

PROVISIONAL TITLE:

NIETZSCHE AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE TIME

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A TENTATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The theses addresses Nietzsche concept of the time, which was never explicitly developed by him but indirectly demonstrated in „*Thus Spake Zarathustra*“ and „*The Will to Power*“.

The main hypothesis aims to demonstrate that although Nietzsche started from traditional understanding of the time: the time as a form in which something occurs, circular understanding of the time allowed him to develop fundamental idea about eternal recurrence of the same through digression from linear understanding of the time. This idea further emphasized the relation between the time and eternity in Nietzsche's philosophy, which opposed Christian understanding of the time.

Admiration of Nietzsche's radicalism to a certain extent, however, does not mean overlooking an important insight: that the time is placed in the field of appearance. What is the cause of our perception of the time as such? Is the time the only perception to which the man aims to give a purpose? The answer to this question Nietzsche gives in the concept of Dionysus.

*And behold! And eagle swept
through the air in wide circles and
on it hung a serpent, not like a
prey, but like a friend: for it kept
itself coiled round the eagle's
neck. I*

Nietzsche's philosophical uniqueness in his approach to the concept of the time is that the time is not treated as its direct subject matter. It is precisely this indirect approach to the concept of the time, in “*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*” and “*Will to Power*,” that makes the issue more puzzling. Nietzsche was taken by vision of the time world structure, thereby;

¹ See: F. Nietzsche “*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p.19. Note: all bibliographical data about referenced titles are listed in the literature listing at the end of the presentation.

he committed himself to discovering the secret of the time. However, in his philosophical opus the concept of the time always escaped logically discursive elaboration. In that sense, the posed difficulty in approaching Nietzsche's understanding of the time is its vagueness and intangibility. That is why, perpetuating through labyrinth of his understanding, the time is a very slow process. The only thing left to the researcher of the time concept is to shed light on its structure by enlivening it. That means to relinquish the same temptation, as Nietzsche did but to remain stern and consequential in immanent criticism of Nietzsche at the same time.

The following analysis aims to demonstrate that:

1. The time in Nietzsche philosophy is understood as eternal recurrence of the same;
2. That he understood the time as ontological category (expressed by philosophical equation $\text{time} = \text{being}$) and
3. That Nietzsche's understanding of the time is opposed to Christian understanding of the time.

How to approach understanding of the time? Is the time intuitively determined? Does it exist regardless of human perception? Is the time influenced by change? Those questions are some of the most difficult tasks in philosophy in general. The problematic of the time is double fold: 1.) How to speak of something that is neither visible nor tangible? 2.) On the other side, considering constant passage of finite events, traditional metaphysics related the time to motion and change, to existence and nonexistence of things. In that sense, Aristotle's definition of the time became one of the most influential in European philosophical history in past two centuries: *For time is just this-number of motion in respect of before and after*². "Measurability" of a motion reflects the essence of the motion "as the measurable." Motion is measured by actual "parts" of time. Therefore "being in time" Aristotle explained by following: ... *'to be in time' means for movement, that both it and its essence are measured by time (for simultaneously it measure both the movement and its essence, and this is what being in time means for it, that its essence should be measured)*.³ When asserting that movement in time is "its essence," Aristotle means necessarily simultaneous "occurrence" of the movement and the time. Thus passing of events and the existence of the time is essentially related.⁴ The question as to how to

² See: Aristotle "*Physic*," Book IV, 219a30-219b2.

³ See: Aristotle "*Physic*," Book IV, 221a3-6.

⁴ See: Aristotle "*Physic*," Book IV, 221a23.

express the movement in logically discursive manner that is, how to connect it with the possibility of its definite meaning is the question which imposes itself. To define conceptually something that moves, something that is temporality would mean fixating, stopping the process itself.

Set in this context, the task of resolving the concept of the time has two directions: 1.) If the time is conceptualized, that is, if fluid movement is conceptually schematized it means to stop the time. 2.) Contrary to this, Nietzsche tried to understand the time intuitively, describing it through the picture and metaphor in *Zarathustra*, by which he tried to give more accurate picture of the movement correlated to the time. *Thou teachest that there is a great year of Becoming, a prodigy of a great year; it must, like a sand – glass, ever turn up anew, that it may anew run down and run out-...*⁵ Firstly, his intuitive spirit is based on the vision of nature as a permanent movement of constant changes: transformation of one thing into another. In this sense omnipotence of nature, its amorphous structure and fluid character, as well as its intangibility, render “ideal ground” on which Nietzsche builds the time structure. In other words, the point from which Nietzsche tries to observe the time structure is of organic nature, unconscious, intuitive, instinctive. Nietzsche’s analysis of this criterion and his inclination to its dominance, in comparison to other approaches, will be analyzed later on. Firstly, we will explore the starting point of Nietzsche’s understanding of the time.

1. THE TIME UNDERSTOOD AS ETERNAL RECURRENCE OF THE SAME

When considering Aristotle’s correlation between the time, the movement, and the change, one wonders if Nietzsche’s set up related to the time, relies on inherited category of the time. If it does, does it imply new definition of the time?

The vulgar, everyday concept of the time, bases on traditional-metaphysical philosophy was what Nietzsche started with. Separating out, setting out the limits between the past, the present and the future Nietzsche regarded as anomaly of vulgar understanding of the time. By overcoming the strict time limits, Nietzsche aimed towards new

⁵ See: F. Nietzsche “*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 213.

understanding of the time: understanding of the time as “unity.” Starting point in such a time is in a straight, linear time, which expands ahead and behind. In other words, to be more explicit about the problem alone, the famous passage from the book *Zarathustra, The Vision and the Enigma* will be analyzed. Dwarf’s dark thoughts Nietzsche’s confronts to his “endless thought,” thought of eternal recurrence of the same.

Look at this gateway! Dwarf! I continued, it hath two faces. Two roads come together here: these hath no one yet gone to the end of. This long lane backwards: it continueth for an eternity. And that long lane forward— that is another eternity! They are antithetical to one another, these roads; they directly abut on one another:— and it is here, at this gateway, that they come together. The name of the gateway is inscribed above: This Moment’. 6

Palpably, Nietzsche points out endlessness of both time lanes, the one that goes backwards (*it continueth for an eternity*) and the one that goes forwards (*that is another eternity*). According to Nietzsche, “the gateway,” “the moment,” which is understood as “now” is self-destructive; it is counterattack of two opposite time lanes, the future, and the past, which come together in now. In this manner the limits between two “lanes”: eternal past and eternal future are set in the moment of “now”. Consequently, the “now” moment is defined as a basic time phenomena of Nietzsche’s philosophy. Thus, concept of the time is still examined in relation to everyday perspective. In this context, Nietzsche understood the time as a succession, sequence of “now” moments: behind each “now,” there is a sequence of endless past “now,” and ahead of it, there is endless sequence of future “now.” Thus, present moment is continuously dubious; it is endless nonexistence and existence again. This dubiousness of limits reside in the “now” moment which is constantly over-flown by future contents, thereby immediately sinking into the past. Essentially the question of how to understand eternity of both time lanes follows. *Zarathustra* says to the dwarf: *Must not whatever can run its course of all things, have already run along that lane? Must not whatever can happen of all things have already happened, resulted, and gone by?* 7 In other words, the eternity or infinity of the past, reveals that everything that can happen at all, had to happen already, therefore infinity

⁶ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 154.

⁷ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 154.

cannot be partial. Likewise, future eternity or infinity requires passing of everything that already happened in the past.

From this perspective, linear time does not allow overcoming the strict limits between the time dimensions in the effort to understand the time as “unity.” Therefore, Nietzsche chooses cyclic movement of the time.⁸ The circle is primordial law for Nietzsche; it is not influenced by becoming; it is eternal: *Circular movement has not come into being; it is the original law, in the same way as the mass of force is the original law without exception or possible infraction. All becoming happens inside of the cycle and the mass of force.* ⁹ Each becoming is related to the time, becoming exists only in circular time. Understanding of circular the time in Nietzsche's philosophy is possible only under assumption of his teaching of eternal recurrence of the same¹⁰. The basic intention of this teaching is to hinder man from his “sacral” understanding of the time ideal beyond the time, in order to make the time the real possibility of human existence¹¹. Through teaching

⁸ The cyclic understanding of the time is closely connected with the mythic structure of the world. In the mythic perception of the world, reality was acquired through constant repetition and impersonification of particular archetypes. That allowed the man to step out from the everyday chronological time and step into entirely different “sacral” time.

⁹ See: F. Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 492.

¹⁰ Teaching about the eternal recurrence of the same Nietzsche experienced as “bottom less though”, “deepest thought”, “winnning thought”, “the hardest though.” In his autobiographical “Ecce Homo” Nietzsche said that the idea dawned on him in August 1881 while he was walking through the woods of Silvaplan Lake “6000 steps from the other side of man and time” (p. 79). Thus, we could say that the whole opus presents an attempt to shed the light on problem of the time in the “quietest hour.”

¹¹ This intention is visible throughout “Zarathustra” but it is the most effective in the *The Vision and the Enigma* in the paragraph depicting the snake:

A young shepherd did I see, writhing, choking, quivering, with distorted countenance, and with a heavy black serpent hanging out of his mouth.

Had I ever seen so much lothing and pale horror on one countenance? He had perhaps gone to sleep? Then had the serpent crawled into his throat-there had it bitten itself fast.

My hand pulled at the serpent, and pulled-in vain! I failed to pull the serpent out of his throat. Then there cried out of me: Bite! Bite!” (p. 155).

The answer to this riddle Nietzsche gives in *The Convalescent* paragraph:

And how that monster crept into my throat and choked me! But I bit off its head and pat it away from me (p. 211).

The snake is the animal of the eternal recurrence of the same, which unrolled, becomes “a heavy black serpent” hanging out of the mouth. The moment when *Zarathustra* bites the snake's head is the moment of the “big pain” and the suffering when he is lying sick in the bed, for seven days. In order for the eternal recurrence of the same to be confirmed, one has to spit out the snakes' head. That is the moment of *Zarathustra*'s redemption, which happens in every moment. Every moment signifies that the redemption happens again and again:

*Becoming must be explained without recourse to final intentions; becoming must appear justified at every moment (or incapable of being evaluated; which amounts to the same thing); the present must absolutely not be justified by a reference to a future, nor the past by reference to the present. (F. Nietzsche *Will to Power*, “p. 377).*

about eternal recurrence of the same, Nietzsche projects the time structure in which past and future consequently repeat:

*And if every thing have already existed, what thinkest thou,
dwarf, of This Moment? Must not this gateway also- have already
existed?
And are not all things closely bound together in such wise that
This Moment draweth all coming things after it? Consequently-
itself also?
For whatever can run its course of all things, also in this long lane
outward- must it once more run! 12*

Within the cyclic process, categories of past and future transform from one to another: the past attains the character of openness as the sheer possibility of a man, and the future attains the permanent character of the past.

Given that Nietzsche thinks about the past and the future within the framework of the moment itself, it is evident that in both cases he was thinking from infinite time perspective. In addition, he considered that everything in this world is subjected to tide and ebb of time. Everything that passes with the time, all infinite characters, had to, if the time is determined through past infinity and infinite future, always pass and come again. By this, Nietzsche clearly points that eternal passing of the time is understood as eternal recurrence of the same.

Hence, Nietzsche renounced the initiative base of linear understanding of the time forward and backwards by relating the time to cyclic movement and in doing so, giving it eternal character, which is the key for understanding of his concept of the time. The time

*"My formula of greatness in man is amor fati: not wanting to have anything else, neither ahead, nor behind, nor in eternal infinity. (F. Nietzsche *Ecce Homo* p. 42).*
Thus, Nietzsche points to the moment not as a single among many others but every moment where everything happens at the same time. Beyond the moment nothing can exist:

*There is no outside!
Every moment beginneth existence,
around every Here' rolleth the ball There'.
The middle is everywhere.*

*Crooked is the path of eternity (F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, " p. 211.)*
The moment encompasses all the time including the past and the future which oppose each other:

*Wandereth next the past and the future as a heavy cloud (Ibid, p. 222),
up to the moment when the will says:
But thus do I will it (Ibid, p. 139).*

¹² See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 154.

understood as eternal, means that it is influenced by neither beginning nor end; it is the law from ancient time. If the time could have begun to become, the end of the time would have been reached. That would mean the end of every change. Since cyclic movement did not reach its end, Nietzsche takes it as a proof that the ending is not possible: *If the world had a goal, it must have been reached. If there were for it some unintended final state, this also must have been reached...The fact of spirit as a form of becoming proves that the world has no goal, no final state, and is incapable of being.* ¹³ Therefore, he concludes that cyclic movement does not have beginning or end, it is eternal that is, infinite. Consequently, infinity of cyclic movement allows him to comprehend the time as eternal recurrence of the same. Precisely the phenomena of the “sameness” indicate ontological character of the time: the same structural relation between the past and the future is always repeated in each structure of presents.

2. THE TIME AS ONTOLOGICAL CATEGORY

It could be concluded, from previous deliberation that, the moment of the “now,” is moment that passes, that is shifting.¹⁴ To think the moment requires thinking eternity. To make the time eternal, for Nietzsche, does not mean to make it timeless but to connect it with movement in infinitum. It is worthwhile posing the question of: How did Nietzsche define relation between infinite and finite?

Christian philosophy identified infinity with eternity, from the perspective of other sidedness, ideal of God beyond the time. Finite, on the contrary, was taken as entire earthly existence, subject to conception and death, existence, and nonexistence. Therefore, it is not regarded worthy of thinking. Through set other sidedness, Christian philosophy presented passing of finite events as insignificant, pure appearance given that it is not subjected to real existence. Nietzsche strongly opposed Christian metaphysics by dramatic statement: “God is dead.” Through death of God, he tried to hinder the man from century long

¹³ See: F. Nietzsche *The Will to Power*, p. 546.

¹⁴ Contrary to Nietzsche, Goethe had poetic vision of time as the “stopped moment. The meaning of the time, according to Goethe, is located in that moment as self-indulgence, which becomes the purpose of human life. Everything beyond that moment is revealed as ephemeris. (See: Goethe, *Faust*, “p.161)

metaphysical blindness to the ideal beyond the time, by affirming passage of finite things on Earth: *Whatever hath become perfect, everything immature – wanteth to die! So sayest thou. Blessed, blessed be the vintner's knife! But everything immature wanteth to live; alas! Woe saith: Hence! Go! Away, thou woe!* But everything that suffereth wanteth to live, that it may become mature and lively and longing...¹⁵ Thus, infinity, in Nietzsche's philosophy, consists in accomplishing one's own possibility of finite in a sense of eternal transformation: birth and death. Infinite affirms finite just as the air we breathe defines the man's existence. It is the medium of human continued existence, affirmation of infinite finite repetition.¹⁶ Nietzsche primarily points to ontological character of the time.¹⁷ His aim was to eliminate the obstacle of being and becoming, the aspect of traditional metaphysical philosophy. Whereas for traditional metaphysical philosophy being presented something static, for Nietzsche being is that which is mobile, which is subjected to eternal motion and change. Given that there is no more being beyond the existence, the time, according to him, is the being of existence itself, that is understanding the existence of being, means understanding it as eternal recurrence of the same: *That everything recurs is the closest approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being:- high point of the meditation.*¹⁸ Being, as infinite repetition, involves finite within itself and defines its essence, which consists of permanent creation and destruction, birth and dying. The time as ontological category, becomes constitutive factor of the world. In that sense the world becomes infinite, that is eternal in time. *The world exists; it is not something that becomes, not something that passes away. Or rather: it becomes, it passes away, but it has never begun to become and never ceased from passing away-it maintains itself in both.*¹⁹

Hence, Nietzsche evidently follows Kant's first antinomy of Critique of Pure Reason: *If we assume that the world has no beginning in time, then up to every given*

¹⁵ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 312.

¹⁶ The finite, in Nietzsche's philosophy is defined as the will for power that is as a force:

Is it not: the world, as force, may not be thought of; we forbid ourselves the concept of an infinite force as incompatible with the concept force. (F. Nietzsche *The Will to Power*, p. 547).

Although it is subject of infinite repetition, the will for power does not have the possibility for infinite development and progress. If it had such ability, it would mean that God is still alive. Necessity of this change is related to time-ness. Nietzsche is not explicit about the essence of this force therefore conclusion can be drawn only through the context of his philosophy that the time is the measure of power.

¹⁷ Compare with E. Fink *Nietzsche's philosophy*, p. 118,119.

¹⁸ See: F. Nietzsche *Will to Power*, p. 298.

¹⁹ See: F. Nietzsche *Will to Power*, p. 548.

moment an eternity has elapsed, and there has passed away in the world an infinite series of successive states of things"²⁰. The point of Kant's thesis is that if past eternity existed as infinite continuity of condition of things, it would have had to be finished in the present moment. That is why, according to Kant, infinite sequence, which passed, that is infinite past, is not possible. In this context, Nietzsche was aware of all difficulties concerning aphoristic problem of infinite past. That is where he faced the most difficult question: How to define something without defining its beginning? On the other hand, how can past be infinite, that is how comes it never begun? Nietzsche, contrary to Kant, considered that aphoristic of infinite past could not be resolved by infinite continuity of things. It is important to indicate at this point that Kant understood "successive states of things" as the alteration of the substance. Every change is a component of time. Within this framework the essence of the time as a change, is manifested in punctuality, immediacy to understand the time as a pure punctuality, based on causality law, according to which every subsequent event is caused by previous, as Kant stipulated, would mean impossibility of presenting the process as finished. The fact that the past is something that "was" and is therefore finished, should be primarily kept in mind. Consequently, weakness of Kant's understanding is evident in comprehending the time solely from linear perspective. Whilst considering the time through such prism, present could only represent the end of infinite past, which could easily be imagined, as well as the beginning of infinite future. That caused strict separation of the time dimensions, which contradicted each other.

Motivated by attestation of Kant's first antinomy, Nietzsche considered that infinite past could be possible only under the condition of cyclic movement. His vision of endless movement could have been represented only in this manner. On the other hand, regardless of this strictly defined connotation, one concrete event had to begin at some point in order to be realized fully. At this point, however, we are for the moment in ambivalent situation, which is resolved quickly. From Nietzsche's perspective of the time dimensions, this event already did happen. Hence, *Zarathustra* states in paragraph "The Convalescent" paragraph:

*Everything goeth, everything returneth; eternally rolleth the wheel of existence. Everything dieth, everything blossometh forth again; eternally runneth on the year of existence.*²¹ The flow of all things through time he calls "the year of existence". That

²⁰ See: I. Kant "Critique of Pure Reason", p. 272.

²¹ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 211.

year repeats endlessly in the play of birth and death, blossoming and withering. Thereby Nietzsche shows that there is nothing new under the Sun that everything happened already. Finally, we can dare to assert the assumption that Nietzsche's referential stand consisting of eternity, understood in (as) the picture of circle, which might be a possible solution of Kant's first antinomy.

From ontological aspect, in context of Nietzsche's philosophy, the time is contemplated in indirect relation to being. His attempt to contemplate being as ancient time is manifested in summing the past and the future in the moment of "now." It is precisely because the repetition takes place in every moment, that it belongs to the moment of eternity. The moment of eternity is anticipated in "great noon" The "noon" is the highest moment of fulfillment, the peak that is revealed as the nucleus of time in which the time reveals its face. That is the moment when the past and the future meet in one point, the moment of the shortest shadow and the highest unity, when metamorphosis of before-noon and after-noon, pain and joy, the Moon and the Sun, night and day takes place. The moment of eternity indicates that Nietzsche contemplated the entire time framework as identity (*one and the same*). Concomitantly identity is understood broadly. Firstly, Nietzsche handled identity as a means to confine the time dimension to general concept – eternity concept. Identity does not mean repetition in strictly defined time intervals, but infinite intertwining of the past and the future in the present. This intertwining consists of following: the future is caused by past that is, by what was and still is in the present. The past can exist in the present, only if the future is coming again and again. Intertwining of the time dimensions, which has the character of the "same," in the context of their infinite repetition, can be understood as "one." The "one," the "same," and the "being" mean continuous correlation of the time dimensions. In this manner, Nietzsche's understanding of the time can be expressed by philosophical equation: time = infinite repetition = being = one = identity.

Ontological aspect of the time is not exhausted in infinite repetition, but it gains its real meaning in ecstatic openness of the man to the world. The "great noon" is the moment in which existence is confirmed in one factual Here and Now. Existence has the character of entelechies, since it always realizes its possibility through affirmation or denial. Saying NO to existence means saying NO to the temporary, to the changeable on the Earth, to the time as circular movement and to infinite repetition. Consequently, the Earth is

subordinated to eternal and unchangeable which was based on other-sidedness. Saying YES to existence means saying YES to everything that was, which is and will be. Nietzsche's highest formula of affirmation is revealed in *amor fati*. That is the formula of the time as eternal recurrence of the same. Man gives into Dionysian time game, which destroys, but at the same time opens up possibility for future becoming. Everything in the world is subjected to Dionysian game of creation and destruction. The world becomes perfect. Nietzsche describes perfection of the world as heavenly condition that is Apollonian veil of Dionysian world foundation. Philosophically poetic way in *Zarathustra*, passage *The Drunken Song* is the best illustration of this moment:

O man! Take heed!
What saith deep midnight's voice indeed?
I slept my sleep,
From deepest dream I've woke, and plead:
The world is deep,
And deeper than the day could read.
Deep is its woe,
Joy- deeper still than grief can be:
Woe saith: Hence! Go!
But joys all want eternity,-
Want deep, profound eternity! 22

Zarathustra's "joy" is the moment of the world's transformation caused by the death of God. The "joy" speaks of experiencing the temporality of time and its firm grounding on Earth. That is the moment of ecstatic openness of man towards the world, shaking experience of eternity. The Earth eternally endures passing wind of change. The experience of passing time gives man the awareness of his finiteness. He stands speechless before that fact, whereas powerlessness is manifested in fear. That is the reason why the man was governed by godly ideal looking for hope and consolation. On the other side, the man had a fear from the insecurity, unknown. It was better to hang onto something secure and reliable than to move on into insecurity and danger. Living in such twirl of time meant temptation of oneself. Whilst tempting oneself, man is supposed to learn to withstand the fear by saying YES to life. Overcoming the fear assumes pride. Nietzsche metaphorically illustrates the pride in the picture of eagle with snake, as the wisest animal, drawn into the play of circle. Animals are not the ones to make cyclic movement, they rather fit into it in

²² See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 314.

order to affirm themselves. Through this cyclic movement and its infinite repetition, Nietzsche defines all events in this world, as well as the man himself²³.

Metaphysic picture of the time reflects his attempt to imprint the character of the being to the existence, to understand the time as all encompassing phenomena. Firstly, Nietzsche's outcome is that existence is temporary, that it is subjected to eternal play of creation and destruction. In accordance to this, the structure of time is reviewed as infinite passing of the time dimensions. It is interesting however, that Nietzsche does not argue his stand. Although he insisted on adjoining the being and the existence, he was never conceptually explicit as to "how" to imprint the existence into character of the being. In other words, he did not step forward in explicating, "I am," that is, how does the time defines the world and the man. In this sphere, he remains ambiguous. The possible reason being, that Nietzsche did not thoroughly contemplate the concept of the infinity, of the temporary structure of the world and the concept of the cyclic motion in order to remove all ambiguity related to it. In any case, Nietzsche clearly gave deeper dimension to the time: he attempted to contemplate the time and the eternity simultaneously.

3. NIETZSCHE'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE TIME as opposed to CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE TIME

The questions, which will be addressed in following chapter, are: Is there a difference between the time and the eternity? What is Christian philosophy relation to the time and the eternity? What is its relation to Nietzsche's understanding of the time and the eternity?

The question about the difference between the time and the eternity might seem banal. However, that is how it appears on the first sight. From the position of Christianity, the time is related to concrete man's life and the earthly existence. In that sense, the time is understood as a sequence, passing of finite things, which gave character of nothingness and

²³ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 19. Special explication of this problem gave M. Heidegger in *Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, p. 214.

pure appearance to the existence itself. Precisely this character of the existence is possible through perception and understanding of the time form from the perspective of the other-sidedness epitome (the image and the likeness) of God. The idea of God signified the eternity. Possibly the most representative meaning of the concept of the eternity in Christian philosophy, which remained relevant for philosophical thought up to date, is placed in philosophy of Saint Augustine. In his *Confessions*²⁴, he says: *eternal... , since unchanging are the form and motion within you* ²⁴. For God's mind the past is defined, as something that does not exist any more, and the future as something that does not exist yet, thus to this extent only the eternal "now" exist²⁵. Both Augustine and Nietzsche have understood the eternal "now" as unchangeable identity. However, whereas for Nietzsche the eternity, related to infinite repetition of all time dimensions, (noon and eternity) and in that sense he related the time to the eternity, in order to overcome destructive time tendency, Augustine eternity relates only to "now" which is not separable (the eternity of the God). Thorough analysis shows that Augustine's endeavor was to interpret the eternity of the God abstracted from temporarily of the time. Eternal God creates from nothingness (*creatio ex nihilo*) thereby finite and temporary are placed in the category of temporality. Bear "now," which does not, includes neither past nor future within itself is articulated as timeless.

In both above-mentioned cases, time is understood as final, passing. Christian metaphysic denied the essence of the time by nominating the God as the creator of the time. The time presented only "the shadow of eternity" which allowed passing of earthly, final events. Thus, the time was entirely subjected to the God, in a sense in which He determined the beginning and the end of the time. The finite of time signified falling into godly eternity. Contrary to this, Nietzsche primarily aimed to eternalize time that is, enforce its power by giving it character of the eternal repetition. In this sense, there is crucial difference between Nietzsche's attempt and the attempt of Christian metaphysic to free itself from the predominance of time. In order to give the time prosperity and power, Nietzsche in his philosophy, tried to overcome other-sided horizon of understanding of the time. In order to demonstrate the importance of this endeavor it is necessary to start from

²⁴ See: A. Augustine *"Confessions"*, XI, 6, p. 33,34

²⁵ Plato was the first to introduce the principle of the eternal presence. The time according to him is eternal image in motion. Since the time is subjected to temporality, Plato identifies it as non-being. Contrary to this, the eternity is defined as permanent, meaning that it cannot be neither "before" or "after", therefore he names it the eternal presence. In this regard, Augustine follows Plato accepting existence of the eternal presence.

Christian understanding of the time: *God is a thought-it maketh all the straight crooked, and all that standeth reel. What? Time would be gone, and all the perishable would be but a lie?...Evil do I call it and misanthropic, all that teaching about the one, and the plenum, and the unmoved, and the sufficient and the imperishable! All the imperishable-that's but a simile, and the poets lie too much.* ²⁶ In “Zarathustra paragraph, *Redemption* Christian horizon of interpreting time is determined as revenge (*resentiment*). Hence “Zarathustra says *This, yea this alone is revenge itself: the Will's antipathy to time ...*”²⁷ Unsettled and revengeful stance of Gods toward the passing of the time comes from the lack of a solid support on Earth, which would allow eternal existence of the time, the man, and the world itself. That is why Nietzsche juxtaposes revenge to the Earth, to the time, that is to passing and to that which passes. Its goal is to subordinate the Earth and the platform of passing to itself. Thus, Nietzsche thinks of revenge in metaphysical sense, as coordination of time. In order to understand the time in line with him, we have to change the horizon of understanding and that means, abandoning the other-sidedness, murder the God, so that all shimmer of Earthly existence can manifest itself. That is why the death of God marks the end of the time denial. Notwithstanding receded Gods support the time still exists, undoubtedly showing that what is missing here is wider support for full understanding of his understanding of the time. The placement and constituency of this support is not easy to locate in Nietzsche's scattered and fragmented texts. The closest description is in *Zarathustra* in already mentioned passage *The Drunken Song* where he juxtaposes the suffering and the pain to the joy. The suffering and the pain express founding structure of the human continued existence experienced in passing of the time. The time that is coming, never comes to stay, but to go away in passing. That is why, according to Christian understanding of the time, passing of the time is knowledge in the deep suffering. If everything is subdued to passing, it means that whatever appears in seducing shimmer awaits the death; everything becomes its prey. That is why the pain is deep. To experience passing of the time, means to experience ones own distraction. The suffering sees in time only short-lived-unrepeatable departure and disappearance, distractive character of the time. Nietzsche juxtaposes deep joy to deep Christian suffering. Whereas the suffering sees only destructive and disappearing character

²⁶ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 83.

²⁷ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 138.

of the time, the joy observes the time on a deeper level. The joy says, "YES" to coming and passing, by which Nietzsche aimed to elevate the time above pure nothingness. Contrary to the suffering, the joy does not emphasize only destructive twirl of the time, but it opens up possibility for creation and birth. In this manner, the time is not only departure to the past but arrival from future as well. Thus, Nietzsche unambiguously insists on the past presenting the future, and the other way around, the future presenting the past. However, this presumption is more interdependent, "before" and "later" cannot be easily distinguished.²⁸ Accordingly, the past and the future are becoming possible only in eddy of the "now"; its two-facedness, through infinite circle of coming and passing, is revealed. This is the point when Nietzsche makes decisive step giving to the "now" eternal character "*But joys all want eternity— 'Want deep profound eternity!'*"²⁹ In fact, he manifests his *hybris* through understanding of coming and passing as inescapable, constant repetition, as the "same." Therefore, eternal recurrence of the same is answer to the problem of passing.

Contrary to Christian philosophy of the time, by inscribing the stamp of eternity to coming and passing, Nietzsche in wider sense, makes radical turn. Eternity, which encompasses the time marks the time as such as well. Within this framework Nietzsche's most productive insight, which reveals the enigma of the time is in already mentioned definition of revenge. At last, we amount to his full definition of revenge. Revenge is *the Will's antipahty to time, and its 'It was'*. On the first sight, "it was" can be surprising and at the last instance, it can leave us confused. Why does Nietzsche emphasize only "it was," and not "now" and "it will be" as well? Surely, Nietzsche considered that the time is defined by the past, the present and the future. However, "it was," in Christian philosophy had irreversible character; it is the burden that could not be discarded. How to dispose "it was" of this heavy "stone" (and let it be in the river of being) was what Nietzsche was occupied with³⁰. As opposed to Christian philosophy, solution to this problem was not in

²⁸ The best argument for such understanding of the time Nietzsche gave in *The Great Longing* paragraph:

*O my soul, I have taught thee to say
today 'as once on a time' and 'formerly'
and to dance thy measure over every Here and There and Yonder."* (p. 215).

²⁹ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra, The Second Dance Song*, available at <http://www.geocities.com/thenietzschechannel/zarapt3.htm#great>

³⁰ That "it was" Nietzsche calls "fragment, riddle, and fearful chance". *Zarathustra* knows that all fragments have tendency to be valuable for themselves that each one appeals to its own game, but *Zarathustra* also knows that is not the way to play the game; to the contrary, the chance should be determined so that all

linear movement mentioned before. Only circular movement, according to him, could reflect the reversible process, which gave the time the character of eternity.

Nietzsche undoubtedly related eternity to infinity, which allowed him adjoining obstruction of the being and the existing from ontological aspect. In analogy to this, from onto-theological aspect, eternity is also related to infinity although it negates finite. Onto-theological foundation, which allows such understanding of eternity, is within the "now." Owing to infinite Christian metaphysic "now" is defined as being. Interpreting *id est* God means to think what "is." "Now" always already "is" consequently, according to Christian metaphysic, it is not subject to any changes in time. Accordingly, "now" and "is" is defined as motionless, static, timeless being which transcends the time by its infinity. Therefore Christian metaphysic relation between the eternity and the time can be defined as relation between infinite and finite, between motionless and motion, between static and dynamic.

Novelty in Nietzsche's endeavor was in avoiding Christian scheme of metaphysic according to which infinite negates finite. In his opinion, infinite is present in finites; it is immanent to finite things. Owing to infinity, he attached metaphysic dimension to finite. Infinite repetition of unrepeatable, praising of permanent temporality in space-time definability, conveys metaphysical approach to the world. (*Weltanschauung*). Nevertheless, thinking about consequence of par excellence from such concept of eternity, it is evident that it has extremely non-metaphysical tendency. The nature of this tendency is evident in his attempt to overcome time ideal and return the shimmer of time to the Earth, shrilly passing of temporary. Thus, Nietzsche found the way out from Christian history through which his conception of the time attains the character of one-sided metaphysic. The questions that follow are: Is Nietzsche's "reversed metaphysic" the only one in western metaphysic history? On the other hand, does he overcome the western metaphysic history via "reversed metaphysic"? Thinkers, as Heidegger, thought that Nietzsche is only "finalizer" of traditional metaphysic, and that his philosophy gave the "final shape". If it were so, it would negate Nietzsche's essential character in understanding of the time, thus every possibility of productive discourse with him would be denied.

fragments are united. His entire effort is 'to compose and collect into unity what is fragment and riddle and fearful chance' (p. 138).

4. EPILOGUE: TIME AND DYONISUS

Admiration of Nietzsche's radicalism should not mean overlooking an important insight: that the time is placed in the field of the appearance. Nietzsche speaks about it in the most significant manner in *The Will to Power : Time eternal. But space and time do not exist in themselves. Changes are only appearances (or sense processes for us); if we posit the recurrence of these, however regular, nothing is established thereby except this simple fact, that it has always happened thus...But appearances cannot be causes*!³¹ Therefore, the appearance of the time is what makes the time possible. The appearance is subjected to "change" which is the essence of the time.³² Changes are eternal as the product of our senses. The questions immediately posed are: What causes our perception of time as such? Is the time the only perception to which the man aims to give a purpose? The answer to this question Nietzsche gives in concept of Dionysus. Dionysus is receptiveness, god of eternal game who through enthrallment, allurements, restless metamorphosis and ridicule levitates man above reasonable, rationally logical understanding of the world, who relieves the man of miserable everyday norms through forgetfulness³³. Contrary to Dionysian, Apollonian eye exists, the appearance, the delusions are his expressions. Apollonian gives measure to the time, sets the limits between time dimensions, transforms insecurity to security; he is interpreter of Dionysian condition. Within Dionysian - Apollonian tension, man has to perceive the world through Apollonian eye and at the same time long to overcome perception in order to reveal the secret of the time. The time is reflection of what essentially is and that is Dionysus. That is why the man cannot escape the net of these two principles, which Nietzsche defines as unity: *Everything present is*

³¹ See: F. Nietzsche *The Will to Power*, p. 293.

³² Ibid, p. 547.

³³ See: F. Nietzsche ' *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 52. The motive for forgetting is explicitly emphasized in Nietzsche book *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*. "Nietzsche stipulated that forgetting is necessary condition of the existence: one can live without memories but not without forgetting. Without forgetting, everything that passed would become "the graveyard of present". However, the relation of history to time is not the subject matter of this paper.

just and unjust and both aspects are equally justified. That is your world! That's what one calls a world! 34

The time motive, as a category of unconscious runs through whole “*Zarathustra*.” Its overall presence does not point to some clear definite tangibility. Nevertheless, this ambiguity, intangibility of the time is not accidental for Nietzsche. While seemingly playing with the reader, looking for accomplice in the play of seduction, enthrallment and disguise Nietzsche pointed to intuitive revelation of time labyrinth. The pictures of the “night,” the “bottom less,” the “sea”: are all nominations for “one and the same” that can be named: the infinity, the eternity, the time itself or continuum of changes. That continuum of changes is what Nietzsche tried to tempt. In tempting of the continuum, he was tempting himself. Only through abstraction of one moment within continuum of the sequence of events, does the man perceive the time. Kant and Augustine’s understanding of the time tells us that the time is only something subjective that is, that time is subjected to the manner of understanding the subject³⁵. In this sense, Nietzsche utterly follows Kant’s and Augustine’s understanding of time as defined in Apollonian – Dionysian relation. Regardless of Dionysian attempt to subjectively sink-into self-forgetting completely, he nevertheless possesses instinct, which longs for appearance³⁶. Appearance is precisely the place where Nietzsche’s unique philosophical understanding of the time is revealed. Nietzsche was taken by vision of the time world structure. Thereby, he committed himself to discovering the secret of the time:

And behold! And eagle swept through the air in wide circles and on it hung a serpent, not like a prey, but like a friend: for it kept itself coiled round the eagle’s neck. 37

³⁴ Ibid, p. 65.

³⁵ Kant defines the time solely as a form of perceptive consciousness, as a pure form of sensitive perception a priori. The time abstracted from instinctive perception cannot belong to things neither as condition nor as a characteristic. Kant denied existence of the time by itself. Nietzsche did not manage to find any other way to point to existence of the time by itself but to imply it in form of bode. Philosophical foundation of this aim is heretofore then clear and unambiguous. The question is, if his barely understandable implications in this direction, could be called foundation at all.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 36.

³⁷ See: F. Nietzsche *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p.19.

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