

MPhil in Art and Design (Studio Practice)

**AN ANALYSIS OF CHAOS AND CREATIVITY
IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART OF LAHORE
THROUGH THE LENS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE**

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CERTIFICATE

It is to hereby certify that the present research under the title of “**An Analysis of Chaos and Creativity in the Contemporary Art of Lahore Through the Lens of Friedrich Nietzsche**” is an original work done by Maryam Zamurd as partial fulfilment of the requirement of the MPhil Art and Design (Studio Practice) degree at the postgraduate Research Centre of Creative Arts, College of Art and Design, University of the Punjab, Lahore. I have personally gone through the raw data to certify the correctness and authenticity of all results reported herein. I further certify that the thesis data has not been used in part or full, in a manuscript already submitted or in the process of submission in partial fulfillment for the award of any other degree from any other institution or home or abroad. I also certify that the enclosed thesis has been prepared under my supervision and I endorse its evaluation for the award of MPhil degree through the official procedure of the university.

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ABSTRACT

This practice-based research examines the contemporary artworks of Lahore based artists, which have been created in response to Chaos. The researcher used German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's Philosophy of Creativity and chaos, as a lens to analyze the contemporary artworks of Lahore.

This research is an analytic study which has been presented in the form of Art installations, videos and kinetic sculptures. The stages between the projection of those thoughts and canvass is a complex and personal journey of the artist and how that journey is expressed is seldom known to the artist themselves, this is accredited to how much of chaos resides in the artist's mind. Many artists, art critics, and theorists have found resonance with his views, which has sparked the growth of Nietzschean aesthetics and a more comprehensive philosophical framework that have influences different art practices imbued out of chaos and otherwise and are relevant even today.

This research study analyses the response of the chaotic history of Lahore in the matter of political chaos, social chaos, economical, as well as psychological chaos, and how the artists of Lahore responded to it while being creative.

The research methodology for this study centers on the philosophy of creativity and its examination in relation to a correlation of artworks created by the aforementioned art institutions. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who lived in the 18th century, is the source of much of the research's literature. In this instance, the core of his creative philosophy has been taken from books like: The birth of tragedy, human all too human, the gay science, the dawn, thus spoke Zarathustra and the will to power. The researcher will track how his ideas that have affected consciously and unconsciously both old masters and contemporary artists today, mainly Lahore.

In addition, the researcher will produce artworks based on these chosen literary expressions examined in the creative endeavors of the past and its linkage to the present as part of this practice-based research. This study is restricted to the study of visual art alone, though it may be expanded to include more concrete forms of expression such as sculpture and installation. The researcher facilitates a journey towards comprehending and accepting the philosophy of creativity by illuminating the creative processes of creative individuals through this process.

Keywords:

Creativity, Chaos, Lucid Dreams, Lahore, Mental instability, Friedrich Nietzsche.

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INTRODUCTION

This practice-based research delves into the Creative response of Lahori Contemporary Artists in accounts of Social, cultural, political, as well as psychological Chaos throughout the Lahore's history. The researcher views these chaotic subjects transforming into the form of art through the lens of German philosopher, cultural critic, and author Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). He is renowned for having controversial and impactful thoughts that went against the conventional moral, theological, and philosophical viewpoints of his day back in the time of Romanticism when ideal life was all the norm. It was after the collective chaos of war that numerous academic fields, including philosophy, literature, psychology, cultural theory, and artworks have greatly benefited from Nietzsche's writings.¹ The link between art as a work of art and human existence was a topic Nietzsche passionately discussed in his book 'the birth of tragedy'. Nietzsche believes that art is good because it gives us a greater sense of power. He saw instinct and intellect as opposing facets of human nature, and he held different views on each. According to him, instinct is a basic, unconsciously generated urge that emerges from a person's innermost self. Nietzsche believed that intellect was a more aware and logical ability than instinct. Intellect, he acknowledges in the form of two creative energies, which he associates with the Greek gods Dionysus and Apollo.²

The researcher will find the link between the philosophy of Nietzsche with the contemporary art of Lahori artists, identify their creative liberations and spontaneous expression of the creative process to create the conceptual work in the form of the product. It is important to keep in mind that Nietzsche's philosophy is intricate and multidimensional, and that many artists and art movements may engage and interpret his ideas in various ways. However, his emphasis on individualism, rejection of conventional conventions, investigation of existential issues, and drive to push and breach established boundaries are all clear indications of his effect on contemporary art.

¹ Steven Mintz, "Nietzsche's Ideas Still Resonate, Provoke and Inspire," Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Events and Jobs, 2024, <https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/columns/higher-ed-gamma/2024/09/20/nietzsches-ideas-still-resonate-provoke-and-inspire>.

² Graham, "What Nietzsche Really Said about Art," Grahamart.com, 2024, <https://grahamart.com/aesthetics/what-nietzsche-really-said-about-art/>.

Statement of purpose

This study will investigate the bridge between chaos and creativity in the artistic context of Lahore's creative individuals, using Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical framework as tool for analysis.

Aims and Objective

- To study Nietzsche's concepts that are relevant to art and creativity and utilize them in the perspective of Lahori artists.
- To study some pieces of art that represent chaos and creativity while aligning with Nietzsche's worldview.
- To gather insight on how the chaos has been molded to creativity through psychological aspects. Thus, to study the borderline between the creative process and the creative artwork.
- To understand the significance of the journey in the creative process albeit the agony and haphazardness of chaotic mind.

Research Questions

1. How does an Artist explain the journey of art from mind to canvas?
2. How does Nietzsche's philosophies employ creative chaos.
3. How the artists of Lahore have responded to social, psychological and political chaos?

Limitation

This study was limited to a small number of contemporary Lahore-based painters. The study intends to offer a thorough examination of the interaction between chaos and creativity as it appears in their works by concentrating on this particular localized art scene. This restriction recognizes that the results could not be generally applicable to all contemporary artists or art movements outside of Lahore, even as it permits a thorough examination of certain artistic methods and beliefs. Thus, broadening the scope to incorporate a variety of artistic viewpoints from larger cultural and geographical settings may be beneficial for future research.

Research Methodology

This research will engage in qualitative methods that will include interviews of the Lahore artists, analysis of their work and study of its co-relation with philosophical literature.

Ultimately, it aims to highlight the relationship between chaos and creativity through the creative process of the artist, via Nietzsche's depiction of the complexity of the human beings.

Summary of the subsequent chapters

This study is divided into four chapters. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of the main question.

Chapter 1:

In chapter 1, researcher sets the stage to understand the origin of chaos and creativity, with the aid of history, mythology, religion and science. Each facet is briefly studied with psychological viewpoint to figure out the relationship between the human creative instinct with the chaos or instability. Furthermore, chaos is studied both as a catalyst and the reaction of creative spark that reveals the connection between the individuals and the chaotic origin of the universe.

Chapter 2:

In Chapter 2, the researcher thoroughly studies life and the philosophical literature of the German Philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche. The research digs deeps into the inspirations of the philosopher, starting from the early school of thoughts in Greek, like Socrates, to his contemporaries such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner. The chapter also include the debunking theories of other intellects like Rene Descartes and proposing counter arguments of the Philosopher. There is also a section to explore the inspiration and relationship of the similar concept in the South Asia literature, in the form of Allama Muhammad Iqbal. Moreover, this chapter explores the relationship between philosophy and art highlighted by Friedrich Nietzsche.

Chapter 3:

In chapter 3, the researcher shifts from theory to practice by examining the works of Lahore-based contemporary artists. She discovers their journey from chaos to creativity in response to various social, political, religious, and cultural factors. Furthermore, the researcher examines how these factors work together to support the emergence of creative expression in the midst of chaos and change through the lens of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Chapter 4:

After a careful examination of the earlier theoretical and contextual investigations, the researcher's personal artistic practice is presented in Chapter 4. The spontaneous spark of artistic instinct, the point at which chaos starts to acquire shape through creation, is examined

in this last chapter. It presents this instinct as the fundamental link between chaos and art; wherein conceptual knowledge is converted into concrete creative production.

Anticipated questions for future research

Researcher is open to the possibilities of further factors that may influence and impact the creative process.

1. This research invites further investigation to study not just Lahori Artist but other cultural contexts of Pakistan as well.
2. How the application of Nietzsche's philosophy can be applied beyond visual narratives.
3. How would the emerging artists of Lahore would respond to themes like chaos and creativity.

CHAPTER 1

CHAOS TO CREATIVITY: A PROLOGUE TO NIETZSCHE

Homo Sapiens have been called the Crown of Creations by Allah Almighty. These individuals are superior in their genetic and chemical components because they take the lead by possessing a phenomenon called thought process. These thoughts or ideas, allowed them to evolve through stone age to present time, by creating, adapting, solving and raising more questions. Creation is a constituent part within a person. The individual realizes this when they begin to comprehend what and how the creation works. The cycle of creation starts within, all the codes embedded inside, it is a system of many connections and emotions.³

The connection of the creation and inner mind has been viewed through different psychological lenses. The creative zone is affected by different parameters. And it is the journey between the creator and the creation that contributes to the end product. Many psychologists have elaborated the relation between the chaotic state of mind and the creativity which will be discussed and explored thoroughly in this chapter, but the researcher is aiming to explore the bridge between the two extremes; chaos and creativity, using the philosophical perspective with the aid of psychology, spiritual and social factors.

1.1 Cosmic Chaos and the Origin of Creativity

The Origin of universe is the beginning of everything. The universe itself is a creation from the chaos. This world was fashioned as the first creation, emerging from nothing. Big Bang theory is the leading explanation that astronomer Georges Lemaitre⁴ presented in 1931, of how this universe came into being.⁵ Religiously, this concept has been around for a while. 1400 years ago, Qur'an mentioned the Divine force as the first creative endeavor in the following verses.

۝۳۰ أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the Earth were meshed together then We ripped them apart? And then We made of water everything living? Would they still not believe?
(Qur'an 21:30)

³ Michael Laitman, "Why Are Humans Considered the Crown of Creation?," *Kabalah and the Meaning of Life* (blog), April 11, 2017, <https://laitman.com/2017/04/why-are-humans-considered-the-crown-of-creation/#gsc.tab=0>.

⁴ Georges Lemaitre (1894-1966) was Belgium astronomer and cosmologist. (Source: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Georges-Lemaitre>)

⁵ Andrew May and Elizabeth Howell, "What Is Big Bang Theory," Space, July 27, 2023, <https://www.space.com/25126-big-bang-theory.html>.

The Genesis 1 phrase *tohu wa-bohu*⁶ is described as God's relationship with chaos. The phrase could allude to a formless condition or a non-being existing before creation. The former condition of the creation, described in the book of Genesis as a "watery chaos" with a word *choshek*⁷. The term "chaos" is frequently employed in contemporary biblical studies to refer to the *Torah*⁸ and related stories of Eastern mythology. Liber Chaos, written in 1285 by the Catalan poet and mystic Ramon Llull (1232–1315), describes Chaos as the original form or matter that God created⁹.



Figure 1 Wenceslaus Hollar. "Chaos," Etching, (1607-1677).
(Source: <https://worldhistoryedu.com/tohu-wa-bohu-meaning-and-significance/>)

The Earth was created, and so was the man to 'create' more. Even so, what does creativity or creation account for? The Latin verb "*Creo*" and the Sanskrit root "*Kar*," mean to produce, generate, and make.¹⁰ Britannica defines "creativity" as the capacity to create

⁶ Tohu wa-bohu –Is Hebrew phrase meaning, From Chaos to Order. (Source: <https://alwaysloved.net/2020/03/30/tohu-wa-bohu-gods-relationship-to-chaos/>)

⁷ Choshek – In Hebrew translated as Darkness or Confusion. (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas/choshek.html>)

⁸ Torah is divine revelation to Israel (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Torah>)

⁹ "Chaos (Cosmogony)," in *Scholarly Community Encyclopedia*, November 21, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.pub/entry/34818>.

¹⁰ Enrica Leydi, "A Word in Four Hundred Words - Creativity," *MedicinaNarrativa.eu* (blog), December 20, 2021, <https://www.medicinanarrativa.eu/a-word-in-four-hundred-words->

something novel, distinctive, and different.¹¹ The Romantic age saw a significant deal of success and theorization for the concept of creativity, which was seen as the privilege of art and a guarantee of originality. According to Britannica, "chaos" is complete disarray and bewilderment beyond comprehension.¹² The word "*Khaos*" comes from the Greek language, meaning "abyss," "vast and empty." Chaos was also referred to the abyss of Tartarus¹³, a dark underground prison for eternally damned in Greek, in the 1400s. It began to take on a familiar sense later in the 1600s, as a formless emptiness of jumbled and chaotic debris. In this chapter, the researcher will expound on the chaos in more categories.¹⁴

The genus Homo awoke in a condition of turmoil 2.5 million years ago, marking the beginning of human civilization. It was a war of life and death every day. The creatures that prowl the earth had to contend with a struggle for survival. Since man was not at the top of the food chain at the time, he had to "create" something in order to outwit the wild beasts to subdue them. When the notion dawned on them, they fashioned weapons from the stones. Hunter-gatherers evolved into humans. Over the course of several centuries, man continued to create, develop his theories, and advance as a species. They established societies, and advocated faiths and produced art. The first humans to leave artifacts behind were from the Paleolithic era. They would etch people, animals, and signs. They combined mineral mixtures, ochres, burnt bone meal, and charcoal with water, blood, animal fats, and tree sap. Additionally, they created little sculptures out of antlers, clay, stones, and bones. During the Neolithic era, humans transitioned from hunter-gatherers to farmers and food producers.¹⁵

Through sheer intellect and ideas, humans have essentially made their own path to the top of the food chain. History gave rise to a sizable number of intelligent people whose voices eventually formed the process of improvement. Following the fulfilment of basic human needs, humanity turned its attention to the cosmos, its largest creation. And while some attempted to comprehend the world we live in, many others provided insightful explanations of the world

creativity#:~:text=The%20origin%20of%20the%20word,generate%E2%80%9D%2C%20%E2%80%9Cmake%E2%80%9D

¹¹ Barbara Kerr, "Creativity," *Britannica* (blog), September 15, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/creativity>.

¹² "Chaos," in *Britannica*, accessed October 1, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/chaos>.

¹³ Tartarus, the infernal regions of ancient Greek mythology. The deepest region of the underworld, where gods, locked their enemies. Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tartarus>

¹⁴ "Chaos: Meaning and History," in *Merriam-Webster*, accessed March 27, 2024, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/chaos-meaning-and-history>.

¹⁵ Lesley Kennedy, "The Prehistoric Ages: How Humans Lived before Written Records," HISTORY (A&E Television Networks, September 27, 2019), [https://www.history.com/news/prehistoric-ages-timeline#:~:text=In%20the%20Paleolithic%20period%20\(roughly,hunting%20birds%20and%20wild%20animals](https://www.history.com/news/prehistoric-ages-timeline#:~:text=In%20the%20Paleolithic%20period%20(roughly,hunting%20birds%20and%20wild%20animals)

within. Philosopher Thales of Miletus (c. 620–546) was the first to advocate for incantation and introspection. On the universe, he remarked, "*All is water.*"¹⁶ Several other thinkers employed their intelligence to create new ideas in the human mind that would explain away the chaos of the world and human-made systems.

There was Socrates (470-399 BCE), Plato (428-348 BCE) and Aristotle (348-322 BCE) among the ancient Greece that made a significant impact on the planet with their insightful notions about life, the universe, and the surrounding environment. Every age was distinguished by a distinct person who posed questions and embarked on a mission to find answers in order to create a better knowledge of the chaos they awoke to.

In his *Timaeus*¹⁷ conversation, Plato offers a thorough philosophical analysis of the origins and innate order of the universe. It begins by elaborating on the idea of the Demiurge, a heavenly craftsman or creator who brings order and structure to the chaotic material universe by using everlasting forms as blueprints.¹⁸ The idea of chaos is mirrored in the Greek term *Chora* in Plato's *Timaeus*. *Chora* is seen, for example, as formless space in which material remnants of the elements are in chaotic motion. According to Aristotle, chaos is something that exists apart from bodies and is necessary for the existence of all tangible bodies. Thus, chaos is introduced into the context of a clearly physical inquiry.¹⁹

Similar but more refined concept was presented by Avicenna of Afshana, modern day Afghanistan. Abu Ali al Huyan ibn Sina (980–1037) is more commonly known in Europe as Avicenna. He is regarded as the pre-modern era's most significant philosopher. Ibn Sina was a metaphysical philosopher of being who focused primarily on how the self's presence in this world relates to its contingency. His philosophy is an attempt to create a comprehensive and cohesive system that is in line with Muslim cultural religious requirements. His ideas on the soul, intelligence, and universe are based on the philosophical space he defines for God as the necessary existence.²⁰

However, in order for God to exist, there must be a man to worship him. Understanding one's own existence is just as vital as acknowledging the existence of God. And the first person

¹⁶ Patricia O'Grady, "Thales of Miletus (C.620 B.C.E. - C. 546 B.C.E.)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (The Flinders University of South Australia), accessed March 27, 2024, <https://iep.utm.edu/thales/>.

¹⁷ *Timaeus* is Plato's book based on Greek historian named Timaeus (350 – 264 BC) (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Timaeus-Greek-historian>)

¹⁸ Zeyl, Donald, and Barbara Sattler. "Plato's *Timaeus*." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2023. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-timaeus>.

¹⁹ "Chaos (Cosmogony)," in *Scholarly Community Encyclopedia*, November 21, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.pub/entry/34818>.

²⁰ Sajjad H. Rizvi, "Avicenna (Ibn Sina) (C.980-1037)," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (United Kingdom: University of Bristol), accessed March 27, 2024, <https://iep.utm.edu/avicenna-ibn-sina/>.

who truly created the need of understanding the self and acknowledging its existence was the 17th century, French Philosopher, Rene Descartes. He quotes,

“Cogito, ergo sum.” “I think, therefore I am.”

Rene Descartes is credited with exploring the power of doubt. denying the reality of things that came before us, gives us the opportunity to investigate the possibility of using uncertainty to solve cosmic riddles. The ability to think and use one's mind is evidence that humans exist. You cannot doubt the existence of your own thoughts since you are thinking when you doubt. even when you have doubts about the accuracy of your senses and you're reasoning. You can never be incorrect about the fact that you exist, no matter how incorrect your perception of reality or how distorted your application of reason may be. Descartes unintentionally distinguished between the mental and physical domains. No matter how distorted or disorganized the mental "things which things" may be, we may be certain that they exist; the actual world must somehow be connected to them.²¹

And once the self and the outside world are connected. People come to the realization that they are just a reflection of time waiting for their life sentence to end. Arthur Schopenhauer, (1788-1860) a German Philosopher sums is that in the process of waiting for the end and pain, we indulge in temporary pleasure to relief from the chaos. How can one go about living if pain and chaos are inevitable?

According to Canadian psychologist Jordan B. Peterson (b.1962), chaos lurks in the irrelevant, which is an extremely intriguing finding given that chaos is essentially infinite. It's a legitimate question: where should it go? You pay attention to what you choose to overlook, and you are free to do so as long as it isn't actively preventing you from moving forward. It's like you voyage all the way back to the beginning of the cosmos when there's nothing but undifferentiated chaos²².

When universe itself is the creation from chaos, how can a human mind be an exception? Chaos doesn't always have to be termed something “bad”; in fact, it can be the door to unfiltered data and raw emotions, which frequently serve as the spark for creative inspiration. Friedrich Nietzsche saw chaos as an essential part of the creative process and the creative activity itself as a unique remedy for misery. The way the creative person's thinking

²¹ Jack Maden, “I Think Therefore I Am: Descartes’ Cogito Ergo Sum Explained,” October 2023, <https://philosophybreak.com/articles/i-think-therefore-i-am-descartes-cogito-ergo-sum-explained/>.

²² Jordan B Peterson, “In Every Bit of Chaos There’s the Possibility of Order,” August 25, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDcEfBa3_b4&t=27s.

incorporates turmoil distinguishes them from the average person. Chaos can originate from external sources including social and cultural predicaments, history and myths, innate genetic traits, psychological elements, or the individual's own active imagination. The researcher will go into great detail on every aspect of the creative mind and look into the relationship and mechanism between chaos and creativity.

1.2 Chaos & Order in Mythologies

If dive into the history, we'd find many evidences of the co-relation between chaos and order in certain myths and parables regardless of region and time. Greek mythology, explained the primeval state through chaos. The first recorded mention of chaos in history is found in Hesiod's (776 BC) *Theogony*²³. He defined *Khaos* as the embodiment of the limitless nothingness that existed before to the birth of everything. He goes on to say that *Khaos* was the first primordial being to give birth to primordial, such as Gaia and Nyx²⁴. *Khaos* just has one appearance in Greek mythology, and that is it. Different poets have defined *Khaos* in different ways over time. One suggested that *Khaos* was a place rather than a person, and that chaos existed in the lower atmosphere of the sky. Another person pointed *Khaos* toward a dark place in the underworld. Publius Ovidius Naso²⁵, a Roman poet, stated that *Kahos* was a disorganized mixture of the components that comprise the universe. After then, those components were divided among all living things, including humans. *Khaos* is a personified being; some imagine her as a lady endowed with all the power of the cosmos, who, realizing she was alone and bored, created the first Greek deities as a means of amusement and then watched her progeny.²⁶

²³ *Theogony* is a poem by Hesiod that Describes the origins and genealogies of Greek Gods. Composed in 730-700 BC.

²⁴ Gaia and Nyx are the two primordial goddesses from Greek Mythology that emerged from chaos. Gaia is mother nature while Nyx is the night. (Source: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230113121_2)

²⁵ Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC) was roman poet who lived during the reign of Augustus (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ovid-Roman-poet>)

²⁶ "Chaos/Khaos: The First Primordial Goddess of Greek Mythology - WILD Mythology," *WILD Mythology*, April 30, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FKY1Asb8yY>.

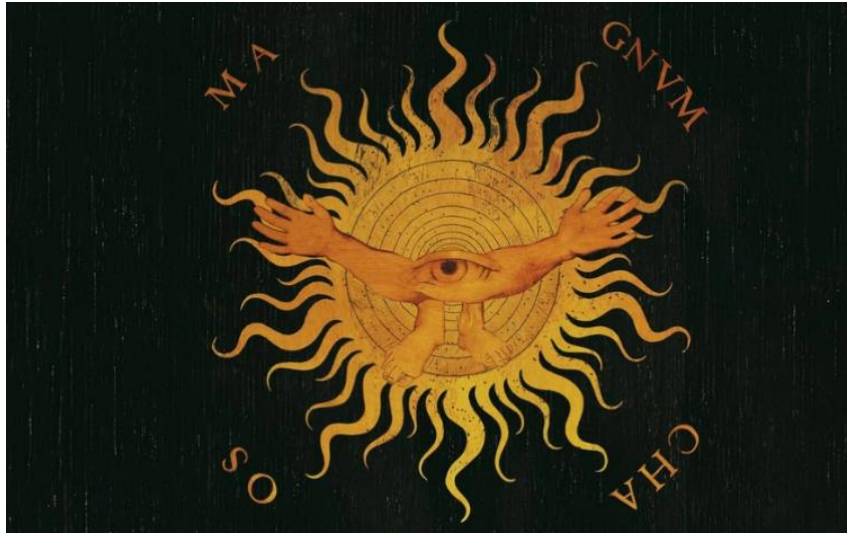


Figure 2 Giovan Francesco Capoferri. “Magnum Chaos,” Original design by Lorenzo Lotto. (1480-1556) *Bailica di Santa*. (Source: <https://beingfullyhuman.com/2020/03/18/remembering-the-creative-aspects-of-chaos-daniel-odiers-the-doors-of-joy/>)

The dawn of time was described in a Legends concerning Marduk and Tiamat. Tiamat, the mother of gods and Apsu, the underground god had embraced and joined hand, both chaos and order. These are the first driving forces that give rise to the elder gods' universe, following Apsu's demise. Tiamat is not pleased that their children destroyed the structure. When Tiamat released Satan and a number of ghosts to wreak revenge for Apsu, Marduk was chosen to bring order in the chaos. Following Tiamat’s defeat, Marduk rescued the planet. ²⁷

²⁷ Amy Tikkanen and Stephen Eldridge, “Tiamat | Mesopotamian Mythology,” Encyclopedia Britannica, March 10, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tiamat>.



Figure 3 Faucher Gudin. "Bel-Merodach, Armed with Thunderbolt, does battle with the Tumultuous Tiamat," from the book "History of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, and Assyria, vol.III, page 9," by G. Maspero. 1904. (Source: <https://archive.org/details/egypt03maspuoft/page/n27/mode/2up>)

During the birth of universe, there was chaos. Yin and Yang arose from that chaos and now lives in harmony at the center of Earth. According to the Yin and Yang doctrine of Chinese philosophy, everything is made up of inseparable opposites that are at odds with one another. Equivalent opposing pairings are complementary and attract one another. Since neither pole is superior to the other and an increase in one results in a corresponding decrease in the other, harmony can only be reached when there is a proper balance between the two poles. The ideas of Yin and Yang and complementary energies were made known by the writings of the Chinese school of Yinyang, which studied philosophy and cosmology in the third century BCE. The cosmologist Zou Yan²⁸, also called Tsou Yen, was the advocator of the theory. According to him, life evolved through five stages, or *wuxing*, which alternated continuously according to the Yin and Yang principle: fire, water, metal, wood, and earth.²⁹

"Pre-cosmogonic chaos out of which the world of god extracted habitable order at the beginning of the time."
(Peterson 2022)

²⁸ Zou Yan (340 – 260 BC) was the Chinese cosmologist of ancient state of Qi.
(<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Zou-Yan>)

²⁹ Mark Cartwright, "Yin and Yang," in *WORLD HISTORY ENCYCLOPEDIA*, May 16, 2018,
https://www.worldhistory.org/Yin_and_Yang/.



Figure 4 Trigrams of Bagua.

(Source: <https://nspirement.com/2017/09/30/ancient-chinese-secret-the-8-trigrams-of-bagua.html>)

Every bit of chaos has the potential to become order, and every bit of order has the potential to become chaos. This is the course of life. That is existence itself. And the boundary between the two is where humans are meant to be. sufficiently stable. Enough engaged.³⁰

In his 1872 book *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche examined the aesthetics of classical Greek tragedy plays through the lenses of the gods *Apollon* and *Dionysus*, two brothers who have radically different personalities. Nietzsche claims that ancient Greek dualism ideals exploring the contrast between chaos and order, reason and crazed lunacy, restraint and unfettered emotion, are reflected in the art of *Apollonianism* and *Dionysianism*.³¹

Hindu Yoga philosophy, display the similar dynamic of interplay of opposite but necessary spiritual deities, *Shakti* and *Shiva*. *Shakti* symbolizes the feminine force and is connected to power and energy, it associated with movement, creativity, and transformation while *Shiva* represents the masculine energy and is connected to consciousness it permits us to observe our thoughts and emotions without getting caught up in them.³²

³⁰ Jordan B Peterson, "In Every Bit of Chaos There's the Possibility of Order," August 25, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDcEfBa3_b4&t=27s.

³¹ Julieanne Klein, "Apollonian & Dionysian | Art, Philosophy & Psychology | Study.com," study.com, 2023, <https://study.com/academy/lesson/apollonian-dionysian-overview-philosophy-dichotomy.html>.

³² Southern Lotus Yoga, "When Opposites Attract: The Myth of Shiva & Shakti," Southernlotusyoga.com, October 2023, <https://www.southernlotusyoga.com/when-opposites-attract-the-myth-of-shiva-shakti>.

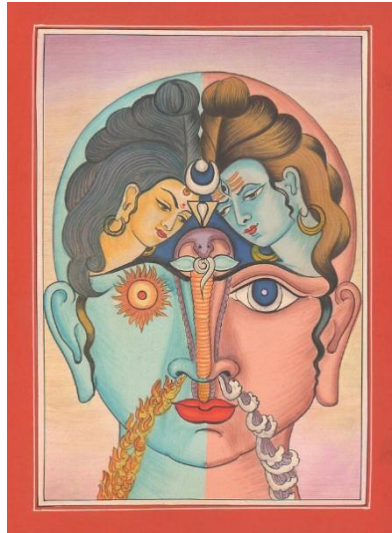


Figure 5 A.K Mundhra. "Shiva Shakti Tnatra Tantrik," 2015.
(Source:https://www.instagram.com/p/DH6pe5nSPyS/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==)

In Japanese Shinto religion and mythology, the universe is formed when Earth and Heaven separated out of the chaos. *Izami* and *Izanagi* stood on a floating bridge of Heaven and stirred the primeval ocean with a heavenly spear and created the land.³³



Figure 6 Nishikawa Sukenobu. "The God Izanagi and Goddess Izanami," 18th century. Ink and color on Paper, 38.3 x 57cm. Mary Griggs Burke Collections.
(Source:<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/671008>)

Egyptian philosophy center around the idea of *maat*, or "order,". *Khnum* is an ancient god with a face of ram and horns. He appears holding an Earthen pot on a potter's wheel and

³³ Charles Long, "Creation Myth," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/creation-myth>.

is believed to have created the mankind from the clay. As a king, it's his responsibility to replace *isfet*, or "disorder," with *maat*. Maat, which incorporated the ideas of fairness, honesty, restraint, and mutuality, was essential to human life.



Figure 7 “Khnum,” 249-251 CE. Hieroglyphic carvings at Temple of Esna. Photo taken by Paul Vinten In the Valley of the Queens, Thebes, Egypt.

(Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-images-hieroglyphic-carvings-egyptian-temple-wall-image19505114>)

These mythical tales show how chaos is commonly seen as an essential factor of creation rather than simply a destructive force. They demonstrate how chaos can spur change, creativity, and artistic expression in a variety of traditions and cultures over the course of time. Mythologies of Chaos were founded solely on belief and strong faith by the devotees at first, today there are many tools, historical evidences, scientific theories and physiological perspectives to both enhance and debunk those myths. These are explored further in the chapter.

1.3 Chaos & Creativity; Psychological dimension in Art

“I put my heart and soul into my work and lost my mind in the process.” (Gogh)

In order to understand this quote from 19th century Dutch painter William Vincent Van Gogh, we must take aid from psychology. In Old psychology of human mind, it was established that the human mind consists of certain states (always changing) and traits (always constant).

The co-relation between these states and traits, form an individual. Today, we have discovered that humans are far more complex than that. Personality is also strongly dependent on the emotional values and psychological trait. Psychology has allowed us to draw the distinct between the creative mind and normal mind via various modes. Each individual is designed with certain codes and information. How that information is stored, processed and used is one of the spectrums of creativity. Whether those codes be in the form of dreams or illusions, how creativity is derived from it is solely on the psyche of the individual. Science has no discrimination amongst the individuals as it claims that creativity is purely the function of brain. Neuroscientist David Eagleman (b.1971), co-author of *The Runaway Species* explains that the creativity involves the interaction between two sides of the brain. There is often a false theory that circled around the internet once, about left side of the brain involved in creativity while the right side of the brain is involved in logics. Eagleman instead gave us 3 networks of brain that he explains to be essential component of the creativity.³⁴

1. Executive attention network
2. Default mode/ Imagination network
3. Salience network

This provided us with a spectrum of creative individuals. How much a person spends time daydreaming or burring in their own jumble of thoughts according to the spectrum is one of the dictators of the creative person. American Psychologist J.P Guilford (1897-1987) in 1950 developed the theory of creativity. He presented us with two concepts.

1. Divergent thinking (generate multiple idea around a concept)
2. Convergent thinking (single direct idea around the concept)³⁵

Aside from the scientific theories, we have philosophies to explain the creative process. Nietzsche have explained the deep understanding of the deep lying roots of tragic creative individuals. Hence, he calls the creative process an antidote for suffering. Over the course of history, we have witnessed several individuals that have wrestled with mental dilemma and misery, for some it even ended tragically. It is a phenomenon not reserved for chosen geniuses but it can affect anyone during their creative endeavors. Nietzsche has put suffering and chaos

³⁴ Rainn Wilson and David Eagleman, "Creativity: The Science behind the Madness," *Big Think*, July 3, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNHDTvqbUm4>.

³⁵ Sergey Markov, "Joy Paul Guilford - One of the Founders of the Psychology of Creativity," Genevive, June 11, 2017, <https://geniusrevive.com/en/joy-paul-guilford-one-of-the-founders-of-the-psychology-of-creativity/>.

at the center point for creativity. His contemporary Philosophers, Arthur Schopenhauer³⁶ related that chaos stem from lacking of something that leads to suffering. And desire to overcome is born within oneself. That desire could be any creative process to free out of that painful state. While Schopenhauer advised to keep the desires to oneself and not give seed to more, Nietzsche encourages to walk on the hostile path towards that which one desires. Because through overcoming those obstacles that chaos could be turned into something creative. Nietzsche gave several pathologies that he associated with creativity such as Substance abuse, Depression and Schizophrenia.³⁷

If we breakdown these pathologies, we can deduce Nietzsche pointed on both categories, suffering from chaos, inflicted by one's own self and natural or inbuilt. There have been several examples where the creative individuals adopted a certain practice to aid their creative procedures.

Salvador Dali (1904-1989), a Spanish artist, famous for his dream like surreal paintings achieved his masterpieces with the aid of a practice he called Active Imagination. He would keep a metal key pinched between his fingers and rest on his favorite chair. Right as he started to drift off into unconsciousness, the key would fall from his hand, on to the floor, snapping him back to consciousness but at the same time allowing him enough time to remember the wild lucid creations. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), an Italian polymath of 15th century would also achieve such a state through polyphasic sleep pattern. In this state, he had divided his day into a pattern, where he would sleep for 2 hours then return to his work for 2 hours and again back to sleep for two hours. He purposely allowed himself to prob both his consciousness and unconsciousness. Issac Newton (1643-1727) an English polymath and Aristotle (384-322 BC) both had similar sleep patterns in their day to achieve the hypnagogic state.³⁸

But there are also conditions where individuals do not engage in such things but their brain is still built in a way to process much more data than the normal individual. Such individuals often mistake their fantasies into realities. They detect patterns and connections that might not even exist. Neuroscientist and Phycologist categorized the individuals based on how much information their brains can filter out. This is called Latent Inhibition. The individuals with low Latent inhibition response to much more stimuli than the high Latent inhibition. But

³⁶ Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) German Philosopher. (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Arthur-Schopenhauer>)

³⁷ Rico, "Nietzsche and Psychology - Why Creativity Demands Mental Suffering," [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wwBkrxC9Qw&ab_channel=LyfeGlass), March 14, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wwBkrxC9Qw&ab_channel=LyfeGlass.

³⁸ "The Insane Sleep Schedule Tesla and Da Vinci Used to Boost Creativity," November 10, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gC2RwDAdPBM>.

they can only intake all that chaos if they possess high IQ to balance it out, otherwise, such individuals are often target of mental disorders.³⁹

An interesting factor is that despite all the processes running behind the scene in the psyche of the individual, they are seldom aware of their creative inventions whether they are psychologically challenged or perfectly healthy. It is a state they experience but can't identify. A lot of creative individuals know what they are producing but it is "how" they get stuck at. It is much of mystery to them as it is to us. Some say its penetrating magic while others say such things are the direct touch of the divine force, they only become the link.

David Lynch (b. 1946) American filmmaker and painter explained the phenomenon out of human control. He quotes,

*"Ideas come to us. We don't really create the idea; we just catch them. In your mind the idea is seen and felt ...Then translating it to some medium. It can be anything. It just has to be something."*⁴⁰
(Lynch 2011)

An American composer, Terry Riley (b.1935) puts the concept in a brilliant way. He quotes,

"If you know what you're doing in the arts then you're doing it wrong. That's a pretty good maximum. If you don't know what you're doing then you are on your right track because you're open to the whole world of possibilities. You don't want to already have the possibilities in. you want to invite them in as an artist, you kind of have to create a culture that invites ideas in and so how could you know what you're gonna be doing." (Riley 2023)

Lahori artist R.M. Naeem (b.1968),

*"The toughest part for every creative individual is this war, this decision, this choice that translates onto their canvas."*⁴¹

Buland Iqbal (b.1983) an artist from Lahore, suffers from fits and epilepsy results from tragic turns of events in his life,

*"I enjoy the process of creation a lot. During the course, things are built and destroyed, there is always curios chase that engulf me whole. But when all that process takes final shape, I lose interest in the final product."*⁴²

Lahore based Pakistani sculptor Irfan Abdullah says,

³⁹ Cristina Chirila and Aneta Feldman, "Study of Latent Inhibition at High-Level Creative Personality. The Link between Creativity and Psychopathology," *SciVerse ScienceDirect*, March 16, 2012, 1–5, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812001504?ref=pdf_download&fr=RR-2&rr=80f77f044abd2793.

⁴⁰ David Lynch, "David Lynch on Ideas," *American Film Inst*, December 2, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2RFMCmfRmc>.

⁴¹ R.M Naeem, Journey from mind to canvas, interview by Maryam Zamurd, 2024.

⁴² Buland Iqbal, Journey from mind to canvass; Chaos to creativity, interview by Maryam Zamurd, April 24, 2025.

"The art is like a pregnant lady. The artist doesn't know its gender, nature or even if the child would be born into the world or take any shape."
(Abdullah, 2023)

The creative individual know that they have to swift through the chaos to shape it some order but the process of how it is done, is sometimes beyond their own comprehension. As Mirza Beg Asadullah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869), a subcontinent poet, quoted

آتے ہیں غیب سے یہ مضامیں خیال میں
غالب صریر خامہ نوائے سر و ش ہے

This couplet of Ghalib can be interpreted as that all the thoughts, ideas and topics that mysteriously come into our subconscious are like voice of God and angels which we pen down on the paper.⁴³

Of course, there is a strong belief in divine intervention but sometimes there is also possibility of social triggers and scenarios that the creative individual has no choice but feel compelled to produce something against or for. Social predicament to tame their chaotic mind and emotions. Pakistani artist and activist Salima Hashmi (b.1942) never let any political crisis silent her brush. Mian Ejaz ul Hassan (b.1940P), Pakistani artist and reformer even spend days in jail due to his outspoken paintings. This dangerous course of action could only be challenged by a creative individual as Nietzsche had formerly described. What triggers the creativity is a strong set of emotional or psychological chaos, however, there have been several artists that challenged the very nature of order, confronting the theory of chaos.

1.4 Theories of Chaos and Art

Since chaos theory links two ideas that are widely known to be incompatible, it raises the possibility of a paradox. The first is that of unpredictability or randomness. Put another way, it's thought that because of its complexity, the world is unpredictable. The second idea is deterministic motion, such as that of a planet or a pendulum.⁴⁴ Ernst Chladni (1756–1827), a

⁴³ Mirza Asadullah Baigh Khan, *Nawa-e-Sarosh*, Poetry, accessed October 2, 2023, <https://urduwallahs.wordpress.com/2012/01/30/nawa-e-sarosh-sound-of-an-angel/>.

⁴⁴ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia. "Chaos theory." Encyclopedia Britannica, March 5, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/science/chaos-theory>.

German physicist and musician, showed how vibrations may be utilized to produce powerful images in the late 1700s. Chladni demonstrated how the frequencies of the sound waves produced by the violin bow could cause the fine sand to settle into distinct patterns when it was spread out over the surface of a metal plate.

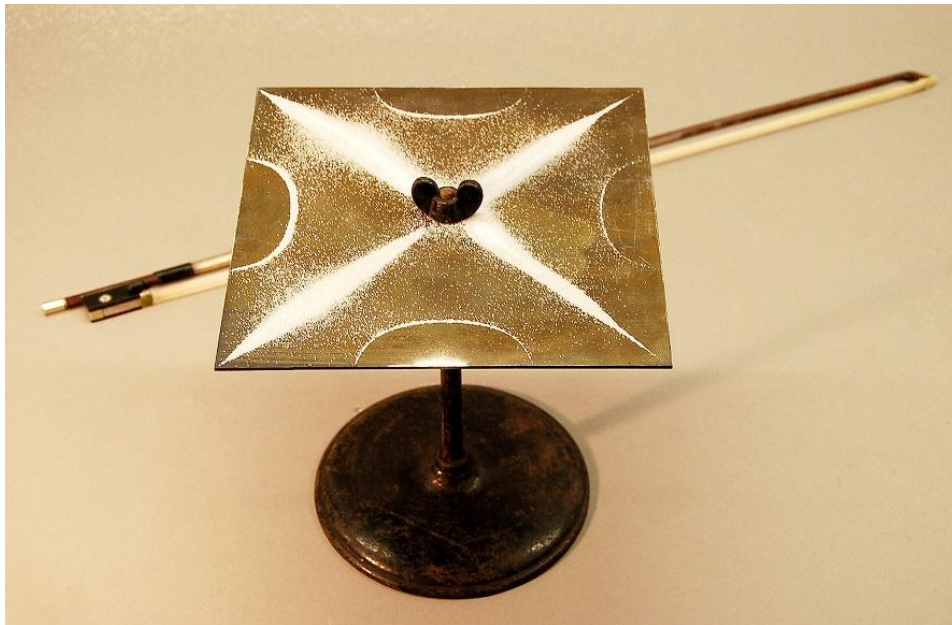


Figure 8 Chladni Plate, "The shape of sound," 19-20th century. Ohio High School. (Source: <https://jsleney.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/the-shape-of-sound4.pdf>)

Building on Chladni's research, a Swiss physician by the name of Hans Jenny (1899–1992) studied vibrational phenomena in the 1960s and dubbed it "Cymatics." While working on a different project, visual artist Jeff Louviere stumbled across the works of Jenny and Chladni. This discovery encouraged him and his partner, photographer Vanessa Brown, to carry out their own experiments to explore the potential forms of sound. The finished piece was called *Resonantia*, which is Latin for "echo." It was a multimedia piece that revolved around twelve vibration-generated pictures. The patterns of the ornamental art resemble those produced by cellular automata. Every object vibrates at a particular frequency that requires the least amount of energy input. These vibrations are linked to patterns of standing waves known as modes. ⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Chau Tu, "Seeing the Patterns in Sound," *Science Friday* (blog), November 7, 2016, <https://www.sciencefriday.com/articles/seeing-the-patterns-in-sound/>.



Figure 9 Louviere, Vanessa. "Resonantia," 2015. Candela Gallery, Richmond. (Source: <https://www.sciencefriday.com/articles/seeing-the-patterns-in-sound/>)

Despite frequently perceiving the universe as chaotic, humans have attempted to make sense of what they have observed about the natural world since the beginning of time. The conflict between rational and irrational numbers persists to this day, serving as the foundation for the chaos theory. The goal of good art is also to include aspects of self-similarity, but this is usually done in a subtle way.

Every picture in a superb piece of art must have a relationship to the others in terms of geometry and metaphorical themes. Nature's intricate forms have long served as an inspiration to sculptors and artists. For instance, the vortices in Van Gogh's well-known "Starry Night" painting seem to have been drawn straight from the stream that meanders between the many vortices. Many of Van Gogh's late paintings, such "St. Paul's hospital, 1889," include gnarled cypress trees with trains of vortices that eloquently capture the bark and knots of the real thing.

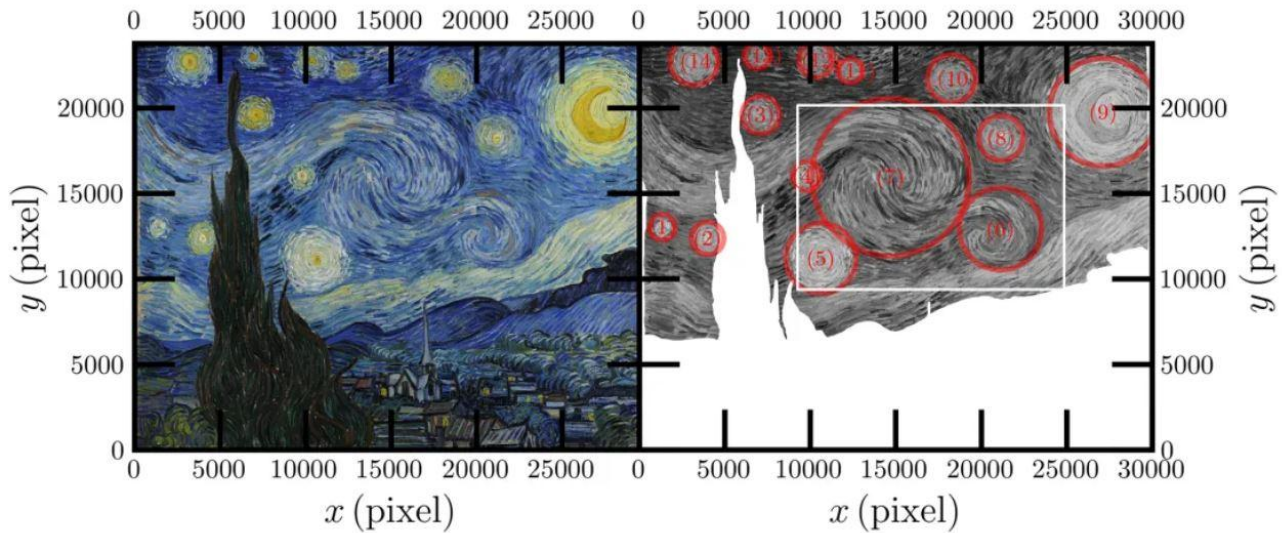


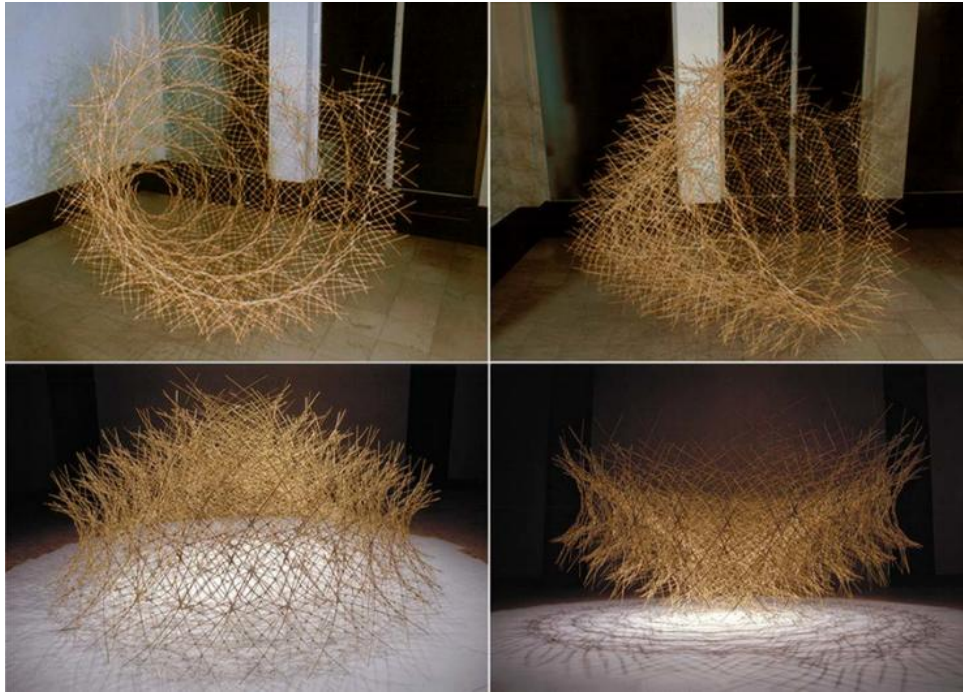
Figure 10 Turbulence in starry night painting. (Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/van-gogh-starry-night-turbulence-physics-mathematics-2024-9>)

Yong Xiang Huang, a researcher of Marine and Environmental sciences in China, observed the painting to see whether it aligned with the theory of chaos and found that, on the smallest scale, the paint combines with background whirls and swirls in a way that the chaos theory predicts.⁴⁶

Conversely, the pattern found on a New Guinean palm leaf represents an additional set of vortices. Using bamboo sticks and rubber band connectors, Manuel Baez crafts sculptures that resemble intricate natural formations. The end product is a structure whose totality exceeds the sum of its parts. According to Baez, his system consists of dynamic processes that are essentially made up of intertwined elemental relationships that develop into integrative systems capable of producing astonishing forms and structures. A basic shape, like a square or pentagon, is used as the starting point for creating a module that is repeatedly duplicated. The model inter-transforms into remarkable shapes that illustrate order that exists within apparent disorder because the sticks are flexible.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Katie Hunt, "Turbulent Skies of Vincent van Gogh's 'the Starry Night' Align with a Scientific Theory, Study Finds," CNN (CNN, September 19, 2024), <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/09/19/science/starry-night-van-gogh-hidden-math/index.html>.

⁴⁷ Jay Kappraff, "Complexity and Chaos Theory in Art," [mi.sanu.ac.rs](https://www.mi.sanu.ac.rs/vismath/jaynew/index.html) (Newark NJ), accessed March 28, 2024, <https://www.mi.sanu.ac.rs/vismath/jaynew/index.html>.



*Figure 11 Manuel Baez "Phenomenological Garden," 1998. Bamboo dowels & elastic bands. Cranbrook academy of art and Sybaris Gallery.
(Source: https://philipgalanter.com/downloads/complexity_guide_dorsky2002.pdf)*

Creativity and chaos are related. They are incomparable as distinct entities. They are identical and one. Since the other cannot exist without the first. Contradictory but interdependent.

Every creative person has moments when inspiration strikes and an idea comes to them. The spark is actually creation, and the thin air is actually a very large and deeply ingrained mental network rather than a completely empty area. Every unprocessed emotion, raw feeling, fear, desire, and everything in between are all part of this web. For some, confronting that tangled web causes trauma and dread, yet creativity is not founded on fear. Though pain, turmoil, and mental illness are often deeply ingrained in creative expression. Whether the process is unconscious or intentional, the creative person uses chaos as an activation and synthesizes it into an artwork.

CHAPTER 2

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE; LIFE AND PHILOSOPHICAL LENS

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was a German Philosopher, essayist and critic, famous for his radical ideas and unique perspective on morality, will, religion and the meaning of life and existence. He challenged traditional values, questioned them and exerted enormous influence in intellectual history. Friedrich Nietzsche's life was marked by significant suffering, both physically and emotionally, yet he was able to produce an extraordinary body of work that has had a thought-provoking impact on philosophy, literature, and the arts. It demonstrated his conviction that misfortune may inspire deep understanding and originality. His philosophical investigations inspire people to face their difficulties, stand up for what they believe in, and find purpose in a complicated and often difficult world.⁴⁸

2.1. Life of Friedrich Nietzsche

On 15th of Oct 1844, Friedrich Nietzsche was born in the Prussian province of Saxony. His name was directly inspired from the King of Prussia Friedrich William IV⁴⁹ given that both of them shared the same birth date. In his childhood, Nietzsche faced the death of his father Carl Ludwig Nietzsche⁵⁰ in 1849 and death of his brother Ludwig Joseph Nietzsche in 1850. Consecutive death of these two, impacted greatly on Nietzsche. He lived most of his life with his mother Franziska Oehler⁵¹ and sister Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche⁵². They both took care of him when he was immensely sick and his sister was also responsible for publishing a lot of Nietzsche's work after his death.⁵³ He wasn't healed from emotional breakdown by witnessing deaths of his close ones that his physical suffering started. He was diagnosed with neurological disease which he inherited from his father. Starting from headaches, they progressed into migraines and made him nearly insane by middle-age⁵⁴. But despite the continuous pain, he was still the most ardent rider of his military unit. But tragedy struck him

⁴⁸ Wilkerson, Dale. "Nietzsche, Friedrich | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2023, iep.utm.edu/Nietzsche/. Accessed 22 Nov. 2024.

⁴⁹ Frederick William IV – Successor of Friedrich William III of Prussia, and ruled from 1840 till his death in 1861.

⁵⁰ Carl Ludwig Nietzsche – (1813-1849) Father of Friedrich Nietzsche, born in the same year as Richard Wagner (1813), who was a friend and patron of Nietzsche.

⁵¹ Franziska Ernestine Rosaura Nietzsche – (1826-1897) mother of Friedrich Nietzsche

⁵² Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche – (1846-1935), she created Nietzsche archive in 1894. She published many of Nietzsche's work after his death.

⁵³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872; repr., Lahore: Readings, 2023).

⁵⁴ Mark Manson, *Everything Is Fucked*, First Edition (2019; repr., New York, NY 10007.: HarperCollins Publishers, 2019), 111–33.

again, falling from his steed, ruptured his ribs. Yet he tried to fight off the pain and serve his quota⁵⁵. In the year 1880, he was mostly bed ridden and extremely sick. But those very painful experiences of life, shaped his thoughts. Having seen tragedy and death up close many times, allowed him to see chaos in a different light than his peers and led him to pen down his phenomenal works. He didn't let the tragedy stopped his creativity.⁵⁶



Figure 12 Friedrich Nietzsche with his mother, Franziska Oehler, 1870.
(Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/oct/06/exploding-nietzsche-myths-need-dynamiting>)

Despite all the pain in his life, he was still a prodigy. At the University of Bonn, Nietzsche studied theology and showed great promise, especially in Christian theology. However, his intellectual rigor quickly clashed with his religious upbringing, and after just one semester, he was exposed to various critiques of Christianity, which caused him to question everything he had been taught. He shed his faith and the innocence of blind devotion, and this crisis of belief marked a turning point in his life. He then went on to study philology and the history of language at the University of Leipzig, where his genius was undeniable. By his mid-20s, Nietzsche was appointed a professor of classical philology at the University of Basel. He still holds the record for being the youngest professor to hold that position. But Nietzsche was not long-satisfied with academic life. After just a few years, he quit his teaching job due to his declining health and growing disillusionment with the limitations of academia and went to write one of the most influential works in philosophy.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (1926; New York: Simon & Schuster, n.d.), 307–39.

⁵⁶ Mark Manson, *Everything Is Fucked*, First Edition (2019; repr., New York, NY 10007.: HarperCollins Publishers, 2019), 111–33.

⁵⁷ Nexus. “Why Nietzsche Was Right about Everything.” *YouTube*, 16 Oct. 2024, www.youtube.com/watch?v=krBjIX4UBI8. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.

2.2 Philosophical influence on Nietzsche and his reinterpretations

Finding out exactly which influences Nietzsche submitted to and for what length of time is undoubtedly crucial. It's also important to determine the specific moment at which the developed-mind broke free from these constraints and was able to find its own road to salvation. The three labels Hellenism⁵⁹, Schopenhauer⁶⁰, and Wagner⁶¹ as well as some other notable patrons of history can be used to characterize the influences that shaped him during that period. Nietzsche was used to rebuking the people who had inspired him the most; it was an instinctive attempt to hide his debts.⁶²

2.2.2. Duality of existence: Schopenhauer vs Nietzsche

One can easily understand the impact Schopenhauer's ‘The World as Will and Idea’⁶³ had on the philosopher, who was still raw from the most painful of experiences and setbacks. In his words,

“Here I saw a mirror in which I espied the world, life, and my own nature depicted with frightful grandeur.” (Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 1872)

He was always aware of the shortcomings in his master's system from the beginning; an essay he wrote in the fall of 1867 serves as evidence of this, as it offers a critique of Schopenhauer's philosophy. Nietzsche was the first person to ever show such ardent love for both Schopenhauer and Wagner and many others.

Towards the end of his intellectual life, Nietzsche, however, turned to total opposition to Schopenhauer. He changed from being one of Schopenhauer's greatest supporters to one of his harshest detractors, to the point where for a long while the public only knew of Schopenhauer because of Nietzsche's criticism of him.⁶⁴

“...one should not merely deny life with the world as will and Representation, as Schopenhauer did; one should in the first place deny Schopenhauer.”
(Nietzsche, *Twilight of Idols*, 1888)

⁵⁸ Therse Elisabeth Alexandra Foster Nietzsche – (1846-1935) sister of Friedrich Nietzsche and creator of Nietzsche Archive in 1894.

⁵⁹ Hellenism – principles, ideals and pursuits associated with classical Greek Civilization.

⁶⁰ Arthur Schopenhauer – (1788-1860) German Philosopher of Pessimism.

⁶¹ Richard Wagner – (1813-1883) German composer, theatre director, polemicist and conductor of operas.

⁶² Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (1926; New York: Simon & Schuster, n.d.), 307–39.

⁶³ *The World as Will and Idea* – Book written by Arthur Schopenhauer, published in 1818.

⁶⁴ Welt Geist, “Why Nietzsche Hated Schopenhauer,” August 24, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYtMZDgl_NA.

Nietzsche is alluding to a widely held belief in the canon of western philosophy that places a negative value on life. This gloomy perspective has persisted throughout history. The material world is a crucial distinction since, in general, a belief in a so-called afterworld or *Hinterwelt*⁶⁵ and philosophical pessimism go hand in hand. A metaphysical domain that is genuinely significant to the disadvantage of the physical world, a "beyond world" that exists beyond of space and time. When Nietzsche encounters pessimism, he also encounters, in one form or another, the belief in a *Hinterwelt*; these philosophers speak about realms beyond our own, where things are good.

Nietzsche's definition of 'Will' doesn't disregard the suffering instead, he takes it as a chance to grow stronger and more capable quite opposite of how Schopenhauer described. His intake on the chaos of life was different from that of Schopenhauer and he counter argued with his master on his perspective of 'will'. Altogether rejecting his pessimistic approach.

Nietzsche's famous line,

"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." (Nietzsche, *Twilight of Idols*, 1889)

Nietzsche advances the thought-provoking argument that Life, like a rare and beautiful bloom, is transitory and depends on the careful nurturing of understanding, empathy, and moderation. A single careless phrase, a fleeting break in compassion, and the delicate balance is destroyed, the flower's petals scattered on the harsh gusts of discord. But that doesn't mean, it's not worth taking care of anymore⁶⁶

2.2.1 Socratic Idealism vs Nietzsche's Realism

Nietzsche's passion for Hellenism undoubtedly inspired him to study philology, but gaining a broad perspective was actually his main priority. Nietzsche portrays Socrates⁶⁷ as a destabilizing force for the culture of Athen in his book 'The Birth of Tragedy'. Because of Socrates, Hellenism enters a new period. A symbol of the weakening Greek character. Dialectic took the place of games, science took the place of art, intelligence took the place of instinct, and critical philosophy replaced pre-Socratic philosophical poetry all the while claiming that he *knew nothing*.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Hinterwelt* –German word meaning, Behind-world or Beyond-world.

⁶⁶ Weltgeist, "Why Nietzsche Hated Schopenhauer," August 24, 2022,

⁶⁷ Socrates – (d.399 BC) Greek Philosopher from Athens and founder of western Philosophy.

⁶⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872; repr., Lahore: Readings, 2023)

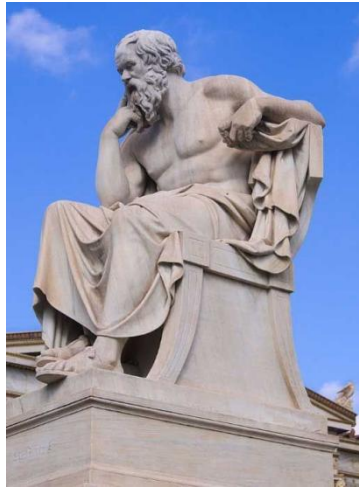


Figure 13 Lenoidas Drosis. "Statue of Socrates," 1850. Marble sculpture in front of Academy of Athens.
(Source: <https://medium.com/illumination/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-philosopher-5ffb263cb7ac>)

Afterlife that Socrates presented, Nietzsche strongly rejected. Because it denied life. It preached Nihilism, a concept that devalues all the beliefs and purposes of life. A concept of pessimism.⁶⁹ He criticized everything that idealized an imaginary world while ignoring the current one. He was the first philosopher who took the anti-metaphysical stance. Nietzsche criticized the Socratism⁷⁰, overly reasoning of life would kill the natural aspect of it.⁷¹

\Nietzsche puts it "*With Socrates it is instinct which becomes critic; it is consciousness which becomes creator.*"
(Nietzsche, 1872)

Socrates represents the victory of reason over instinct. Stated differently, Socrates ushers in a new era, but what about the previous one? Nietzsche expresses open curiosity about the phenomena of Socrates, the person who eradicated classical Greek civilization. Nietzsche's concern with Socrates begins here. He describes Socrates as the first theoretical man, a dialectician, or an argumentator. With Socrates, we enter the age of reason and philosophy. This excessive focus on *reason* is a symptom of decaying decadence, an indication of a life in decline.⁷²

⁶⁹ Alan Pratt, "Nihilism," Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2021, <https://iep.utm.edu/nihilism/>.

⁷⁰ Socratism – the method of Socrates, the inductive method.

⁷¹ K. J. L. Kjeldsen, "Nietzsche versus Socrates," Noontide Magazine, August 31, 2020, <https://medium.com/noontide/nietzsche-versus-socrates-d67ebd727d5d>.

⁷² Weltgeist, "Why Nietzsche Hated Socrates," March 9, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM78nStythg>.

Ken Robinson emphasizes on this notion; how over statics squander the life ruthlessly.

⁷³ “We don’t grow into creativity, we grow out of it, or rather educated out of it.” – Ken Robinson.⁷⁴

Socrates last words, “*O Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepios*”⁷⁵ earned a harsh criticism from Nietzsche as he described life a sickness and was grateful to be freed from this burden.⁷⁶

Nietzsche ends it with

“The dying Socrates became the new ideal of the noble Greek youths, - and ideal they had never yet beheld, - and above all, the typical Hellenic youth, Plato, prostrated himself before this scene with all the fervent devotion of his visionary soul.” (Nietzsche, 1872)

2.2.3. Spectrum of creation: Wagner vs Nietzsche

In the fall of 1865, a third influence—one that would prove to be the most potent ever exerted over Nietzsche—was added to the first two, Hellenism and Schopenhauer. It all started with his introduction to Richard Wagner. He met Wagner through the latter's sister, Ottilie Wagner⁷⁷ in 1868. Nietzsche felt that he was in the presence of a person who, among all modern men, he most closely resembled in terms of force of character. Once more, in the instance of Richard Wagner, Nietzsche placed great emphasis on the man's personality from the outset and could only see his creations and opinions as an expression of the artist's own existence, even though at the time he was not at all familiar with every one of those works.⁷⁸

⁷³ Ken Robinson, “Do Schools Kill Creativity?” *YouTube*, January 6, 2006, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY>.

⁷⁴ Ken Robinson (1950-2020) was British author and orator.

⁷⁵ James E Bailey, “Socrates’s Last Words to the Physician God Asklepios: An Ancient Call for a Healing Ethos in Civic Life,” *Cureus*, December 28, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.3789>.

⁷⁶ K. J. L. Kjeldsen, “Nietzsche versus Socrates,” *Noontide Magazine*, August 31, 2020, <https://medium.com/noontide/nietzsche-versus-socrates-d67ebd727d5d>.

⁷⁷ Ottilie Wagner – (1811-1883) wife of Hermann Brockhaus.

⁷⁸ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (1926; New York: Simon & Schuster, n.d.), 307–39.



Figure 14 Fritz Luckhardt. "Richard Wagner," 1860. Photograph, 14 x 10 cm. Bassenge Gallery. (Source: <https://rexvalrexblog.wordpress.com/2014/07/09/wagner-com-a-pensador-reflexio-i-accio-un-passeig-pels-seus-escrits-teorics-ii/>)

According to Nietzsche, Wagner was a first-class creative genius who, in his opinion, justified the world and all of its suffering. But Nietzsche soon realized that Wagner was not at all who he had envisioned. Nietzsche believed that Wagner was later driven more by a desire for fame and fortune than by genuine creative motivations. Nietzsche's views of moral subjectivity and autonomy clashed with the composer's fervent nationalism and dubious moral compass. Nietzsche was so deeply disillusioned that it caused a huge rift between them. It compelled Nietzsche to reevaluate his fundamental beliefs. Nietzsche realized the necessity for critical thought and the uncritical idolization of Wagner because of his affection for the man. He realized that confronting beliefs is the path to true wisdom. Even though Nietzsche and Wagner's relationship ended badly, it sparked a change that would ultimately determine his intellectual legacy.⁷⁹

2.2.4. The Self in question; Descartes vs Nietzsche

Ego cogito ergo sum
"I think therefore I am" (Descartes, 1637)

Based on this idea, Descartes⁸⁰ goes on to construct an argument that shows 'knowing' is first and foremost possible. He introduces a method of doubt. To reach scientific conclusions, all viewpoints that are not credible should be rejected all together. He doubts senses.

⁷⁹ VIS PHILO, "The Shocking Truth about Nietzsche and Wagner's Controversial Relationship!" August 5, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTnj20GgtSI>.

⁸⁰ Rene Descartes – (1596-1650) French Philosopher, Scientist, mathematician.

Proposition of existence could be doubtful as one could easily be dreaming. Though doubtful or not, it is a state of mind, a capacity to think.⁸¹

Nietzsche attack on this cartesian rationality⁸² in ‘Human, all too human’⁸³. That is to say, human rationality itself is not particularly rational. Nietzsche provides that not only does science provide a poor explanation for the meaning of life, but it also frequently falls short of its objectives of supplying insightful information about the physical world.⁸⁴



Figure 15 Frans Hals. “Rene Descartes,” 1649. Oil on canvas, 77.5 x 68.5cm. Louvre Museum France. (Source: <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2013/jun/02/descartes-portrait-survives-accidentals-h-20130602/>)

Nietzsche criticizes self-determining “I” of Descartes that is apart from ‘Think’. He seems to be arguing that our mental states are the result of the body's function, which is concealed from our consciousness. Nietzsche states that thinking is nothing more than a relationship between the drives. Drives are processes of unconscious thinking, feeling, and willing. The unconscious drive activity is developed at the surface level by conscious thinking, as stated in a note by him.

“The body is a great reason, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd. An instrument of your body is also your little reason, my brother, which you call “spirit”- a little instrument and toy of your great reason.”

(Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 1883-1885)

⁸¹ Jonas Monte, “Sum, Ergo Cogito: Nietzsche Re-Orders Descartes,” *Aporia* 25, no. 2 (2015): 2015, https://aporia.byu.edu/pdfs/monte-Sum_ergo_cogito.pdf.

⁸² Cartesian Rationalism – way of thinking that accepts, dualism. Such as concept of mind and body.

⁸³ Human, all too Human – Book by Friedrich Nietzsche, published in 1878.

⁸⁴ Groundwork For the Metaphysics of MGTOW, “On Modernity Part 3: Nietzsche vs Descartes/Science,” April 21, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DknaZBVjYFQ>.

Nietzsche describes body as a social structure that is made up of numerous souls. The souls go beyond good and evil.⁸⁵ He argues that thinking is determined by the subject who believes that thoughts only emerge when 'I' want them to at will, not the other way around.⁸⁶

2.3. Concepts of Nietzsche on Chaos n Creativity

Nietzsche spent a large portion of his final years living in the Swiss Alps, where he alternated between periods of productive work and crippling illness. Nietzsche wrote his most important works during these years of seclusion. He found comfort in his philosophical reflections despite his medical illnesses, failed marriages, and strained family ties. His unrelenting quest for knowledge was demonstrated by works such as *Human, All Too Human* (1878), *The Gay Science* (1882), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887). Nietzsche established the foundation for a fundamental reconsideration of human values in these writings. Nietzsche's idea on chaos and creativity directly tied to many profound concepts that he presented in his books⁸⁷

2.3.1 Will to Power (*Will Zur Macht*)

Will to Power, a concept with which Nietzsche responded his concern at the effect of nihilism⁸⁸ in the contemporary world. According to Nietzsche, nihilism is the state of hopelessness, meaninglessness, and confusion that results from existential crisis and uncertainties. Will To Power, embodies the basic motivation that drives human actions. It includes the drive to make oneself known, to conquer obstacles, and to create. It encompasses more than just vying for control over others; it also includes pursuing self-actualization and self-affirmation. According to Nietzsche, each person possesses an inbuilt, creative drive known as the will to power. It was a creative wellspring and a powerful source of energy. According to Nietzsche, people should use this innate ability to drive themselves toward self-actualization and artistic expression rather than giving up in the face of meaninglessness.⁸⁹

The inspiration of the idea came from 'The World as Will and Representation' (1818) by the Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860). Nietzsche read his book in his early twenties and felt

⁸⁵ The Machiavellians, "Mind, Self, and Embodied Consciousness | Nietzsche on Embodied Mind | Why Descartes Was Wrong," November 26, 2022,

⁸⁶ O Petrovska, "Descartes' Cogito: Subject and Objectivity," *SSRN ELibrary*, 2019, 2, 5, 6, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5030226.

⁸⁷ Nexus, "Why Nietzsche Was Right about Everything," *YouTube*, 16 Oct. 2024, www.youtube.com/watch?v=krBjIX4UBI8. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.

⁸⁸ Nihilism – from Latin Nihil, means nothing.

⁸⁹ Sociology learners, "Nietzsche Art and Nihilism | Will to Power in Art," *YouTube*, 14 Oct. 2023, www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-rC1bnXV9Q. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.

connected to it. The will to power according to Nietzsche cannot be conceived as anything good or bad. He explains it as a basic drive that can be found in every being, it is the way of expression that is different. Nietzsche is against the pursuit of power; he advocates the sublimation of the will to power into creative activity. Nietzsche devotes much of his attention to self-mastery and transformation.

“Wherever I found a living thing, I found there will to power.” Thus spoke Zarathustra.

Nietzsche contemplated writing the book under this title but he never could publish it, it was his sister that published the collection of notes and titled them will to power.⁹⁰

The writings of psychologists like Carl Jung⁹¹ and Sigmund Freud⁹² have been influenced by Nietzsche's investigation of the unconscious and the function of instinct. Carl Jung has quoted Nietzsche many times in his works. He said,

“All in all, Nietzsche was to me the only man of that time who gave some adequate answers to certain urgent questions which then were more felt than thought.” (Jung, 1951-1961)⁹³

Gilles Deleuze⁹⁴ was highly inspired from Nietzsche and wrote his book Nietzsche and philosophy (1962) derived out of his concept of ‘Will to Power’.⁹⁵ He writes,

“Nietzsche seems to have sought a radical transformation of Kantianism⁹⁶, a re-invention of the critique which Kant⁹⁷ betrayed at the same time as he conceived it.” (Deleuze, 1962)

Several artists have also been influenced by Nietzsche's philosophies. Some implemented his thoughts into their works. Nietzsche's will to power has allowed many to explore themes of strength, ambition, and the quest for supremacy.

⁹⁰ Emrys Westacott. “Nietzsche's Concept of the Will to Power.” *ThoughtCo*, 2019, www.thoughtco.com/nietzsches-concept-of-the-will-to-power-2670658. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.

⁹¹ Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961) – Swiss psychiatrist, psychologist and theorist.

⁹² Sigmund Freud (1856- 1939) – Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis.

⁹³ Purrington, “Carl Jung on ‘Friedrich Nietzsche’ - Anthology - Carl Jung Depth Psychology,” Carl Jung Depth Psychology, September 28, 2023, <https://carljungdepthpsychologysite.blog/2023/09/28/friedrich-nietzsche/>.

⁹⁴ Gilles Louis Rene Deleuze (1925-1995) – French Philosopher

⁹⁵ Luke Dunne, “Does Truth Depend on Perspective? Gilles Deleuze on Nietzsche,” The Collector, February 27, 2023, <https://www.thecollector.com/gilles-deleuze-nietzsche/>.

⁹⁶ Kantianism – a philosophical system emphasizes moral principles over individual desires.

⁹⁷ Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) – German philosopher.

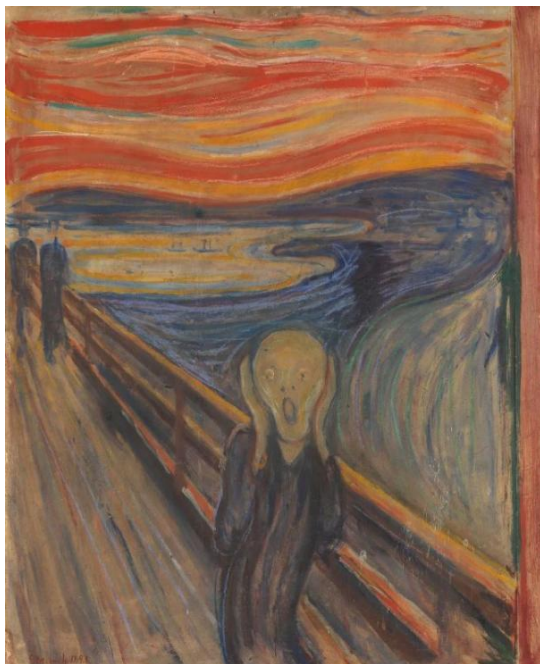


Figure 16 Edvard Munch. "The Scream," 1893. Tempera and casein on cardboard, 91 x 73.5 cm. National Gallery Oslo. (Source: <https://www.edvardmunch.org/the-scream.jsp>)

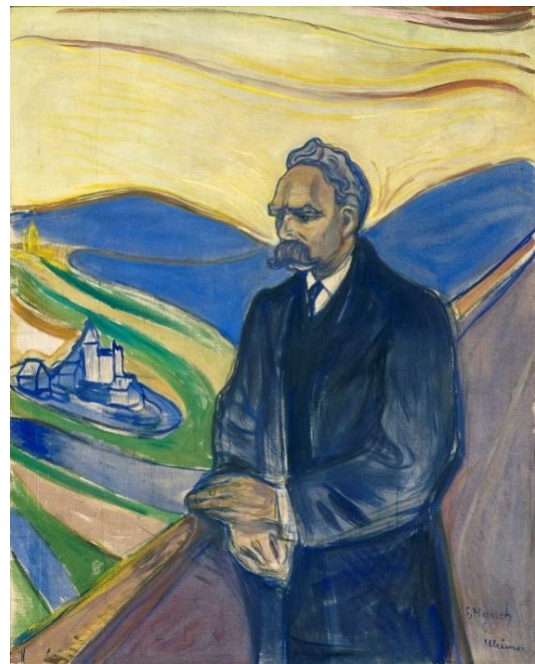


Figure 17 Edvard Munch. "Friedrich Nietzsche," 1906. Oil on canvass, 79.1 x 62.9 inches. Oslo Norway, De Agostini Picture Library. (Source: <https://hedgehogreview.com/web-features/thr/posts/ecce-homo-munch-paints-nietzsche>)

Edvard Munch (1863-1944), a Norwegian painter produced a portrait of Nietzsche in the year 1906. It was Six years after the philosopher passed away. In order to understand the works of Munch, it is important to recall the Philosopher's theory, that suffering is the foundation of all existence. But it does not encourage pessimism.⁹⁸ The 1893 painting 'The Scream' can be interpreted as the consequences of living a life devoid of purpose, nihilist. Edvard Munch was inspired by Nietzsche and wrote in his diary.

*"My fear of life is necessary to me, as is my illness. They are indistinguishable from me, and their destruction would destroy my art."*⁹⁹

In Nietzsche's writings, Munch *"discovered a shared spiritual kinship, both suffered from loneliness, a lack of recognition, and a fear of madness."* Munch also appreciated Nietzsche as a philosopher.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Michael J. Strawser, "Dionysian Painting: A Nietzschean Interpretation of Munch," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Journal of Art History* 61, no. 4 (January 1992): 161–72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00233609208604320>.

⁹⁹ Xenex, "The Scream," Wikiart (Visual Art Encyclopedia, May 1, 2017), <https://www.wikiart.org/en/edvard-munch/the-scream-1893>.

¹⁰⁰ George Gulliver, "Edvard Munch's 'the Scream': The Face of Existential Ugliness.," Medium, July 8, 2020, <https://medium.com/@georgegulliver/edvard-munchs-the-scream-the-face-of-existential-ugliness-86ac35c0f8ef>.

Marina Abramovic (b.1946), a Serbian artist organized a performance called Rhythm 0, in the year 1972. Where she stood still for 6 hours straight and allowed the audience to make a choice and pick from 72 items that were displayed on a table and employ them as they see fit. She instructed, *“I am the object. During this period, I take full responsibility.”* Since audience become aware that there would be no consequences of their actions, they begun to test the objects in extreme ways. Abramovic emphasized how far people are ready to go when there is no threat of accountability. This was inspired from Nietzsche’s idea of Will to power. The idea of power dynamic and human nature.¹⁰¹



Figure 18 Marina Abramovic. “Rhythm 0,” 1974. 6 hours performance art at Galleria Studio Morra in Naples. (Source:<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2023/sep/25/marina-abramovics-shocking-rhythm-0-performance-shows-why-we-still-cannot-trust-people-in-power>)

Nietzsche's philosophies have influenced people but they have also drawn criticism. Martin Heidegger¹⁰² was one of the people who criticized Nietzsche’s ‘Will to Power’. According to him, ‘Will to Power’ was an abstract framework. Nietzsche’s approach to ‘will’ and ‘power’ reduces the existence of self to a mere drive. He argues that extensive understanding of existence of something needs more comprehension than the drive for power and control.¹⁰³ One critique focuses on the possibility of encouraging a risky individualism that

¹⁰¹ Ella Anthony, “The Violent Viewer: Rhythm 0 and Subjecting Oneself to Dehumanization | Arts | the Harvard Crimson,” [www.thecrimson.com](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2023/3/30/maria-abramovic-performance-art-rhythm0-article/) (The Harvard Crimson, March 30, 2023), <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2023/3/30/maria-abramovic-performance-art-rhythm0-article/>.

¹⁰² Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) – German Philosopher

¹⁰³ Babette Babich, *Heidegger’s Will to Power*, vol. Vol. 38 (Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology, 2007).

downplays the significance of shared duty and communal ideals. Examining its ethical and social ramifications critically is crucial. Adopting this idea should not be construed as supporting brutal rivalry or the quest for dominance at the expense of others. Exploitation and injury may result if people put their desire for power ahead of moral limits or the effects on other people. To guarantee that the drive to power is utilized for personal development without ignoring the welfare of others, a balance between self-empowerment and ethical duty must be established. Nietzsche's idea of the Will to strength is still applicable in the twenty-first century; it can be interpreted as an exhortation to accept one's own strength and work toward personal fulfillment. The idea of taking control of one's situation and determining one's own worth is empowering in a time when social pressures and conformity can impede personal development. Philosophical movements like post-modernism and existentialist philosophers were influenced by Nietzsche's emphasis on uniqueness and authenticity.¹⁰⁴

2.3.1. Dionysus and Apollonian

Friedrich Nietzsche used the terms *Apollonian* and *Dionysian*, two Greek deities, in his works, particularly in the birth of tragedy (1872). *Dionysus*, comes from the Greek word 'Dios' and 'Nusa', meaning 'God' and 'Tree', a vegetation God. Whereas *Apollo* is believed to have been derived from pre-Greek-proto-form, *Apalyun*. However, the exact origin of it is unknown.

Apollo is the representation of calm, logical, structured and orderly form of art. His music, *Paean*¹⁰⁵ is thought of as a classical music. On the other hand, Dionysus is the form of art expressed purely by instinct, chaos and emotions. His music, *Dithyramb*¹⁰⁶ is an abstract expression.¹⁰⁷

Nietzsche examined Greek tragedy's function as a model art form that personified the thirst to power in his works. Nietzsche believed that Greek tragedy was a prime example of how art could both challenge and surpass nihilism. It represented the conflict between opposing forces and was a combination of chaos and order, reason and emotion. In this synthesis, individuals found profound meaning and affirmation. Nietzsche celebrated the *Dionysian* spirit of ecstasy, the surrender to emotional intensity, as a path to redemption and self-assertion.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Naushad Sajjani, "Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' - Relevance in the 21st Century," Medium, October 24, 2023, <https://medium.com/@realistkul/nietzsches-will-to-power-relevance-in-the-21st-century-c081173fefa4>.

¹⁰⁵ Paean – song of praise and triumph of ancient Greece.

¹⁰⁶ Wild choral hymn of ancient Greece.

¹⁰⁷ Gnostic Informant TV, "Nietzsche: Apollonian & Dionysian Explained," YouTube, October 24, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trNFQoTHQzA>.

¹⁰⁸ Sociology learners. "Nietzsche Art and Nihilism | Will to Power in Art." *YouTube*, 14 Oct. 2023, www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-rC1bnXV9Q. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.



Figure 19 Pistoxenos. "Cylix of Apollo," 470 B.C. White ground bowl. Archaeological Museum, Delphi. (Source: <https://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K5.2.html>)



Figure 20 Bacchus Caravaggio. "Dionysus," 1596. Oil on canvas, 95x 85cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy. (Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Musicians-by-Caravaggio>)

"We have considered the Apollonian and Dionysian as artistic energies which burst forth from nature itself, without the mediation of the human artist." (F. Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy 1872)

Two basic worldviews, which we will refer to as art-worlds, are the source of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. The first art-world, is considered to be dream-world. According to Nietzsche's philosophy, the dream world or apollonian world is one of content of submission. Illusions abound in our dreams. But the sheer structure of these illusions pulls us in, sometimes to the extent that we try to continue dreaming even after realizing that we are dreaming (lucid-dreaming).¹⁰⁹

Salvador Dalí¹¹⁰ encouraged lucid dreaming, which he called the *slumber without sleep*. He was inspired by Nietzsche and repeatedly refers to his philosophies and concept of art and painted many of his phenomenal works as a result, including the persistence of Memory.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Antonis Chaliakopoulos, "What Is the Apollonian and Dionysian in Nietzsche's Philosophy?" The Collector, January 13, 2022, <https://www.thecollector.com/nietzsche-philosophy-apollonian-dionysian/>.

¹¹⁰ Salvador Domingo Felipe Jacinto Dalí (1904-1989) – Spanish surrealist artist.

¹¹¹ Magdalena Scholle, "How Nietzsche Inspired Dalí | Issue 112 | Philosophy Now," [philosophynow.org](https://philosophynow.org/issues/112/How_Nietzsche_Inspired_Dali), 2016, https://philosophynow.org/issues/112/How_Nietzsche_Inspired_Dali.



Figure 21 Salvador Dali. "The Persistence of Memory," 1931. Oil on canvas, 24.1 x 33 cm. Museum of Modern art, New York city. (Source: <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79018>)

Although drunkenness Dionysus, the second art-world (or intoxication) is a completely different experience, it is founded on delusions or false representations of reality, just as the dream world. Reality under the influence is instinctual. In contrast to the dream's planned, orderly illusion, drunkenness is irrational and intensely emotional. The subject dissolves in this chaotic reality, merging with its environment. Therefore, intoxication is a state of oneness, or fundamental unity as Nietzsche refers to it. The art of light and serene reason is known as Apollonian. Nietzsche considered the art of form and structure as the sound example of Apollonian art, such as sculpture and music.¹¹²

Nietzsche assumes, this dichotomy is everlasting and exist in every human being. It can arise naturally and can be observed in a wider spectrum of life including history, ethics, psychology and politics.¹¹³

¹¹² Antonis Chaliakopoulos, "What Is the Apollonian and Dionysian in Nietzsche's Philosophy?," The Collector, January 13, 2022, <https://www.thecollector.com/nietzsche-philosophy-apollonian-dionysian/>.

¹¹³ Rivai, "Apollonian and Dionysian: Another Way to Understand Art and Society." *Medium, ILLUMINATION*, 14 Nov. 2022, medium.com/illumination/apollonian-and-dionysian-another-way-to-understand-art-and-society-9cfc63028995. Accessed 21 Nov. 2024.



Figure 22 Lenoid Ilyukhin, "Apollo and Dionysus," Oil on canvas, 14 x 6.5 feet.
(Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/BmeARJkB6eD/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==)

Authors Hermann Hesse¹¹⁴, inspired by Nietzsche's idea of duality explored the similar themes in his works like *Demian* (1919) and *Steppenwolf* (1927). Nietzsche had the biggest impact on him which later on begun his dive for his creative life.¹¹⁵

Aside from inspiration, there have also been negative dialectics, challenging his notions. Theodor Adorno¹¹⁶ is one such example. It has been suggested that Nietzsche may have had a substantial influence on Adorno's negative dialectics, so much so that he is often mistaken as the creator of his works. Adorno, criticized Nietzsche's theories from a Marxist¹¹⁷ standpoint, at the expense of personal freedom.¹¹⁸

In his *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche tried to understand that what was meaning of art by exploring Greek tragic plays. According to Nietzsche, art must confirm life. Strength and willpower are closely related to depressing reality. Vitality eliminates pain. Pain is the opposite of strength. Suicide on the spiritual level could be brought on by pain. Seeing all of this, Nietzsche came to the conclusion that the goal of art was to arouse this vitality and provide people the opportunity to process their negative and cynical feelings. Even though the artwork

¹¹⁴ Hermann Karl Hesse (1877-1962) – German-Swiss poet, novelist and painter.

¹¹⁵ Herbert W Reichert, *Friedrich Nietzsche's Impact on Modern German Literature* (University of North Carolina S, 2020).

¹¹⁶ Theodor W Adorno (1903-1969) – German philosopher and musicologist.

¹¹⁷ Marxism –struggle between social classes, capitalist and proletariats.

¹¹⁸ Nektarios Kastrinakis, "Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* and Its Debt to Nietzsche: Could Nietzsche Be the Originator of Adorno's Negative Dialectics?" *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, July 21, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537241265116>.

would be tragic, Nietzsche recognized that tragedy might occasionally be positive, as Aristotle had said. Catharsis is what it is. In the words of Aristotle, God used this incident to symbolize Dionysus, drunkenness, and craziness. It involves entering the emotional state that allows for psychological transformation. Additionally, Dionysus was the god of death and rebirth. He was the force capable of dying like the hero and emerging as something different. Art is necessary for life stimulation. According to Nietzsche, modern art is a cultural mess that doesn't even make sense. He got us to wonder what psychological feelings it would arouse in the present. when a banana is duck tapped against a wall¹¹⁹. Nietzsche laments the situation of modern art for this reason. It is life-denying, devoid of inspiration, and a poisoned irony.¹²⁰

2.3.2. *Hinterwelt* and *Amor Fati*

When Nietzsche encounters pessimism, he also encounters the belief in a *Hinterwelt*, a world beyond. Many philosophers speak about realms beyond our own, where things are good and Nietzsche counters the idea with the concept of *Amor Fati*, Love of Fate. Nietzsche's philosophical position on existence, purpose, and the rejection of metaphysical escapism is reflected in the important connections between his ideas of *Amor fati* and *Hinterwelt*. Plato's (427-347) theory of forms hold that the physical material world is only an imperfect reflection of a truer timeless world of forms or ideas, called *hinterwelt*. There is this idea that the material world is inferior to some kind of metaphysical beyond world, which may or may not be accessible to us. Nietzsche is heavily opposed to this notion. He is alluding to a widely held belief that places a negative value on life. For him, this marked the start of a prolonged decadent history in the western philosophical heritage. It was claimed by Socrates as well, who was in many respects the father of all later philosophy, that life was a disease and that death was the remedy. At least according to Nietzsche, this gloomy perspective has persisted throughout history. We see stems of Socrates characterization of existence as an illusion in Buddhism, Hinduism, and in Christianity as well. The claims of revival and the life are declared in Islam,¹²¹

وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ٦٤

But the Hereafter is indeed the real life, if only they knew (29:64)

¹¹⁹ The Comedian – 2019 artwork by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan.

¹²⁰ Uberboy Clips. "Nietzsche on Why Art Must Serve Life." *YouTube*, 23 Apr. 2023, www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8Z-i-VAmYU. Accessed 30 June 2024.

¹²¹ The Written world, "How Nietzsche Overturned Centuries of Thinking | Socrates Is Dead!" April 28, 2020



Figure 23 Gustave Dore, "Paradiso," 1868. Engraving print, (Source: <https://www.arthistoryproject.com/artists/gustave-dore/paradiso-canto-34/>)

In general, a belief in *Hinterwelt*¹²² and philosophical pessimism go hand in hand. Schopenhauer contends that since humans can directly experience something similar to the "will" without the aid of the senses, metaphysical knowledge is ultimately conceivable. 'Will' is the metaphysical foundation of existence and that it is entirely distinct from the material universe.¹²³ This idea was brushed down by Laine Bachman¹²⁴ who said the worlds she creates in her paintings offer a peek of the vegetation and animals that reside in a secret interplanetary realm, suspended in the space of some bizarre galaxy.

¹²² *Hinterwelt* –German word meaning, Behind-world or Beyond-world.

¹²³ Weltgeist, "Why Nietzsche Hated Schopenhauer," August 24, 2022

¹²⁴ Laine Bachman – Columbus artist



Figure 24 Laine Bachman. "Beyond Worlds," 2024. Acrylic on canvas. Canton Museum of Art, United states. (Source: <https://www.cantonart.org/exhibits/beyond-worlds-paintings-laine-bachman-april-23-2024-july-28-2024>)

"The true world, attainable to the sage, the pious man and the man of virtue, –he lives in it, he is it." (F. Nietzsche, Twilight of the idols, ch 5 1889)

The idea of the *Hinterwelt*, Nietzsche criticized is as an escape from this world, for the coward and weak. He explains how the real world becomes a myth by this concept through his book, *The twilight of Idols*. He contends that instead of accepting the complexity of life as it is, it causes people to downplay the significance of their actual experiences and look for fulfillment in a beyond world. He presents the counter notion, *Amor Fati*¹²⁵ in many of his books including, "The gay science" and "Ecce homo". It is a philosophy of strongly and decisively accepting everything that has happened in one's life, both the good and the terrible. It is the belief that everything in the universe is precisely as it should be, and it is an attitude of profound acceptance and love of what is.¹²⁶

Nietzsche writes:

"The highest form of human existence is to be found in the affirmation of life, in the love of one's fate, amor fati." (Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, section 10, 1886)

¹²⁵ Amor Fati – Latin word meaning Love of fate

¹²⁶ The School of Life, "NIETZSCHE ON: Amor Fati," *YouTube*, January 11, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xzh1BjCA5Q>.

This concept was first introduced in the Ancient Greek philosophies like Stoicism.¹²⁷ Nietzsche elaborated this concept in many of his works. According to him, all the things are taken from a vast universal perspective. If one knows the innermost nature of things, not only would they put up with it but would also love it and would be willing to live it for eternity. A cycle that Nietzsche calls, eternal recurrence.¹²⁸

Eternal recurrence, a theme was explored by an Italian artist Marco Battaglini.¹²⁹ He composed a painting that can complement several realities in an immortal instant. The artist's uniqueness lies in conceptualizing the possible coexistence of the anti-aesthetic and classical beauty ideals. He mixes the heavenly and refined with the vulgar depiction. He overlaps several chronological, spatial, and cultural realities as a result of his research on multidimensionality, where everything makes sense. Battaglini's ultimate goal is to eliminate obstacles that twist how reality is perceived.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Stoicism – Hellenistic belief that virtue is enough to achieve well in life

¹²⁸ Eternal recurrence – concept that states that time is infinite and that same events will happen repeatedly in the same way till eternity.

¹²⁹ Marco Battaglini – Italian artist born in 1969.

¹³⁰ Marco Battaglini, *Amor Fati*, 2020, Air brush on canvas, 2020, <https://www.artmajeur.com/marco-battaglini/en/artworks/15976570/amor-fati>.

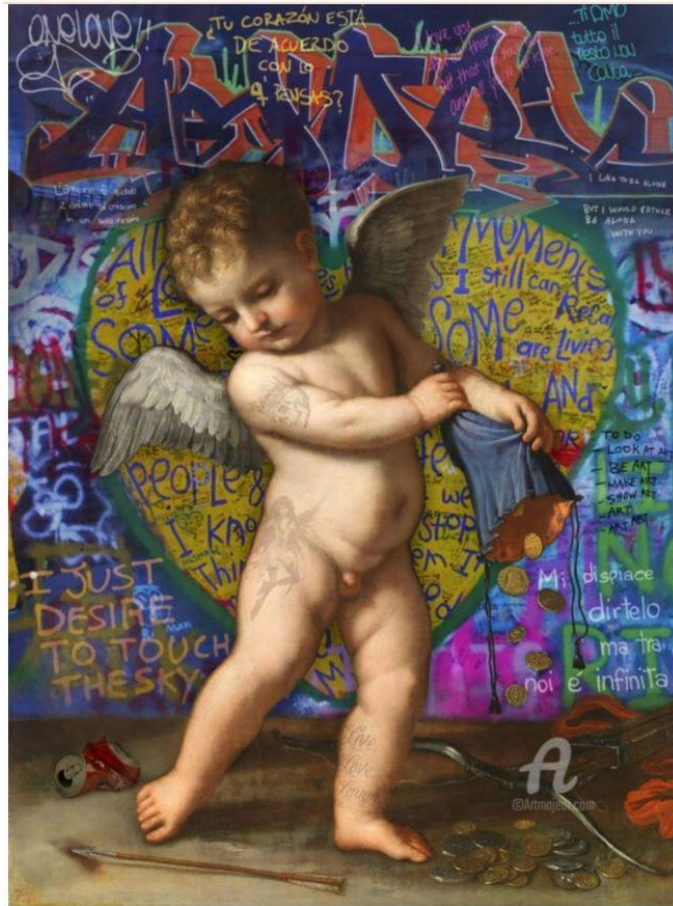


Figure 25 Marco Battaglini. "Amor Fati," 2020. Airbrush and mix-media on canvass, 120 x 90 cm.
(Source: <https://sistart.org/artwork/marco-battaglini-amor-fati/>)

"You must have chaos within you to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: you must have love for your fate, amor fati." (Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, ch 10, 1883)

Although Nietzsche's *amor fati* has gained popularity and support, it has also drawn criticism from a number of philosophical schools that place an emphasis on social justice, agency, individual liberty, and the complexity of the human condition. These criticisms are a reflection of current discussions over the nature of acceptance in the face of adversity and how people ought to respond to their circumstances. Simon de Beauvoir¹³¹ discusses ideas that can result in accepting one's circumstances without making an effort to alter them. She stresses the necessity for women to question social norms rather than accept their lot in life as preached by *amor fati*.

"The individual, knowing himself and choosing himself as the creator of his own values, would seek to impose them on others. The result would be a conflict of opposed wills enclosed in their solitude" (Beauvoir, 2011)

¹³¹ Simone Lucie Ernestine Marie Bertrand de Beauvoir (1908- 1986) – French feminist activist

According to some detractors, *amor fati* can result in a type of fatalism; when people accept their situation without making an effort to alter or better it. This acceptance might prevent initiative and a drive for self-improvement.¹³²

Hinterwelt criticizes the propensity to find fulfillment in a fantasy world outside of our reality while *amor fati* promotes a deep acceptance and affection for the present, confirming life in all its complexity. Collectively, they demonstrate Nietzsche's philosophical investigation into the nature of suffering, meaning, and the human experience, highlighting the value of living completely in the present rather than finding comfort in a fantasy world.¹³³

2.3.3. Übermensch

The central principle of Nietzsche's philosophy is that God is dead. It is a concept so vast and often misunderstood. The most basic understanding of this concept is that the age of reason and enlightenment had contributed a great deal to the corrosion of religious beliefs. He didn't mean that an actual deity has died but rather that our idea of god has died. Rationality and laws have taken over and there was no need for divine light to govern the morality and values. Nietzsche explained that not only the God was dead but it was humanity that killed it.¹³⁴

So now, in a world without a god, an individual must establish their own meaning. To achieve that Nietzsche introduced his vision of *Übermensch*. This idea was first presented in Nietzsche's book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883). Nietzsche was pondering what a person who was psychologically superior to present humans would look like. Living according to your values is the greatest way to live, according to Nietzsche. This does not imply that someone will always hold onto their beliefs if they think something to be true. Values are subject to change. It actually indicates that one shouldn't give up their beliefs in favor of fleeting pleasure. Strong-willed individuals are referred to by Nietzsche as *Übermensch*¹³⁵.

¹³² Simone de Beauvoir, "A NIETZSCHEAN BEAUVOIR? BECOMING WHO ONE IS as a BEING with OTHERS" Vol.27 (2011): 61–71, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/45237630#:~:text=She%20says%20that%2C%20in%20Nietzsche's,solitude%22%20\(EA%2072\)..](https://www.jstor.org/stable/45237630#:~:text=She%20says%20that%2C%20in%20Nietzsche's,solitude%22%20(EA%2072)..)

¹³³ Jack Maden, "Amor Fati: The Stoics' and Nietzsche's Different Takes on Loving Fate | Philosophy Break," philosophybreak.com, December 2023, <https://philosophybreak.com/articles/amor-fati-the-stoics-and-nietzsche-different-takes-on-loving-fate/>.

¹³⁴ Scotty Hendricks, "'God Is Dead': What Nietzsche Really Meant," Big Think, January 29, 2022, <https://bigthink.com/thinking/what-nietzsche-really-meant-by-god-is-dead/>.

¹³⁵ Übermensch – German word meaning overman or superman.

Übermensch in one form or another was painted and written by different people throughout history, the names might vary but the core concept resonate with Nietzsche's vision. Such as the painting of Hercules in the Garden of Hesperides by Peter Paul Rubens. *Hercules*¹³⁶, most notable Greco-Roman hero that actually features a surprising number of attributes, traits and persona that are also frequent elements of *Übermensch*. The parallels between Nietzsche's *Übermensch* and Hercules emphasize themes of human greatness, struggle, and courage. Both characters stand for the ability to overcome obstacles, find purpose, and go beyond accepted bounds. They promote an optimistic view of people that values fortitude, resiliency, and the transformational potential of self-overcoming.¹³⁷



Figure 26 Peter Paul Rubens. "Hercules in the Garden of Hesperides," 1638. Oil on canvas, 246 x 168cm. Sabauda Gallery, Turin. (Source: <https://gallerix.org/album/Rubens/pic/glrx-1931179481>)

¹³⁶ Heracles – Greek Herakles or Roman Hercules, a demi-god.

¹³⁷ Brandon Zachary, "Disney's Hercules Is the Best Superman Movie Ever," CBR, May 13, 2020, <https://www.cbr.com/disneys-hercules-best-superman-movie-ever/>.

In Ancient writings of Lucian¹³⁸, we see an existence of *hyper-Anthropos*¹³⁹ from the Greek word, Hyper ‘above’ and Anthropos ‘humans’ in his work ‘The Tyrant’¹⁴⁰. It is possible to see Lucian's representation as a component of his satirical study of human nature and societal madnnesses. The Hyper-Anthropos, frequently with irony, criticizes humanity's shortcomings and raises the possibility of higher accomplishments. This idea, so revolutionary was even attempted to be visualized through the music by spearhead track in 2018.¹⁴¹



Figure 27 Spearhead. “Pacifism is Cowardice,” 2018. Music Album Cover, A3 poster print.
(Source: <https://invictusproductions666.bandcamp.com/album/pacifism-is-cowardice>)

The idea of *Übermensch* was so exquisite that it inspired a whole genre of comic based around this concept. Jerry Seigel¹⁴² and Joe Shuster¹⁴³ created Superman in their DC¹⁴⁴ action comic that was released in 1938. The irony is that Superman can do anything he wants. He was

¹³⁸ Lucian of Samosata (125AD -180AD) – Hellenized Syrian satirist and novelist.

¹³⁹ Hyper-Anthropos –is a term for people who have put their own needs above those of other species.

¹⁴⁰ The Downward Journey or The Tyrant, released in 1915.

¹⁴¹ Babette Babich, “Nietzsche’s Zarathustra and Parodic Style: On Lucian’s Hyper Anthropos and Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*,” *Fordham University*, 2013,
https://research.library.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1055&context=phil_babich.

¹⁴² Jerome Siegel (1914-1996) – American Comic Book Writer.

¹⁴³ Joseph Shuster (1914-1992) – Canadian-American comic book Artist.

¹⁴⁴ DC or Detective comics is an American Comic Book Publisher and flagship unit.

free to rule the world, do as he please, and live as he pleased. Superman may have lived his life on Earth in a variety of ways. But the defining point about Superman is that he is a physically superior specimen to a human, even the *Übermensch* in every imaginable way—and yet he lives his life according to a moral code implanted in him by physically and intellectually inferior people. The fierce rivalry with Lex Luthor is enhanced by its readiness to unselfishly enforce these moral standards and serve as an example of virtue.¹⁴⁵



Figure 28 Lee Bermejo. “Lex Luthor: Man of Steel,” 2005. Written by Brian Azzarello. *Comic Book Art, Volume 1*. (Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/left-Lex-Luthor-Man-of-Steel-Vol1-No-1-May-2005-written-by-Brian-Azzarello_fig4_386226708)

Indian *Mahā Puruṣa*¹⁴⁶ is also the similar concept of the great men or liberated soul. Coomaraswamy¹⁴⁷ defines the Nietzschean *Übermensch* in Indian terms,

¹⁴⁵ Lvenger, “Why Lex Luthor Is Really the *Übermensch*, Not Superman,” *Comic Vine*, January 26, 2013, <https://comicvine.gamespot.com/profile/lvenger/blog/why-lex-luthor-is-really-the-ubermensch-not-superman/88839/>.

¹⁴⁶ Maha Purusha – The Sanskrit word Mahāpuruṣa is a compound of the words mahā and puruṣa, which means “great man”

¹⁴⁷ Ananda Kentish Muthu Coomaraswamy (1877-1947) – Indian philosopher.

“He is the Arhat¹⁴⁸, Buddha¹⁴⁹, Jina¹⁵⁰, Tirthankara¹⁵¹, the Bodhisattva¹⁵², and above all Jīvan-mukta¹⁵³ ..., whose actions are no longer good or bad, but proceed from his freed nature.” (Coomaraswamy, 1880)¹⁵⁴

According to Nietzsche, evolution cannot be presumed to be complete. He intended to make some predictions regarding the future of the superman, the more developed individual of the future. Nietzsche considered Johann Goethe¹⁵⁵ to be the closest person to superhuman status to date. He asserts that Superman will develop their own morals, be self-reliant, and forge their own path.¹⁵⁶

That ideology was not unique to Nietzsche. Before him, *Sufis*¹⁵⁷ have also shared similar ideas on a man who is, at its core is a man with virtue and high morals and is indifferent with this world’s pain and material wealth. A man that can tame its *nafs*¹⁵⁸ can focus only on divine love. This is where it differs from Nietzsche, while the *Übermensch* is created out of need for humanity because God is dead. *Momin*¹⁵⁹, a man who can tame his *nafs*, is created because of his love for the God.¹⁶⁰ Allama Iqbal¹⁶¹ created the persona of *Momin*. An individual who stands out for having a strong religious conviction and unwavering moral principles. *Übermensch* and *Mard-e-Momin*¹⁶² are essentially the same person. While *Übermensch* is free of his ego and does not worship God, *Momin* is free of his ego and believes in Allah alone. *Momin* is the Arabic word that means ‘a camel that follows its path without straying’. A true *Momin*, according to Iqbal, is someone who has blind faith and doesn't question their beliefs. A more accurate definition of a *Momin* is someone who isn't easily sidetracked by pleasures.

¹⁴⁸ Arhat – a person who has reached Nirvana

¹⁴⁹ Siddhartha Gautama, most commonly referred to as the Buddha, was a wandering ascetic and religious teacher who lived in South Asia, during the 6th or 5th century BCE and founded Buddhism

¹⁵⁰ deities symbolize enlightened

¹⁵¹ is a savior and supreme preacher of the dharma.

¹⁵² a being in Buddhism who is striving to become a buddha and achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings

¹⁵³ Hindu term that refers to a person who has attained self-knowledge and self-realization while still living

¹⁵⁴ Jason Freitag, “A NIETZSCHE for INDIA: A. K. COOMARASWAMY and the SUPERMEN in the WEST,” *Journal of East West Thought*, n.d.

¹⁵⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) – German polymath.

¹⁵⁶ The School of Life, “NIETZSCHE ON: The Superman,” *YouTube*, September 25, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxiKqA-u8y4>.

¹⁵⁷ Sufi – in Arabic the word means ‘Man of Wool’. It is a person who represents the mystical dimension of Islam.

¹⁵⁸ Nafs – is an Arabic word meaning self. Or defines as Ego.

¹⁵⁹ Momin – it is one of the names of Allah, and by definition a person with complete submission to the will of Allah

¹⁶⁰ Akbar Ahmed, “An Enquiry into Nietzsche’s Concept of Superman and Iqbal’s Illustration of Perfect Man,” *Views and News*, November 9, 2020, <https://www.viewsnews.net/2020/11/09/enquiry-nietzsches-concept-superman-iqbals-illustration-perfect-man/>.

¹⁶¹ Allama Muhammad Iqbal – (1877-1938) south Asian Islamic Philosopher, poet, politician.

¹⁶² Mard-e-Momin – also known as Insan-i-Kamil, translates to Perfect Man.

بندۂ مومن کا دل بیم و ریا سے پاک ہے
قوت فرماں روا کے سامنے بے باک ہے

To reach the stage of *Momin* or *Übermensch*, Iqbal writes *Asrar-e-Khudi*¹⁶³ and *Tashkeer-e-Fitrat* and gave an explanation of the philosophy of the "self" and how the 'self' governs the entire cosmos. Similar to Nietzsche's goal of exploring the "self," Iqbal also dug deeply into this idea and wrote a great deal on it.¹⁶⁴ Pakistani Artist, Amin Gulgee¹⁶⁵ had his own take on the concept. He made a series of metal sculptures in the form of Helix¹⁶⁶. A structure of DNA. The most important factor that plays its role in shaping the personality of a human. Intentionally, the subject of Gulgee's sculpture. The genetic code, that makes human to a superior being, he calls it *dervish*.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ *Asrar-e-Khudi* – Published 1976, written by Iqbal

¹⁶⁴ Intellecthawwal, "The Purpose of Life || Iqbal, Nietzsche, Sufism and Islam," June 20, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H05vvRtMNEk>.

¹⁶⁵ Amin Gulgee (b.1965) – son of Ismail Gulgee.

¹⁶⁶ Helix – three-dimensional spiral curve

¹⁶⁷ Eva Cornman, "How Genes Shape Personality Traits: New Links Are Discovered," Yale School of Medicine (Yale School of Medicine, September 9, 2024), <https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/how-genes-shape-personality-traits-new-links-are-discovered/>.



Figure 29 Amin Gulgee. "Dervish," 1999. Copper and rock crystal, 32x4x4 inches.
(Source: <https://www.gulgeeamin.com/portfolio/helix/>)

The concept of *Übermensch* was more of a vision than a theory in Nietzsche's mind. At the intersection of the conscious and unconscious, the past and present, the agony and the joy, there was a timeless moment of pleasure. In "*the middle of life, so surrounded by death*," Nietzsche plunged into his own blaze, plagued by recollections of the passing of his father and his broken connection with Wagner, the most important person in his life.

*"The Übermensch shall be the meaning of the earth!
I entreat you my brethren, remain true to the earth, and do not believe those who speak to you of supra-terrestrial hopes! ...*

*Behold, I teach you the Übermensch: he is this lightning, he is this madness! ...
Behold, I am a prophet of the lightning and a heavy drop from the cloud: but this lightning is called Übermensch."* (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 1883)

In the secondary literature, Nietzsche's hesitancy to clarify his meaning has led to a variety of interpretations and even mis-use. The Nazi regime's adoption of Nietzsche's concepts to expand its racist and elitist worldview is one of the *Übermensch*'s most vital attacks. Critics contend that the original philosophical goal has been obscured by this abuse.¹⁶⁸

Carl Jung criticized the impact of it,

¹⁶⁸ Eva Cybulska, "Philosophy Now," [Philosophynow.org](https://philosophynow.org), 2012, https://philosophynow.org/issues/93/Nietzsches_Ubermensch_A_Hero_of_Our_Time.

“And what kind of an answer did the next generation give to the individualism of Nietzsche’s superman? It answered with a collectivism, a mass organization, a herding together of the mob, that made everything that went before look like a bad joke. Suffocation of the personality and an impotent Christianity that may well have received its death-wound—such is the unadorned balance-sheet of our time.” (Jung G., 1944)

Its criticism draw attention to possible moral challenges, misunderstandings, and the difficulties of adapting an idealistic viewpoint to the complexity of society and human existence. Deeper consideration of the complications of aiming for such an ideal and the principles that guide human existence is encouraged by these criticisms.¹⁶⁹

“Freud was a great destroyer, but the turn of the century offered so many opportunities for debunking that even Nietzsche was not enough.” (Jung G., 1944)

The *Übermensch* is a potent representation of personal potential, self-creation, and the search for meaning in contemporary discourse. Although interpretations differ, the fundamental concepts remain relevant and inspire thought in a variety of domains, motivating people to explore their identities and question social conventions in their pursuit of greatness and authenticity.¹⁷⁰

His writings frequently emphasize the value of individual development, originality, creativity and pursuing one's own principles. You can only be certain that you are living the life of your true self if these principles are self-made, having developed organically from within, and free from outside pressure or coercion. According to Nietzsche, the majority of individuals live their lives adhering to a system of inherited values that they do not challenge. They acquire them through early exposure to the morals of their peers, family, and the surrounding community. In order to become an *Übermensch*, a person must critically examine his own actions and strive for ultimate self-expression. His philosophy is not for everyone to be understood and revels in controversy. He is certainly a person who always think on the contrary of a notion. He is provoking thinker who may have been simply born ahead of his time¹⁷¹

2.4. Nietzsche’s Legacy

Nietzsche’s health deteriorated dramatically between 1878 and 1889. He traveled between German, Swiss, and Italian cities and penned eleven works. He experienced a nervous

¹⁶⁹ Joseph Folley, “Nietzsche’s Most Misunderstood Idea | the Übermensch,” [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdNpNGqi0Ks), December 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdNpNGqi0Ks>.

¹⁷⁰ Eva Cybulska, “Philosophy Now,” [Philosophynow.org](https://philosophynow.org), 2012, https://philosophynow.org/issues/93/Nietzsches_Ubermensch_A_Hero_of_Our_Time.

¹⁷¹ The Stand-up Philosophers, “Was Nietzsche a Sociopath or Just ahead of His Time?” YouTube, March 28, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO1mn1noPxM>.

breakdown on January 3, 1889, after witnessing a man lash a horse in the street. He lost his mind and never came back after collapsing on the street. He would remain in a vegetative condition for the next eleven years. He passed away on August 25, 1900. Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, Nietzsche's half-sister, took care of him during his years of insanity. Elisabeth published only parts of Nietzsche's because she had been married to a well-known anti-Semitic¹⁷² and nationalist in Germany. Despite his utter ignorance, Nietzsche became well-known in Germany and became associated with the Nazi movement. It all happened when a skewed selection of his writings was published and exploited to advance the ideology of the Nazi party. The world learned about Friedrich Nietzsche's actual ideas after World War II.¹⁷³

He addressed to Meta Salis¹⁷⁴,

"I love those who not know how to live," he said. "For they are the ones who cross over." (Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 1883-1885)

The philosopher devoted his entire life to provide important insights on the complexity of human existence, nature of morality and the search for meaning in the chaos of the world. His theories are still relevant and encourage people to explore their identities. Especially now in 21st century when new gender roles are created. To challenge social customs, and believe in the potential of self-creation. Nietzsche continues to be a crucial figure in modern philosophy by promoting investigation into what it means to live really in a complex world. He doesn't just promote questions but answers them as well. His investigation of art is a lifeline and self-expression. It is his answer to find meaning, purpose, and energy in a chaotic world that occasionally seems to lack intrinsic value. His work, 120 years later still influence people and not just Germans but his impact spans across the globe.

it has had a profound impact on South Asian art. His theories stimulate a lively discussion in modern art, resulting in creative manifestations that capture the complexity of the local human condition, society, and identity. For South Asian artists negotiating the connection of tradition and modernity, Nietzsche continues to be a powerful source of inspiration.¹⁷⁵

Through art, we can embrace the creative impulses that enable us to face and overcome nihilism, confirm our existence, and negotiate the difficulties of modernity. He writes with

¹⁷² Anti-Semitism – Is hostility towards or discrimination against Jews as a religious or racial group. The term first coined in 1879 by German Wilhelm Marr.

¹⁷³ Paul Kleinman, *Philosophy 101: From Plato and Socrates to...* (2013; repr., Simon & Schuster, 2013), 201–5.

¹⁷⁴ Meta Von Salis (1855-1929) – Swiss historian and feminist. She took care of Nietzsche for couple of years.

¹⁷⁵ Jason Freitag, "A NIETZSCHE for INDIA: A. K. COOMARASWAMY and the SUPERMEN in the WEST," *Journal of East West Thought*, n.d.

Mania and is unconcerned that readers may misconstrue his work. As evidence of the timeless value of artistic expression in the human experience, Nietzsche's legacy lives on.¹⁷⁶

"Become who you are!" (Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, 1888)

¹⁷⁶ Sociologylearners. "Nietzsche Art and Nihilism | Will to Power in Art." *YouTube*, 14 Oct. 2023, www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-rC1bnXV9Q. Accessed 24 Nov. 2024.

CHAPTER 3

NAVIGATING CREATIVITY OUT OF CHAOS: NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHICAL LENS IN THE ART OF LAHORE

Lahore can be presented as one of the best examples of creativity coming out of chaos. Mainly due to the city's history of invasions and occupations, as well as its ongoing reconstruction, expansion, and embellishment, with eternal recurrence. It seems as the best model for Nietzsche's "creative genius". Lahore's unique blend of geographical advantages and rich resources has fueled its growth yet also attracted invaders and political turmoil. Despite experiencing chaos and upheaval, the city consistently regained its footing, reflecting Nietzsche's concept of Will to power against Nihilism. This resilience has allowed Lahore to absorb diverse cultural influences, yet maintain its unique identity, exemplifying Nietzsche's idea of creative transformation amidst chaos.

3.1. Lahore: Chronicles of Chaos and Courage

Historically, Lahore is called the city of gardens and it has always attracted onlookers.¹⁷⁷ It still stands before us in all its splendor, having magnificently withstood the test of time and several hardships. But it took years of withstanding chaos that today we can call it the center of art and culture in Punjab Pakistan.¹⁷⁸

3.1.1. Origin and Etymology

If we turn the pages of history all the way back to its origin, we will find no actual written script or document that can give us direct account of when the city was formed. However, the earlier form of art, myths and architecture and literature give us much room to debate. The oldest mythical evidence that we have is from Hindu narrative of the *Ramayana*¹⁷⁹ meaning Rama's way. According to which, the city was stumbled upon by *Loh* or *Lov*, the son of King Rama¹⁸⁰ and thus the city was named after him, *Lohawar*. Other variations of city names were *Lava Puri*¹⁸¹, *Lavpor*, *Loh Kot*¹⁸² and *Lohar*¹⁸³. And because it is a mythical epic

¹⁷⁷ Ayesha Mehmood Malik, M. Yusuf Awan, and Memoona Rashid, "View of a Study of Disintegration of Lahore from a City of Gardens to a City of Congestion," *Journal of Art, Architecture and Built Environment* 1, no. 2 (December 2018): 16, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jaabe.12>.

¹⁷⁸ Durdana Kareem, "Lahore: Cultural and Historical Centre of Pakistan," Medium, November 18, 2024, <https://medium.com/@misbahsalman02/lahore-cultural-and-historical-centre-of-pakistan-ddb3072504cf>.

¹⁷⁹ *Ramayana* – is a Sanskrit Epic by the poet Valmiki, believed to have date before 300 BCE.

¹⁸⁰ Rama is a god in the kingdom of Ayodhya, from the Epic *Ramayana*

¹⁸¹ *Lava Puri* – city of Lava

¹⁸² *Loh Kot* – the fort of Loh

¹⁸³ Maria Nazar, "Lahore: The City through Fairytales - Maria Nazar - Medium," Medium, January 12, 2020, <https://medium.com/@conversationswithafriend/lahore-the-city-through-fairytales-624c60128f47>.

and the only oldest account that gives us any context about the city, it was later on debunked by researcher Zeeshan Hussain¹⁸⁴ who argued that the claim cannot be proven because after Carbon-dating, we can discover that Lahore was not much older than 3000 years, it must have come about approximately around the end age of Harappa.¹⁸⁵ While Rama was born in 7323 BCE¹⁸⁶. So, the city could not have been named after him, as it didn't even exist back then. The earliest concrete age of existence of the city is via Persian book of 982 AD, *Hadud al Alam* (Regions of the world). It describes Lahore with a lot of temples and mud walls.¹⁸⁷

3.1.2 Lahore reimaged: From the Formative Years till Partition

"History belongs, above all, to the active and powerful man, the man who fights one great battle....," (F. Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* 1874)

Lahore, Pakistan is a powerful illustration of Nietzsche's will to power and eternal recurrence because of its diverse history and culture. The city is a dynamic example of human ambition and the never-ending search for meaning because of its development, which is characterized by resiliency, inventiveness, and aggressive identity and connects with Nietzschean philosophy.¹⁸⁸

Despite the mystery of its origin, the eminent aspect of this city lies in the richness of its culture and art. People from Lahore are especially known for their festive spirits and celebrating no matter how much of despair they face. A notion in response to nihilism.¹⁸⁹ Allusion to all the instability they faced in the form of political, social, economic, and psychological factors. Since its strategic location and ample resources have made Lahore a growth hub, invaders have been trying to control. But in spite of everything, their culture flourished, withstood severe waves of suffering, and created even more powerful works of art that continue to inspire us now. On one side of the walled city, Lahore recounts the historical tales and legends along the river Ravi while on the other side, it depicts a modern socio-

¹⁸⁴ Suno Digital, "The Hidden 3000-Year History of Lahore | from Rani Ichhra to Maharaja Ranjit Singh | Ft. Xee Hoo," YouTube, October 4, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVYox8PzHsM>.

¹⁸⁵ Majid Sheikh, "Carbon-Dating Throws Back the Age of Lahore," DAWN.COM, August 2, 2014, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1122757>.

¹⁸⁶ Rakesh Krishnan Simha, "The Scientific Dating of the Ramayana | India Facts," IndiaFacts, November 15, 2015, <https://indiafacts.org/the-scientific-dating-of-the-ramayana/>.

¹⁸⁷ Validimir Fedorovich Minorsky, trans., *Hadud al Alam* (982AD; repr., Lahore, 1927).

¹⁸⁸ Shujaat Ali Khan, "How, If at All, Should Philosophy Address the Question of History: An Inspiration from Nietzsche's Philosophy for Indo-Pak," *Academia.edu*, April 16, 2019, https://doi.org/10.9326032/25589578/24300201/s200_shujaat_ali.

¹⁸⁹ Suno Digital, "The Hidden 3000-Year History of Lahore | from Rani Ichhra to Maharaja Ranjit Singh | Ft. Xee Hoo," YouTube, October 4, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVYox8PzHsM>.

economic pattern. That is why Lahore presents diversity of art and cultures of different eras of long-lost days.¹⁹⁰

The known history of Lahore began around 682 CE under the rule of Chauhan dynasty¹⁹¹. It began with anarchy when city was invaded and it was just the start of the chaos. Whoever wanted to attack Delhi¹⁹² would attack, loot, and cause havoc in Lahore as well. The city would get momentary calm before the storm arises again, in form of different ruler, different dynasty, different motives. But it has always been looted and plundered. It became the first Muslim state under the rule of Qutb al-din Aibak in 1206¹⁹³. Furthermore, the first Mughal emperor of the south Asia was Zahiruddin Babar¹⁹⁴, he occupied Lahore in 1524. Despite the chaos, the art was thriving side by side. It reached its peak during Mughal empire, and it wasn't until Emperor Akbar¹⁹⁵ succeeded the throne that Lahore became truly a jewel. Akbar developed the Mughal style paintings and formed a large atelier. He gathered artists from all over the India and was frequent visitor of the atelier. The court painters would make illustrations of books, legends, myths, poetry and fables. The most notable example of that is *Dastan-e Amir Hamzah* or *Hamza Nama*¹⁹⁶, of which only 200 paintings have survived.¹⁹⁷ During his rule of 50 years, Lahore was adorned with splendors and constructions.

¹⁹⁰ Muhammad Waseem Soomro, "Exploring Lahore: Where Tradition Meets Modernity," The Spine Times - The Spine Times (The Spine Times, January 19, 2025), <https://spinetimes.pk/exploring-lahore-where-tradition-meets-modernity/>.

¹⁹¹ Chauhan Dynasty is of rulers who ruled the western parts of India between 6th and 12th century.

¹⁹² Delhi, a city in India, in east of Lahore, the Delhi gate opens to the direction of Delhi.

¹⁹³ Qutb Al din Aibak (1150-1210) was founder of Muslim rule in India.

¹⁹⁴ Zahirru din Babar (1483-1530) ruled the empire from 1526-1530

¹⁹⁵ Akbar (1542-1605) the Great ruled the empire from (1556-1605)

¹⁹⁶ Hamzanama (1562-1577) explores the adventures of uncle of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

¹⁹⁷ A.K Ramanujan and J.A.B. van Buitenen, "South Asian Arts - Mughal Style: Akbar Period (1556–1605) | Britannica," [www.britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com/art/South-Asian-arts/Mughal-style-Akbar-period-1556-1605), accessed February 11, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/art/South-Asian-arts/Mughal-style-Akbar-period-1556-1605>.



Figure 30 Court of Akbar. "Hamzanama," 1567-1582. Opaque watercolor and gold paint on cotton, 66.0 x 49.3 cm. National Gallery of Victoria. (Source: <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/53290/>)

However, Aurangzeb¹⁹⁸ banned music and painting from his court. In the remaining time of Mughal emperors, the city didn't receive as much attention as it used to.¹⁹⁹ It was later when Ranjit Singh²⁰⁰ appointed Lahore as capital that it flourished again, especially in art and painting. Ranjit Singh divided the streets of Lahore into different *Muhallas* and *Kuchahs*. Each street had a leader of its own and all the artists and artisans that had fled Lahore due to its instability were summoned back and relocated. Each street named after the artisan of that field, such as *Muhalla Naqqashan* (Street of Painters/illustrators), *Kuchah Kumharan* (street of potters), *Kuchah Lakar Haran* (Street of Wood engravers) *Kuchah Khattatan* (street of calligraphers) and many more. This unique feature was seen nowhere else in the world where each locality was named after the artisan or artists.²⁰¹ The end of Sikh era in Lahore concluded with the British takeover of Punjab after the Second Anglo-Sikh War. That marked the end of historical Lahore and after Britishers came in 1848 it became the modern Lahore with Anglo Islamic Architecture under Sir Ganga Ram²⁰² and Bhai Ram Singh²⁰³ as engineer and architect

¹⁹⁸ Aurangzeb (1618- 1707) ruled the empire 1658-1707

¹⁹⁹ Marika Sardar, "The Art of the Mughals after 1600," Metmuseum.org, 2020, https://www.metmuseum.org/TOAH/hd/mugh_2/hd_mugh_2.htm.

²⁰⁰ Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) was the first ruler of the Sikh empire in the northwest Indian-Subcontinent, ruling from 1801 till 1839.

²⁰¹ Kanwal Khalid, "Lahore, City of Kuchas and Muhallas of Artists a Rarity in the World," *Majallah-e-Tahqiq Research Journal of the Faculty of Oriental Learning* 39, no. 111 (2018): 15–21, https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/uocc/pdf/12_v39_111_18.pdf.

²⁰² Sir Ganga Ram (1851-1927)

²⁰³ Bhai Ram Singh (1858-1916)

respectively.²⁰⁴ We find the final years of Sikh power in the Punjab, through the massive oil on canvas painting of August Theodor Schoefft²⁰⁵, whom had a reputation of painting portraits in city of Calcutta.²⁰⁶



Figure 31 August Schoefft. "Darbar of Maharaja Ranjit Singh," 1841-1855. Oil on Canvas, 120 x 192-inch Princess Bamba Collection. (Source: <https://www.sikhvirs.org.pk/darbar-of-maharaja-ranjit-singh/>)

It was a great shift from traditional Sikh art to western styles, influencing local artists. All colonial paintings of Lahore can be traced back to the 19th century however within a decade, Lahore faced years of violence and chaos until British Army took over.

²⁰⁴ Nadeem Alam, "Depiction of Architectural Pattern of Lahore in Landscape and Cityscape Painting of Pakistan" (2017).

²⁰⁵ August Theodor Schoefft (1809-1888) Budapest artist who came to Lahore in November 1841 to paint the court of Maharajah Sher Singh (1807-1843).

²⁰⁶ Ian Talbot and Tahir Kamran, *Colonial Lahore: A History of the City and Beyond* (2016; repr., Hurst Publishers, 2016).



Figure 32 Sheikh Zain ud Din, "Brahminy starling with two *Antheraea* moths, caterpillar and cocoon on an Indian Jujube Tree," 1780. Opaque colors and ink on paper, 76.2 x 96.52 c, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. (Source: <https://www.artera.ae/artworks/4dbd84bc-a093-445f-bf69-e7869493bd48>)

A clear shift could be observed in the art and paintings during the British Raj. The illusion of space that the Mughal painters achieved long before Pablo Picasso²⁰⁷, started to take western approach. Halos and Cross, the strong Christian symbols of the time, started appearing in the Mughal miniature paintings. And slowly as the East India Company took over, the company paintings²⁰⁸ supplanted other schools of art. That marked the beginning of psychological chaos that later changed economies for the Sub-continent.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) Spanish Painter and founder of Cubism.

²⁰⁸ Company paintings – the works produced by Indian artists in European style and palette, commissioned by Europeans in 18th and 19th century. (source: https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cpin/hd_cpin.htm)

²⁰⁹ Art Booklet, "Allegorical Symbols in Mughal Miniature Painting | Art Booklet," Art-booklet.com, 2020, <https://www.art-booklet.com/2020/11/19/allegoricalsymbols/>.



Figure 33 Left: Nanha and Manohar. “Yawm al-Din, (The Day of Judgement),” 1605-10. Illustration from a manuscript of *Khamisa of Nava’I Nanha and Manohar*. Watercolour and gouache on paper, 22.4 x 14.8cm. The Royal Collection Trust, London. (Source: https://www.asianart.com/articles/last_judgment/6.html) Right: Andriaen Collaert, “The Last Judgement,” 1580. Engraving, 41.9 x 29.6cm. Royal Library of Belgium. (Source: <https://www.meisterdrucke.ie/fine-art-prints/Adriaen-Collaert/1611788/The-Last-Judgement.html>)

This was beginning of search for identity in a land where many cultures, religions, and ideas coexisted. According to Nietzsche, the core element of human identity motivates people to increase their power and creativity. And every ethnic group started moving in the direction of the identity that suited their will. Whether or not inspired by philosophers, poets, thinkers or artists of that time.²¹⁰

This was the time period when we can clearly draw a parallel between Nietzsche and the philosopher of south Asia; Allama M. Iqbal. The philosophies of Iqbal²¹¹ and his poetry expressed much more than just the thoughts and feelings of Indian Muslims. Additionally, they encouraged and galvanized the Muslim populace to step up their efforts to liberate oneself from chains both within and without.²¹² Iqbal examines the works of previous philosophers, claiming that the fine arts have always been related with many religions. Manifest architecture, which is a combination of beauty and grandeur, is visible in their temples. Stone carving, fetish carving, and painting have all been involved with religion since the beginning. Iqbal's poetry,

²¹⁰ Alejandro Betancourt, “Nietzsche’s Fundamental Component of Human Identity: The Will to Power,” Medium (Bottomline Talks, July 21, 2022), <https://medium.com/bottomline-conversations/nietzsches-fundamental-component-of-human-identity-the-will-to-power-7a611d226334>.

²¹¹ Allam M. Iqbal (1877-1938) South Asian Islamic Philosopher, poet and politician.

²¹² Riffat Hassan, “The Concept of Pakistan and Iqbal’s Philosophy,” October 2023, https://riffathassan.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/The_Concept_of_Pakistan.pdf.

unlike Plato's and similar to Nietzsche's, expresses a real universe with all of its history and chronology. Nietzsche classified art and the human self into two categories: Apollonian and *Dionysian*, and he preferred *Dionysus'* self, which represents change and life. Iqbal associates it with *Jalal* and *Jamal*, suggesting a counterbalance between the two. He explains that *Jamal* without *Jalal* is nothing and without the spirit of the two, the vision of Pakistan might not have been realized.²¹³

3.1.3 Partition of the sub-continent and Lahore: a colossal chaos and creativity

After the partition of the Sub-continent, literature took over the wheel to express its grief and relief over the freedom from the Britishers. That colossal chaos gave birth to many phenomenal works of literature and poetry. Notable, *Subh-e-Azaadi* by Faiz Ahmed Faiz.²¹⁴

یہ داغ داغ اجالا یہ شب گزیدہ سحر
وہ انتظار تھا جس کا یہ وہ سحر تو نہیں
یہ وہ سحر تو نہیں جس کی آرزو لے کر
چلے تھے یار کہ مل جائے گی کہیں نہ کہیں
فلک کے دشت میں تاروں کی آخری منزل
کہیں تو ہوگا شب سست موج کا ساحل²¹⁵

*These tarnished rays, this night-smudged light — This is not that Dawn for which, ravished with freedom, we had set out in sheer longing, so sure that somewhere in its desert the sky harbored a final haven for the stars, and we would find it. We had no doubt that night's vagrant wave would stray towards the shore, that the heart rocked with sorrow would at last reach its port.*²¹⁶

The dark imagery of blood sheds lurks in the nightmares of almost all the poems on partition, because this very blood that once bound them was shed mercilessly under British's careful scheme of occupation. This concept was captured by Indian Urdu poet, Nida Fazli.²¹⁷

انسان میں حیوان یہاں بھی ہے وہاں بھی
اللہ نگہبان یہاں بھی ہے وہاں بھی
خون خوار درندوں کے فقط نام الگ ہیں
ہر شہر بیابان یہاں بھی ہے وہاں بھی

*The beast within the human is here, as well as there
Allah is the protector here, as well as there
Only the names of blood-thirsty monsters are different*

²¹³ Alia Hadi Ali and Aqeel Abbas, review of *A study of Iqbal's concept of Aesthetics as Didactic in Sadequain Painting at Lahore Museum*, by Allama Iqbal and Sadequain, *Allamaiqbal.com*, 2025, <https://iqbalreview.allamaiqbal.com/index.php/ire/article/view/98/63>.

²¹⁴ Faiz Ahmed Faiz (1911-1984) Pakistani poet and author of Punjabi and Urdu Literature.

²¹⁵ From the Book 'Nuska Ha e Wafa' by Faiz Ahmed Faiz, published in 1985, page 116

²¹⁶ Faiz Ahmed Faiz, "Subh-e-Azaadi," in *Nuskha Hai Wafa*. Translated by Agha Shahid Maktaba-e-Karwaan publisher, 1985, page 116.

²¹⁷ Muqtida Hasan Nida Fazli (1938- 2016) was Indian Urdu and Hindi poet, lyricist and dialogue writer.

An exceptional work of literature that demonstrates the necessity of partition as well as narrates the consequences of it, laced with sacrifices, broken dreams and countless wounds would be *Bano*, a novel written by Razia Butt. ²¹⁹ It was later turned into soul-clenching drama named *Dastaan* in 2010. ²²⁰

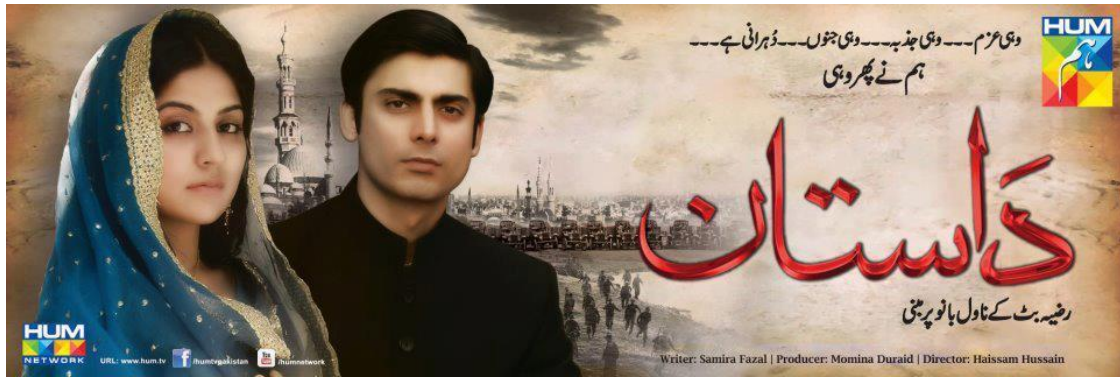


Figure 34 “Dastaan,” 2010. Drama. Featured Sanam Baloch and Fawad Khan, Directed by Saissam Hussain. Based on novel *Bano* of Razia Butt.

(Source: <https://travelsinsonganddance.wordpress.com/2014/12/26/dastaan-episode-2/>)

Lahore has demonstrated a wide range of tastes in its architectural, artistic, and lifestyle developments over the ages. The multiple cultures and languages that make up modern-day Lahore allow the city to maintain its historical character as a hub of diverse socioeconomic and ethnic trends. That goes beyond its need for aesthetic pleasure and all that has survived of the city today is an essential force of vitality and self-overcoming and is the essence of Nietzsche’s Will to power. ²²¹ As Nietzsche said,

“The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.”²²²

²¹⁸ Onaiza Drabu | Prachi Jha, “Reading Partition Poetry,” DAWN.COM, August 14, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1499501>.

²¹⁹ Razia Butt (1924–2012), Urdu novelist and playwright of Pakistan.

²²⁰ Zahra Mirza, review of My take on Dastaan: The End! by Haissam Hussain, February 21, 2014, <https://reviewit.pk/my-take-on-dastaan-the-end/>.

²²¹ Modern Philosophy 101, “Nietzsche and the Will to Art: How Creativity Defines Human Existence,” Medium, February 20, 2025, <https://medium.com/@philosophy.101/nietzsche-and-the-will-to-art-how-creativity-defines-human-existence-128f6034763e>.

²²² M. Abbasi, “Nietzsche & Iqbal: Übermensch and Khudi,” Mohammed Abbasi, January 17, 2023, <https://mmabbasi.com/2023/01/17/nietzsche-iqbal-ubermensch-and-khudi/>.

3.1.4. Chaos and Canvas: Artistic voices in the new land.

At the inception of Pakistan, many artists were battling unpromising political and economic circumstances when the country was newly born. There were little resources for art education and main instinct of that time was survival. And because of that, in the earlier decades of independence, artists were not able to evolve any particular school of art, instead they focused on individual styles. Abdur Rehman Chughtai²²³, Haji Sharif²²⁴ and Allah Buksh²²⁵ were one of the prominent artists of the pre- and post-independence state of Pakistan.²²⁶ There is also a stark difference in their artwork of pre- and post-independence.

Their artwork begun to reorient towards Islamic and Mughal art aesthetics influenced by philosophies of Muhammad Iqbal²²⁷ and several other poets of South Asia. The influence of the philosopher M. Iqbal was evident in works of many artists. Aslam Kamal²²⁸, Sadequain,²²⁹ Abbasi Abidi²³⁰, Jimmy Engineer²³¹ and many others, used all of their abilities to bring the spirit of Iqbal to their canvasses.²³²

²²³ Abdur Rehman Chughtai (1897-1975) Mughal art, miniature painter.

²²⁴ Haji Sharif (1899-1978) rendered Mughal and Pahari miniature paintings.

²²⁵ Ustad Allah Bux (1895- 1978) Pakistani painter and calligrapher.

²²⁶ Sadia Arshad, "Artists Who Created Art Movements in Pakistan," *Asian Academic Research Journal of Social Science & Humanities* 3, no. 5 (May 2016).

²²⁷ Allama M. Iqbal (1877-1938) Philosopher and poet of the sub-continent.

²²⁸ Aslam Kamal (1939- 2024) was Lahore based poet, visual artist and writer (<https://www.dawn.com/news/1802721>)

²²⁹ Sadequain (1930-1987) was artist poet and calligrapher of Pakistan. (<https://www.artnet.com/artists/sadequain/>)

²³⁰ Abbasi Abidi (d. 2018) was the former principal of National college of arts. (<https://www.dawn.com/news/1447926>)

²³¹ Jimmy Engineer (b.1954) was born in Balochistan, is an artist. (<http://www.jimmyengineer.com/>)

²³² M. Suheyl Umar, "Tradition of Iqbal's Poetry on Canvas," Punjnud kam, 2004, <https://punjnud.azurewebsites.net/ViewPage.aspx?BookID=14409&BookPageID=329440&BookPageTitle=THE%20TRADITION%20OF%20IQBAL%E2%80%99S%20POETRY%20ON%20CANVAS>.



Figure 35 Sadequain. "Treasures in time," 1961. Mural. 8 x 60 feet. States Bank of Pakistan.
(Source: <https://blog.saffronart.com/2012/11/02/sadequain-a-muralist-par-excellence/>)

According to Iqbal, the idea of art was through beauty. Every beautiful object possesses expression and is a manifestation of the divine beauty that pervades the entire cosmos. He emphasized that the duty of an artist is to unveil the hidden beauty that encompasses the entire cosmos. A notion that Nietzsche agreed on as well.²³³

Nietzsche writes,

*"There are two different types of people in the world, those who want to know, and those who want to believe."*²³⁴

Pakistan was born into a challenging environment for the arts. Since many art instructors and students had emigrated to India, notably, M.F Husain,²³⁵ S.H Raza,²³⁶ Krishen Khanna,²³⁷ and Amar Nath Sehgal²³⁸. However, Lahore, which had the most advanced infrastructure, in terms of general chaos kept inspiring the staying artists like Anna Molka Ahmed²³⁹ who adopted German Expressionist style of painting. Shakir Ali²⁴⁰ was more

²³³ Alia Hadi Ali and Aqeel Abbas, review of *A study of Iqbal's concept of Aesthetics as Didactic in Sadequain Painting at Lahore Museum*, by Allama Iqbal and Sadequain, *Allamaiqbal.com*, 2025, <https://iqbalreview.allamaiqbal.com/index.php/ire/article/view/98/63>.

²³⁴ M. Abbasi, "Nietzsche & Iqbal: Übermensch and Khudi," Mohammed Abbasi, January 17, 2023, <https://mmabbasi.com/2023/01/17/nietzsche-iqbal-ubermensch-and-khudi/>.

²³⁵ M.F. Husain (1915-2011) Indian Muslim Painter of cubist style. (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/M-F-Husain>)

²³⁶ Syed Haider Raza (1922-2016) Indian Muslim painter and member of Bombay Progressive Artists group (<https://mathaf.org.qa/en/encyclopedia/artists-biographies/sayed-haider-raza/>)

²³⁷ Krishen Khanna (b.1925) is Indian artist born in Lyallpur. (<https://www.artnet.com/artists/krishen-khanna/>)

²³⁸ Amarnath Sehgal (1922-2007) was Indian modernist, sculptor, painter, poet and educator. (<https://dagworld.com/amar-nath-sehgal.html>)

²³⁹ Anna Molka Ahmed (1917-1994) Pakistani artist and pioneer of fine arts in the country.

²⁴⁰ Shakir Ali (1916-1975) modern Pakistani artist and principle of NCA

concerned with cubist style whilst Khalid Iqbal²⁴¹ and Colin David²⁴² embraced realism. For this reason, Expressionism, Abstract expressionism and Realism were three major art expressions in the beginning years of Pakistan.

The first school of thought or rather a first group of art was formed in 1952 by the name Lahore Art Circle, comprising of Ali Imam²⁴³, Moyenne Najmi²⁴⁴, S. Safdar²⁴⁵, Ahmed Pervez,²⁴⁶ Anwar Jalal Shemza²⁴⁷ and Shakir Ali but by 1957, artists were forced to leave the circle due to political turmoil brought on by M. Ayyub Khan's²⁴⁸ Marshal Law.

Pakistan's political and economic systems have encountered many challenges. Since gaining independence, the nation has experienced political instability, particularly in 1965 as the newly found country was in war with its eight times bigger neighbour. In 1971, Pakistan and Bangladesh were split apart. It was similar to losing a limb. Many poets used poetry, like Naseer Turabi's "*Wo hum safar tha*," to communicate their sorrows.

In 1971 the Lahore art group resurfaced under the moniker Fine Arts Equity, led by Ijaz ul Hassan.²⁴⁹ It was categorized into Music Equity, Actors Equity and Writer's equity by 1974. With the generous support from Moyenne Najmi, the fine arts equity established the 'Lahore Art Gallery' at the ground floor of his residence and inaugurated the first show in 1974. It was a time when Equity was outlawed, and any opposition to marital rule was ruthlessly put down Under the dictatorship of General Zia ul Haq's.²⁵⁰

3.1.5 Creative spirit in response to Martial regime, terrorism and 9/11

Since gaining its independence, Pakistan has experienced years of instability. Absence of sincere leadership, lack of constitution and repeated martial laws left the growth in peril. No prime minister has served out a full five-year tenure. Without stability, growth cannot occur. Thus, the land has faced many political and social crises all due to lack of loyalty and morality.²⁵¹ The artists in response have fought and arose high during the challenges and painted their voices through the chaos, staying conscious of their morality of right and wrong. There have been terror attacks and conflicts in Pakistan ever since it gained its independence in 1947. This

²⁴¹ Khalid Iqbal (1929 – 2014) Pakistani painter and art teacher

²⁴² Colin David (1937 – 2008) Pakistani artist

²⁴³ Syed Ali Imam (1924-2002) Pakistani Artist, particularly contributions in Karachi.

²⁴⁴ Moyenne Najmi (1928-1997) Pakistani Artist

²⁴⁵ Sheikh Safdar (1924-1983) Pakistani artist.

²⁴⁶ Ahmed Parvez (1926-1979) Modernist painter from Pakistan.

²⁴⁷ Anwar Jala Shemza (1928-1985) Pakistani artists and calligrapher.

²⁴⁸ M. Ayub Khan (1907 – 1974) Second president of Pakistan.

²⁴⁹ Mian Ijaz ul Hassan (b.1940) Pakistani artist and activist.

²⁵⁰ M. Zia-ul-Haq (1924-1988) was 6th president of Pakistan.

²⁵¹ Nation, "Political Instability in Pakistan," The Nation, July 13, 2024, <https://www.nation.com.pk/13-Jul-2024/political-instability-in-pakistan>.

includes the war of 1965, fall of Bangladesh in 1971, the Target Killing, the incident of APS, the conflicts with Taliban and many more. Through their art, the artists challenged the status-quo, questioned the government, challenged their morality and raised awareness in order to fight injustice and advance peace in nonviolent means. The artists who protested through their work had mostly encountered threats and political consequences in the form of arrest, restrictions and censorships.²⁵²

Ijaz ul Hassan²⁵³ is well-known for using political metaphors in his paintings of flowers, trees, and other greenery. For instance, Mao's²⁵⁴ well-known catchphrase to encourage the growth of the arts, "*Let a hundred flowers blossom*," is referenced in his picture Let a Hundred Plants Grow. Hassan explores this idea in the painting New Year's Bouquet, which features the vivid colors for which he is renowned, yet the vase is empty of flowers and is instead filled with barbed wire. Since he has said that his flowers are a support for life, their absence in this picture conveys the profound loss of humanity brought about by the military government.²⁵⁵

²⁵² Syed Farjood Ailya Rizvi, Ayesha Latif, and Atifa Usmani, "View of Voices of Resilience: Pakistani Artists Respond to War and Terror," SPCRd.org (SPCRD GLOBAL PUBLISHING, December 2024), <https://www.ramss.spcrd.org/index.php/ramss/article/view/419/440>.

²⁵³ Mian Ijaz ul Hassan (b.1940) Pakistani artist that painted on political themes and sufferings of the world. (<https://www.artleove.com/post/art-as-an-act-of-resistance-2/>)

²⁵⁴ Mao Zedong was a Chinese leader of the movement 'Hundred Flower campaign' in 1956. (Source: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Hundred-Flowers-Campaign>)

²⁵⁵ Kristin Plys, "Art against Imperialism in '80s Pakistan: A Photo Essay," Jamhoo, April 26, 2021, <https://www.jamhoo.org/read/2021/4/26/art-against-imperialism-in-80s-pakistan-a-photo-essay>.

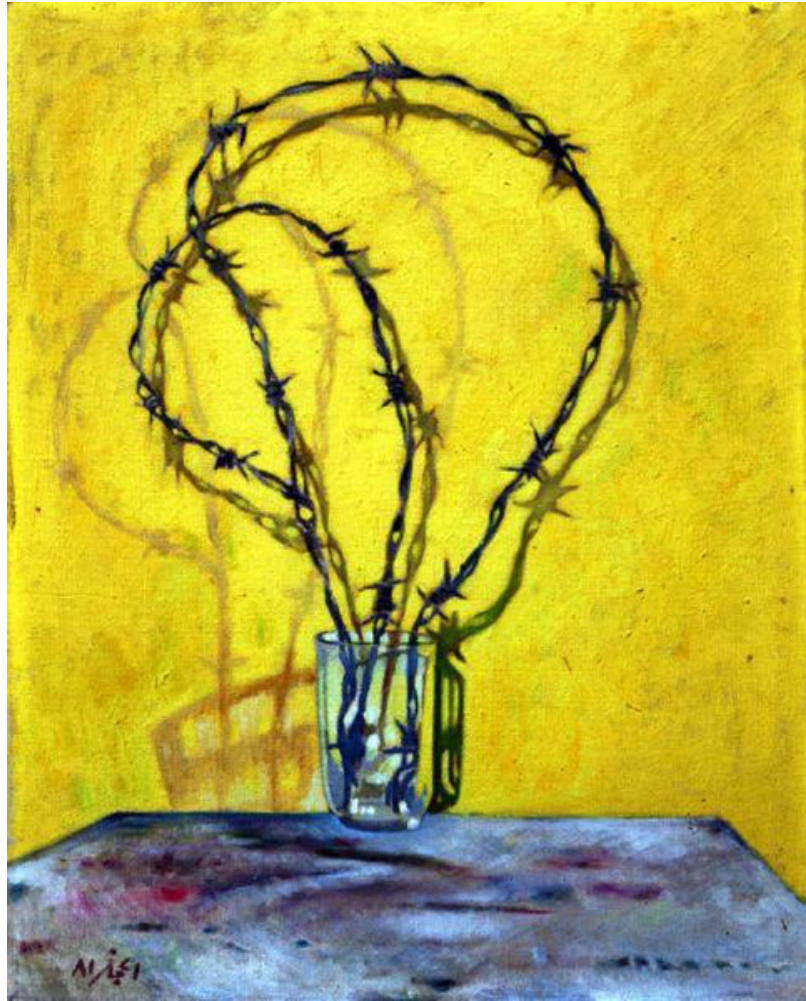


Figure 36 Ijaz ul Hassan. "New Year Bouquet," 1981. Oil on canvass. (Source: <https://www.jamhoor.org/read/2021/4/26/art-against-imperialism-in-80s-pakistan-a-photo-essay>)

The South Asian artistic legacy served as the foundation for anti-Zia visual art, which expanded its dedication to anti-imperialist causes throughout the Global South. Music, dance, visual, and performance art were among the many forms of artistic expression and media that were subject to oppressive restrictions under the Zia government. With the exception of calligraphy and landscape painting, all figurative art was prohibited.²⁵⁶

Abdur Rahim Nagori²⁵⁷ painted the tyranny of Martial Law that lasted for 10 years, in the form of his following painting. His artworks were never meant to please. It was never a decoration but always a statement.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Kristin Plys, "Art against Imperialism in '80s Pakistan: A Photo Essay," Jamhoor, April 26, 2021, <https://www.jamhoor.org/read/2021/4/26/art-against-imperialism-in-80s-pakistan-a-photo-essay>.

²⁵⁷ Abdur Rahim Nagori (1939-2011) was Pakistani painter with socio-political themes. (<https://paintersofpakistan.wordpress.com/2014/03/20/abdur-rahim-nagori/>)

²⁵⁸ "Abdur Rahim Nagori," PAINTERS OF PAKISTAN, March 20, 2014, <https://paintersofpakistan.wordpress.com/2014/03/20/abdur-rahim-nagori/>.



Figure 37 Abur Rahim Nagori. "King of Clubs," 1984. Oil on canvas. (Source: <https://www.jamhooor.org/read/2021/4/26/art-against-imperialism-in-80s-pakistan-a-photo-essay>)

Of all the military governments, General Muhammad Zia-ul Haq's was the most repressive. The eleven most discouraging years in Pakistani history in regards to freedom of expression and free will were 1977–1988. The repressive grip of General Zia-ul Haq also targeted organizations that promoted art. Strict censorship was applied to the art councils, and exhibitions of figurative art. Artwork that expressed anti-government sentiment were prohibited. *"Art with political connotation became a criminal offence,"* quotes Quddus Mirza. Artists with anti-government beliefs or opinions were detained, disciplined, and imprisoned. These artists most likely created the most potent symbolic piece in Pakistani history. Their specialty became the utilization of symbols. Given the Subcontinental mindset's history of emotionally reacting to symbols, this was a very wise decision on the part of the artists. Furthermore, symbols had many meanings and were not straightforward. The artists frequently expressed their critical reaction to the repressive administration by deftly combining and contrasting them to convey new meanings.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ Mohammad Imran et al., "A HISTORY of VISUAL ART in PAKISTAN: STUDYING the RESISTANCE against ZIA-UL-HAQ'S MILITARY REGIME," *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 54, no. 54 (2017),

After years of conflict and struggles, Artists Association of Punjab²⁶⁰ was established in 1985 and held their inaugural show at Alhamra art gallery²⁶¹. The association also worked in construction for the National Art Gallery of Pakistan²⁶². The association responds to the calamities of life irrespective of the region. They have made exhibitions on issues of Palestine²⁶³, Burma,²⁶⁴ and Kashmir²⁶⁵²⁶⁶

Under the regime of General Zia-ul Haq, there were many anti-women laws. Women witnessed violence across different generations. In those trial times, Lala Rukh²⁶⁷ stride ahead and created Women's Action Forum (WAF), a platform for women's right in the South Asia. Her efforts include establishing the visual language of the women's movement throughout Pakistan in addition to organizing demonstrations, open forums, and protests.²⁶⁸

http://nihcr.edu.pk/Downloads/Dr_Sajid/Articles/11-%20A%20HISTORY%20OF%20VISUAL%20ART%20IN%20PAKISTAN%20STUDYING.pdf.

²⁶⁰ Artist Association of Punjab is the successor of Lahore art circle. (Source: Hassan, Mian Ijaz ul. "An Introduction | Artists' Association of Punjab." Artistsassociationpunjab.com, 2012. <https://artistsassociationpunjab.com/intro.html>.)

²⁶¹ Alhamra Arts Council (1992) designed by Nayyar Ali Dada

²⁶² National Art Gallery of Pakistan (1973) also known as PNCA

²⁶³ Palestine has undergone displacement, forced by Israel and genocide.

²⁶⁴ Burma, today known as Myanmar

²⁶⁵ Kashmir – a territory under conflict between India and Pakistan

²⁶⁶ Mian Ijaz ul Hassan, "An Introduction | Artists' Association of Punjab," Artistsassociationpunjab.com, 2025, <https://artistsassociationpunjab.com/intro.html>.

²⁶⁷ Lala Rukh (1948 – 2017) – Pakistani teacher, women's rights activist and artist.

²⁶⁸ Natasha Ginwala, "Lala Rukh Introduction by Natasha Ginwala," Documenta14.de, 2015, https://www.documenta14.de/en/south/902_lala_rukh_introduction_by_natasha_ginwala.

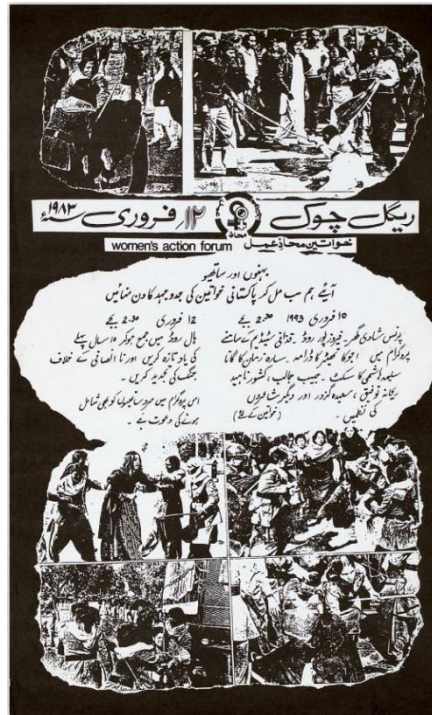


Figure 38 Lala Rukh, flyer for women's action forum announcing a Jalsa event on 10th of February, 1993. offset print. (Source: https://www.documenta14.de/en/south/902_lala_rukh_introduction_by_natasha_ginwala)

At the start of new century, Pakistan faced a new dilemma at the face of 9/11.²⁶⁹ A lot existential queries and identity questions were raised after the attack on twin towers and Pakistanis had to decide on, identify, and defend their positions to both residents and visitors. In order to answer these kinds of issues, artists were essential. Retaining their identity and refusing to allow any pressure to diminish their reasoning.²⁷⁰

Shazia Sikander²⁷¹ addressed the tragedy of politics and propaganda. Her painting, no fly zone is response to the 9/11. The monstrous figures are represented with political relevance. Sadia Abbas commented on the pieces,

"The empty throne marks a crisis of postcolonial sovereignty in an era of revived imperialism."

The shades of red, blue and white wings depict the involvement of united states in their propaganda against Pakistan.²⁷²

²⁶⁹ On 11 September, two planes crashed at the Twin towers in New York and nearly 2750 people lost their lives.

²⁷⁰ Quddus Mirza, "His-Story of Pakistani Art," 2012, https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/Jamal/PDF/8_v1_2012.pdf.

²⁷¹ Shazia Sikander (b.1969) Pakistani miniature artist, printmaker and animator.

²⁷² Sean Kelly, "No Fly Zone," The Morgan Library & Museum, June 4, 2021, <https://www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/online/shahzia-sikander/no-fly-zone>.

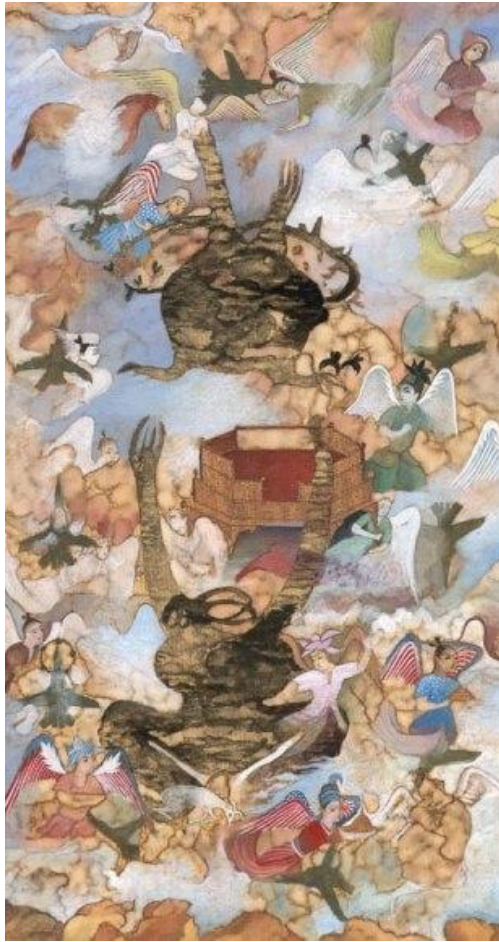


Figure 39 Shazia Sikandar. "No Fly Zone," 2002. Watercolor, Dry Pigment on Wasli Paper, 8.5 x 4.5 inches.
(Source: <https://www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/online/shahzia-sikander/no-fly-zone>)

Mian Ijaz ul Hassan painted triptych, a 3 panel Mural painting. The artwork is a compilation of reality from various sources. The combination is based on more than just aesthetic or formal requirements. It is also connected to politics and war crimes.²⁷³

"There is no dichotomy – life is both art and politics." (Mian Ijaz ul Hassan)²⁷⁴

²⁷³ Quddus Mirza, "Bright and Brilliant | Art & Culture | Thenews.com.pk," Thenews.com.pk, September 8, 2024, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/1227964-bright-and-brilliant>.

²⁷⁴ Nimra Khan, "Art Review: Devil & Demons by Mian Ijaz Ul Hassan," Youlinmagazine.com (Youlin Magazine, January 31, 2024), <https://www.youlinmagazine.com/story/art-review-devil-&-demons-by-mian-ijaz-ul-hassan/MjcxNA==>.



Figure 40 Mian Ijaz ul Hassan, "The Red Signal 9/11," 2003. Oil on canvas, 60 x 108 inch. Private collection.
 (Source: <iframe src="https://www.facebook.com/plugins/post.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fphoto%2F%3Ffbid%3D1441807599172375%26set%3Da.523658637653947&show_text=true&width=500" width="500" height="250" style="border:none;overflow:hidden" scrolling="no" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen="true" allow="autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; picture-in-picture; web-share"></iframe>)

When war crimes become a common occurrence, it desensitizes the viewers, making them numb to the suffering. Rashid Rana expressed this notion in his artwork, *The red carpet*. Ashley Lee commented on the ‘dual’ nature of his work saying

“All of Rana’s works are about dualities; though many address the clichés of sex and violence, his newer works are more conceptually challenging, exploring the validity of history, social constructs of beauty and the ubiquitous digital mediation of everyday life”

Rana’s inspiration also comes from his surroundings; describing where he gains his motivation from, he says

“My work is often a three-way negotiation between myself, my immediate physical surroundings and what I receive – whether through the Internet, books, history or collective knowledge”²⁷⁵

²⁷⁵ Sahar Hamid and Shahzeb Khan, “Beauty out of Chaos: A Parallel Study of Pakistan’s Trauma Art and Literature,” *Journal of Research (Humanities)*, 2018



Figure 41 Rashid Rana, "Red Carpet," 2007. Print and Diasec, 116 x 87 inches.
(Source: <https://www.gallerychemould.com/artworks/2916-rashid-rana-red-carpet-i-2007/>)

Rana's dual photomontages are the direct representation of what Nietzsche describes *Apollonian* and *Dionysian*. In his dual piece, *Red Carpet*, Rashid Rana offers an intriguing perspective on desensitization to misery and slaughter. He finds inspiration in the Muslim custom of slaughtering an animal on Eid ul Azha. He claims that depending on where they live, people react to violence in two different ways. They are impacted by the tragedy if it occurs in real time, but if it occurs on screen, they act as though it is unreal and almost unbothered. He relates it to the news on television, when mass murder, target killing and suicide bombing was everyday occurrence in Pakistan and how easily the audience moves on.²⁷⁶

Another form of duality is seen in works of Mahwish Chisty²⁷⁷. Though her duality revolves more around the medium and color harmony. She utilized her miniature painting techniques to paint the American war weapons in the truck art style. Encompasses the very land they target, referring how much of a daily element they have become. They are embellished in patterns and motifs of truck art. She compares the lethal war weapons with the children's toys hinting how careless, insensitive and dangerous the contemporary warfare has become.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, "Rashid Rana - Part 2 of 2," YouTube, August 28, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1MuhuOe4zI>.

²⁷⁷ Mahwish Chisty (b.1980) Pakistani artist and activist with interest in traditional folk culture of Pakistan.

²⁷⁸ Kristen O' Regan, review of *Miniature Military Drones Decorated in a Pakistani Folk Art Tradition*, by Mahwish Chisty, February 6, 2017, <https://hyperallergic.com/356690/miniature-military-drones-decorated-in-a-pakistani-folk-art-tradition/>.



Figure 39 Mahwish Chishty. "Drone series," 2013. Gouache, tea stain and photo transfer on Masonite, 24" x 18.5" x 8". (Source: <https://www.mahachishty.com/drone-art-series>)

Friedrich Nietzsche's ideas of duality, in the form of chaos and order are also consistent with Imran Qureshi's²⁷⁹ art, which is renowned for its complex interaction between beauty and violence. Art has always addressed global issues, war, terrorism, genocide, instability. His work would let you experience the after effects of war scenes, violent bloodshed with stains on the wall. The splatters are minutely rendered flowers and foliage to depict the 'hope of survival'.²⁸⁰ Represents dichotomy in his work, violence and hope, life and death. The large site-specific installation that was named after a verse by the poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, "*And they still see traces of blood*". He used 30,000 sheets of paper, all painted in red to depict violence, bloodshed and

²⁷⁹ Imran Qureshi (b.1972) is contemporary miniature artists of Pakistan. (Source: <https://ropac.net/artists/71-imran-qureshi/>)

²⁸⁰ Urvi Kothari, "Imran Qureshi's Stark Artworks Address War, Genocide and Global Instability," Stirworld.com (STIRworld.com, May 21, 2024), <https://www.stirworld.com/see-features-imran-qureshi-s-stark-artworks-address-war-genocide-and-global-instability>.

lives that are lost. But upon the closer look on those crumpled sheets of paper, one can find flowers minutely painted, reflecting hope amidst the chaos.²⁸¹



Figure 41 Imran Qureshi, “ And They Still See traces of Blood,” 2013. Installation at ‘when two is truly company exhibition. (Source: <https://www.naturemorte.com/artists/imranqureshi/selectedworks/2208/>)

The chaos presented in a thought-provoking way stimulates the beauty of life and strength. Nietzsche judges a piece of art according to how it is related to human existence. Nietzsche believes that art is helpful because it gives us a greater sense of strength; art is considered bad when it fosters an unwholesome sense of decadence and degeneration. Like in the vibrant splatters of scarlet paint erupt across the canvas, their wild energy gradually transforming into delicate, organic shapes. As the viewer's gaze lingers, the random bursts of color morph and alter, exposing the distinct outlines of flower petals.²⁸²

Art advocates a sensitive relationship between massacres, miseries and visual expression. On the tragedy of Army Public School in 2014, Artist Association of Punjab responded with an exhibition, “Massacre of the innocent.” The artist offered a variety of perspectives on how this heart wrenching tragedy was perceived. They painted the tragedy, symbolically,

²⁸¹ Hafsa Sarfraz, “EXHIBITION: WHEN TWO IS TRULY COMPANY,” DAWN.COM, April 29, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1330101>.

²⁸² Aatish Taseer, “Making Art from Pakistan’s Chaos,” The New York Times, June 27, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/27/opinion/making-art-from-pakistans-chaos.html>.

metaphorically, realistically through the vision of a sobbing mother metaphorically, flowers or uniform covered in blood. Additionally, candles, a broken school notebook smeared with blood, and a plush doll twisted in barbed wire were employed as allegories.²⁸³

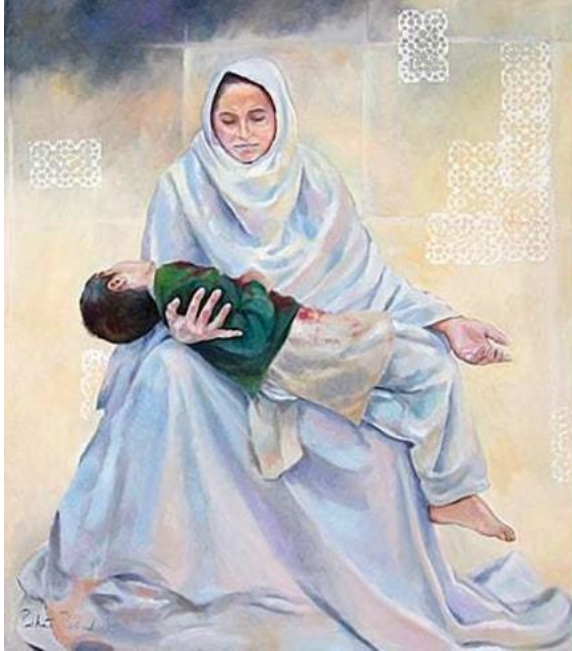


Figure 42 Rahat Naveed Masud. 2016. Oil on canvas. 29th AAP Annual exhibition, Alhamra arts council. (Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1175113>)



Figure 43 Mian Ijaz ul Hassan. "Massacre of the Innocent" 2016. 29th AAP annual exhibition, Alhamra arts council. (Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1175113>)

Similarly, a worldwide crisis focusing on the plight of women and girls was presented by another artist, Humaira Abid²⁸⁴. She makes up a disproportionate percentage of the millions of people who have fled their home countries as a result of political conflict and strife, ethnic cleansing and persecution, domestic abuse, climate change and natural disasters, and crimes against humanity.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Nadeem Alam , "The Murder of Humanity," *DAWN.COM*, April 12, 2015, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1175113>.

²⁸⁴ Humaira Abid – contemporary artist of Pakistan.

²⁸⁵ Museum, "Humaira Abid: Searching for Home - Museum for Art in Wood," Museum for Art in Wood, December 7, 2023, <https://museumforartinwood.org/exhibition/humaira-abid-searching-for-home/>.



Figure 44 Humaira Abid. "Searching for Home," 2016-17. Pine Wood and Red Wood stain. USC Pacific Asia Museum. (Source: <https://pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu/exhibitions/humaira-abid-searching-for-home/>)

The artwork tackles the emotions of loss and dislocation, which are typical in a chaotic society. As it struggles with the lack of a secure home or identity, leading to a search for new meanings, Abid's work reflects Nietzsche's investigation of nihilism, where established values are questioned.

The concept of deprecate stillness and helplessness was illustrated in the nihilist art of Mughees Riaz.²⁸⁶ He very seldomly painted human figures. His journey to paint the figures was an attempt to showcase the reality tainted with terrorism and insecurity. A bird sitting calmly on deflated back of a man. Too silent, almost symbolic of death. However, there is also *amor fati*, the hope in the earthen pot in his hand.²⁸⁷

"I aimed to highlight the insecurity of our country, constant fear among the people and the overall life in Pakistan," ²⁸⁸

²⁸⁶ Mughees Riaz (b.1971) is painter and art educator. (Source: <https://artciti.com/shop-by-artist/Mughees-Riaz-Painting>)

²⁸⁷ Amna R Ali, "Beyond the Vista: Artist Mughees Riaz Explores Sunsets and the Human Figure," Newslines,

²⁸⁸ The Express Tribune, "Creative Chaos Mughees Riaz Depicting Serenity in a Country Torn by Terrorism," The Express Tribune, October 24, 2011, https://tribune.com.pk/story/281309/creative-chaos-mughees-riaz-depicting-serenity-in-a-country-torn-by-terrorism#google_vignette.



*Figure 45 Mugheez Riaz. "Begging," 2011. Oil on Canvass. Gallery Karachi.
(Source: <https://newslinemagazine.com>)*

At the peak of helplessness, man returns toward God. However, Nietzsche declared "God is dead". He presented the concept of divine madness. A frenzy that is self-inflicted. This painting recreates the death of Jesus, the Christian divinity. The Artist Raza Bukhari²⁸⁹ creates a masterpiece of anguish and sorrow. However, the man who grieves is the one who slaughtered their Messiah.

²⁸⁹ Raza Bukhari – born in Iran, he is a miniature artist inspired by Persian techniques of painting.



Figure 46 Raza Bukhari. "Greif," Mix Media on Wasli, 18 x 27 inch.
(Source: https://web.facebook.com/Raza.bukhari.art/?_rdc=1&_rdr#)

The image's focal point is a lone figure buried in a deep darkness of a fabric-like pattern; their face's details hidden as they seem to be weighed down by grief. The center figure is surrounded by a whirlpool of expressive brushstrokes in subdued shades of gray, brown, and black that convey a sense of anguish and mental turmoil. Because of the painting's tight framing, the viewer's attention is drawn inward to the hooded, hunched figure in the middle. Transparency patches show hints of a blurred background, suggesting a larger story or setting for the lone figure's melancholy, but the details are unclear. A tone of solemn reflection is created by the expert, expressive use of paint, which invites the viewer to empathize with the deep melancholy this reworking of an Old Master work conveys.²⁹⁰

Identity is a logical fabrication. Nietzsche rejects both the existence of lasting things and the existence of indistinguishable things in general. He believed that the world is made up of timeless occurrences that have non-universal characteristics but can relate to one another in non-universal ways.²⁹¹ This concept is found in the artworks of Faiza Butt²⁹². She paints controversial themes like identity, politics and gender. She uses symbols and juxtapositions them with figures. Her choice of elements, challenge and question the stereotypical perception

²⁹⁰ How Nietzsche Inspired the Most Famous Painting in the World," *Thoughts on Thinking*, February 12, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vw3BThEIPi>.

²⁹¹ Eric Steinhart, "Nietzsche on Identity," 2005, <https://philpapers.org/archive/STENOI-2.pdf>.

²⁹² Faiza Butt (b.1973) is Pakistani political artist working in multiple mediums.

on the subject. She believes that Complete recognition and absolute abstraction are overlapping concepts that do not exist.²⁹³



Figure 47 Faiza Butt. "Impermanence," 2021. Ink on Polyester film, 29 x 21 inch.
(Source: <https://www.vadehraart.com/artworks/38691-faiza-butt-impermanence-2021/>)

While exploring the identity, there is a fine line between the subject matter and the content. A concept found in Sobia Ahmad's²⁹⁴ work. She employs metaphysical elements to deals with topics like identity, sexuality, and conversation with their surroundings. There is also attention to military and geopolitical matters. While staying true to the miniaturist aesthetic and symbolism. She experimented on subject themes in terms of scale and material.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ "Faiza Butt: The Political Artist," The Express Tribune, January 6, 2013, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/487955/faiza-butt-the-political-artist>.

²⁹⁴ Sobia Ahmed, Pakistani miniature artist and professor. (Source: <https://oartspace.com/team/sobia-ahmed/>)

²⁹⁵ JanKossen, "The Contemporary Miniaturists: Art from Pakistan - Announcements - E-Flux," e-flux, 2025, <https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/187359/the-contemporary-miniaturists-art-from-pakistan/>.



Figure 48 Sobia Ahmed. "Who is Who?" 2023. Gouache on Paper, 20 x 15 inch. (Source: <https://myartguide.com/pk/artworks/who-is-whodiptych/34501>)

Nietzsche believed that art was a means of confronting and overcoming a world where traditional values were disintegrating. Artists can create new meanings and values via their work, turning hopelessness into beauty. Rohma Malik shares the same notion. She said art has the power to bring people together, not just in the terms of creating but also appreciating. She encouraged that the people united won't stand for extremism. A way to comfort the future. It is very exceptional how the artist skillfully combines mastery of the material discipline with evocative content.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ Rohama Malik, Extremism No More, interview by Olivia Watkinson, April 25, 2016, https://web.facebook.com/projectsakshi/posts/inteha-pasandi-ab-nahi-extremism-no-more-below-is-olivia-watkinsons-interview-wi/1564997070465054/?_rdc=1&_rdr#.



Figure 49 Rohma Malik and Shehzil Malik. “Wall of Tolerance,” Mural at Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Lahore. (Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1078546/young-artists-paint-wall-of-tolerance-in-lahores-gulshan-e-iqbal-park>)

Thus, tragedy is portrayed by Nietzsche as the finest art form, the most effective means of coping with misery, and the most accurate description of life. According to Nietzsche, the tragic worldview approaches reality even more accurately than the sciences since the latter are unable to recognize that all that people accomplish, including knowledge and artistic creations, is fundamentally a coping strategy for the grim absurdity of life.²⁹⁷

3.2 Art as a Mirror: Navigating Inner Chaos

Art has a powerful capacity to both reflect and react to the suffering of its day. Artists in Lahore frequently address the local issues from a global viewpoint, or the other way around. Art is a source of psychological liberation and not just for the creator but the audience as well.

“We have art in order not to die of the truth.” (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power 1901)

In all of its manifestations, art is a potent tool for self-analysis, emotional release, and self-expression. It makes it possible for people to express emotions and experiences that are otherwise hard to put into words. But in a society that is becoming more and more focused on efficiency, surface-level relationships, and emotional repression, many people experience what

²⁹⁷ Rose Thompson, “The Birth of Tragedy by Friedrich Nietzsche | Issue 154 | Philosophy Now,” [philosophynow.org](https://philosophynow.org/issues/154/The_Birth_of_Tragedy_by_Friedrich_Nietzsche), 2023, https://philosophynow.org/issues/154/The_Birth_of_Tragedy_by_Friedrich_Nietzsche.

is known as "emotional restraint." This phrase alludes to the accumulation of repressed emotions caused by an inability or unwillingness to communicate one's sentiments in a healthy way. Modern societies are seeing an increase in emotional restraint, and its connection to art provides an interesting prism through which to view its effects and possible solutions.²⁹⁸

In the world of art, many artists have used art as a tool for catharsis, to unshackle themselves and achieve liberation. According to Nietzsche, art has the power to turn pain into beauty. People can release themselves from the burden of sorrow by using artistic expression to transform their anguish into something positive and meaningful.²⁹⁹

"He who has a 'why' to live for can bear almost any how." (F. Nietzsche, *Twilight of Idols* 1888)

There are many of such examples of artist of Lahore, who through the course of their life painted their struggles and emotions that had no other outlet. Iqbal Hussain³⁰⁰, the illegitimate son of a courtesan, was raised in Heera Mandi, well known as the Red-Light District. He was constantly a social misfit. He has depicted people whose misery and anguish are endless in his paintings and who have a tarnished reputation in their communities. He is called the "Painter of the Imprisoned Souls"³⁰¹. Although women in Iqbal's paintings were breathtakingly beautiful, they weren't depicted as goddesses. Rather, the women in his paintings portray the emptiness in their eyes and hollow facial expressions.³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Aqdas Hashmi, "Art and Emotional Restraint by Aqdas Hashmi - Article - AE Magazine," Aemagazine.pk, January 14, 2025, <https://aemagazine.pk/article/art-and-emotional-restraint>.

²⁹⁹ Jack Maden, "The Apollonian and Dionysian: Nietzsche on Art and the Psyche | Philosophy Break," philosophybreak.com, March 2024, <https://philosophybreak.com/articles/apollonian-and-dionysian-nietzsche-on-art-and-the-psyche/>.

³⁰⁰ Iqbal Hussain (b.1950) – Artist and Patron of restaurant Cooco's Den in Lahore.

³⁰¹ Tribune, "Real Life Depicting the Struggles of Women One Brushstroke at a Time," The Express Tribune, December 13, 2016, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1262324/real-life-depicting-struggles-women-one-brushstroke-time>.

³⁰² Hira Hyder, "The Walled City of Lahore and Iqbal Hussain; the Painter of Lost Souls - Eligible Magazine," Eligible Magazine, July 30, 2017, <https://www.eligiblemagazine.com/2017/07/30/walled-city-lahore-iqbal-hussain/>



Figure 50 Iqbal Hussain. "Violence," Oil on Canvas. Clifton Art Gallery, Karachi.
(Source: <https://pin.it/VRpew6WQR>)

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche mainly agrees with Schopenhauer's pessimistic viewpoint, in order to cope with suffering and get through life humanity has developed a variety of collective coping mechanisms, or illusions. Nietzsche refers to this illusion as "the Apollonian drive for beauty." the Greeks were able to lessen or even justify the horror of existence by nurturing existence as an aesthetic experience. These artistic activities gave life meaning and made its otherwise random happenings feel narratively guided and significant.³⁰³

However, when a narrative is overdone, it becomes the norm for some people, for better or worse. Aesthetic experiences are frequently associated with women. Throughout history, they have often been depicted as symbols of beauty and grace in art, literature, and media. they are frequently under pressure to conform to a wide range of social norms that specify their

³⁰³ Jack Maden, "Amor Fati: The Stoics' and Nietzsche's Different Takes on Loving Fate | Philosophy Break," philosophybreak.com, December 2023, <https://philosophybreak.com/articles/amor-fati-the-stoics-and-nietzsche-different-takes-on-loving-fate/>.

conduct, looks, and goals. They are generally conditioned from an early age to conform to feminine norms that value obedience, caring responsibilities, and modesty—sometimes at the price of their uniqueness and aspirations. One such artist commented on that statement by turning body as form of possession in her artwork. Nausheen Saeed³⁰⁴ used her art as a metaphor for the things she experienced and heard growing as a girl.³⁰⁵



*Figure 51 Nausheen Saeed. "Baggage," 2008. Fiber glass, Fabric and Leather.
(Source: <https://collabcubed.com/2013/03/11/nausheen-saeed-baggage/>)*

Nietzsche states, by inventing the art of tragedy. Tragedy has the power to change. To put it another way, tragedy blends the Apollonian and Dionysian urges: it beautifies while confronting the world's realities. Through Tragedy, the Greeks were able to represent the heartless, eternal, depersonalized chaos of Dionysian reality. A concept strongly represented in Saira Waseem's³⁰⁶ paintings. Greek mythology, baroque symbolism, epics, and any other genre that fits her story are all used by her. She develops a hybrid that suggests concepts of good and evil, among other things, by using miniature painting to create a setting for people from many eras to interact.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ Nausheen Syed – art educator at NCA

³⁰⁵ Subuhi Parvez, "Pakistani Artist Nausheen Saeed Calls 'Men' the Problem in Pakistan," Hindustan Times, August 21, 2013, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/art-and-culture/pakistani-artist-nausheen-saeed-calls-men-the-problem-in-pakistan/story-w5k1IbUO2UclqZ74tgPjOP.html>.

³⁰⁶ Saira Wasim (b.1975) – contemporary miniature artist of Lahore.

³⁰⁷ Saira Wasim, "Saira Wasim - Official Website," Sairawasim.com, 2012, <https://www.sairawasim.com/>.



Figure 52 Saira Wasim. "Plea for peace," 2012. Gouache, ink, gold and abri on wasli, 22x20 inches. Gandhara Art, Karachi. (Source: <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/saira-wasim-plea-for-peace>)

Nietzsche describes thoughts as the symptoms of the actual event. He explains that behind every thought there is a lie effect. Each thought, feeling, will, is not a drive but a state. A state that power all our constituent drive in that instant. According to Nietzsche, thoughts are the manifestation of the real event. He explains that there is a lie effect underneath every thinking. Every idea, emotion, and will, is a state rather than a drive. A condition that fuels every one of our constituents' drives at that instant. Those unconscious or seldom conscious sparks, narrates themselves in the form of art and such.³⁰⁸

Artist Anila Zulfiqar³⁰⁹ suggests a strong, almost instinctive connection to the Walled City. She calls this phenomenon 'becoming unconscious'. It implies that the artist has an innate connection to the culture and history of these old structures in the walled city of Lahore. There are a subconscious awareness of her heritage and the experiences of her predecessors.³¹⁰

"Man, like every living creature, thinks constantly, but does not know it." (F. Nietzsche, The Gay Science 1882)

³⁰⁸ Christopher Fowles, "Nietzsche on Conscious and Unconscious Thought," *Inquiry* 62, no. 1 (September 27, 2018): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174x.2019.1527537>.

³⁰⁹ Anila Zulfiqar – Artist and Educator at PUCAD Lahore.

³¹⁰ Haris ul Hassan, "Anila Zulfiqar," Oyster Art Gallery, accessed September 11, 2024, <https://oysterartgalleries.com/artist/statement-anila-zulfiqar-34>.



Figure 53 Anila Zulfikar. "Anamnesis," 16x11 inches, Water color on cut paper pieces.
 (Source: https://gallery6islamabad.com/products/gali-abstract-painting-by-anila-zulfikar-montage-on-paper-9-x-14-inches-copy?srsId=AfmBOopHaV3k5sC9s-fALCtfv3_lslQVqkLgm1O-7BOMTma43Cz9yb73)

According to Nietzsche, people have taken morality for granted without considering their ancestry. He travels back in time to examine the circumstances that led to the creation of good and evil, as well as law and order. If they have improved or hampered human welfare, and whether they have any inherent value. For the first time, the values of these principles were being questioned. This is where

we come across a fundamental concept: the principle of resentment is the starting point for the moral uprising of slaves, and in this painting by Sabahat Nisar,³¹¹ the citizens to whom laws are enforced.³¹²



Figure 54 Sabahat Nisar. "Chaos," 2024. Acrylic and Oil on canvass, 24 x 24 inch.
(Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/C8NC2LVi647/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==)

The artists' life experiences have a great influence on their work. Sometimes, in order to completely grasp an artwork, it takes sense to have a peek inside the life of the artists. There is a reciprocal relationship between the artist's emotional experiences and the processes that give rise to creative ideas. A certain level of chaos that forces us to step outside of our comfort zone is something

³¹¹ Sabahat Nisar – contemporary artist of Lahore.

³¹² Edited by Heather Wilburn and Ph.D., "Slave and Master Morality," open.library.okstate.edu (Tulsa Community College, May 30, 2020), <https://open.library.okstate.edu/introphilosophy/chapter/slave-and-master-morality-by-nietzsche/>.

Nietzsche recommended. Every development occurs when we investigate chaos and step outside of our comfort zone. We have to add a bit more chaos when we get acclimated to the confusion and it returns to order.³¹³

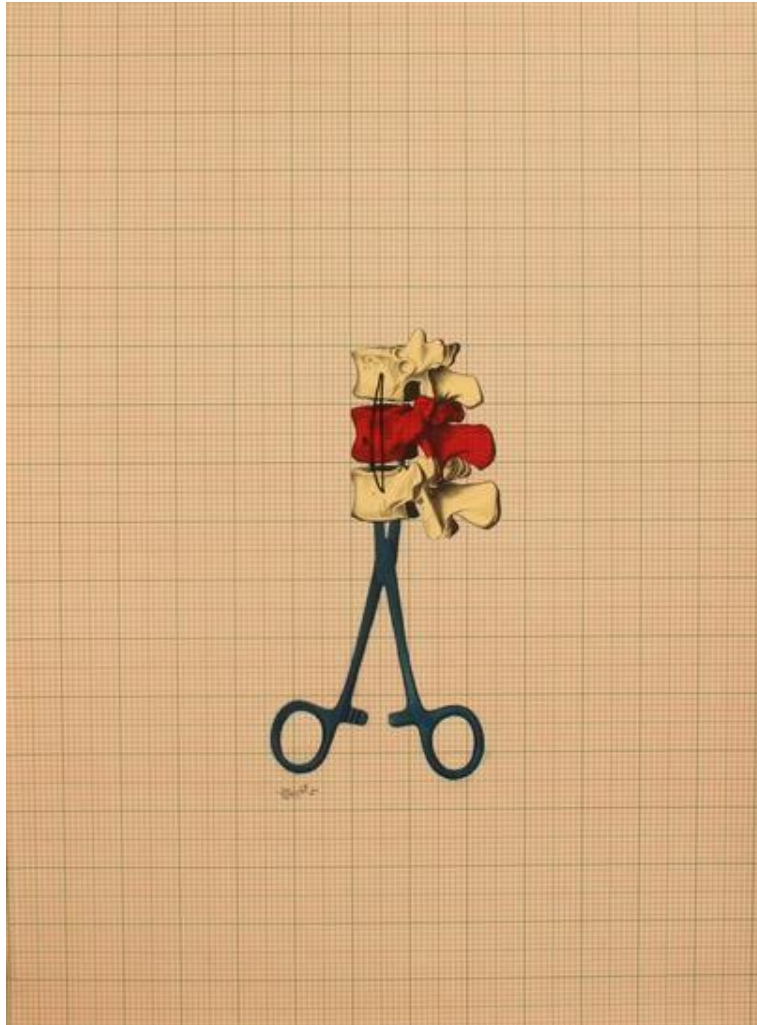


Figure 55 Attiya Shaukat. "Hurt you, bless you," 2011. Thread and Goache on Wasli graph paper, 21 x 13 inches. (Source: <https://www.youlinmagazine.com/article/beyond-dna-a-project-of-studio-rm/MzEzOA==>)

Following her involvement in a horrific occurrence in 2003, Attiya Shaukat embarked on her expressive journey. While hanging her paintings for the Mini Thesis display at the National College of Arts, she fell off the ladder and injured her back. Her lower body was paralyzed and left her confined to a wheelchair. She underwent surgeries and treatment but still could not walk. It led to an emotional trauma. Physical limitations, however, did not prevent

³¹³ Aidan McCullen, "Order from Chaos; Beauty from Ugliness - the Innovation Show," The Innovation Show, January 6, 2021, <https://theinnovationshow.io/order-from-chaos-beauty-from-ugliness/>.

her from communicating her psychological state. She returned to her painting practice and graduated in 2004 after collecting support from the art community.³¹⁴

Chaos and disorder in the form of physical pain, is far from inspiration but it has promoted artists like Farida Kahlo and Attiya Shaukat to keep creating art. Without chaos there would also be no aspiration.³¹⁵



Figure 56 Usama Butt. "Bringing Order in Disorder," 2023. Charcoal on paper, 5x3 feet. Degree show PUCAD.

(Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHHzbwMs_cV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==)

The artist Usama Amir's presented a work titled 'Bringing order in Disorder'. The goal of the work was to capture the unadulterated beauty that emerges from hardship. The victorious spirit that emerges when life's turmoil is systematically transformed into a deeply intimate and harmonious order.

³¹⁴ Sidra Liaqat, "Reflection of Traumatic Emotions through Painting: A Cathartic Experience," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 7, no. 3 (2023): 278–83.

³¹⁵ "Embrace the Chaos: Nietzsche and Choosing a University," *betterunichoices*, July 31, 2023, <https://www.betterunichoices.com/articles/embrace-the-chaos-nietzsche-and-choosing-a-university>.

Through his artistic endeavors, he aims to bring attention to the grace that comes with hardship, where the unadulterated, spirit of human tenacity emerges, creating a striking picture of bravery, strength, and the profound changes that take place when obstacles are surmounted and used to forge a peaceful and profoundly meaningful life. He showcased the intricate workmanship of life's tumultuous yet profoundly beautiful journey.³¹⁶

"In all chaos there is cosmos, in all disorder a secret order." (Jung 1953-1979)

Sometimes chaos arises from giving up control. Excessive control can highlight the negative aspects, even if it can also give a sense of security. The will to power is neither good nor bad. Everyone has this fundamental desire, which manifests itself in a variety of ways. The scientist's and philosopher's drive to power is transformed into a will to truth. It is channeled into a desire to create by artists. He commends the sublimation of the will to power into artistic endeavors. Artist Laiba Fatima, lets the chaos determine the final product. Subconscious ideas, dreams, and artistic intuition were all sparked by this pandemonium.³¹⁷



Figure 57 Laiba Fatima. "Chaos through giving up control," 2023. Acrylic on Canvas, 36 x 48 inches. Degree Show PUCAD. (Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/C04Z1q8s2je/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==)

³¹⁶ Usama Amir, Bringing Order in Disorder, interview by Maryam Zamurd, June 30, 2024.

³¹⁷ Emrys Westacott, "Nietzsche's Concept of the Will to Power," ThoughtCo, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/nietzsches-concept-of-the-will-to-power-2670658>.

Nietzsche makes a connection, when instability and precariousness begin to infiltrate our lives, it threatens all that we have always taken for granted. Until then. Instability, precariousness, and unresolved issues exist. We have no solution. It resembles a dust cloud blown by the wind. The term "instability and precariousness" refers to both the emotional journey one takes and the changes one undergoes in their lives. Whether it be relationships or situations that affect the physical and mental health.³¹⁸

Rimsha Abrar's painting "*Paracosm*" is about conscious and unconscious domains of the dreams. The artist wanted to explore the depths of the dream world and confront the typical banality of daily life. Through her imaginative world, which she explores in a magnificent and captivating way, the artist looks for ways to escape and disengage from reality. The artwork offers a glimpse into a dreamlike inner dimension that is always there to assist everyone along the journey, depicting the search for untapped imaginations and hidden truths.



Figure 58 Rimsha Abrar. "*Paracosm*," 2023. Degree show PUCAD.

³¹⁸ Author S Colombo, "Instability and Precariousness," *LoosenArt* (blog), April 2021, <https://www.loosenart.com/blogs/magazine/instability-and-precariousness>.

The incessant dance between order and chaos, a never-ending interplay between structure and entropy that gives rise to the infinite complexity of the natural and human realms, is the fundamental rhythm of the universe. Our insatiable desire to classify, regulate, and give meaning to chaos is at odds with the inherent unpredictability of our existence, and this delicate balance lies at the core of the human experience. We build massive structures only to watch them fall; we design intricate systems only to watch them malfunction. And we discover the seeds of change and the potential to repair, reinvent, and rise again during turbulent times. Because one can only flourish in a world where order and chaos coexist. The catch is to harness their complementary strengths.³¹⁹

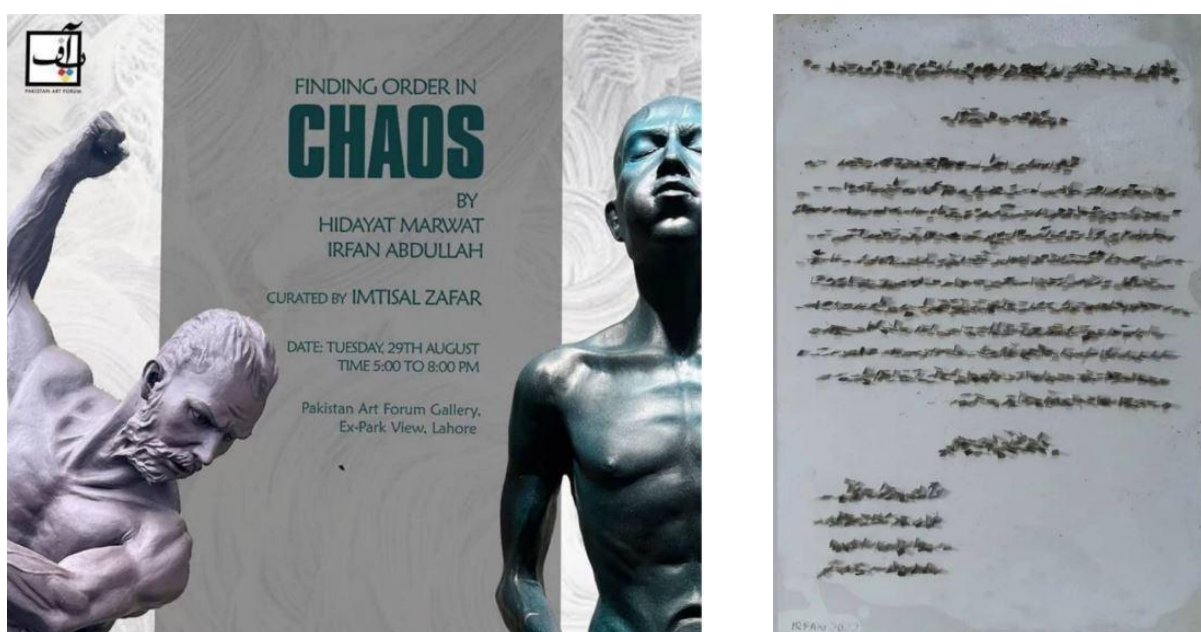


Figure 59 Irfan Abdullah. “Arzee,” 2023. Blades on concrete slab. Pakistan Art forum Gallery, Lahore.

(Source:

https://www.instagram.com/p/Cc12IKkMn6r/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWF1ZA==)

In a strong, aggressive gesture, a thick slab of concrete is penetrated by numerous razor blades. The placement these sharp components gives the impression that a single letter is rising out of the gray concrete foundation. The duality of this work might make the spectator feels tense and anxious. The structure is heavy on the eyes, because of the formal typographic shape it creates.³²⁰

Naqibullah, an artist from NCA also uses hard material in his artwork. He uses nails and bends them into different poses to illustrate the conflict in a battle for dominance. He shared his personal experiences of witnessing humans driven by greed, destroying others and fatalities. He strategically places his nails in aggressive attitude. He creates postures like fighting and tackling others through bending these nails.

³¹⁹ Elaine Woo, “The Link between Creativity and Mental Illness,” Getty, May 11, 2023,

<https://www.getty.edu/news/the-link-between-creativity-and-mental-illness/>.

³²⁰ Irfan Abdullah, Finding Order in Chaos, interview by Maryam Zamurd, August 29AD.

He was able to create a crisp image by arranging them neatly in order to give illusion of peace from a distance.³²¹

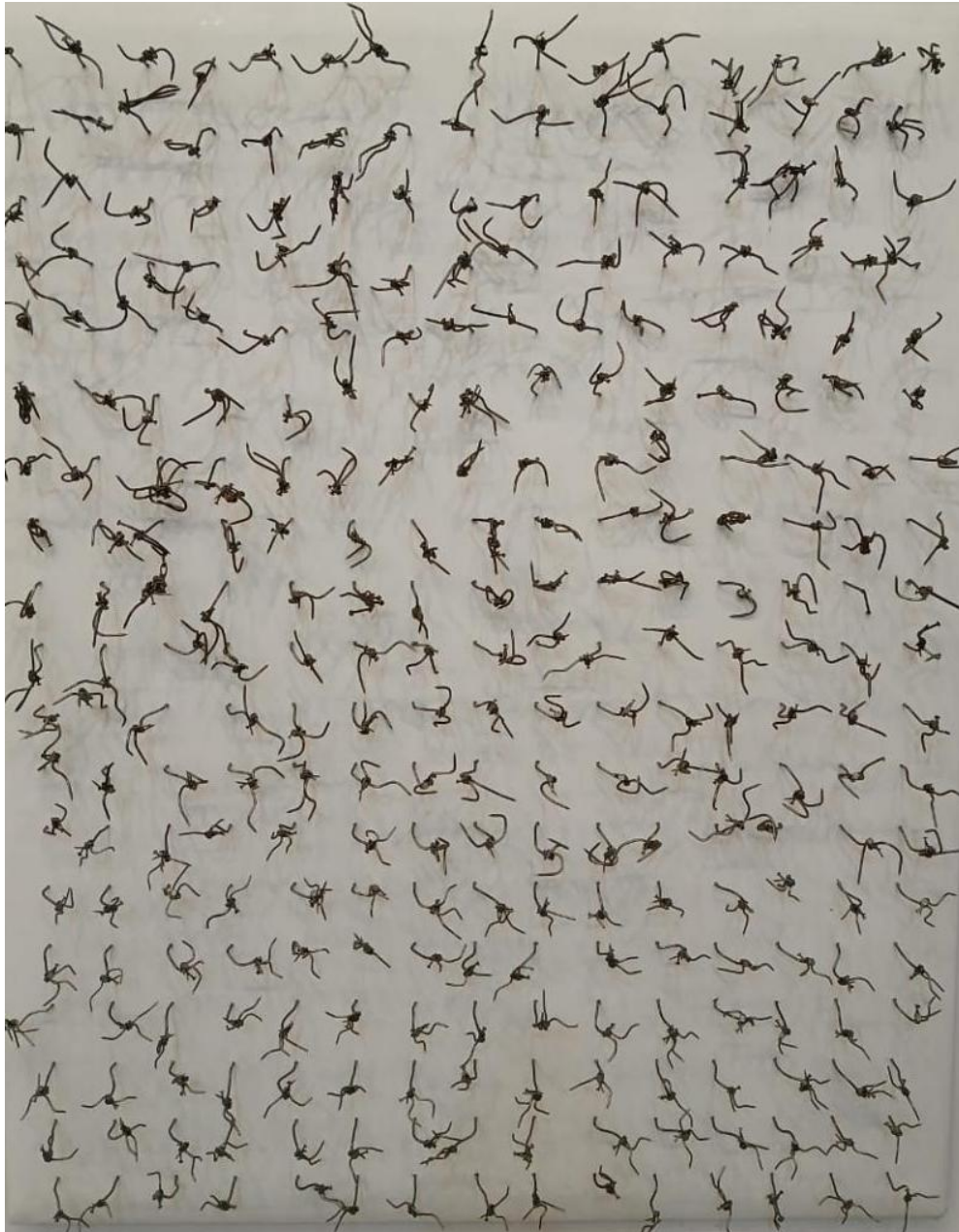


Figure 60 Naqibullah. "Chaos," 2025. Construction nails on HDF, Degree show NCA. (Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/DEZ5uK8I9Oq/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==)

Another artist Ali Hamza, portrayed the fragile yet complex nature of life in the painting lifeline. An intriguing visual representation of the idea of "lifelines" is created by the string painting's delicate white lines, which contrast sharply with the black canvas's harsh, inky expanse. The intricate network of overlapping channels formed by the carefully positioned and tensioned threads is evocative of the

³²¹ Naqibullah, Chaos, interview by Maryam Zamurd, January 9, 2025.

intricate web of ties that support and foster human life. While some strands are bold and unwavering, straight and true, others twist and swirl, coming together in a complex dance of resilience and fragility. In order to highlight the endless nature of our vital connections to one another, certain lines are abruptly cut short, while others extend past the canvas's edges.

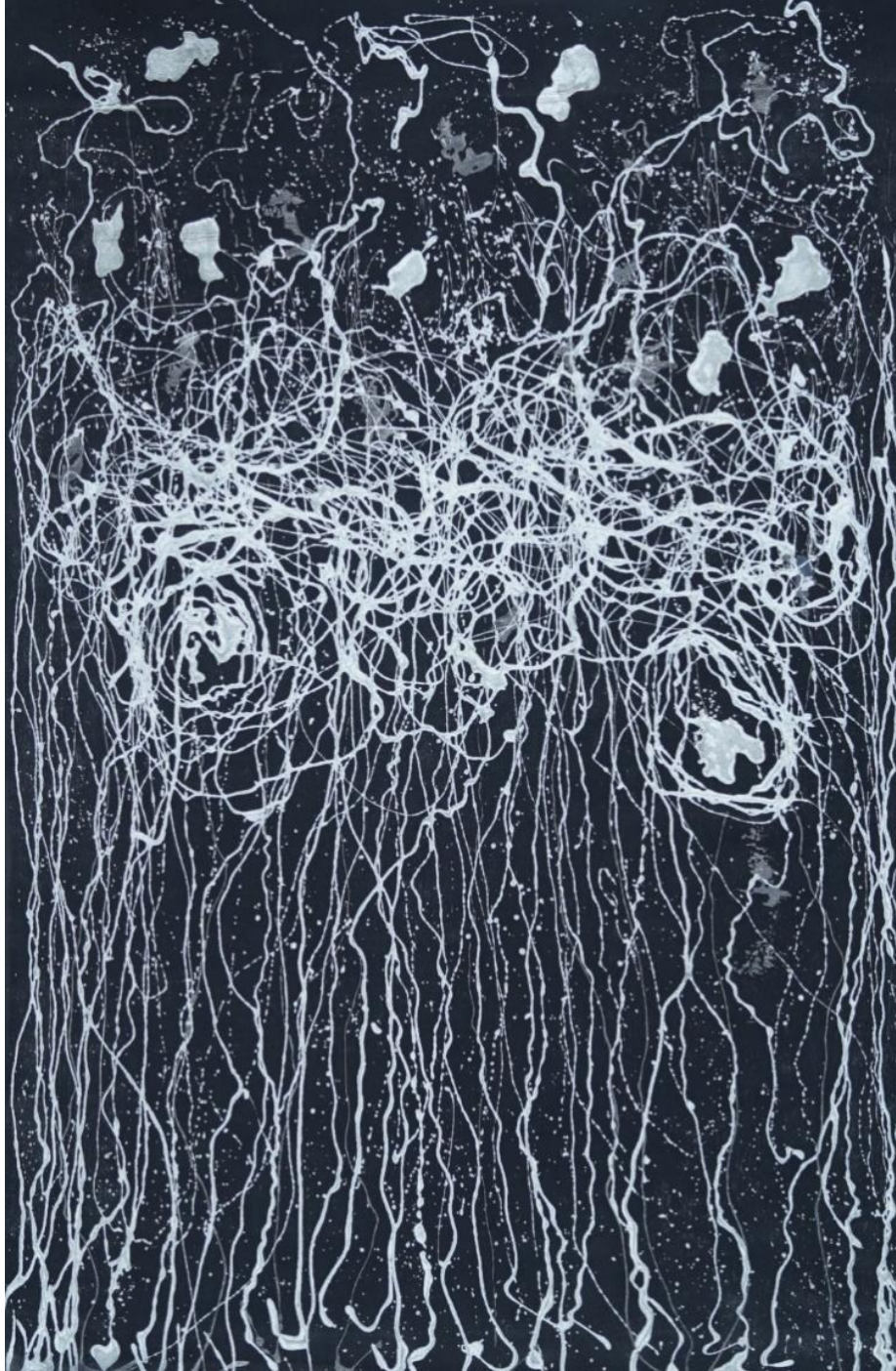


Figure 61 Ali Hamza. "Life lines," Emulsion on canvas.
(Source: https://www.instagram.com/alihamzaartist?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet&igsh=ZDNlZDc0MzIxNw==)

The destruction and renewal, the serenity and chaos, the two forces that coexist in every human heart. Nimra Ahmed from Punjab University. Lahore portrays new style of miniature painting. She combines sharp lines of missiles with the soft lines of the flower lily. This symbol represents broader conflict as well as internal chaos.³²²



Figure 62 Nimra Ahmed. "Serenity in chaos," 2025. Gouache and debossing on Wasli, Degree show PUCAD. (Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/DQtvVVTDPYP/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWF1ZA==)

Nietzsche believed that the purpose of art was identified by the Greeks. They processed their negative emotions through tragic plays. Catharsis of negative emotions through tragedy. Aristotle would

³²² Nimrah Ahmad, "Thesis Display Serenity in Chaos ," Instagram, 2025, https://www.instagram.com/p/DQtvVVTDPYP/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=a3ZrNDZ0Ym56ZzZs.

claim the tragedy to be essentially good. And Nietzsche agreed to it with an example of a good cry to lift your spirits. The type of catharsis that painters perform on their paintings. Nietzsche was researching the reasons behind the ancient Greeks' theatrical productions of these great tragedies and their social reasons. How that kind of art was helping them? This is a very fundamental part of human nature. A great hero's legacy lives on after he struggles for the truth, even after he passes away. People are motivated and energized by that and the art lives on.³²³

³²³ Uberboy Claps, "Nietzsche on Why Art Must Serve Life," YouTube, April 23, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8Z-i-VAmYU>.

CHAPTER 4

CHAOS TO CREATIVITY; AUTHOR'S PATHWAY OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS

In this chapter, the researcher discusses how chaos shapes the core of her artwork and serves as a crucial catalyst in her creative process. The profound path from chaos to creativity illustrates the intricacy of the human condition. The researcher will look at how chaos and disorder can spur creativity and inspiration. The researcher will aid from philosophical ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche. Every piece displayed below would elaborate a distinct interplay with chaotic elements and would demonstrate the transformation potential of accepting uncertainty. Through this investigation, researcher hope to shed light on the complex relationship between disorder and creativity. By depicting life's chaotic elements that enhance artistic expression and contribute to the creation of meaningful art rather than acting as barriers.

4.1. Creative journey of the Researcher

The researcher had a personal connectivity with the research topic. Her life events have always inclined towards chaos but she always found hidden beauty in it. Even during this research, the author was diagnosed with chronic illness of SLE. It left her bed-ridden for a year. It was the one of the most unstable years of her life. But it sparked more certainty and belief in her life.

Her body was changed forever and she couldn't work with all the materials like she used to. Despite that, she opted to work with entirely new medium, metal. She chose a steady material that was perfectly contradictory of her unsteady body.

This research for the past three years, has concentrated on the idea that "instability leads to stability and vice versa." This concept that has been recently reshaped to "chaos and order." The researcher tried her best to find the bridge between the two extremes. In her attempt of doing so, she found the insights of Fredrick Nietzsche. By holding up to his philosophies, she was able to grasp the Bridge between artist and the canvas.

The researcher believes that the interaction of instability and stability produces a recurrent dynamic that is essential to the development of creativity. Stability, which includes reliable routines, honed skills, and a comfortable sense of control over one's style, serves as the initial basis for artistic practice. Ironically, when this stability becomes unmanageable, it begins to stifle creative potential. Familiarity turns into a conceptual prison, stylistic patterns become rigid, and methods become repetitive. As creative tension diminishes and

predictability increases, the artist feels bored, alienated, or stagnant. These situations often lead to an internal crisis and an intentional attempt to create instability and chaos.

As we have already established through the previous chapters that In order to elicit unexpected results, artists purposefully disturb their own processes by experimenting with new materials, disorganizing their conceptual or physical workspace, disobeying rules, or imposing restrictions. Similar to historical cycles in which significant art movements have arisen as responses against earlier stable traditions, such as the shifts from Realism to Impressionism or from Modernism to Postmodernism. This self-induced instability signifies a necessary rupture. Chaos serves as generative raw material rather than failure during this unstable phase, which is marked by clumsy attempts, failed experiments, conflicting ideas, and emotional turbulence. The artist can identify new patterns, symbols, or gestures that would not appear under stable circumstances by focusing on this disorder for an extended period of time. This leads to the emergence of accidental forms and unique combinations.

Over time, this chaotic exploration turns into a new kind of stability, like a new direction, a new style, or a clearer set of ideas. This process psychologically represents the fluctuation between Apollonian order and Dionysian chaos, as well as between conscious technique and unconscious impulse, illustrating that artistic vitality emerges from the tension between these extremes. In the end, both stability and instability or in other words order and chaos are necessary. Stability without change becomes stagnant, and instability without structure becomes meaningless. The creative process works best when the two move in a rhythmic way, creating a cycle in which each stage leads to the next.

The artist came to the conclusion that artistic installations would best capture the essence of these ideas in order to implement the insights gained from this research.

The first step was burning the canvases. It was not just igniting them for the sake of fire but burning a part of oneself with it. Later, the fire became a medium, which the artist would carefully manage for her artworks. This gave the researcher a new identity that was lost in the previous fire. This interaction with fire represented the dichotomy of creation and destruction which is a part of the creative process. The usage of fire became more symbolic over time, leading to use of matchstick instead of the flame. It became an allegory of spark.

At the inception of the concept, painting was the first medium. Later it shifted to wood and wire sculptures. It also incorporated videography and now installations are part of the series. Each artwork demonstrates how the creative process can arise from seemingly incompatible conditions by reflecting and exploring the dynamic interplay between chaos and order.

4.2. RESEARCHER'S STUDIO WORK

The artist has always focused on the bridge between Chaos and Creativity. This connection was named 'Spark' by the artist. This spark is the fleeting moment of the creative process. It does not linger on but a person's life can be greatly affected by it. For the symbolic representation of a human's spark, the artist uses 'Matchsticks'. This tiny object has the power to provide light or ignite a fire. This volatile nature represents, transformation, potential of new beginning and consciousness. These moments of spark come instinctively, unplanned, and require one to compose them through intellect or order.

The series started with a relatively small painting, titled "*Haddiya*". It represents a matchstick wrapped in the gift bow. This moment was the epiphany. The realization of an ability that could not be comprehended via words but could only be expressed through art.



Figure 63 Maryam Zamurd. "*Tohfa*," 2022. Oil on canvas, 6 x 6 inches. Personal Collection.

In the figure 63, the artist displays the first realization of a creative spark. She presents realization as a crucial stage in the creative process. It is frequently a transient insight that is

small in size but has the power to have a significant impact. This fleeting "spark" is the beginning of creative thought and is an opportunity that needs to be recognized and seized before it disappears. This moment is significant because it has the capacity to spark creativity and an expression of the various ideas and feelings that exist within the person.



Figure 64 Maryam Zamurd. "Iztirab," 2022. Burnt canvas with matchstick plastered inside. 12 x 18 inches. Personal collection.

In the Figure 63, the artist communicated the aftermath of the psychological chaos. If one's internal, instinctive spark is not recognized or expressed, it could shape into internal conflict that reveals itself as psychological distress. The creative person frequently feels a

strong desire to express the dormant ideas inside of them. There is always a struggle to find different ways to ignite this spark. When the creative drive is not ignited, it can lead to a feeling of suffocation and emotional distress that is detrimental to one's mental health. This scenario was perfectly captured by the artist. She created the pivotal moment when that spark is left to suffocate.

The artist burns a canvas, and places a matchstick inside. The flame is burning but the moment is frozen in time. This was achieved by wrapping the matchstick in the cling sheet and placing it right near the center. The cling sheet is thin, fragile and see through. The matchstick inside is headless, all burnt, just like the canvas. The cling sheet represents the fake drape which one wears to suppress their emotions. However, the matchstick is surrounded by the burnt canvas which is loud and recognizable.



Figure 65 Maryam Zamurd. "Pull Siraat," 2023. Digital illustration, 12 x 36 inches. Personal Collection.



Figure 66 Maryam Zamurd. "Pull Siraat II," 2023. Wire sculpture, 6 feet. Personal collection.

In this artwork, the artist creates a profound scenario. She brings our attention to a moment in the creative process, which she labels as the "do or die" moment. It is the moment of truth, of decision. The moment where a person faces two choices: either move forward and face the fear of the unknown possibilities, or burn oneself with limitations of if(s) and but(s). The artist names the Figure 65 and 66, "Pull Sirat". A bridge of life and death according to Islamic doctrine. The pathway of believing and pulling yourself forward without looking down. A moment of trust in your choices. An acknowledgement of destination. And fear of no harm. The only way the *pull Sirat* can be crossed is by being honest to oneself.

The artist made a digital illustration and later converted it into a 6 feet wire sculpture. She sculpted a burnt, seemingly weak matchstick. A marble is set to cross the bridge from one edge to the other. Here marble presents the human, which has been shaped by the flames. Those flames are the human experiences based on their choices. The experiences that shaped their identity and life.



Figure 67 Maryam Zamud, "Jag mag," 2024. Digital illustration. 18 x 36 inches. Personal collection.

In the figure 67, artist presents a work titled 'Jag mag'. It refers to a firefly. In this work she juxtaposes a red cushion and a stick to make them appear as a matchstick from afar. A small firefly is resting on the cushion while its tail is lighting up the cushion.

The firefly is a powerful metaphor for the creative spark because it embodies the spirit of inspiration that arises at times of deep insight and clarity. The creative spark frequently emerges unexpectedly, illuminating in the darkness of turmoil and uncertainty. Much like the

transient yet vivid brilliance of a firefly. But in this artwork the artist is presenting a different idea. She is presenting a moment of rest, calm and motionlessness. Chaos should not always be taken as a token of destruction. Sometimes, the chaos is in the stillness. In the most comfortable of the places.

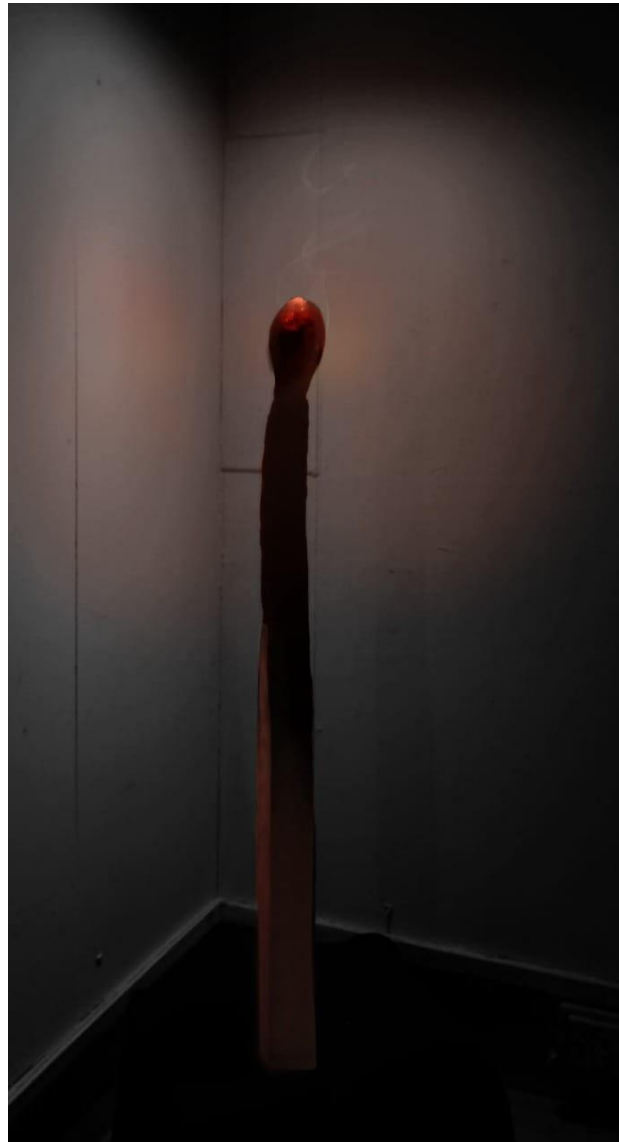


Figure 68 Maryam Zamurd. "Untitled," 2023. Wood Sculpture, 4 feet. Personal collection.

In figure 68, the artist carves 4 feet long wooden block and shapes it into a burnt, matchstick. Though burnt, it is standing steadily. This matchstick is a representation of perseverance at the face of helplessness. Persistence at the face hopelessness. It presents the possibility that even if the spark may have gone out, it still carries the capacity to inspire new artistic creations. It is the building block of something meaningful. The idea that even in the aftermath of something, there is always a lingering moment that can present itself as an

opportunity for something new and creative. It is a journey of how a spark could continue to ignite with continuous support and firm belief in oneself.

FINAL ART INSTILLATIONS (VIDEOS & SCULPTURES)

The idea of the creative spark has a contagious relational dimension. If two people who share similar interests get together in their creative endeavours, they can spark each other's passion and create a cooperative atmosphere where ideas are freely exchanged. This interpersonal interplay demonstrates how creativity is interconnected; exchanging thoughts and experiences can serve as a potent catalyst for additional artistic investigation. It illustrates the idea that creation is a collective experience that every individual shares.



Figure 69 Maryam Zamurd. "I am still alive," 2023. Videography. Personal collection.

In the figure 69, we can see different panels of the video installation. A burnt, seemingly dead matchstick gave a spark to the other matchstick, who is fresh and new. It helped it ignite. This exchange challenges the traditional notion of creativity, which is making something out of nothing. A response to nihilism. The closing line. However, the "red spark" suggests that chaos is not merely a dead end but rather a storehouse of unrealized kinetic potential.

The new match represents potentiality, a structure without energy. while the old match represents history, energy without structure. The moment of ignition theory holds that creativity requires a collision between the chaotic remnants of the past and the planned readiness of the future. Rather than going out, the fire moves. One idea to another, one spark to another. The artist represents life keeps on going while catching and moving on with our better versions.

The artwork "*Lamha*" (figure 70,71) captures the idea of awareness in the creative process and is a moving depiction of the epiphany. A brand-new matchstick is positioned perfectly still in the middle of a ticking clock. The dual nature of time and realization is reflected in this work, which highlights the importance of this ephemeral instant as the matchstick stays motionless. This brief but significant moment acts as a trigger, influencing the hours that follow and potential creative paths.



Figure 70 Maryam Zamurd. "*Lamha*," 2025. Kinetic installation, 2 x 2 feet. Personal Collection.

The addition of a mirror in the composition's centre enhances the artwork's narrative even more. The mirror serves as a reflective surface. It reflects light against a dark background that absorbs it. It symbolizing the relationship between awareness and contemplation. According to this dynamic, looking in the mirror and reflecting on oneself is the crucial point at which an individual recognizes that they are directly accountable for igniting their own creative spark.



Figure 71 Close up of "Lamha,"

In this situation, the matchstick is no longer the source of innovation but rather a symbol for possibility. The person who sees their reflection is the real source of the creative drive, not the matchstick. This insight highlights the notion that every individual has the capacity to realize their creative potential and start a journey of transformation. *"Lamha"* effectively communicates the core idea that self-awareness and personal accountability are necessary to the creative process, presenting introspection as a vital first step in realizing and utilizing one's natural artistic potential.

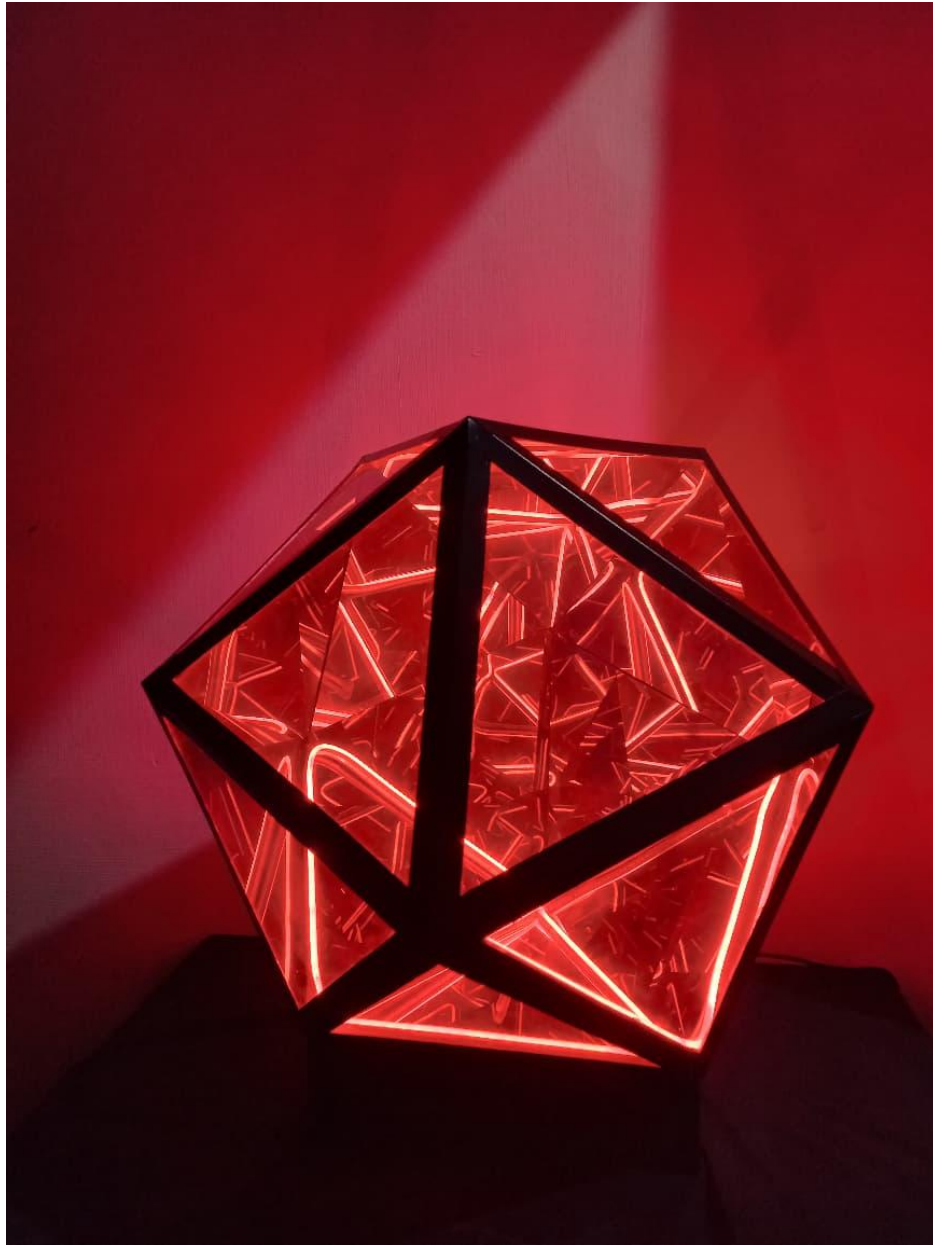


Figure 72 Maryam Zamurd, "Dellusion of Illusion," 2025. Icosahedron infinity box installation. Personal Collection.

In figure 72-74, The artist presents a crucial, contradictory threshold in the human psyche. In this installation, the exact point is depicted when emotions become so overwhelming that the intellect is compelled to enter a protective, suspended state of dormancy.

The artist presented this piece, which is housed inside an icosahedron, a twenty-sided geometric structure that symbolizes complex order and serves as an infinity mirror box on the inside. As soon as the viewer peers inside, they are met with an endlessly recursive barrage of red light. A broken, infinite maze of reflections is created by placing red strips of light inside the mirrored walls. A state of complete internal and psychological chaos is depicted by this

optical mirage. A mind overrun by confusion, the crippling fear of restriction, and the horrifying knowledge that there is no cognitive escape route. It is the structure of fear.



Figure 73 Inside view of "Delusion of Illusion."

However, the installation claims that this confined space has a hidden beauty. From a distance, the aggressive red-light multiplication transforms pure disorder into hypnotic, crystalline patterns. This implies that the distinct, intricate patterns of human personality are also produced by the same chaos that confines the self. The lone focal point, a single red matchstick, rests peacefully on the base of this optical storm, nearly engulfed by its surroundings. Its head is finely carved into the shape of a human brain rather than the typical sulfur bulb. The intellect is there, but it is drowned out by the roar of fear. It waits for the exact moment when the chaos aligns itself just enough to allow for a fresh ignition. And for that, one needs to embrace and get used to the process of chaos in order to change the perspective of viewing the remaining potential.

The "brain-match" isn't predicted to burn. It is in a state of stillness, waiting. It symbolizes the mind that has given in against the overpowering psychological chaos and is

going into a necessary hibernation. Importantly, it is almost impossible to find the reflection of this brain-matchstick inside the infinity box because it is obscured by the crimson, disorganized multiplication of the surrounding red strips. The intelligence is there, but it is drowned out by the cacophony of fear, waiting for the exact moment when the chaos will muzzle just enough to allow for a fresh ignition.



Figure 74 Inside closeup of "Delusion of Illusion."

In figure 75-77, The artist explores the moment before the ignition of any creative idea, which is loud, chaotic, overpowering, yet unique and beautiful.



Figure 75 Maryam Zamurd. "I think, therefore I am," 2025. Light sculpture, 6.5 feet. Metal and net. Personal Collection.

Following the research, Zamurd explores Nietzsche's concept of 'Will to power.' The artist created seven pieces made up of massive metal sculptures that each create a shape of a

burned matchstick. The artist achieved these shapes by hammering and smashing the metal into shape rather than using precise casting.

The sculptures' twisted, blackened forms depict the anguish of wood changing to carbon. This physical effort reflects the severity of ignition itself. The textured surfaces show that burning is a complex, chaotic process of metamorphosis, with a history of struggle contained in each twisted curve and scarred edge.



Figure 76 presenting motion sensor of "I think, therefore I am."

The installation is interactive. It transforms it from a static object into a dynamic entity, aligning with Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "Will to Power." When a person approaches the sculptures, they activate and light up, indicating their awareness of the person's presence by suddenly emitting energy. In Nietzschean terms, this signifies that the subject does not simply perish or accept passive destruction. The ignition serves as a visual cue that the object maintains its internal drive or will to exist, despite enduring damage. It implies that true power involves not only perfection but also resilience in chaos.



Figure 77 close up of "I think, therefore I am"

Through this, the artist herself experiences the process of reaching the final limit. True creativity must suffer a turbulent process of transformation before emerging as a beautiful reality, just as the universe went through seven days of turmoil to find its shape.

In figure 78-81, "Teen peher" (three dimensions) artist creates another video installation, which presents a meditative composition. Three burning matchsticks leaning against one another to form a fragile pyramid. As they burn, they create a microcosm of destruction and heat. However, the true conceptual weight of the piece lies in the duality of the shadows they cast.

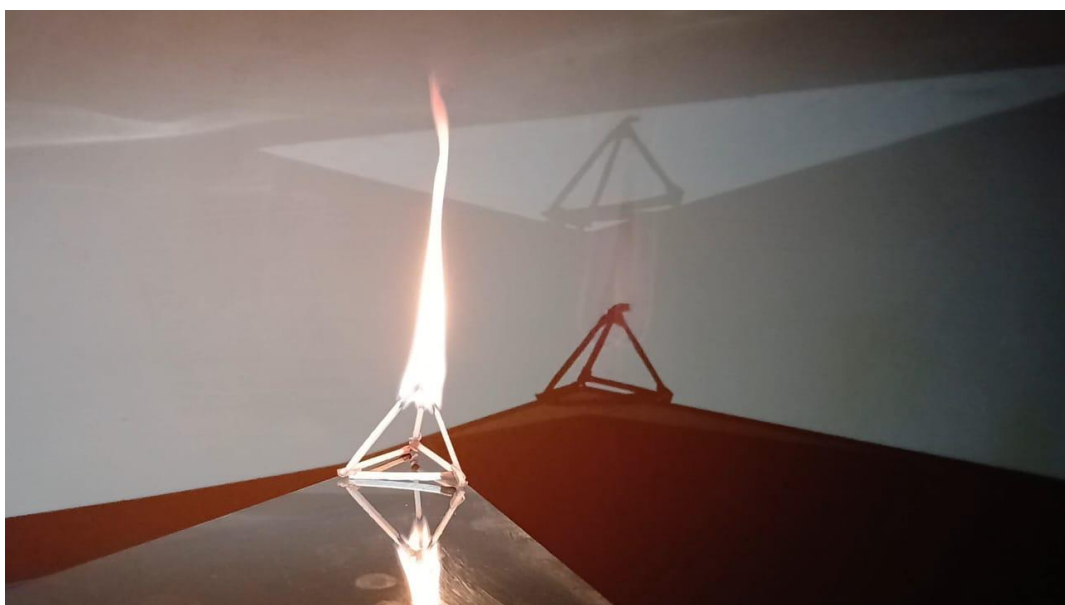


Figure 78 Maryam Zamurd. "Teen peher," 2025. Videography. Personal Collection.

The casting shadow thrown onto the wall behind hardly mimics the flickering dance of the flames, as if it is not really acknowledging the fire. Yet, looking upward at the reflective shadow, it tells a different story: it captures the bodies of the matchsticks but completely erases the fire. The reflection shows only the structure, stripping away the burning energy that consumes it.



Figure 79 Maryam Zamurd. "Teen peher," 2025. Videography scene II. Personal collection.

The artist presented the burning matchsticks as a stand metaphor for the Dionysian reality of the human psyche: the internal conflict. The shadow is representation of Apollonian reality. Even though its burning, it shows no sign of disorder until it is fully consumed.



Figure 80 Maryam Zamurd. "Teen peher," 2025. Videography scene III. Personal collection.

The difference between the reality and the two shadows, ironically paints a picture of connectivity. The shadow appears as a separate entity, is dependent on the castor of it. Much like how Apollo and Dionysus are connected yet independent.

the flame-less reflection represents the Apollonian mask—the composed, sanitized self-image we project to cope with our own volatility. It is the intellect imposing a calm order upon a burning psyche.



Figure 81 Maryam Zamurd. "Teen peher," 2025. Videography scene IV. Personal collection.

The artwork suggests that creativity is found in the gap between these two states. We must endure the chaos of the fire to exist, yet we rely on the cooling structure of the mind to give that chaos form and structure. The "personality" is not just the wood or the fire; it is the tension of burning while pretending, in the reflection, that we are whole.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the thesis, the researcher has reached to the conclusion that chaos and creativity have profound relationship. These two are connected and are the driving force behind the artistic process. Chaos often arises as a precursor to creativity. It serves as a catalyst that challenges artists to transcend conventional boundaries in the artwork. They symbolize contrasting qualities and represent dualities that exist in many cultures. This balance is essential for creative process. A bridge that surpasses the verbal expression. Many artists encounter similar journey of chaos during their creative process. Through the lens of dualities, it emphasizes the significance of finding balance amidst turmoil to foster true artistic expression. The acknowledgment that this experience often eludes verbal description underlines the deep, experiential nature of creativity that artists navigate throughout their journeys.

Though creativity is frequently embedded with trauma, chaos and mental disorder but the creative individual use chaos as an activation and synthesize it into an artwork whether the process is oblivious or conscious. This dynamic relationship between chaos and creativity implies that disorder can stimulate original ideas and creative output rather than acting as simple barriers.

This study has thoroughly studied the intricate relation of chaos and creativity with the frameworks of Nietzsche's philosophical perspective in contemporary art of Lahore. The author has discovered the response of Lahori artist during tumultuous times. Nietzsche's idea of 'will to power' is a vital source of creative expression, as it is the catalyst to embrace chaos and to embark on creative journey. This research also sheds light on the spectrum of human experiences of chaos both as suffering and a source of inspiration and growth. It lighted on the infinitesimal spark that becomes a bridge between the artist and their voices via different medium. A web of raw, untranslated emotions or drives as Nietzsche would phrase it.

The creative process is often deeply personal and unique to each artist. It involves navigating a complex blend of emotions, thoughts, and experiences that may be difficult to articulate. This inability to fully describe the process underscores its profound nature; it exists in a realm that transcends language. Artist possesses an intuitive understanding of this journey. It is through experimentation, reflection, and emotional engagement that they can tap into their creative potential. The journey between chaos and creativity is essential for understanding both extremes. Chaos provides the raw material and tension, while creativity offers a structured response to that chaos. This journey allows artists to connect deeply with their work, imbuing it with meaning and resonance. The ability of artists to turn chaos into creativity hinges on the

transformative journey they undertake. This process, though often inexpressible, is crucial for bridging the gap between the chaotic and the creative. Without this journey, both extremes lose their significance, highlighting the deep interconnection between struggle, exploration, and artistic expression.

In conclusion, the analysis had aided the philosophy of Nietzsche to understand the contemporary art practices of Lahore based artists and the chaos on their pallets. This study contributes to philosophical, psychological, religious and cultural understanding of interplay of chaos and creativity while navigating through their creative process.

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