpreted as embodying a kind of irony); nor would it make sense to suggest that it operates literally, since nothing beyond language exists to be designated. Instead, language must be seen as forming part of the effects of the language-user upon other subjects and thus as participating in the constitution of the subject. This notion does not reconcile easily with the former claim (that language falsely represents the human being), which is compatible with Nietzsche's earlier discussion of language. Here, Nietzsche maintains that language and consciousness are metaphors for an underlying realm of imagistic representations which, in turn, acts as a metaphor for sensory data. In light of the apparently intractable difficulties of attributing a coherent position to Nietzsche, we must note that although this model of language is clearly present in his early writings and is indicated even in his last works, it is essentially unstable due to its incompatibility with other central aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy.

Keeping this in mind, how does Nietzsche's notion of language as a metaphorical expression of subconscious human existence relate to his emphasis on the value of style and rhythm in expression, and on his attempt to present a relational and self-referential notion of meaning? For Nietzsche, the most basic level of human existence is the realm of sensory data or nerve stimuli, epistemological access to which he believes is limited by the metaphorical nature of its representation to consciousness in conceptual thought. Sarah Kofman suggests that this relationship provides the basis for a characterization of

consciousness (and thus of language) as a tropic representation of the human being.[14] Kofman uses the term 'metaphor' to describe the relationship between the realms of cognitive thought and subconscious experience, but if we recall our explanation of the differences between metaphor and allegory in chapter 3, we might argue that it is more appropriate to refer to this relationship as 'allegorical'. In *On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*, Nietzsche presents a description of the production of concepts from sensory data, and does indeed speak in terms of 'metaphor': "To begin with, a sensory impression is transferred into an image: first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor."[15] The relationship now under discussion, however, is not that of individual words and concepts to the particular clusters of nerve stimuli that they are supposed to represent, but that of language and conceptual thought as a whole to the entire realm of subconscious imagistic and sensory human existence. The former two realms consist of many words and concepts in a network of interrelationships, which exist in parallel to the unconscious human processes from which they are derived. According to Nietzsche's model of language as a surface, it is these interrelationships, and not the relations of individual words or of groups of words to something beyond themselves, that are responsible for creating meaning.[16] This meaning forms a veil or lens through which we view the world. My claim could be phrased as the suggestion that language is allegorical for Nietzsche insofar as it is constituted by many metaphors, the interrelationships of which are responsible for the presentation to consciousness of the world as a meaningful whole. The fact that meaning is generally believed to be the result

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[14] Kofman: *op. cit.*, p.139.
[15] Nietzsche: TL p.82.

of correspondence to genuinely existing things is a mistake that Nietzsche believes undermines the ability of human beings to play with these inter-relationships, thus creating new meanings and new ways of perceiving and interacting with the world.

This conception has significant similarities to Novalis' model of language as allegory. In both cases, meaning emerges from the interplay of linguistic terms, rather than from correspondence, and reference to something beyond language is the result of a tropic transference which perceives the extra-linguistic world as bearing a structure mirroring that of language. In Novalis' case, the relationships between words form an allegory that reflects both human experience and a real world beyond the human. He bases this ability on the genuinely analogous structure of these realms. Furthermore, the relationships between these three spheres and the divine is such that language forms an allegory for spiritual, as well as physical, reality, and in such a way as to be capable of conjoining the spiritual and the physical within itself. As a result, language not only represents the spiritual through the physical, but in so doing spiritualises and raises the physical.

For Nietzsche, language possesses the potential neither to spiritualise a physical universe, nor to mediate knowledge of such a universe to the human subject. However, Kofman's account suggests a surprising parallel in this respect between Novalis' notion of language as allegory and Nietzsche's account. She claims that for Nietzsche, the physiological processes of the human body represent an initial interpretation of the external world in which it finds itself, of which consciousness forms a simplified further interpretation.[17] In that case, it might be argued that Nietzsche's notion of language as a

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[16] Nietzsche: WP s.557; PTG s.11.
[17] Kofman: *op. cit.*, p.144.

rhythmic surface in which meaning is created through the interplay of semantic elements provides an allegory, not only for the human being, but also for the world in which the human being finds itself. However, the existence of a realm of things in themselves beyond the human is, according to Nietzsche, completely indemonstrable, and he is thoroughly clear that he believes in no spiritual level of existence beyond that. Thus, although language could be said to form an allegory for the human interpretation of the world, the radical disjuncture he perceives between this interpretation and any things in themselves means that language cannot represent a real world. On the other hand, the fact that for Nietzsche there *is* no world of things in themselves beyond human interpretation may leave room for the application of a claim related to that made by Kofman. For Nietzsche, the metonymically projected world of conscious human experience is a world of concepts with no corresponding objects. Insofar as language ultimately reflects this projected conceptual realm, which effectively forms the world in which human beings exist, it could be said to form an allegory for the universe. Rather than forming a further metaphor for a metaphoric, physiological interpretation of a real world, language is a trope of the experiential world in which the human being is situated. This position on allegory in Nietzsche's theory of language might be summarized as the following: although it can be said of Nietzsche (again with the reminder that this notion conflicts with his perspectivism) that his model of language is compatible with a notion of language as an allegory for the human being and for the world of human experience, it cannot be claimed that he, like Novalis, presents language as forming an allegory for either things in themselves or for a realm of absolute spirit.

An interesting development that follows from this comparison is the difference it illustrates in the attempts of Nietzsche and Novalis to cope with the division between the world of things in themselves and the world of human experience. Nietzsche denies the existence of a world of things in themselves, which leaves only the human aspects of experience to be accounted for. Novalis also effectively disposes of the difference between the world of human experience and that of things in themselves by claiming that the activity of the interpreting subject is responsible for the form taken by the latter. In the following discussion, we suggest that their different perceptions of trope underlie the relationship of Novalis' magic idealism to Nietzsche's denial of things in themselves and his claim that the world of 'being' is a metonymic human construction. This discussion will be relevant to our response to Norman's claim that a major difference between Nietzsche and the Romantics is the obsession of the latter with the notion of truth.

For Novalis, as for Nietzsche, because of its subjective and limited character, language necessarily emphasizes some aspects of what it attempts to describe while downplaying others, and its ability to do so underlies its creation of meaning. Its reflection of reality, therefore, is not formed according to strict causal laws, but involves the intervention of human artistry. For both Novalis and Nietzsche, the ability to draw out the meaning of chance events by arranging them into a unified whole is an expression of strength. In Novalis' case, it is also an instance of raising, or of bestowing higher meaning on the interpreted object.[18] This is the case in the subject's self-expression as well as in the interpretation of natural phenomena: "All the chance events of our lives are materials

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[18] "Poetry elevates each single thing through a particular combination with the rest of the whole". Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments I" *op. cit.*, s.25.

from which we can make what we like. Whoever is rich in spirit makes much of his life."[19] Del Caro draws attention to the differences in these notions of creativity, pointing out that while Novalis views artistic interpretation as capable of recreating both the subject and the world according to a higher meaning, Nietzsche believes that all creative energy should be channeled into self-mastery.[20] Nietzsche's lack of interest in investing the world with value is due to his belief that the eventual recognition of the subjective character of this value will lead to nihilism. However, he also believes that the world as it appears to us is necessarily a human construction:

> Because we have for millennia made moral, aesthetic, religious demands on the world, looked upon it with blind desire, passion or fear, and abandoned ourselves to the bad habits of illogical thinking, this world has gradually *become* so marvellously variegated, frightful, meaningful, soulful, it has acquired colour - but we have been the colourists: it is the human intellect that has made appearance appear and transported its erroneous basic conceptions into things.[21]

For Nietzsche, the human element in the organization of experience into the particular forms in which it appears to us means that what we perceive, and *a fortiori* what we communicate through language, is not 'true', in the traditional sense of the word. Novalis, on the other hand, believes that the creative activity of the subject is, at the same time as bestowing meaning and spirituality, capable of mediating *truth*. Many commentators have suggested that Nietzsche uses a dual sense of 'truth', and maintains the inability of language to mediate truth (in the traditional sense; as something fixed and absolute) while arguing that actual truth-claims are pragmatic or conventional, with the result that he talks

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[19] Hardenberg: "Miscellaneous Observations" *op. cit.*, s.65, also s.27.
[20] Del Caro: *op. cit.*, pp.277-281+299.
[21] Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, s.16.

of 'truths' as human constructions.[22] This latter kind of human-dependent truth is the only kind that Nietzsche believes genuinely exists, and Novalis, too, seems to equate truth with human creativity. However, Nietzsche separates the two kinds of truth in his writings and denies existence to one of them, while Novalis instead seems to conflate them, claiming that truth is at once absolute and present to a degree in subjective, creative structures such as poetic language. Once more, we encounter the difference between Novalis' conviction that subjectivity and trope are essential components of genuine knowledge, and Nietzsche's belief that the traditional epistemological project of discovering truths is precluded by the presence of creativity in language and cognition.

In this context, let us examine Nietzsche's criticism of accounts such as that of Novalis which claim that the artist has access to a higher meaning. Nietzsche opposes such views by claiming that this meaning is a social construction artificially projected onto events:

> The poet expresses the general higher opinions possessed by a people, he is their flute and mouthpiece - but, by virtue of metric and all the other methods of art, he expresses them in such a way that the people receive them as something quite new and marvellous and believe in all seriousness that the poet is the mouthpiece of the gods. Indeed, in the clouds of creation the poet himself forgets whence he has acquired all his spiritual wisdom - from his father and mother, from teachers and books of all kinds, from the street and especially from the priests; he is deceived by his own art and, in naive ages, really does believe that *a god* is speaking through him, that he is creating in a state of religious illumination - whereas he is repeating only what he has learned, popular wisdom mixed up with popular folly. Thus, insofar as the poet really *is vox populi* he *counts* as *vox dei*.[23]

Novalis, in fact, does not express his notion of the poet's vision in terms of the perception of a pre-existing higher reality, but emphasizes the creative and human aspects of this

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[22] Clark: *op. cit.*, pp.12-13; Steven Hales and Robert Welshon: "Truth, Paradox and Nietzschean Perspectivism" in *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 11:1, 1994, p.101. See also: Nietzsche: TL pp.80-81+85; WP ss.530-544.

interpretation. All human beings interpret their experiences to some extent, but it is the artist or poet who most obviously takes an active role in the formation of her world:

> [T]he beautiful, the subject of art, is not given to us nor can it be found ready in phenomena. All sounds produced by nature are rough - and empty of spirit - only the musical soul often finds the rustling of the forest - the whistling of the wind, the song of the nightingale, the babbling of the brook melodious and meaningful. [...] For most people this reversed use of the senses is certainly a mystery, but every artist will be more or less clearly aware of it. Almost every person is to a limited degree already an artist. In fact he sees actively and not passively - he feels actively and not passively. The main difference is this: the artist has vivified the germ of self-formative life in his sense organs - he has raised the excitability of these for the spirit and is thereby able to allow ideas to flow out of them at will - without external prompting - to use them as tools for such modifications of the real world as he will. On the other hand for the nonartist they speak only through the intervention of external prompting, and the spirit, like inert matter, seems to be governed by or to submit to the constraint of the basic laws of mechanics, namely that all changes presuppose an external cause and that effect and countereffect must equal each other at all times. At least it is some consolation to know that this mechanical behavior is unnatural to the spirit and is transient, like all that is spiritually unnatural.[24]

Novalis claims here that, while it appears that the way we understand the world follows strict causal laws, in fact a creative element is always present. Furthermore, he finds the idea that a causal relation might exist between the world and our conception of it depressing and constricting, consoling himself with the thought that such a relationship is unnatural and, therefore, likely to be temporary.[25] Nietzsche also believes that no necessary relationship exists between the world and our representation of it in language or consciousness, or even in subconscious images. The creative, tropic nature of the link between understanding, perception and the world that is posited beyond the human

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[23] Nietzsche: HH vol. 2, s.176, also s.32. See also: Nietzsche: RL p.243.
[24] Hardenberg: "Logological Fragments II" *op. cit.*, s.17.

undermines our ability to know or communicate anything about reality, or suggests the nonexistence of such a reality.

It is sometimes claimed that, as the natural conclusion to the latter line of reasoning, Nietzsche's perspectivism replaces the tropic notion of language present in his early works.[26] However, we have argued that Nietzsche is inconsistent in the application of his perspectivism to the subject, and continues to espouse a model of conceptual thought as inadequate to the purpose of expressing the basic realm of human existence, thus presenting the human condition as essentially one of isolation and alienation. This thesis maintains that although Nietzsche's perspectivism is incompatible with his tropic, expressive notion of language, he nonetheless maintains both simultaneously, thus undermining the stability of his response to the perceived threat of nihilism. The tendency of commentators to focus on Nietzsche's perspectivism and to ignore his continuing, underlying commitment to an expressive notion of language and thought has provided support for the claim that Nietzsche's concerns are not those of the Romantics.

One author who capitalizes on this uneven emphasis is Judith Norman, who presents a number of arguments against the identification of Nietzsche with Romanticism, most of which are based on Nietzsche's avowed perspectivism. Norman claims that the theories of language of Nietzsche and the Romantics are fundamentally different because the Romantic conceive of language as capable of mediating truth through the tropes irony and allegory - a conception which she claims Nietzsche lacks. This assertion is similar in some respects to our claim that for Novalis, trope enables communication, while for

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[25] Behler: (1993) *op. cit.*, p.273.
[26] Kofman: *op. cit.*, pp.16+82.

Nietzsche it undermines the possibility of such a thing. However, Norman appears to take Nietzsche's perspectivism as a straightforward representation of his philosophy, and overlooks those of his claims which present language and cognition as inadequate to human experience, thus implying a representative or expressive model of language. She bases her argument for Nietzsche's presentation of language as incapable of genuine communication on his denial of a world beyond language,[27] whereas we suggest that, while this argument does have a sound basis, Nietzsche *also* claims that language fails to represent an actually existing realm of human experience, and that this inadequacy is the result of its tropic nature. In other words, Nietzsche is not consistent in his denial of an extra-linguistic realm, frequently slipping from his perspectivism into a model in which an underlying essence characterizes, if not the physical world of the object, certainly the subject. The ability of language to mediate knowledge of an extra-linguistic realm is obviously incompatible with the denial of the existence of such a realm, and so we cannot claim that Norman is wrong in this respect. Nietzsche does deny the ability of language to mediate genuine knowledge of an externally existing world or of human beings. However, for Norman to make this claim in an unqualified manner she must ignore internal contradictions present in Nietzsche's philosophy, focusing on his perspectivism and neglecting his pervading tropic and expressive model of consciousness and language.

Following from this emphasis on Nietzsche's perspectivism is Norman's claim that a concern with truth pervades Romantic philosophy and is absent in Nietzsche, whose writings reflect instead an interest in the *desire* for truth.[28] As a result, Norman claims,

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[27] Norman: *op. cit.*, p.509.
[28] *Ibid.*, p.514.

Nietzsche is able to move on to an affirmative, immanent, and self-sufficient aesthetics, while the Romantics use artistic means to 'compensate' for the inaccessibility of truth.[29] Norman argues that the different conceptions of irony present in the philosophies of Nietzsche and the Romantics indicate these opposing concerns:

> [T]he dialectical quality of irony, the fact that [...] it unsays what it says while saying it, seems quite out of keeping with the general tenor of Nietzsche's thought. Nietzsche thinks that the philosophical concern for truth has been overcome, but operating in a post-truth environment is not simply a matter of saying and unsaying each statement. Indeed, far from overcoming the problem of truth in any meaningful way, this shows an abiding, almost obsessional concern with that very problem, with the absence of any Truth. And we do not find this sort of concern in Nietzsche, who, unlike the romantics, thinks that truth is irrelevant rather than missing [...]. Accordingly, Nietzsche wants philosophy to move on to something else, and one of the things he suggests it should move on to is art. But if we see art as simply a set of rhetorical strategies for dwelling on the simultaneously insurmountable and unavoidable problem of truth, then this hardly counts as moving on.[30]

Against Norman, we have argued that the kind of irony present in Nietzsche's philosophy *does* function by 'unsaying what it says while saying it'. Irony as it occurs in Nietzsche, when it differs from Romantic irony, does so primarily in that it does not aim to point to something beyond itself but merely undermines its own statements, thus calling for a reappraisal of existing linguistic categories. Norman seems to claim as much earlier in her article, asserting that "irony is the way Nietzsche allows his apparently paradoxical truth-claims to self-consciously signify their illusory [...] status, and deny that there is anything more solid on which they can be founded."[31] In light of this characterization of Nietzschean irony, we can apply to Nietzsche, as well as to the Romantics, Norman's

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[29] *Ibid.*, p.515.
[30] *Ibid.*, p.518.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp.517-518.

statement that "far from overcoming the problem of truth in any meaningful way, this shows an abiding, almost obsessional concern with [...] the absence of any Truth".[32] On our interpretation, both Nietzsche and Novalis use irony to indicate the absence in language of truth, in the traditional sense of a correspondence between words and states of affairs. Furthermore, both suggest that the only kind of truth that actually exists is a creative, subjective truth dependent on the tropic operation of human language and consciousness for its existence. As Maudemarie Clark suggests, Nietzsche places a high value on a correspondence notion of truth,[33] and his discovery of its absence in language and consciousness causes him to devalue these structures, suggesting that they are 'falsifications', 'illusions' and 'lies' - accusations mitigated only by his perspectivism, which claims that no world exists to be misrepresented. As we have seen, Nietzsche's perspectivism never succeeds in completely replacing his tropic notion of language and cognition. An abiding concern with traditional epistemological models can thus be seen to exist in Nietzsche's theory of language. Novalis, on the other hand, responds to his discovery of a lack of correspondence in language by accepting the subjective, limited character of both knowledge and truth.[34] The idea of a truth beyond subjectivity and perspective is perceived as a regulatory principle which can be approached by degrees. As a result, while Norman is correct in pointing out that Romanticism aims to communicate truth, she gives Nietzsche too much credit when she suggests that he succeeds in 'moving on' from the concern with truth to a totally immanent aesthetics.

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[32] *Ibid.*, p.518. See also: Breazeale: *op. cit.*, p.306.
[33] Clark: *op. cit.*, p.90.
[34] Hardenberg: "On Goethe" s.24. See also: Bowie: *op. cit.*, pp.18+64; Margaret Stoljar: "Introduction" in *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1997) p.5.

More plausibly, Norman presents the Romantic project as differing from Nietzsche's in that one aspect of the truth that it attempts to communicate is the existence of a divine absolute existing beyond natural phenomena.[35] Although Nietzsche's perspectivism often fails to eliminate a world of things in themselves, especially with regard to the subject, he is consistent in his denial of a spiritual realm. He maintains that the Romantics' belief in such an absolute sphere renders their philosophy nihilistic and denigrating of the self and the realm of everyday human experience.[36] In Novalis' philosophy, language and art do indeed have the purpose of mediating an awareness of this spirit or essence. Novalis presents this purpose as unrealizable, with the result that it presents a point to be eternally aimed for, rather than an achievable goal in itself. Consequently, the value of creativity in art and language consists not in the final result, but in the process. For Nietzsche, however, this kind of value is still value as a means, and his belief that human beings will eventually realize the non-existence of the divine means that he thinks that this instrumental value will eventually be negated, leading to nihilism.

Although nihilistic in this sense, Novalis' philosophy is not nihilistic in the compounded sense that Nietzsche attributes to, for instance, Christianity - that is, it is not self-denigrating or self-denying. Nietzsche perceives Christianity as especially damaging in that it not only grants no intrinsic worth to physical existence, but actually devalues the physical, claiming that physical drives and desires are corrupt and evil.[37] Novalis, on the other hand, as a pantheist perceives the physical not as a mere mask for the divine spirit, but as an emanation of divinity. As such, everything in existence has great value, and the

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[35] Norman: *op. cit.*, p.519.
[36] Nietzsche: HH vol. 1, ss.141-142; WP s.829.

task of the poet (and of human beings in general) is not to negate the world in order to leave room for the divine, but to represent the world in such a way as to allow its inner divinity to be perceived. It could be argued that intrinsic worth is thus seen to inhere in natural phenomena. However, from Nietzsche's perspective the attribution of divine status to the physical is spurious, and so even if Romanticism does not directly devalue the physical, the eventual realization of the fact that the physical actually lacks this divine character will still result in nihilism. Thus we agree with Norman that belief in the divine sets Novalis apart from Nietzsche, and claim that, despite its optimistic and affirming view of existence, Novalis' Romanticism is not a position that Nietzsche could endorse.

It is not clear, however, that Nietzsche's own response to the problem of crumbling faith in traditional value-systems avoids ushering in the same kind of nihilism that he perceives in Romanticism - and possibly with more immediacy. While the structures that give value in Novalis' philosophy may eventually negate themselves, Nietzsche's thought already represents a negation of all forms of extrinsic value that might be given to human existence, and his attempts to posit an intrinsic value to humanity based on creativity undermines itself. Our use of trope to characterize Nietzsche's theory of language helps clarify this, in the context of the deconstruction of the possibility of communication.

Corresponding to their responses to the critique of the ability of traditional forms of epistemology and language to mediate knowledge, the models of communication presented by Nietzsche and Novalis bear important similarities, but diverge radically in their expectations for the possibility of meaningful communication. For both thinkers, the link between language and things is imaginative, creative, and subjective. Novalis

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[37] Nietzsche: TI 'Morality as Anti-Nature'.

claims that "both [sign and signified] are related to each other only in the one who is signifying",[38] while Nietzsche states: "One never communicates thoughts: one communicates movements, mimic signs, which we then trace back to thoughts."[39] However, for Nietzsche this retracing of thought processes is unreliable; since one's personal experiences colour one's interpretations, a piece of language is unlikely ever to mean the same thing to more than one person.[40] Nor are we capable of representing things truthfully even to ourselves. The subjective, tropic means by which language functions represents a breakdown in communication in the form of a corruption of information, leaving the human being fundamentally isolated from her fellow language-users. For Novalis, on the other hand, the tropic nature of language represents the possibility of freedom, creativity, and the realization of one's fundamental unity with other creatures. The idea of language as trope, therefore, works in Nietzsche's case to alienate the human being from other humans, as well as from herself and from any extra-linguistic realm that might exist, while for Novalis it has the opposite effect. Since both Nietzsche and Novalis hope to present creativity, especially originality in the formation and use of conceptual and linguistic categories, as an alternative use of language to fidelity to pre-existing objects and events, this difference has important implications for the success of their respective projects. While Novalis' advocacy of creativity is supported by the role it plays in enabling individual human beings to exist in harmonious communion with the world, with others and the divine, creativity in Nietzsche functions negatively, according to most people's standards, and results in the impossibility of true

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[38] Hardenberg: ((2003) *op. cit.*, s.11.1.
[39] Nietzsche: WP s.809.

communication, understanding, or self-revelation. Recognizing this problem, Nietzsche denigrates social values and attempts to set up instead the ideal of the great individual. His success in this venture is limited, largely due to his presentation of the origins of language as social in nature. Since language and consciousness developed together to further the aims of communal living, they tend to affirm communal values, which Nietzsche claims are damaging to the flourishing of individuals - especially of great individuals.[41] Thus Nietzsche's presentation of language as bearing the potential to affirm the human being through its promotion of creativity, as well as through its projection of the values and way of life of the language-user, is frustrated by its social origins and inadequacy to its object. He ends up with a model that presents language as furthering social goals at the expense of individual ones, thus failing to liberate the individual from her conceptual fetters, but without enabling true communication with others. Language thus succeeds neither in allowing a communion of the language-user with others and with nature, such as is found in Novalis, or, as Nietzsche hopes, in aiding the individual to affirm herself as she genuinely is, beneath the social and conceptual categories imposed on her by conscious interpretations of existence. The ironic use of language advocated by Nietzsche, in which the language-user continually revises conceptual and linguistic categories in order to avoid becoming trapped, thus has no hope of a positive outcome, but is an inherently negative process. Freedom is presented as an escape from particular forms of constraint, while no possibility of escape from all constraint is offered. For Novalis, freedom is expressed in a similar movement from one

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[40] Nietzsche: EH 'Why I Write Such Good Books' s.1.
[41] Nietzsche: WP ss.33, 130, 246, 783-785.

system of expression to another; however, this freedom is presented as a movement towards something (the spiritual, the absolute, or truth) rather than away from something. Although this goal can never actually be attained, affirmation inheres in the process itself, which is fundamentally a process of ever-closer communion with oneself, with others, with the natural world and with God.

The use of the notion of language as trope has enabled this study to draw attention to the most important difference that we perceive between the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis: the opposition between their responses to their critiques of epistemology, which in both cases discovers a creative, subjective element to be inherent in human speech and understanding. In short, this opposition is that Novalis believes that the possibility of genuine communication is dependent on the presence of trope in language, while Nietzsche believes that it is undermined by this presence. Despite this opposition, our focus on the tropic aspects of their theories of language reveals that Nietzsche and Novalis have very similar conceptions of how language and knowledge function; it is their different expectations regarding standards for communication and understanding that result in their divergent appraisals of language's potential. In both cases, imagination and association are seen to be responsible for the creation of meaning and the belief in an external world conforming to our conception of it, and in both cases, this model is derived from a notion of language as trope. The six kinds of trope highlighted in this study enable us to pinpoint exactly how subjectivity enters these accounts of language, as well as the repercussions of this subjectivity for each thinker's understanding of the value of human existence. We will now summarize our accounts of

each of these tropes, and draw our findings together in order to formulate a conclusion regarding the relative merits of the two theories of language.

Novalis' model of the world as a set of signs representing the divine, and of language as a set of signs representing the world, suggests that these linguistic systems function metonymically, in the sense that they allow one thing (natural phenomena or words) to stand for another (the divine or natural phenomena). A comparison with Nietzsche's use of the specific form of metonymy 'confusion of cause and effect' demonstrates more clearly how this representation works. In both cases, the world of human experience is perceived as a linguistic construct, projected beyond the human being on the basis of an inference from concepts. Common to both accounts is the notion that this construct is the result of an abstraction from properties which are largely subjective in character. However, the conclusions that the two thinkers draw from this discovery are radically different. For Nietzsche, language as metonymy entails that we can know nothing about things in themselves, or even whether things in themselves exist. For Novalis, 'genius' is the creation of the real world in conformity with our conceptions of it, meaning that language's conferral of coherence and meaning both spiritualises the world and draws out the inner truth of the universe.

Our account of synecdoche also illuminates the different potential for language perceived by Nietzsche and Novalis. For Nietzsche, language is synecdochal insofar as the creation of words requires the highlighting of some aspects of objects and events in order to use them to stand for the whole. Synecdoche is thus responsible for a corruption of data. For Novalis, by contrast, the synecdochal character of language only falsifies the

world when language is taken literally. When its true nature is understood, the objects and events designated by language are seen to be artificially selected aspects of a unified whole which they, as parts, connote through synecdoche. In this way, finite, limited language is capable of mediating the infinite through suggestion and association.

The analogous structure of language, human, nature and spirit provides grounds in Novalis' philosophy for the possibility of genuine communication through language, due to the ability of language to mirror these other realms. For Nietzsche, on the other hand, the analogy between human, language and world is the result of language's need to divide, simplify and make crude, and of its subsequent imposition of the resultant categories onto both human and world. Nietzsche believes that this renders everything communicated in language necessarily a distortion.

We found that irony also suggested parallels and differences in the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis. In both cases, irony is the mechanism by which language indicates its inability to signify literally, and points to the need for a creative use of language. However, while for Novalis, this alternative use of language enables a more truthful kind of communication, for Nietzsche it only signals the impossibility of communication on a genuine level and acts as an imperative to keep changing linguistic strategies for shaping and representing the self and its world.

Nietzsche's use of metaphor to characterize the formation of language is absent from Novalis' account; however, the definition of 'allegory' as an 'extended metaphor' enabled us to present Nietzsche's model of language as a whole as an allegory for subconscious human processes. As such, we asked whether it would be justified to claim that, for

Nietzsche, language functions allegorically to represent the human being and the world, as it does for Novalis. We concluded that although Nietzsche claims that no world of things in themselves exists, his account does include a world of subjectively constructed concepts in which the human being exists, as well as levels of human existence besides cognition, and that language does function to represent these realms through allegory. However, Novalis' beliefs that the divine is also represented by language, and that the realm of human experience corresponds to a real world, set his account apart from that of Nietzsche and demonstrate once again that for Novalis, but not for Nietzsche, language has the potential to signify truly and to enable communication.

Our findings helped us to ascertain that Norman is correct in her claim that Novalis believes that language is capable of pointing beyond itself towards extra-linguistic states of affairs, while Nietzsche wishes to deny this capacity. However, Nietzsche is not consistent in this denial. His belief that language and consciousness repress an unconscious realm of drives and instincts implies that a pre-existing subject is there to be repressed and misrepresented. This leads us to conclude that real communication and the mediation of truth are absent from Nietzsche's account of language not because he holds that nothing exists to be communicated or known, but because he believes that the subjective, tropic aspects of language render it inadequate. This conclusion also suggests the inaccuracy of Norman's claim that the Romantics are obsessed with truth, while Nietzsche has liberated himself from the need for such a notion. While Novalis does indeed believe that language can be used creatively to approach truth, it is less clear that the desire for truth is lacking from Nietzsche's account. Nietzsche claims that truth, in

the traditional sense, is entirely absent from language, and uses this claim to demonstrate the essential isolation and ignorance of the human being. The fact that he does so reveals his retention of the traditional ideal of truth as objective, and dependent on the direct and necessary correspondence of language and states of affairs. For Nietzsche, creativity acts as a hindrance to both knowledge and communication. Norman's claim that Nietzsche moves on from truth to an immanent and affirming aesthetics suggests that Nietzsche sets up creativity as a value *opposed* to truth (whereas for Novalis, they are compatible). However, because the lack of truth in language undermines the ability of language to form a genuine communication or self-revelation and renders the individual isolated from other human beings, in order to present creativity as a desideratum Nietzsche must set up individual values as an ideal superior to social or 'herd' values, and claim that these new values are fostered by creativity. Unfortunately, because of the social origins of language, even a creative use of language does not act to liberate the individual, instead imposing crude, generalized and misleading categories upon the subject. As a result, language is a medium inadequate both to traditional values regarding social living and the search for truth, and to Nietzsche's new values which celebrate the individual. Based on this conclusion, it might be argued that Nietzsche's attempt to present an immanent and affirmative philosophy poses a more immediate threat of nihilism than does Novalis' integration of the ideals of truth and creativity into a single theory of poetic language.

On top of these difficulties, Nietzsche's theory of language suffers from internal contradictions as a result of his failure to entirely replace his tropic and expressive notion of human beings and language with perspectivism. Additionally, while Novalis escapes

the self-referential paradox by presenting language as capable of mediating knowledge indirectly, through trope, Nietzsche's denial of this possibility renders questionable the status of his own use of language.

Ultimately, we must conclude that, while Novalis' philosophy must have appeared nihilistic to Nietzsche in its positing of a divine realm beyond ordinary human experience, it succeeds where Nietzsche's does not in presenting creativity as a value capable of replacing or supplementing the traditional desire to possess truth. It does so by absorbing and altering the notion of truth, making truth subjective and capable of existing by degrees. Nietzsche attempts instead to create an account of the human that involves no extrinsic values such as the aspiration to truth, but in doing so he succeeds not in establishing an intrinsic value to human existence based on creativity, but rather in eliminating the possibility of value of any kind. In undermining the capacity of language to mediate truth, and in basing this deconstruction on the role of creativity in language, Nietzsche requires us to affirm the creative nature of language despite its direct opposition to normal standards of value. Meanwhile, his insistence on the tendency of language to further these standards makes language an inadequate medium for the promotion of the individualistic values that he proposes to set up in their place. Due to these inconsistencies and failures, Nietzsche's response to the discovery of trope in language is both less stable and less affirming of the human being than is that of Novalis.

Summary and conclusions

This chapter provides a brief overview of the main argument of this thesis, found in chapters 3-6, and of our findings. Beginning with a reminder of the six tropes used in this thesis and how we applied 'trope' to language as a whole, we continue with a summary of the manifestation of trope in the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis, and finish by reviewing the results of our comparison.

In chapter 3, we attempted to provide definitions of six tropes (synecdoche, analogy, metonymy, metaphor, irony and allegory) that we found relevant to this study, in a form which allowed them to be helpfully applied to the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis. The use of trope in this thesis was intended to clarify correspondences between the theories of language of the two thinkers, as well as to illuminate the main difference we perceived: their different responses to the discovery of a creative and subjective element to knowledge and language. We found that the traditional definition of trope, as a 'deviation from the standard significance of words', depended upon a distinction between figurative language and a prior, literal sense to language. Basing our argument on recent accounts that suggest that trope functions by the transfer of subjective connotations of words and phrases, we were able to present trope as a notion of how language works, rather than as a description of a particular kind of language. To claim that language as a whole is tropic, we suggested, is to claim that it functions by a creative transference of associations, rather than by the direct correspondence between words and things that is often thought to characterize language. What all six forms of trope used in our study have in common is the use of connotation, rather than denotation, to signify

their object, thus introducing a creative, subjective element into communication. This suggests that language is not a rule-bound operation, but requires the active intervention of the subject in order to create meaning and to communicate.

Our discussion of language in Nietzsche's writings encountered all six kinds of trope defined in chapter 3. While the attribution of a synecdochal, analogical, metaphorical or metonymic account of language to Nietzsche was relatively straightforward, our discussions of irony and allegory illustrated problems and inconsistencies within his theory of language. Nietzsche's claims regarding the inadequacy of language to mediate truth are ironic, insofar as they undermine the ability of his own text to communicate truthfully. His insistence on the invalidity of the tropic relation between language or knowledge and any kind of pre-existing reality leave him ill-equipped to deal with this self-referential paradox. Meanwhile, our discussion of the suggestion that Nietzsche presents an allegorical notion of language, in which language embodies, rather than describes, the truths that it attempts to communicate, ran into serious inconsistencies within his philosophy. We based this discussion on an attempt to reconcile Nietzsche's notion of language as a surface in which meaning is created through the interrelationships of words with his model of language as involving a series of metaphorical transferences. We discovered that Nietzsche simultaneously denigrates language for its inability to represent the world or the human in any genuine sense, and claims that no pre-existing world or subject exists to be misrepresented. Although some commentators claim that Nietzsche's perspectivism forms a response to, and replacement of, his tropic notion of language, we argued that throughout his writings he continues to present a model –

closely related to his earlier discussion of language as trope - of cognition as inadequate to the true expression of the subconscious human being. Consequently, we concluded that Nietzsche's theory of language is self-contradictory and unstable.

All the tropes defined in chapter 3, except metaphor, were found to be present in Novalis' theory of language, although not necessarily in the same form as in the thought of Nietzsche. In particular, Novalis is more straightforward than Nietzsche in his use of allegory, claiming that the interrelationships within language reflect the structure of the subject, of the natural world, and of the divine spirit of which he believes these are emanations, and consequently that language is capable of mediating truth. This ability of language was seen to be dependent on the analogical structure that Novalis believes exists between language and these three realms. Irony is also more straightforward in Novalis' writings than in those of Nietzsche. For Novalis, the literal sense of language is nonsensical, but if one realizes this it becomes possible to approach truth through a negation of the literal adequacy of one's claims. Meanwhile synecdoche, which for Nietzsche refers to the part-whole relation between words and what they signify, can be seen in Novalis' model of language to be founded on the interconnectedness of all natural phenomena, with the result that a representation of one aspect of the world is capable of mediating, through association, knowledge of the universe as a whole.

In chapter 6, we compared the use of trope in the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis, using our findings to demonstrate their different approaches to some of the same problems. The different forms of trope tended to have similar implications for the two models of language, and a pattern emerged. We found that each trope was applicable to,

and helped explain, the way language was seen to function in both accounts, often demonstrating fundamental similarities. However, they also revealed that while the ability of language to communicate truth (and of human cognition to obtain genuine knowledge) was perceived by Novalis to be dependent on trope, for Nietzsche the presence of trope in language entailed the impossibility of genuine communication or understanding. We saw that this was so in the cases of metonymy, synecdoche, and analogy. In the cases of metaphor/allegory and irony, a similar effect was observed, but in Nietzsche's writings the contradiction between expressivism and perspectivism made it unclear whether this impossibility was based on a corruption of information due to the creative and subjective nature of trope, or to the non-existence of a truth to be indicated.

The use of trope to characterize the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis also helped us formulate a response to Norman's argument that Nietzsche's perspectivism and the Romantics' goal of representing the physical and spiritual realms render their philosophies utterly incommensurable. We argued that while Novalis is indeed preoccupied with the task of mediating knowledge, it is not the case that Nietzsche successfully escapes the desire for truth in his writings. The incompatibility of Nietzsche's perspectivism with his tropic and expressive model of language and consciousness means that he frequently slips into a characterization of the human being that presupposes an already-existing subject capable of being stifled and misrepresented. That Nietzsche makes this misrepresentation dependent on the presence of trope, and hence of subjectivity and creativity, in language and consciousness, reveals his abiding concern with a correspondence notion of truth. It also undermines his attempt to attribute

an intrinsic value to creativity and, through creativity, to the human being. Having argued that language's social origins and need to simplify what it describes render it an accomplice in the propagation of social values and an enemy of individual self-expression, Nietzsche proceeds to demonstrate the inadequacies of language in this capacity, thus undermining its ability to promote traditional values regarding truth and sociability as well as its ability to foster individual creativity. Instead, Nietzsche advocates a perpetual re-creation of linguistic and conceptual categories in order to avoid becoming trapped by one way of perceiving things, and one way of life. We discovered that while Novalis advocates a similar eternal re-creation of linguistic systems, for Novalis this process manifests freedom as a positive movement towards ever-greater truth, and ever-closer communion with the rest of existence, in contrast to Nietzsche's essentially negative view of creativity in language.

Our verdict regarding the points of contact between the theories of language of Nietzsche and Novalis is that, while both present a similar model of language as trope, their responses to this model are radically different. Nietzsche's refusal to grant epistemological adequacy to trope results in a theory of language which has trouble with the self-referential paradox, contains internal contradictions, and presents a negative vision of freedom, communication, knowledge, and of human life in general. Novalis, on the other hand, accepts trope as fundamental to the success of language and thought, with the result that, although his system is nihilistic by Nietzsche's standards, he does at least succeed in formulating a positive philosophy in which creativity and the human being are affirmed through their ability to endow the world with truth, meaning, and the spiritual.

References

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Baldick, Chris: *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2nd edition, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001

Behler, Diana: *The Theory of the Novel in Early German Romanticism*, Bern: Lang, 1978: Explores Novalis' expression of the need for poesy to unite philosophy and poetry and the resulting mediation of real and ideal, and subject and object.

Behler, Ernst: "Nietzsche's Challenge to Romantic Humanism" pp.30-52 in *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, vol. 5, 1978: Nietzsche saw the artistic ideals promoted by the Romantics as founded on weakness and lack. In opposition he placed the Dionysian artistic ideal, which he saw as stemming from overabundance and the affirmation of life. Behler claims, however, that Nietzsche's 'dionysian classicism' masks his partial affinity with the very ideals he attributes to the Romantics.

Behler, Ernst: *German Romantic Literary Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993: Behler suggests that the Romantic's identification of the limits of knowledge and language grounds the possibility of human freedom and creativity in striving to surpass these limits.

Behler, Ernst: "On Truth and Lie in an Aesthetic Sense" pp.76-92 in Michael P. Clark (ed.): *Revenge of the Aesthetic: The Place of Literature in Theory Today*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2000: According to Behler, both Nietzsche and the Romantics challenge the domination of scientific discourse, especially where it occurs in philosophy, and suggest the need to utilise the approach to truth found in poetic and mythic language in addition to more 'rational' means.

Black, Max: "Metaphor" pp.273-294 in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol.55, 1955: Proposes an 'interaction view' of metaphor, in which a set of implications associated with the source of the metaphor is imputed to the target, sumultaneously organising our perceptions of the target and reinforcing 'commonplaces' believed about the source.

Blanchot, Maurice (trans. Deborah Esch and Ian Balfour): "The Athenaeum" pp.163-172 in *Studies in Romanticism*, 22:2, 1983: Claims that Romanticism emphasises the productive act rather than the work in literature. Fulfilment requires using the whole while constantly interrupting it, necessitating the fragment as systemless system; the rhythm of breaks between fragments constitute the structure of the work.

Bowie, Andrew: "'The Philology of Philosophy': The Early Romantic Heritage and Contemporary Literary Theory" pp.116-135 in *Publications of the English Goethe Society*, vol. 65, 1996: Argues against literary interpreters who believe that texts, and by extension the world, have meanings pre-existing interpretation. Claims that Novalis locates meaning not in representation, but in the changing relationships between linguistic terms. Facts and final truths are abandoned, resulting in an imperative to create new interpretations and perspectives with which to make the world meaningful.

Bowie, Andrew: *From Romanticism to Critical Theory: The Philosophy of German Literary Theory*, New York: Routledge, 1997: Argues that the Romantics abandoned the attempt to discover a single foundation for knowledge, accepting instead the circularity of knowledge claims and asserting that knowledge exists in a context of existing practices and meanings. The Romantics held a constitutive and relational model of language, and claimed that through the reorganisation of language, the subject imposes meaning on the world. Meaning is thus not a result of semantic rules, but depends on the spontaneous creative action of the subject.

Breazeale, Daniel: "The Word, the World, and Nietzsche" pp.301-320 in *Philosophical Forum*, 6:2-3, 1974-1975: Claims that Nietzsche never gave up the desire for a 'distortion-free' representative language, and could not accept that knowledge is always finite and human.

Calhoon, Kenneth Scott: "Language and Irony in Novalis' Die Lehrlinge zu Sais", pp.51-61 in *The Germanic Review*, 56:2, 1981: Claims that the text presents language as a mediator of the relationship of humanity to nature. Novalis denigrates scientific discourse for its isolation of forms from nature, disguising the fluid totality of the world and positing a separate 'world-in-itself'. Poetic language attempts to overcome these limitations, mediating the transcendent by intimating the infinite, thus enabling the more creative interaction with the world found in magical idealism.

Cantor, Paul: "Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of Metaphor" pp.71-88 in David S. Miall (ed.): *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, Sussex: The Harvester Press, and New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982: Discusses Nietzsche's attempts to undermine the difference between literal and figurative language, claiming it reflects a larger concern with the physical/spiritual distinction.

Clark, Maudemarie:*Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990: Claims that the claim of *On Truth and Lies in the Extra-Moral Sense* that humans have no access to truth is perceived by the later Nietzsche as a symptom of the ascetic ideal.

Crawford, Claudia: *The Beginnings of Nietzsche's Theory of Literature*, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988: Argues that most of Nietzsche's theory of language was

already in place by the time he read Gerber, and that for Nietzsche, the unconscious functions as a language of images underlying conceptual language.

Cuddon, J. A.: *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 3rd edition, London and New York: Penguin Books, 1991

Davidson, Donald: "What Metaphors Mean" pp.29-46 in Sheldon Sacks (ed.): *On Metaphor*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978: Argues that the meaning of metaphors is simply their literal meaning. Metaphors have a truth-value, and are usually false. Davidson's account relies on the distinction between what a metaphor *means*, and what it draws our attention to.

De Lubac, Henri (trans. Mark Sebanc): *Medieval Exegesis, vol 1: The Four Senses of Scripture*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, and Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998: The authoritative work on medieval Biblical exegesis, describing in detail the four most commonly used exegetical senses as well as several less widespread alternative models.

Del Caro, Adrian: *Nietzsche Contra Nietzsche: Creativity and the Anti-Romantic*, Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989: A comparison of Nietzsche and the Romantics, particularly Novalis and Schlegel. Del Caro presents Nietzsche as the "last Romantic", claiming he supercedes Romanticism in overcoming his own Romantic 'sickness', evident in his earliest works.

De Man, Paul: "Nietzsche's Theory of Rhetoric", pp.33-51 in *Symposium*, 28:1, 1974: Points out that for Nietzsche, all language is rhetoric, and rhetoric depends on tropes. De Man argues that it is impossible to escape the deceptive nature of language, even while drawing attention to the deception, resulting in a constant ironical movement - in the Romantic sense of the word.

Drabble, Margaret (ed.): *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, revised edition, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995

Dupriez, Bernard (trans. and adapted Albert W. Halsall): *A Dictionary of Literary Devices: Gradus, A-Z*, Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991

Eco, Umberto: *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984: Divides theories which view metaphor as the fundamental mechanism of language formation from those which see language as a rule-governed mechanism, where the metaphor signals a problem with part of the system.

Goodman, Nelson: *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merril Co. Inc., 1968: Claiming that representation and exemplification are conventional aspects of symbols, and suggesting a role for creativity in linguistic and perceptual interpretation.

Hales, Steven D., and Robert C. Welshon: "Truth, Paradox, and Nietzschean Perspectivism" pp.101-119 in *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 11:1, 1994: Argues that all previous attempts to explain Nietzsche's 'truth-perspectivism' have failed due to the self-referential paradox. Claims this can be resolved by distinguishing strong and weak truth-perspectivism, and that the latter fits with both Nietzsche's critique of epistemology and his positive claims.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von (trans. Palmer Hilty): *Henry von Ofterdingen*, Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1992: Henry searches for the blue flower, which symbolises his quest for poetry, love and self-knowledge. The narrative is broken by smaller stories, embodying Novalis' theory of raising while representing the breakdown of the barriers between dreams and waking life, myth and reality, physical and spiritual.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Miscellaneous Observations", pp.23-46 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: The fragments describe Novalis' thoughts on poetry, symbol, religion, the absolute, wit, language formation, representation, the individual and the state, the human being as microcosm, history, truth, the 'interesting' and translation.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Logological Fragments I", pp.47-66 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: Novalis outlines his theories of philosophy and poetry, and his belief that the two must ultimately be united. 'Logological' refers to the reflection of philosophy upon itself, the 'philosophy of philosophy', or philosophy raised to the higher power, also known as 'poeticized' philosophy.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Logological Fragments II", pp.67-82 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: Fragments dealing primarily with art, language, philosophy and communication. Novalis claims that perception is active, and that even the experiences of ordinary people are artistic in that we form our sensations according to our spirit. The difference between the artist and the ordinary individual is that the artist allows his formative spirit to flow outwards from him, whereas the experiences of ordinary individuals appear to be to a greater degree subject to external causality.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Monologue", pp.83-84 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: Claims that language "plays" only with itself, and that this autonomy enables it to mirror the interplay of relations in nature, like a blueprint. The

freedom of language from correspondence with the world enables the "world soul" to speak through it.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Teplitz Fragments", pp.101-110 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: Discusses women and religion, equating women with love and throwing light on Novalis' use of female figures as mediators of the divine. Reading is depicted as philology or interpretation, suggesting that the reader forms a second writer.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "On Goethe", pp.111-120 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: Beginning as a discussion of Goethe's scientific writings, these fragments develop into a discussion of metaphysics.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "General Draft", pp.121-136 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: A discussion of metaphysics, beginning with the claim that the self needs to represent itself in the nonself in order to understand itself and then discussing the aim of nature (the progression from chaos, through differentiation, to reunification), magical idealism, the necessity of illusion and error for the possession of truth, and Novalis' theory that every appearance is a symbol of the whole.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von: "Last Fragments", pp.153-166 in Margaret Mahony Stoljar (ed. and trans.): *Novalis: Philosophical Writings*, Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997: On poetry, philosophy, religion, physics and nature. Poetry is depicted as linking the inner and outer worlds, as well as past, present and future. Novalis claims that every particular thing within the universe symbolises the whole, and is represented in the whole, by free association.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von (ed. Jane Kneller): *Fichte Studies*, Cambridge, New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2003: Novalis' critical reception of Fichte, containing responses to Fichte's work as well as his own thoughts on infinity, representation, magic idealism and poetry.

Hardenberg, Friedrich von (trans. Ralph Mannheim): *The Novices of Sais*, New York: Archipelago Books, 2005: A discussion of several complementary approaches to the task of solving the riddle of nature, suggesting in particular a correspondence between an outward and an inward path to knowledge.

Heller, Peter: *Studies on Nietzsche*, Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1980: Claims that Nietzsche moved from his Romantic stage, through the advocacy of an ascetic free spirit, to a celebration of the immanent. According to Heller, each of

Nietzsche's phases assimilates, as well as supercedes, the last, with the result that his thought always includes Romanticism, even when seeking to overcome it.

Hinman, Lawrence M.: "Nietzsche, Metaphor and Truth" pp.179-200 in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43:2, 1982: Discusses the implications of Nietzsche's account of language as metaphorical for reference and truth.

Houlgate, Stephen: *Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, Cambridge, London, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986: Discusses the relation of Nietzsche's perspectivism to his view of metaphysics, emphasizing Nietzsche's replacement of a two-tiered model of being and perceived appearances with one of becoming and conceived rigidity.

Jaspers, Karl (trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz): *Nietzsche: Introduction to an Understanding of his Philosophical Activity*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965: Describes Nietzsche's philosophy in terms at times strongly reminiscent of Novalis' Romanticism.

Kaufmann, Walter: *From Shakespeare to Existentialism: Studies in Poetry, Religion and Philosophy*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1959: Objects to Jaspers' Nietzsche, claiming that Jaspers has 'romanticized Nietzsche' and presenting the Romantics as death-obsessed and self-denying.

Kaufmann, Walter: *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edition, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974: Rejects any connection between Nietzsche and the Romantics, primarily on the basis of Nietzsche's self-proclaimed anti-Romanticism.

Kofman, Sarah (trans. Duncan Large): *Nietzsche and Metaphor*, London: The Athlone Press, 1993: Argues that, for Nietzsche, consciousness and the body symbolize each other, and that he presents interpretation, rather than an underlying text of the world, is the primary fact.

Kuzniar, Alice A.: "Reassessing Romantic Reflexivity: The Case of Novalis", pp.77-86 in *The Germanic Review*, 63:2, 1988: Argues that Novalis acknowledges the essentially schismatic nature of self-reflection. The striving for unity often advocated in Novalis' works forms a regulatory principle; self-reflection is impossible without division, meaning that not only the eventual synthesis of representation and contemplator, but also a prior state of union, is impossible.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson: *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980: Argues that the whole of human experience is structured by metaphor, which is defined as the understanding of one aspect of experience in terms of another.

Minnis, A.J.: "*Quadruplex Sensus, Multiplex Modus*: Scriptural Sense and Mode in Medieval Scholastic Exegesis" pp.231-256 in Jon Whitman (ed.): *Interpretation and Allegory: Antiquity to the Modern Period*, Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2000: For our purposes, useful in its historical account of the four senses of medieval Biblical exegesis.

Molnár, Géza von: "The Composition of Novalis' Die Lehrlinge zu Sais: A Reevaluation", pp.1002-1014 in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 85:5, 1970: Emphasises the dialectical structure of *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, through which Novalis outlines humanity's estrangement from nature and hope for reunification. The first three paragraphs of the novella ask if the 'great inscription' of nature is legible, and answer in both the negative and affirmative. Novalis uses this initial opposition to emphasize the movement from unity to differentiation that has happened with man and nature, and the possibility of approaching unity once more.

Molnár, Géza von: *Romantic Vision, Ethical Context: Novalis and Artistic Autonomy*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987: Claims that Novalis' philosophy primarily attempted to overcome the subject-object distinction through the unifying action made possible through poetry.

Moore, F. C. T.: "On Taking Metaphor Literally" pp.1-13 in David S. Miall (ed.): *Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives*, Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1982: Suggests that the primary intention in using metaphor may not be to *say* something, but to produce an effect on the hearer. Argues that similarities can be found between any items, but that certain kinds of similarities tend to become 'encoded' in the grammatical structure of language.

Murphy, Timothy: *Nietzsche, Metaphor, Religion*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001: Nietzsche's related notions of metaphor, interpretation and narrative are presented as the tools with which social identity is constructed, and through which the individual apprehends reality.

Nehamas, Alexander: *Nietzsche, Life as Literature*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1985: Nehamas argues that Nietzsche uses the model of a literary text to describe the world, and uses his writings to construct a literary character for himself, thus exemplifying his notions of style, self-overcoming, and the will to power.

Neubauer, Jon: *Novalis*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980: An introduction to Novalis' work, focussing on an explanation of the use of various symbols in different texts.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. Marianne Cowan): *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1962: Nietzsche summarizes the ideas of

several pre-Socratic philosophers, emphasizing conceptions of being, becoming, and the infinite.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (ed. Oscar Levy, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici): "Nietzsche Contra Wagner" pp.53-82 in *The Case of Wagner*, New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1964: Nietzsche complains about Wagner's introduction of 'drama' into music, expecting music to *mean* something and thus devaluing its intrinsic qualities of rhythm and tone.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. Walter Kaufmann): "The Case of Wagner" pp.153-192 in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, New York: Random House, 1967: Describes Wagner as making music as harmful and decadent, where it should be lighthearted and lively.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale): *The Will to Power*, New York: Vintage Books, 1968: Of particular interest for our purposes are Book 2, section 3: "Critique of Philosophy" and Book 3, section 1: "The Will to Power as Knowledge", in which Nietzsche deals with themes of philosophy, science, poetry, language and knowledge-claims.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. Walter Kaufmann): *The Gay Science*, New York: Vintage Books, 1974: Drawing together many important themes of Nietzsche's writing, including his belief in the necessity of forgetting for culture and the impossibility of epistemological access to things in themselves.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. R. J. Hollingdale): *Human, all too Human*, Cambridge, New York and New Rochelle: Cambridge University Press, 1986: Nietzsche introduces many of his abiding concerns, including the ideas of reality as flux, things in themselves as inaccessible, and the inadequacy of our explanatory notions of cause and effect, subject and predicate.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (ed. Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair and David J. Parent): *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989: Notes from Nietzsche's class on rhetoric, in which he discusses the ubiquitous nature of rhetoric and trope as well as the origins of language.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale): "On the Genealogy of Morals" pp.3-200 in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, New York: Vintage Books, 1989: Nietzsche discusses the origins of 'slave' and 'noble' morality, developing a genealogical method for understanding all phenomena as interpretations and subjugations by competing forces.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann): "Ecce Homo" pp.201-338 in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, New York: Vintage Books, 1989: Nietzsche describes his previous writings, particularly *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in glowing

terms. The book is slightly autobiographical, relating the small things - physiological things - which he here claims are the most important.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. R. J. Hollingdale): *Beyond Good and Evil*, London, New York and Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990: Nietzsche deconstructs traditional epistemological models, investigating the tendency to believe in things in themselves, meanings, and causal agents, as well as the possibility of adequate knowledge.

Nietzsche, Friedrich: "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge" pp.3-60 in Daniel Breazeale (ed. and trans.): *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, Amherst, New York: Humanity Books, 1990: Discussing the damaging effects of indiscriminate knowledge on culture and demanding that aesthetic considerations be applied to the gathering of information.

Nietzsche, Friedrich: "On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" pp.79-100 in Daniel Breazeale (ed. and trans.): *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, Amherst, New York: Humanity Books, 1990: A detailed discussion of the formation of language, with an emphasis on the metaphorical and metonymic transferences inherent in the relationship of concepts and words to things.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. R. J. Hollingdale): "Twilight of the Idols" pp.29-122 in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, London, New York and Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990: Especially interesting are "Reason' in Philosophy', where Nietzsche seeks to draw attention to his argument that language is responsible for the false belief in active agents and things in themselves.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. R. J. Hollingdale): "The Anti-Christ" pp.123-199 in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, London, New York and Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990: Belief in 'truth', especially in religious statements, is seen as restrictive, stifling self-realisation and hindering genuine truthfulness.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (trans. Richard Gray): "Notebook 19 (Summer 1872-early 1873)" in *Unpublished Writings from the Period of Unfashionable Observations*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999: Many of Nietzsche's early thoughts on the nature of language and the relation between knowledge and culture.

Norman, Judith: "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism", pp.501-519 in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 63:3, 2002: Argues against placing Nietzsche in the same philosophical tradition as the Romantics. She claims that despite a shared concern with the validity of traditional notions of truth and the illusory nature of reality and

language, Nietzsche and the Romantics pursue different projects. The Romantics aim to explore and express the transcendental subject; Nietzsche affirms the immanent.

Pfefferkorn, Kristin: *Novalis: A Romantic's Theory of Language and Poetry*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988: Argues that art, for Novalis, expresses or symbolises something about the artist, the world, and the spirit which works through the artist, elicits a creative response from the spectator, and also exists for its own sake, enabling it to present an inverted image of the real and reflect the absolute.

Poellner, Peter: *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995: Investigates internal contradictions in Nietzsche's philosophy as a whole, especially regarding the relation between Nietzsche's scepticism about metaphysics and his positive metaphysical claims. Poellner identifies serious problems with Nietzsche's extension of his perspectivism to the subject.

Ricoeur, Paul: "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling" pp.141-157 in Sheldon Sacks (ed.): *On Metaphor*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978: Ricoeur argues that imagination and feeling play an intrinsic role in the emergence of the sense of metaphors. An inadequate notion of imagination as merely 're-presenting' perceptions is responsible for denying a productive role to imagination. This role must be construed as working together with the (more generally accepted) cognitive aspect of sense-production.

Schaber, Steven C.: "Novalis' 'Monolog' and Hofmannsthal's 'Ein Brief': Two Poets in Search of a Language" pp.204-214 in *The German Quarterly*, 47:2, 1974: Schaber claims the two texts share a conception of communication in which language is, to a certain degree, autonomous, problematizing communication and understanding. Both suggest intuition, rather than reason, as a ground for communication.

Seyhan, Azade: *Representation and Its Discontents: The Critical Legacy of German Romanticism*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992: Seyhan discusses similarities in Nietzsche's and Novalis' discontent with the notion of philosophical certainty; their claims about the impossibility of unmediated truth; their idea that language creates an autonomous world beside the real world; and their claim that knowledge is the making familiar of the unfamiliar. The discussion of Nietzsche centres on his early works, which Seyhan claims are straightforwardly Romantic.

Stern, Josef: *Metaphor in Context*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 2000: Stern differentiates the literal and the metaphorical via the context-independence of the former and context-dependence of the latter. He concludes that figural language may have emerged prior to literal.