

Return to Nature

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What is to be heard in the phrase "Return to nature"?

Taken most directly, the phrase expresses an imperative. Suppose that it is addressed to someone or even that in solitude one addresses it to oneself. On those to whom it is addressed it imposes the demand that they return to nature. As the condition of its pertinence, the imperative presupposes that its addressees either have themselves retreated from nature or have somehow been withdrawn from it, so that in either case they are separated or at least distanced from nature. The imperative enjoins them to return across this distance, to close the space of separation, so as to come again into proximity to nature, so as to arrive once more at the place where they would once have been, even if in a past that would never quite have been present.

And yet, in completing such an odyssey, they would come to occupy this place differently. Once immediacy has been disrupted, even if always already, the situation is never again the same as it would have been. Once, having been set apart, they return to nature, they will have reinstalled themselves therein with a certain deliberateness; they will perdure within the compass of nature only through resolve and thus always with a certain residual detachment. The trajectory through which they will have passed will always have left its trace in their comportment.

The imperative to return to nature has been repeatedly sounded in the history of philosophy, and the heterogeneity of its sources is indicative of the manifold senses borne by the phrase. It is voiced already in antiquity. It receives one of its most direct expressions in the contrast that Diogenes of Sinope drew between convention and nature and in his insistence that happiness depends on acting in accordance with nature.¹ The human in search of happiness is thus enjoined to measure his actions by reference to nature, by turning—or returning—to nature as his guide. According to ancient testimony, both Chrysippus and Diogenes of Babylon declared that choice, as in selecting some things and rejecting others, should be exercised in accordance with nature, that is, again, by turning—or returning—to nature as guide.² Reporting the precepts of the Stoics, Stobaeus writes: “All things in accordance with nature are to-be-taken, and all things contrary to nature are not-to-be-taken.” And again: “All things in accordance with nature have worth, and all things contrary to nature are unworthy.”³ The theme is pervasive from the early Cynics throughout much of Stoicism: the measure of actions, of things, and of their worth is to be found by turning—or returning—to nature, by determining whether they are in accordance with nature (κατὰ φύσιν).

Thus, the return to nature may be carried out in order to secure a proper measure; actions and dealings with things will then be executed in accord with nature, will be fitted to its measure. Yet the very concept of measure, the differentiation between what provides the measure and what is measured by it, indicates that these

instances of human comportment retain a residual detachment from nature itself. They are to be measured by nature, not assimilated to it.

The return to nature, as demanded in the imperative, may be carried out in other ways, that is, with other ends in view and in various registers. In the mid-eighteenth century the imperative was sounded in a form unheard-of in antiquity. In his *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality among Men*—the so-called *Second Discourse*—Rousseau undertook to return descriptively to the human as it existed in its original—that is, savage—stage, in what Rousseau calls the state of nature (*l'état de nature*). In recovering and describing the human in the state of nature, his intent is to show how, once humans left this state and the development of society commenced, human inequality and hence oppression and injustice came about. Here, then, the return to nature is theoretical; it is a matter, not of modern men again becoming savages, but only of describing that original state. The description of the state of nature is meant, in turn, to serve a political end, or at least to enable an analysis of modern social-political conditions, of the means by which the inequality in modern society came about. Yet, in turn, this analysis identifies the customs, laws, and institutions that would need to be dissolved or at least radically transformed in order to eliminate inequality and establish a society in which, as was the case with humans in the state of nature, all are equal. Thus, Rousseau's descriptive return to nature opens the way to a condition that, though not that of the savage, would, in a way accordant with modern life, approximate the state of nature.

Yet within the scope of this return to nature, Rousseau also carries out other, more specific modes of return, returning to nature in other registers. One such register is that of the origin of language. In Rousseau's description of the human condition in the state of nature, it becomes evident that as long as humans were living in such proximity to nature, they had little or no need for language. Only at the threshold of the break with the state of nature did incipient speech first appear, namely, as what Rousseau calls "the cry of nature [*le cri de la nature*]," which was uttered only in situations of great danger or violent pain.⁴ Later, other sounds besides the mere cry were added: the inflections of the voice were multiplied and combined with gestures. Still later, in order to overcome the limitation of gestures, our progenitors introduced articulate vocal sounds, and language in the proper sense thus began to develop. Hence, through his descriptive return to nature, to humans in the state of nature, Rousseau provides the basis for his account of the origin and development of language.

Another register in which Rousseau carries out the return to nature is that of music. In his *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, which in its full title bears the further designation "In Which Melody and Musical Imitation are Treated," Rousseau focuses on another phase in the development of language. It is a phase that he presents by depicting a kind of primal scene at a fountain or a festival where the passions of lovers-to-be are aroused and speech first flourishes, first comes fully into its own. According to Rousseau, it was here, along the way from the state of nature, that music was born. As it arose, it consisted solely of melody and was bound closely to speech. This was, as it were, music's state of nature.⁵ What came later was, perhaps even more than in society

at large, a matter of degeneration: with the rationalization of language, separation ensued between speech and song; then, as harmony became dominant, melody—and hence song—was impaired, so that finally there resulted an expressionless music forgetful of the voice. Need it be said that through this analysis Rousseau is proposing a return by which music would come into proximity to its state of nature? Then melody would again become primary, harmony serving only for its enhancement; and song, thus restored, would again follow the accents of speech. This is a proposal that Rousseau not only declared but also, as composer, sought to carry out, as in his celebrated opera *Le Devin du Village*.

In some instances a return to nature is broached within a highly determined register and within a larger context committed contrariwise to separation from nature. Consider the case of Kant. Although the *Critique of Pure Reason* begins by acknowledging the dependence of knowledge on experience, the primary movement enacted in the critical project consists in a regress from experience—primarily from the experience of nature—to the *a priori* conditions of such experience, conditions that lie not in nature but in the subject. This directionality expresses the very sense of Kant's so-called Copernican Revolution. The movement counter to nature is even more pronounced in Kant's practical philosophy: morality itself lies in self-determination that, utterly detached from natural inclination, is carried out in accordance with the moral law.

It is only in the *Critique of Judgment* that an exception is found, one that is all the more striking in that it occurs within a context in which, even as the beauty of natural

things is discussed, there remain moments of retreat from nature. The relevant passage is that in which Kant affirms the contemplation of nature, or, more precisely, intellectual interest in the beautiful in nature. Such interest attests, according to Kant, to a mental attunement to moral feeling; for a person so attuned will always take an interest in any trace that nature provides of its harmony with our own spirit and its law. It is precisely such a trace that nature offers in the purposiveness of its beauty. On this basis Kant declares natural beauty superior to the beauty of art. The return to nature, as the turn from art to nature, he then expresses in a single, very remarkable sentence depicting the scene of such a return: "A man who has taste enough to judge the products of fine art with the greatest correctness and refinement may still be glad to leave a room in which he finds those beauties that minister to vanity and perhaps to social joys, and to turn instead to the beautiful in nature, in order to find there, as it were, a voluptuousness for his spirit in a train of thought that he can never fully lay out."⁶

That the trace of spirit is to be found in nature, through the return to nature, is a theme that resonates throughout post-Kantian thought, not only in the absolute form it assumes with Schelling and Hegel, but also in a quite different mode and tone with the New England transcendentalists. Emerson writes incessantly of nature, that "nature always wears the colors of the spirit," that "nature is the symbol of spirit," and, still more succinctly, that "behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present."⁷ Or again, clearly echoing Kant, he writes: "The moral law lies at the center of nature and radiates to the circumference."⁸ Thus it is that the human spirit is expanded and enhanced by coming into proximity to nature, by returning from the detachment from nature

enforced and inculcated by city life. In the poem that Emerson places at the head of his essay entitled "Nature," he writes:

Spirit that lurks each form within
Beckons to spirit of its kin.

In the essay itself he describes the return from the city to nature: "At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he takes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes. Here we find Nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges like a god all men that come to her."⁹

Thoreau also writes of nature in such a way, though in a more exclamatory style, as near the beginning of *Walden*: "To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself!"¹⁰ Yet what is most distinctive in the case of Thoreau is that he enacted the return, living alone for two years in the woods on the shore of Walden Pond and transcribing that enactment in his book *Walden*.

In all these instances the force of the imperative to return to nature is based on the capacity of nature to set before human sensibility a trace of spirit or to offer a recovery of the originary. It is imperative that one return to nature because it is in and from nature that one is displayed to oneself in some specific manner: as submitted to measure, as spirit, or in the originary form that characterized the human in the state of nature. The return to nature is less for the sake of experiencing nature itself than for

the sake of discovering in it something more originary that is reflected back from nature to oneself. If such reflective self-discovery is taken to be definitive of the human, then the imperative “Return to nature,” addressed to a person, is an absolute imperative and one to which a person will always already have responded, regardless of whether the imperative has actually been addressed to that person. One will always already have been engaged, as we say, by one’s very nature, in the return to nature, and the imperative by which one is addressed serves only to redouble the engagement.

In German Idealism the reflection from nature back to the spiritual and originary comes to be thought in an absolutely decisive manner and in all its consequences. Thus, in delimiting the concept of nature at the outset of the *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel writes: “Nature has arisen as the idea in the form of otherness [*Form des Andersseins*].” Still further, he writes that the idea is precisely this: “to disclose itself, to posit this other [i.e., nature] outside itself and to take it back again into itself in order to be subjectivity and spirit.”¹¹ Much more succinctly, Schelling declares that nature is visible spirit and affirms “the absolute identity of spirit *within* us and nature *outside* us.”¹² Nature thus comes to be thought as the originary, the idea, in its otherness, in an externality—indeed as externality itself—to be cancelled as spirit emerges in its self-disclosure. The return to nature occurs only for the sake of the return, in turn, from nature back to spirit; in this ultimate return nature is cancelled as mere nature, is relieved of its nature, and is brought back to spirit, raised to the level of spirit. Here Hegel’s speculative word *Aufhebung* has its broadest extension.

The determination of nature as both other than spirit and yet none other than spirit is reflected in the double sense born by the word. For one speaks not only of nature but also of the nature of things, even of the nature of nature. On the one side, the word designates the domain of natural things—mountains and rivers, trees and flowers—which is regarded as quite apart from the spiritual, but, on the other side, it designates what something essentially is, its essence, which in modern thought is intrinsically allied with subjectivity or spirit. Yet, this double sense of nature extends back to Greek antiquity: already in the Platonic dialogues the word φύσις is commonly used in both senses. In its broader application, the word signifies, on the one side, the domain or origin of natural things and, on the other side, the εἶδη that define all such things, that determine them to be what they are, thus constituting the answer to the question: τί ἐστίν; As correlative to νόησις, the εἶδη are designated as νοητά, as what comes to be called the intelligible; and the intelligible is then distinguished from the αἰσθητά, the sensible. The dyad of intelligible and sensible that is thus designated comes, therefore, to encompass in its span the entire range of being, and as such it provides the founding distinction of what comes to be called metaphysics. In its double sense nature enjoys the same gigantic span. Nothing lies outside this span, neither beyond it nor before it. Nothing lies outside of nature. Hence, the return to nature will always be also a return within nature.

And yet, both in classical antiquity and in our time, this ontological configuration has been disrupted. This disruption of the intelligible/sensible dyad involves, though in very different ways, the emergence of another sense of nature.

In classical antiquity this disruption occurs, in its most manifest form, in Plato's *Timaeus*. In the account given of how the godly δημιουργός formed the cosmos, the dyad of intelligible and sensible is affirmed and indeed is woven into the entire first discourse that Timaeus delivers. And yet, precisely at the point where the discourse focuses most intently on the order in the heaven, a certain disordering begins to announce itself. As a result Timaeus interrupts his discourse and proposes to begin again from the beginning. In the second discourse, which then follows, this interruption proves to have been the interruption of the intelligible/sensible dyad. Not that Timaeus rejects the dyad or in any way puts it aside; rather, along with these two kinds, the intelligible and the sensible, he introduces a third kind. Thereby he both demonstrates that the dyad is not comprehensive, that it does not encompass the entire range of being, and that its very possibility is based on the third kind.

The third kind is named in numerous ways, all of which—even the designation “third kind”—are necessarily consigned to what Timaeus terms bastard discourse. Timaeus declares it to be like gold that can be molded into all possible shapes. He also calls it by the name ἔκμαγεῖον, which designates a mass of wax or other soft material on which the imprint of a seal can be stamped. He calls it also ὑποδοχή, commonly translated as “receptacle,” and, most insistently, by the name χώρα. These different designations are cast in such a way that they clash and utterly resist being brought together into a single image of a certain kind. For what is being named—in a necessarily bastardly way—is neither a kind, that is, an intelligible εἶδος, nor an image of a kind, that is, a sensible thing.

The word φύσις is scattered throughout the *Timaeus* and is used in several different senses. Early in the dialogue Timaeus is described as one who has made it his task to know “about the nature of the all [περὶ φύσεως τοῦ παντός].”¹³ Much later, when Timaeus actually enumerates the three kinds, he refers to the offspring, that is, the sensible, as the φύσις between the other two.¹⁴ But among the many usages of the word, there are two that are especially significant in the present context. One is exemplified when Timaeus speaks “about the nature that receives all bodies [περὶ τῆς τὰ πάντα δεχομένης σώματα φύσεως].”¹⁵ In this phrase it is the third kind that is designated as nature, as a nature other than the nature that Timaeus described in his first discourse. The other usage occurs when, as he proposes to begin again, Timaeus enjoins his interlocutors that “We must bring into view the nature itself [φύσιν . . . αὐτήν] of fire and water, and air and earth, before the birth of the heaven.”¹⁶ The reference is to what will prove to be, not the elements themselves, but rather the elements as not yet themselves, as mere traces (ἴχνοι) held in the χώρα. This entire scene lies before the birth of the heaven; it is a nature that preceded nature, a nature older than sensible nature.

Let me pass over the renewal and development that such a concept of nature underwent with Schelling, who called it *die alte Natur*,¹⁷ in order now to address the way in which in our time, that is, from Nietzsche on, the classical ontological configuration is disrupted. This disruption is encapsulated in a single sentence in the Prologue to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. It is a performative utterance that borders on issuing an imperative. It reads: “I beseech you, my brother, *remain true to the earth*

[*bleibt der Erde treu*], and do not believe those who speak to you of otherworldly hopes!”¹⁸ Here the earth represents the things of the earth, that is, the sensible; and the otherworld represents the intelligible, now that, in Nietzsche’s idiom, this allegedly true world, the otherworldly, has finally become a fable. What the sentence announces is thus an inversion of the classical configuration, an inversion by which the sensible is now to be regarded as the true world, while the intelligible is allowed to drift away into oblivion, that is, is abolished. There remains—so it seems—only the sensible, only nature in the sense of the sensible. It is to this nature, the only nature, that Nietzsche implores his brothers to return. To philosophize after Nietzsche would require a return to nature in which there are mountains and rivers, trees and flowers.

And yet, in Nietzsche’s celebrated account of how the true world finally became a fable, the abolition of the intelligible constitutes only the penultimate stage. What follows in the final stage thoroughly disrupts the direct and seemingly self-evident return to nature that would seem to be prescribed. Here is Nietzsche’s account of the final stage: “The true world we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one perhaps? But no! *With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one.*”¹⁹ Yet, what is the sense of this final graphic deed, this claim to have abolished the apparent—that is, the sensible—world? For most certainly the sensible world is not, in its actuality, abolished; it is not done away with. We open our eyes or attune our ears, and—behold!—the things of sense are there before us. While it may be that the intelligible, since it was never more than a specter, has vanished completely and has only to be put out of our minds, erased from our memory, the sensible

stubbornly persists in its perceptibility and in its support of and resistance to our endeavors.

What is it, then, about the sensible that has been abolished? It is only—and precisely—its character as apparent, as *scheinbar*, as appearance (*Erscheinung*) of something beyond it, namely, of the intelligible. Because since classical antiquity the sensible has always been understood by reference to the intelligible, the abolition of the intelligible deprives the sensible of the determination it has borne throughout the history of metaphysics. Now that it can no longer be understood as imaging the intelligible, the sensible is utterly lacking in determination. Now that it stands alone, there is no telling what it is, not at least in a discourse that continues to be governed by the conceptuality of metaphysics. Now that there remains only the nature in which there are mountains and rivers, trees and flowers, the very sense of nature must be determined anew. Now we must—like Timaeus—begin again from the beginning.

A beginning can be discerned in certain directions taken in the development of phenomenology from Heidegger on. Responding to the Nietzschean injunction, *Being and Time* sets sensible beings free of the intelligible. No longer are they determined as imaging a remote intelligible set beyond them nor as grounded in the pure concepts of a transcendental subject or of spirit. Rather, they are taken as determined by their insertion in a world, by their placement within the referential structures that constitute a world. The world itself is nothing set beyond the sensible beings within it. Without itself being a sensible being, it belongs nonetheless to the domain of the sensible; it is *of* the sensible even though not itself a sensible being. Though in Heidegger's early

thought the world is intrinsically bound to the human, this bond is not a grounding, nor is the human taken as a transcendental subject or as spirit. In the development of Heidegger's thought that begins in *Contributions to Philosophy*, even this bond is broken, and whatever affinity there might have been with the metaphysics of the subject is eliminated. Merleau-Ponty's conception of the invisible, as that which, without itself being visible, belongs to and indeed renders possible the visible, extends and develops the redetermination of the sensible that frees it from governance by an intelligible beyond.

But what does this beginning ventured in phenomenology entail with regard to the determination of the sense of nature? Is nature to be regarded simply as the totality of sensible beings? Most certainly it was not so regarded by the ancients. Even in Aristotle the distinction persists between nature and natural things, between φύσις and τὰ φύσει ὄντα; nature itself Aristotle defines as an inner ἀρχή that governs the origination and growth of natural things. While the *Timaeus* does sometimes employ the word φύσις in reference to sensible beings, it also applies the word to other kinds such as the χώρα that are rigorously distinguished from sensible beings. Kant, too, avoids simply identifying nature with the totality of sensible beings. In a highly significant footnote in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he distinguishes between a formal or adjectival sense of nature and a material or substantive sense. Nature in the latter sense he identifies as "the sum of appearances insofar as . . . they are thoroughly interconnected." These are, says Kant, "the things of nature," while nature itself is "a subsisting whole [*ein bestehendes Ganzes*]." He distinguishes this sense of nature from

the formal sense, according to which nature designates “the connection of the determinations of a thing according to an inner principle of causality.” Hence, nature in the formal sense is not a totality of beings but rather the connection (*Zusammenhang*) between their determinations. Nature in this sense consists, not of beings, but of the connection by which they are determined as what they are. It is because of its bearing on *what* things are that Kant links nature in this sense to such expressions as “the nature of fluid matter, of fire, etc.”²⁰

In view of these historical indications, the question needs to be addressed as to whether there are discernible moments or entities that, while intrinsically related to sensible beings, nonetheless are distinct from them. Is it possible, beyond the structure of world and the conception of the invisible, to discern and determine moments, configurations, or even entities that go beyond—that exceed—the domain of sensible beings, that lie outside it, such that, if nature is to include these, it cannot be identified simply as the totality of sensible beings.

There are at least two such moments or kinds of entities that can be discerned. Each has the effect of rendering nature as something in excess of the mere totality of sensible beings. One has come to light very recently; the other is to be retrieved from very ancient sources.

The first corresponds to the discovery in recent astrophysics of beings that are not sensible, that by their very nature cannot be presented to sense. Among the several instances of such beings, the most obtrusively excessive are black holes. Such beings have a structure that in no way corresponds to that of a terrestrial thing, of a being

having sensibly perceptible properties. A black hole is centered in a singularity, which is an intense concentration of very large mass (at least several times that of our sun) that converges asymptotically toward a point. Consequently, it has such enormous density that its gravity prevents even light from escaping; that is, the escape velocity is greater than the speed of light. As distance from a singularity increases, the escape velocity decreases, and at a certain distance it is equal to the speed of light. This distance defines the extent of the black hole. The imaginary sphere described by this radius constitutes what is called the event horizon. This is the place of no return for light. In its vicinity a shower of particles is produced, and it is only the presence of this peculiarly configured array of particles that allows the event horizon, itself entirely invisible, to be detected. Light—and everything else—that reaches the event horizon will disappear into the black hole. Since no light can escape it, the black hole is entirely invisible—not really black as a thing can be black, which would still be visible, but absolutely invisible.²¹

The invisibility of a black hole is a kind of invisibility hitherto unknown, indeed virtually inconceivable. It is not an invisibility that can be breached and converted in degree or manner into visibility as with the unseen other side of an object or as with a perceptual horizon; neither is its invisibility comparable at all to that ascribed by metaphysics to the intelligible, for it belongs, not apart from sensible things, but in their very midst. A black hole is a being that, by virtue of what it is, cannot in any manner be present to sense; it is a being that is not a sensible being. Yet, as set among such things, it presumably belongs to nature. This belonging expands the concept of nature beyond that of the totality of sensible beings.

The second of the moments or entities by which nature exceeds the mere totality of sensible beings can be discerned by taking up the connection drawn in the *Timaeus* between nature, especially in the sense of the *χώρα*, and the traces of the elements. This connection points back to the elemental thinking of early Greek philosophers such as Anaximenes, Heraclitus, and especially Empedocles; for all these figures, thinking is, as such, directed to *φύσις*, and *φύσις* is thought primarily as the gathering of the elements. Engagement with these ancient sources prompts a renewal of the sense of element, of element in the sense still heard when we speak of being exposed to the elements. Even the elements named by the ancients, in names barely translatable as fire, air, water, and earth, open toward senses that resist appropriation by metaphysics: elements such as light and sky, wind and rain, the sea, the earth. These expand the sense of nature, not—as with black holes—by being nonsensible, not by remaining withdrawn from sense. On the contrary, the elements surround us and are eminently displayed before our senses—in the blue of the sky, the brilliance of the light, the coolness of the wind, the sound of the falling rain. What is decisive is that the elements are encompassing, that they are not determinately bounded but rather display a certain indefiniteness not to be found in things, that they betoken also a depth unlike the profile-determined depth of things. By elaborating these and other features, a rigorous distinction can be drawn between elements, on the one side, and things or objects, on the other.²² By including also the elements, nature exceeds the mere sum of sensible things.

There remains still the question as to whether, granted these moments of excess, the extent of nature is to be limited or whether nature is to be determined as including all that is, hence as coextensive with being. Would it be possible, for the sake of accord with what Emerson calls the common sense of nature, to distinguish it from the cosmos at large? Could such a distinction be drawn without simply reinstating in another guise the Ptolemaic distinction—long since refuted—between the sublunary world and the incorruptible heaven? One possibility would be to regard the sky as the limit separating nature from the cosmos, for, like any genuine limit, the sky displays a peculiar relation to each of the regions it would distinguish. From within nature and to the senses naturally employed, the sky appears as a uniform dome that, together with the earth, encloses the enchorial space in which the things that concern humans come to pass. But when the senses are supplemented, as by powerful telescopes, so that humans can look beyond the surface appearance that is the sky, the sky as such dissolves and becomes an opening onto the cosmos.

If such a distinction between nature and cosmos were to be elaborated, then while extraterrestrial entities such as black holes would be regarded as beyond nature, they could nonetheless be taken as attesting to the limit of the sensible. For such entities do not present themselves to the senses. If, in the wake of the Nietzschean inversion, there is presentation *only* to the senses, then it follows that such entities do not present themselves at all. Recognition of such entities would require, then, that the very sense of being as presence be suspended.

Yet within nature, presence would remain decisive, at least in connection with the elements. It is in this regard that one could begin to elaborate a sense of the imperative beyond the range of the Nietzschean inversion. For, quite apart from theoretical reflections on nature, humans share a capacity to be entranced by elemental nature. When we stand motionless and silent with our gaze fixed upon a towering mountain peak or an expanse of sea stretching to the horizon, our interest is neither in seeing what a mountain or sea looks like nor in coming to know what its essence is. Rather, standing in the presence of the elemental, we simply abide with it and let our senses be absorbed by it. In giving ourselves over to it, we at the same time enhance our sense of belonging to the elemental—in a sense of sense irreducible to mere perception and to essential cognition. By engaging such an elemental sense, a path can perhaps be opened for rethinking the return to nature in a manner that, at once, advances beyond mere inversion while also returning to the beginnings of Western philosophy.

Notes

- ¹ See Émile Bréhier, *The Hellenistic and Roman Age*, trans. Wade Baskin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 13–16.
- ² *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, edited with translations and commentary by A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 356–57.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 1: 355 (translation modified). Greek text is given in *ibid.*, 2: 350–51.
- ⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur L'Origine et les Fondements de L'Inégalité parmi les Hommes* (Paris: Flammarion, 2008), 87. This text was first published in 1755.
- ⁵ It is only by analogy that one can ascribe a state of nature to music. For Rousseau regards music as intrinsically distanced from nature. Thus, contrasting it with painting, he writes: “One sees from this that painting is closer to nature and that music depends more on human art” (*Essai sur l'origine des langues* [Paris: La Bibliothèque du Graphe, 1970], chap. 16, 537. The final version of this text dates from 1762, though it was not published until after Rousseau’s death. It was originally a fragment from the *Second Discourse*, which Rousseau omitted as too long and out of place.)
- ⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, in vol. 5 of *Werke: Akademie Textausgabe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968), 299–300.
- ⁷ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, in *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson (New York: Random House, 1940), 7, 14, 35. *Nature* was first published in 1836.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹ Emerson, "Nature," in *Selected Writings*, 406. This essay belongs to the Second Series, which was first published in 1844.

¹⁰ Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, ed. Brooks Atkinson (New York: Random House, 1965), 15. First published in 1854.

¹¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830)*, *Zweiter Teil: Die Naturphilosophie*, in vol. 9 of *Werke* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1970), §247.

¹² F. W. J. Schelling, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*, in *Schriften von 1794-1798* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967), 380.

¹³ Plato, *Timaeus*, 27a.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 50d.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 50b.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 48b.

¹⁷ See my discussion in *Chorology: On Beginning in Plato's "Timaeus"* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 155–67.

¹⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, in vol. VI/1 of *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968), 9.

¹⁹ Nietzsche, *Götzen-Dämmerung*, in vol. VI/3 of *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969), 75.

²⁰ Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in vol. 3 of *Werke*, A419 / B446.

²¹ See my discussion in “The Cosmological Turn,” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 26 (2012): 152-62, and in *Logic of Imagination: The Expanse of the Elemental* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), chap. 7.

²² See *Force of Imagination: The Sense of the Elemental* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), chap. 6.