

Subjectivity and Freedom in Nietzsche's Aesthetics

Renadev M. V.¹

© *Philogram Research Journal* 2025

Abstract

This paper explores Friedrich Nietzsche's radical redefinition of subjectivity and freedom through an aesthetic lens, challenging traditional metaphysical and rationalist frameworks. Rejecting the notion of a static, pre-existing self, Nietzsche conceives subjectivity as a dynamic multiplicity of instincts, drives, and affects, a "work in progress" to be actively created rather than discovered. This view dismantles Kantian universalism, positing freedom not as an inherent rational capacity but as a rare achievement forged through self-mastery, the reinterpretation of values, and the artistic shaping of one's instincts.

The paper argues that Nietzsche's aesthetic perspective intertwines subjectivity and freedom as co-constitutive processes. True freedom emerges not from conformity to moral laws but from the creative synthesis of Apollonian (rational) and Dionysian (passionate) forces, transforming life into an artistic phenomenon. By examining Nietzsche's critiques of reason, morality, and tradition, the paper demonstrates how his vision of the "creative subject" redefines autonomy as an existential project, a continuous, often agonistic act of self-creation within the constraints of culture, biology, and history. Ultimately, Nietzsche's aesthetics offers a paradigm where freedom is neither given nor universal but earned through the aesthetic justification of existence itself.

Keywords: subjectivity, freedom, aesthetics, reason, instinct, passion

Introduction

This paper traces how subjectivity and freedom are creatively linked, viewed through Nietzsche's aesthetic perspective. As we know, the traditional metaphysical notion of the self is a static, pre-existing substance. Nietzsche challenged this view, arguing instead that the subject is not a unified, immaterial core but a multiplicity, a dynamic interplay of instincts, drives, affects, and actions. The self is not something we discover but something we actively create through a process of artistic engagement. This redefinition of

¹Renadev M. V., Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy, University of Hyderabad, Telengana.

subjectivity opens a possibility of freedom that is also entirely different from the traditional foundation of freedom. It goes against the conventional idea of freedom and addresses this more naturalistic sense, and understands freedom in terms of limitations. This idea of freedom challenges freedom as a universal value or as a condition necessary for moral agency in the Kantian sense. For thinkers like Kant, freedom is grounded in the capacity of all rational beings. It is a universal, inherent feature of rationality. Nietzsche critically engaged with this universal and rationalist foundation and reinterpreted it based on human psychology, cultural limitations, and natural sense experience. From this perspective, all human beings are not equally free or capable of autonomy. So in that sense, freedom is not a birthright or an abstract principle; it is an achievement, attained only by those who are strong enough to shape and reinterpret their instincts, overcome moral conditioning, and create new values.

From the very beginning, philosophers have been concerned with the questions of what subjectivity and freedom are; however, most studies that have addressed these topics have approached them strictly through a rationalistic framework. Here in this paper, instead of that, we are engaging subjectivity, freedom, and aesthetics as interconnected, co-existing, and mutually constituted possibilities.

In this paper, I aim to explore the idea of subjectivity and freedom in Nietzsche's aesthetic perspective. The paper is divided into three sections. In the first section, I shall discuss the nature of subjectivity according to Nietzsche. In the second section, I shall focus on freedom as it is central to his subjectivity. In the last section, I will show how his notions of subjectivity and freedom are closely connected to his aesthetics. Finally, in conclusion, I shall analyze the interrelation of these concepts.

Nietzsche's conception of subjectivity

"There is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind the deed, its effect and what becomes of it; 'the doer' is invented as an after-thought, – the doing is everything." (Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 26). Nietzsche radically rethinks the idea of subjectivity and agency from a philosophical perspective. This is entirely different from the traditional rational framework of Socrates and Immanuel Kant. Nietzsche challenges the traditional metaphysical notion that actions are produced by a stable, pre-existing self or subject, a doer behind the deed. He argues instead that what we think of as the self is not the source of actions, but it is an identification with our past experience and construct, invented after the fact to explain or justify actions. The deed, the doing, is primary; the notion of a doer is a fiction added later. This critique is aimed particularly at moral and religious traditions that presuppose a unified soul or moral agent responsible for its actions in a stable, continuous way.

For Nietzsche, this idea of a substratum or essence behind the act is a linguistic and psychological illusion. Language tricks us by turning verbs into nouns, actions into things. However, for Nietzsche, there is no fixed identity behind thinking, feeling, or

acting; these are all dynamic processes, flows of becoming without a permanent center. What we call the subject is just the sum of these processes, falsely unified by grammar and custom. In Nietzsche, the self is related to, but distinct from, the subject. It is not a pre-given essence but a dynamic configuration of drives, instincts, and passions, continually shaped and creatively reconstituted over time. This vision lays the groundwork for understanding the self as something to be created rather than discovered, a task of aesthetic and ethical engagement. Unlike Kant, for whom the subject is a rational unity and the self-embodies moral autonomy, Nietzsche replaces metaphysical and moral unity with a provisional, plural, and creatively forged self. For Nietzsche, the creative subject thus becomes a work in progress, always directed toward the ongoing formation of a creative self.

“Everything is subjective,” you say, but even this is an interpretation. The “subject” is not something given; it is something added and invented, and projected behind what there is. — Finally, is it necessary to posit an interpreter behind the interpretation? Even this is an invention, a hypothesis. (Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 26)

In Nietzsche's philosophy, the subject is not a pre-existing, stable entity but rather a dynamic process of becoming, shaped by the interplay of instinct, experience, and creative expression. Nietzsche breaks decisively from the Cartesian notion of a fixed, rational self and instead conceives of subjectivity as an ongoing project of self-formation. Rather than being endowed with an innate, rational will, the Nietzschean subject must cultivate agency through a continuous struggle for self-mastery. So, for Nietzsche, true freedom is not the absence of constraint but power over oneself, a capacity to affirm and shape one's instincts, drives, and values in a coherent and self-directed way. This implies that freedom is not granted but earned, and that subjectivity is something one creates through the aesthetic practice of life itself.

Nietzsche critiques traditional metaphysical thinking, especially the assumption that actions must stem from some underlying, stable subject or self. He argues that what we call strength or a quantum of force is not something that belongs to a subject; it is the activity itself. In Nietzsche's view, there is no hidden essence behind willing or acting; rather, force and drive are the realities of existence. To speak of a will or drive as something possessed by a subject is a linguistic illusion: there is no entity behind the drive, and there is only the driving force. For Nietzsche, it is the will to power.

Nietzsche points out that this illusion is reinforced by language and reason, which tend to mislead us by creating grammatical structures that imply the existence of subjects behind verbs, like the thinker behind thinking. But for Nietzsche, reality is fundamentally made up of forces in motion, dynamic quanta of will to power, expressing themselves through striving, overcoming, and becoming. What appears to be a subject is just the stabilization of these acts over time, a fiction useful for herd morality or unexamined social life, but not for a true creative subject.

Subjectivity, for Nietzsche, can be defined as a condition in which a subject or individual

owns conscious experiences, such as perspectives, feelings, beliefs, and desires. The creation of subjectivity, for him, is a complex process. Nietzsche rejects the notion of the subject as an unmoved mover, *causa sui*, *causa prima*, or a soul-atom, leading him to develop an alternative conception of subjectivity. According to Nietzsche, "the belief regarding the soul as indestructible, eternal, indivisible, or monad should be dispelled from one's philosophy." (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 14). Nietzsche questions what makes something subjective. Is it actions, events, changes, or the process of becoming, rather than the traditional ideas of subjects, doers, substances, or beings? For Nietzsche, the action and the person doing the action are inseparable; the action fully represents the person. He argues that the person is nothing more than the sum of their actions and emotions, and that the subject is defined by these effects.

He invites a new way of constructing human subjectivity, not just the traditional immortal soul. "The way is open for new acceptations and refinements of the soul hypothesis, and such conceptions as 'mortal soul,' and 'soul of subjective multiplicity,' and 'soul as the social structure of the instincts and passions,' want henceforth to have legitimate rights in science." (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 14) In the above quotation, Nietzsche addresses traditional concepts like the subject, soul, and ego from the perspective of science. The subject is an assemblage of appearance, passions, actions, etc. Each act has a precise dimension and direction; the subject is a constructed entity, an outcome of these total elements.

Nietzsche's subjectivity is not merely a totality of activities but a relative unity. Dispositions are made up of micro-dispositions and more or less connected activities. These are drives, desires, instincts, powers, forces, impulses, passions, feelings, affects, pathos, etc. Subjects are reducible multiplicities of these micro dispositions. So, subjectivity is constituted by micro-dispositions (drives, desires, instincts, powers, forces, impulses, passions, feelings, affects, pathos, and so on). It is essential to point out that for Nietzsche, intellectual thinking is also guided by micro-dispositions. It can be concluded that the actions, becoming, and appearances are the fundamental elements that determine the subject. Nietzsche affirms that "affects" are the inner states that help to describe and predict these actions, becoming, and appearances. To put it more clearly, Nietzsche connects affects to the art experience as it produces a "pleasurable affect" that seduces us to keep living.

An affect for Nietzsche is something that assaults us suddenly and wildly." He considered affects as close and a cornerstone of his multileveled theory of subjectivity. Sometimes, it works for and against, so it has its instinctive interpretation, a specific way of construing and reacting to environmental situations. Instead of individual affects, each with its interpretation or perspective, the creation of subjects happens through unions of these affects.

A subject has an unstable qualitative nature. This unity is an aggregate connected to the physical, bodily sum. Nietzsche, going beyond the dichotomy of body-mind duality,

gives the correct model for theorizing the "soul," "self," or "subject." Unlike animals, humans consist of a complex network of competing instincts, desires, drives, beliefs, and capacities, and therefore embody a multiplicity of perspectives and interpretations.

The concept of subjectivity is not an isolated area in Nietzsche's philosophy. Rather, all his philosophical views are interconnected. Understanding Nietzsche's subjectivity is only possible through his aesthetic approach. This is a result of Nietzsche's unique approach to reason and passion. According to Nietzsche, in the history of Western philosophy, most of the conceptual analysis is based merely and purely on reasoning. In opposition to that, Nietzsche's aesthetic approach combines reason and passion.

Nietzsche on Reason, Instinct, and Passion

"I have made it understandable how Socrates was fascinating: he seemed to be a doctor, a savior. Is it necessary to go on and point out the error which lay in his belief in "rationality at all costs"? – It is a self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists to think that they can escape from *décadence* merely by making war against it." (Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* 16) We can see that this glorification of reason comes from Socrates to Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, and then to Western philosophy. However, Nietzsche wants to highlight the animal aspect of humans, reminding us of our instincts and nature beyond just reason.

Nietzsche radically challenges Kant's foundational belief in the unity and internal consistency of reason. While Kant holds that theoretical and practical reason are merely different perspectives within a single rational faculty, Nietzsche dismantles this notion by exposing reason's contingent, psychological, and historically constructed nature. For Nietzsche, reason is not a pure, autonomous faculty grounded in universal structures of thought, but rather an instrument shaped by instincts, drives, and power relations. From Nietzsche's point of view, the Kantian belief in a necessary, a priori unity of reason is a metaphysical illusion.

Moreover, Nietzsche would reject the very idea of the primacy of practical reason as an artificial moral hierarchy built on the illusion of universal laws. In place of Kant's unified rational subject, Nietzsche presents the self as a multiplicity of competing wills and drives, with no central authority to unify or harmonize them. Morality, rather than being the expression of a rational will, is for Nietzsche a product of instinctual resentment and the will to power, masked in the language of duty and universality.

"Shift in the understanding of the subject, when it is applied to the field of aesthetics, namely, the radical shift according to which the rational, conscious, unitary subject is replaced by the heterogeneous multiplicity of unconscious bodily forces and human being is not the efficient cause of things but forces are." (Balya 253) Here Nietzsche wants to challenge the Kantian idea of the unity of reason. He shows that human subjectivity actually involves multiple perspectives; it is the creative combination of reason and passion. One may believe oneself to be rational, yet it must be considered that human

beings are always already human, all too human. Nietzsche attributes many of our shortcomings to our identification with reason over instinct, and the soul over the body. This dominance of reason has diminished the importance of our basic instincts and drives, disrupting the creative balance between emotion and reason.

The first thing to notice about rationality is that it doesn't have a single meaning in the history of philosophy. It refers to the general class of activities, such as thinking, the ability to reflect, and the ability to use a relatively sophisticated language. In these ways, we can see a much more sophisticated and narrow use of the notion of rationality. This distortion upset the balance between reason and passion, giving rise to continuous conflicts within philosophical thought.

Sometimes, rationality concerns the means of achieving a given goal or determining the best strategy in competition with an opponent; at other times, rationality concerns the selection of the right goals themselves. It is most apparent in Plato and Socrates. Nietzsche was worried about this sort of understanding. Philosophers have agreed since ancient times that sometimes our experience can be misleading. So reason somehow bypasses all sense experience. "The moralism of the Greek philosophers from Plato onward is the result of a pathological condition, likewise their admiration for dialectic. Reason=virtue=happiness simply means: we have to imitate Socrates and produce a permanent daylight against the dark desires – the daylight of reason." (Nietzsche *Twilight of the Idols* 16) It is the reason for a unique facility to know the truth directly. As mortals, we can only get a glimpse of it now. Still, the basic idea for Socrates is that this kind of reasoning process is very much a social process. Again, he excludes emotions, passions, and public opinion. In Nietzsche's words, Socrates turns reason into a tyrant so that it becomes the only mode of philosophical thinking.

Throughout history, it has been widely believed that considering 'reason as science' holds the key to solving humanity's problems. Nietzsche vehemently questions this and asks for a courageous self-experiment in one's own life; it can only reveal the power of an individual's instinctual and emotional part. Some Enlightenment philosophers placed significant emphasis on sentiment; however, this emphasis should not be considered an advocacy for the passions, which Nietzsche later identified as the strong sentiments that constitute passion in a creative subject.

In a way, the Enlightenment stands in sharp opposition to Nietzsche's perspective. For Nietzsche, the Apollonian impulse, exemplified in Socrates and carried forward through civilization, contrasts with the Dionysian. Moreover, the Enlightenment is opposed not only to the Dionysian but also to a certain form of faith. Kant, as the central representative of Enlightenment rationality, elevates reason as universal and authoritative. As a result, the obscure realm of emotions is often dismissed as murky and unreliable. Nietzsche, as a strong critique of Kant, reinvestigated the relevance of emotion as a Dionysian force by considering it a determining factor of a creative subject.

Now, romanticism also has an exciting history. One might say, for example, that the

Dionysian cults were romantic in a sense. The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasized the importance of sentiments as opposed to pure reason. Interestingly, David Hume and Adam Smith also defended the sentiments and minimized the importance of reason. Schopenhauer is a romantic philosopher; he directly confronted the Enlightenment. In one sense, the Romantics placed their faith not in reason but in another domain, best characterized as the passions.

“That art, and not morality, was the essential metaphysical human activity, the existence of the world is justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon.” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* 4) In Schopenhauer's philosophy, this idea is most clearly expressed. For him, what is truly real is our passions. According to Nietzsche, it is in our passions that we find ourselves; that is where we find meaning. For Nietzsche, seeing the world as an aesthetic phenomenon is not a way of withdrawing from it. But instead, it is a way of engaging with it, to live your life to make it beautiful. That is all a way of engaging with yourself to know your subjectivity.

While examining the history of religion, we can see a continuous fight against sense experience. They consider sense experience a deceiver, making humanity afraid to go deep into the totality of sense experience. “There has to be an illusion, a deception at work that prevents us from perceiving what is; where's the deceiver?” – “We've got the deceiver!” they cry happily, “it's sensation!” (Nietzsche *Twilight of the Idols* 18)

One has to understand that Nietzsche is doing something very shocking in the history of philosophy. The Enlightenment endorsed reason as the only road to truth. Kant says if the purpose of life were to be happy, God would have put in us a simple instinct. Nietzsche, by contrast, emphasizes the extent to which reason is superfluous. Reason is what leads us to distort or falsify the evidence provided by the senses. What Nietzsche means is this: if we are going to talk about trusting our instincts, we should take that very seriously. It is another example of his naturalism, of his this-worldliness. That is, we are animals, motivated primarily by drives, instincts, and an inborn capacity.

The idea is that instinct and drive move us and give us meaning. If we follow our instincts, we find that there are also aesthetic instincts. What is clear to Nietzsche is that we have all sorts of instincts. Here, art always exists to shelter the totality; in this case, we can see that mainstream philosophy and religion attacked basic human instincts and sensual pleasures. Looking at these instincts and emotions from the perspective of aesthetics, we can distinguish animal instincts from human instincts.

“Assuming that nothing real is 'given' to us apart from our world of desires and passions...” (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 35). Here, Nietzsche talks about virtues, emotions, and grand passions in such a way that they are very distinctively each our own. It opens our eyes to our particularities, uniqueness, and creativity. He writes in one place as if every passion contains its quantum of reason and suggests that reason is the confluence of passions. The combination of the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

In continuation of subjectivity, freedom is central to his philosophy. In the next section,

I shall focus on his concept of freedom; most importantly, both can be more comprehensible from his aesthetic approach.

Subjectivity and Freedom

Freedom is defended neither as a value on which all human beings have some claim, nor as a condition of moral agency. It is true that Nietzsche relates his conception of freedom to notions of responsibility and autonomy, but he understands these notions very differently than they are understood by Kant and Kantian moral philosophers. (Rutherford 513)

For Nietzsche, true responsibility and autonomy are not about conforming to universal moral laws, but about becoming who one is, mastering the chaos of one's drives, creating a coherent form out of inner multiplicity, and affirming one's life and fate. So freedom of the will is not as a detached capacity for rational choice but as power over oneself, a form of internal strength and self-command that is rare and difficult. It requires a rigorous reevaluation of inherited values and the courage to live without mere obedience and metaphysical guarantees. Thus, Nietzsche's idea of freedom is aesthetic and existential: it belongs only to those who genuinely work for self-creation as participants in their subjectivity, and it manifests in the style and force of one's life, not in moral conformity or rational contemplation.

"Nietzsche's own remarks about autonomy suggest that he construed it as a rare achievement, proper to a relatively few excellent lives, and this feature tends to support the interpretation of Nietzschean autonomy as an ethical ideal" (Gemes and Richardson 11). In Nietzsche's thought, freedom is conceived as a form of positive freedom—not as liberation from constraints or interference, but as the freedom to engage and participate. Individual choice, therefore, is not merely about having freedom, but about the capacity to act or become something different. Freedom represents the self-awareness of one's own becoming. The notion of "freedom from all constraints" is, for Nietzsche, an illusion. True freedom, in his view, is expressed within boundaries, and the recognition of those boundaries is what constitutes greatness.

"Sense of responsibility is a constitutive condition of agency. Agency and free will, then, involve not the ability to escape the constraints of time and necessity but the ability to will those very constraints" (Gemes and Richardson 12). For instance, in the Japanese painting tradition known as *Hitofude-Ryuu*, the artist creates the entire image with a single brushstroke—once the brush leaves the paper, the work is complete, demanding exceptional creativity. Likewise, a poem composed with a fixed number of syllables—no more and no less—requires the poet to craft something new within that constraint. Thus, creativity arises through working within boundaries. In the same way, Nietzsche understands freedom as the ability to act within limitations. Culture, traditions, biology, and circumstances constrain human life. Freedom for Nietzsche can be summarized in one word: 'creativity'.

What is essential for Nietzsche is the individual and the individual's ability to create, but this has to be distinguished from what we call the individual's ability to choose. It is in terms of a phrase that he picks up from the Greek poet Pindar. It is a straightforward phrase that says become who you are. Instead, it implies a creative power to become, which is always in a process. Virtually none of us is raised in such a way or thrown into such circumstances that there is no simple emergence. Instead, what is at stake is the cultivation of the self, a process that endures throughout one's life. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, he writes, Existence and the world gain their ultimate justification only when perceived as an aesthetic experience. The idea of freedom, understood within the limits of individual creativity, largely involves the act of self-creation. In a sense, freedom is in a minimal canvas and color pattern. What can you paint? You only get one line, and that is your life.

You are born into a specific pattern – a family, social class, culture, and tradition – all of which shape who you become. Yet, Nietzsche calls for a lion-like stance, a bold rejection of convention. He advocates the revaluation of values and urges individuals to become the creators of their own values in accordance with their lives. At times, Nietzsche also emphasizes the importance of trusting one's instincts.

In the same way, when we use reason, we often adopt the prevailing wisdom of our culture, whether or not it truly fits us. Thus, a creative individual actively participates in shaping their own subjectivity, making freedom a natural outcome of this process of self-creation. Instincts and drives are like raw materials, and freedom creates subjectivity. Freedom is to constitute one's conflicting group of drives and take to another level the possible subject. Nietzsche argues that there are few people in whom different conflicting drives, emotions, viewpoints, and interpretations are balanced and brought together into a strong, unified whole. In these individuals, all perspectives and interpretations are allowed to emerge and contribute to the overall unity. Such human beings can create their own style for their characters. Nietzsche says that creating a style for one's character is an excellent and rare art.

Nietzsche emphasizes the artist, philosopher, and saint because their occupations, unlike others, take us to their very purpose: the question of the meaning of existence. This leads to the question: How does Nietzsche define freedom in his works?

"We alone are the ones who have invented causes, succession, reciprocity, relativity, coercion, number, law, freedom, reason, purpose; and if we project, if we mix this world of signs into things as if it were an 'in itself,' we act once more as we have always done, that is, mythologically. The 'unfree will' is mythology: in real life, it is only a matter of strong and weak wills" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 21). From these discussions, we can recognize the possibility of freedom. Nietzsche maintains that a will can never be entirely free or entirely unfree; rather, every will possesses a certain degree of strength or weakness. Freedom, for him, is the readiness to take responsibility for oneself. In simple terms, it involves being true to oneself – being aware of who you are, understanding your

own tastes, and embracing your authenticity.

Nietzsche challenges all moral and religious systems, fiercely criticizing these traditions for continually obstructing the possibility of genuine free will. Some thinkers misunderstood Nietzsche as a complete naturalist, but we can see that his argument of naturalism is entirely different from all traditional concepts. His concept of free will doesn't mean the freedom to act as you desire, whenever you wish, because if it were, it would be meaningless. Nietzsche does not ask an enslaved person about her impulses and instincts, which is not a desirable state of affairs.

From the standpoint of aesthetic justification, Nietzsche asserts that freedom does not imply a return to nature but rather a call to transcend it. He argues that freedom involves the capacity to envision a goal and act decisively to realize it. This idea is central to his concept of the *will to power*, which represents the drive to achieve the highest possible state of existence. Unlike the notion of merit-based free will, the *will to power* serves as the foundation upon which genuine freedom is built. "We must know how to preserve ourselves: the greatest test of independence." (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 39) In Nietzsche's view, true freedom is the will to take ownership and responsibility for one's actions and passions. It involves confronting hardship and embracing life's pain and suffering with a positive, life-affirming attitude.

Aesthetic Expression of Subjectivity

"Nietzsche's idea of the 'intoxication' of the creative artist, the increased feeling of power; the inner compulsion to make of things a reflex of his own fullness and completion." (Bowie 308). By this quote, Nietzsche's idea of the creative artist broadly refers to a creative subject. For him, life itself is a creative engagement, so here the artist is not merely contemplating the world and their life. Thus, the creative subject refers to a higher state of vitality, energy, and self-affirmation, a moment when the subject is so overwhelmed by the feeling of inner strength and plenitude that they are compelled to manifest it creatively. This increased feeling of power is not merely an emotional expression, but a metaphysical and existential condition in which the subject experiences a kind of overflowing. The world becomes material to be shaped, interpreted, and transformed according to every individual's inner passion.

This idea aligns closely with his concept of the will to power, not simply a desire to dominate, but a fundamental creative force that manifests in reordering and reinterpreting the world. In the intoxicated state, the creative subject does not imitate life; they recreate it, imposing form upon chaos and making reality a reflection of their highest self. This is the aesthetic ideal Nietzsche holds above all, a Dionysian affirmation of life through creative transformation.

"It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified" (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* 5). For Nietzsche, humans are the ones who create sense and meaning in the universe. Through artistic creativity, human beings can

find justification for their existence and impart meaning and purpose to their lives. Nietzsche suggests that a person's feelings of power, courage, and pride are associated with the beautiful and are diminished by the ugly. The world can only be justified when viewed as an aesthetic creation.

For Nietzsche, the basic elements that lead to a heightened aesthetic experience or rapture come from activities like dance, music, and other forms of sensual pleasure. At its core, this rapture brings an increase in strength, fullness, and vitality. In this state, a person's creative power grows stronger, and they give meaning to everything from their own abundance. This has to transform into perfection in art.

“Art, and not morality, was the essential metaphysical human activity” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* 5). For Nietzsche, art is not just a copy of nature but a deeper force that allows us to transcend nature itself. Art serves as a response to nihilism, acting as the strongest force against any desire to deny or reject life.

Two of Nietzsche's most fundamental aesthetic ideas—the Dionysian and the Apollonian—need to be briefly discussed in order to understand the function of art in his conception of subjectivity. Apollo is the deity of individuality, illusion, structure, order, and the visual arts, whereas Dionysus is the god of passion, chaos, nature, and music. It is through the dynamic interaction of these two opposing but complementary elements, reason (Apollo) and passion (Dionysus), that personal growth and development continue. Nietzsche believes that the highest form of art in history, tragedy, comes from the harmonious combination of these two elements.

“Where must tragedy come from? Perhaps out of desire, out of power, out of overflowing health, out of overwhelming fullness of life?” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* 4). In exploring the function of tragedy as an art form, Nietzsche depicts it as embodying courage and emotional freedom when confronting a formidable enemy, a profound calamity, or an overwhelming challenge. The tragic artist embraces and exalts this triumphant state. In Nietzsche's philosophy, all forms of nihilism are transformed into art, which he sees as the highest spiritual activity in humans, giving life profound meaning.

The Dionysian element in art allows humans to go beyond the limitations of individual existence and connect with both the human and natural worlds. Through art, people move beyond their ego and achieve unity with the universe, highlighting art's role as a way to transcend the self. Every subject is the totality of complex aspects: emotions, reason, passion, and desire. In that change, art is inseparable from reconciling humans with nature. This aesthetic understanding of human nature itself has been given a particular subjectivity to human beings.

Aesthetic subjectivity is deeply entwined with necessity. Transfiguring instinctual drives into a unified aesthetic vision. Only genuine creative subjects are capable of this creative synthesis, those rare individuals who possess the strength to shape their own subjectivity in alignment with the deeper rhythms of life. This vision of freedom as

aesthetic necessity elevates the creative individual to the highest philosophical ideal, one who becomes what they are.

Possibility of a creative subject

In another instance of equating necessity with freedom, Nietzsche claims that Goethe 'disciplined himself to wholeness, he created himself' (TI 49). This idea of self-creation points to the self-reflexive nature of the processes at work here. In imposing order on oneself, the self acts upon itself, but in doing so, something new comes about. (Berry and Leiter 99)

From the aesthetic point of view, creative subjects such as artwork can counterbalance contemporary culture's pessimistic inclinations. This creative spirit helps people rediscover their inner selves and find purpose in the world. It can alter reality and unveil a more profound truth about life, that the unconscious urges and instincts that underlie the human experience might be expressed via art. "In this idea of aesthetic self-fashioning, we see another key Nietzschean aesthetic theme: that of creativity. Nietzsche admires people who do not merely play by the existing rules, but who go beyond them, who, in his terms, "legislate" or "create" values." (Huddleston, *"Nietzsche's Aesthetics"* 6) The creative subject only challenges the standards and ideals of society. Even if it went against the popular preferences and viewpoints of the time, they might show the guts to question expectations and produce something fresh and unique.

Here, the creative subject is an artistic creation that creates itself. The dynamic interaction of forces and energies continually renews the subject. Perception and viewpoint continuously shape themselves. Instead of being created by a supernatural being or external force, the creative subject emerged from the basic energies of life. The will to power as an art influences and constructs their reality through their creative actions. Art could alter and reinvent our perception of the world rather than only reflecting it. The human mind continuously reinterprets and reshapes the world, which is considered a work of art.

The creative subject offers insight into the fundamental inclinations of power and nature; they create something fresh and unique by delving deeply into life's primordial impulses. So, the will to power as art is a potent instrument for comprehending the nature of power and the desire for it. The will to power as art enables us to inspire others to reject the limitations of custom and tradition and to produce works that profoundly impact others. In this way, the creative subject represents the will to power.

Additionally, the phenomenon of the creative subject can shed light on the nature of morality and religion. Morality and religion are subjective interpretations of reality influenced by human consciousness rather than objective realities. The creative subject is a potent representation of human ingenuity and metamorphosis, and by examining the creative process, we may learn more about the basic instincts and motivations that influence human existence.

To understand this creativity, we closely examine the fundamental forces of human nature based on Greek gods, the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Creativity manifests in humans as a force of nature under two essential characteristics: the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Form, harmony, and order define the Apollonian element of art. The Apollonian symbolizes the logical, measured, and organized elements of artistic expression. It is the area of boundaries and clarity where individual awareness can take charge and give the chaotic forces of life structure and order.

"As Nietzsche puts it in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "in man, creature, and creator are united: in man, there is material, fragment, excess, clay, dirt, nonsense, chaos; but in man, there is also creator, form-giver." (Huddleston, *"Nietzsche's Aesthetics"* 6) However, chaos, ecstasy, and excess are characteristics of the Dionysian component of art. The Dionysian symbolizes the illogical, primordial, and unorganized elements of artistic creation. In a condition of orgiastic release, the individual consciousness is overtaken by life's raw forces and loses its sense of self. The creative subject asserts that excellent art requires both the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

Creative subjects should see the world not as it is but as it may be in a more comprehensive, direct, and significant manner. To do this, every subject needed to indulge in continuous intoxication and develop individuality. So, their way is to change reality rather than replicate it. Every subject must undergo this process of transfiguration to convey its deep understanding and perceptions. Creating their subjects allowed the individual to express their freedom and fullness of life.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have explored the relationship between subjectivity and freedom in Nietzsche's philosophy, with a special focus on his aesthetic perspective. The synthesis of reason and passion (Apollonian and Dionysian elements), as well as order and chaos, becomes the model for self-formation. So when we come to Nietzsche's aesthetics, we can see that subjectivity and freedom are closely connected. This paper leads to the conclusion that genuine freedom is the by-product of your subject formation. Nietzsche radically eliminates all kinds of traditional metaphysics and presents an alternative practical self. The significant point is that the subject is not a fixed entity; it is constantly changing and, at the same time, is not pre-existing. If it is not a pre-existing, fixed entity, there is a chance to create it. Nietzsche's subjectivity is the combination of passions, instincts, desires, etc.; when someone accepts this totality, this is the way to freedom. Then, the creation of the subject itself opens the freedom of your subject.

Freedom means to accept genuineness and authenticity; through this, be what you are. Creating their style for their character is an incredible and rare art. Such individuals have formed their subjectivity through active participation, rejecting established laws and discovering new ways of living grounded in their authentic tastes and values. In doing so, they affirm their freedom. From this standpoint, freedom and subjectivity are deeply

intertwined, each giving rise to and sustaining the other.

So, the subject is not passive or inherited but active, self-determined, and fundamentally creative. Subjectivity and freedom are not given; they are self-creative. They must be achieved through the aesthetic shaping of life itself. To be free is to take responsibility for one's becoming; it is to say yes to one's instincts, history, and limitations, not by submission but through their transformation. The individual does not merely exist but must be crafted like a work of art. The highest expression of freedom is thus the creation of a self that justifies existence as an aesthetic phenomenon.

So, from this aesthetic perspective, subjectivity and freedom are very different from those of Enlightenment thinkers like Kant. From this perspective, everyone does not naturally have agency or free will. Instead, it is something rare and difficult to achieve. Most people are controlled by their instincts, habits, and social influences. They do not truly act on their own. Real agency happens only when a person gains power over themselves. That freedom means having control over one's own instincts and being able to shape them. This kind of freedom belongs to what we call the creative individuals, someone who can participate in their subject creation and create freedom, work on it, and live by their own values. It is a creative and more authentic form of freedom.

At the same time, this artistic way of understanding has a deep connection between freedom and necessity. It shows that in the case of creative individuals, freedom and necessity are the same. These people choose their actions out of a deep inner need. Their actions feel necessary, not forced. This inner necessity is not a weakness but a sign of creative energy. A creative subject does not fight against fate. Instead, they accept it and make it their own. They turn necessity into a kind of self-creative path. In this way, they change the meaning of freedom. It is no longer the absence of limits, but the ability to make a creative space in those limits. Art gives meaning to suffering, disorder, and the void of meaning with courage, turning them into sources of depth and beauty. In this way, art is the way of becoming *Übermensch*. So, from the aesthetic perspective, life is a work of art.

Nietzsche's aesthetics offers a profound rethinking of subjectivity and freedom. They are inseparable and mutually constitutive. To be a subject is to be engaged in the ongoing artistic process of self-creation, and to be free is to affirm this process joyfully and courageously. Through this aesthetic approach, life itself becomes a work of art, unfinished, intense, and deeply meaningful. So here Nietzsche's aesthetics stands for the possibility of a creative subject. Creative subjects can participate in the formation of subjectivity and freedom; they are not passive spectators of their subject creation but active participants. Thus, the formation of subjectivity inherently brings about the creation of freedom.

Works Cited

- Balya, Gülizar Karahan. "The 'Death' of the Artist—A Nietzschean Approach to Aesthetics." *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics*, vol. 5, 2013, pp. 248–257.
- Berry, Jessica N., and Brian Leiter, editors. *A Matter of Taste: Nietzsche and the Structure of Affective Response*. *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 24 Sept. 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2019.1656255>.
- Bowie, Andrew. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche*. Manchester University Press, 1990.
- Gemes, Ken, and John Richardson. "Introduction." *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, edited by John Richardson and Ken Gemes, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 3–17.
- Huddleston, Andrew. "Nietzsche's Aesthetics." *Philosophy Compass*, vol. 15, no. 11, 2020, e12706. <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12706>.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Edited by Keith Ansell-Pearson, translated by Carol Diethe, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy*. Translated by Ian C. Johnston, Blackmask Online, 2003.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Will to Power*. Edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann, edited by R. J. Hollingdale, Vintage Books, 1968.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich W. *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Translated by Marion Faber, introduction by Robert C. Holub, Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich W. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*. Edited and translated by Adrian Del Caro and Robert B. Pippin, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich W. *Twilight of the Idols*. Translated by Richard Polt, introduction by Tracy Strong, Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.
- Rutherford, Donald. "Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal: Nietzsche and His Antecedents." *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 54, no. 6, 2011, pp. 512–531.
- Philogram or its licensor (e.g., a society or other partner) holds exclusive rights to this article under a publishing agreement with the author(s) or other rightsholder(s);

author self-archiving of the accepted manuscript version of this article is solely governed by the terms of such publishing agreement and applicable law.