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THE INFINITE BODY _____

In the autumn of 1887, Nietzsche jots down a plan to look at “modernity” through the analogy of nutrition and digestion:

Sensitivity unspeakably more irritable [...], the accumulation of disparate impression greater than ever – the cosmopolitanism of foods, literatures, newspapers, forms, tastes, even landscapes etc. the tempo of this influx a prestissimo; the impressions wipe each other out – weakening of digestive force results.¹

This is a variation on a familiar theme of decadence, or decadent self-reflection – too much, but of that too little. Here, a plethora of forms leads to a lack of formation, the prestissimo of modernity paralyzes its subjects, sensory overload produces numbness. There’s too much to act on, and hence no action – the paradoxes of the anti-Hegelian anti-dialectic in which *Aufhebung* is no longer possible.

But why all this under the sign of digestion? The theme pervades Nietzsche’s writing, and like many of Nietzsche’s important terms, it metamorphoses, accrues different implications, and serves various functions. The remainder of the fragment cited above – which recapitulates many themes that occur from Nietzsche’s early writings on – makes it clear that the stomach of modernity is an organ of the long nineteenth century, at least as Nietzsche perceives it:

A sort of assimilation to this inundation of impressions occurs: man unlearns to act; he only reacts to external excitements. ... Deep weakening of spontaneity: the historian, the critic, the analyzer, the interpreter, the observer, the collector, the reader – all reactive talents: all science! Artificial arrangement of his nature into a mirror: interested, but quasi only epidermally interested [...] (XII, p. 464)

Reacting to the increasing and increasingly rapid flood of data, Nietzsche’s modern man closes himself off, makes his body impermeable, offers not his interior but only his skin to the world, refusing osmosis or *Stoffwechsel*, the German term for metabolism which means, literally, change of stuff, a transformation of materials. In consequence, the metaphor of the mirror, for the longest time the master trope of self-reflection, becomes an image of surface deflection.

I will argue that in his figures of digestion, Nietzsche proposes a new economy of the body’s relationship to the world, one that would complement and partially replace the various models of vision that had dominated modernity’s discourse of embodied and disembodied subjectivity.² Thus, Nietzsche’s reflections on the alimentary system frequently appear in contrast to visually inflected philosophemes. Here is a famous

fragment from the Will to Power collection: 'When ... Kant says: "Two things remain forever worthy of reverence," that is, the starry heaven and the moral law, 'today we should sooner say: "Digestion is more venerable."' ³

The aphorism is a typically Nietzschean provocation, of the sort that has led Eagleton to blame Nietzsche for 'more than a smack of vulgar Schopenhauerian physiologism', ⁴ and Beardsworth speaks of 'Nietzsche's physiological explication of digestive systems' in ominous tones as 'desperately inadequate, allowing for the worst appropriations'. He elaborates: 'To think of the truth of spirit simply in terms of the finite body prepares for (promises) a metaphysics of selection.' ⁵

I want to show that Nietzsche does no such thing, and he does no such thing on several levels. First of all, it is precisely in Nietzsche's tropes of digestion that the body becomes everything but finite. Nietzsche's digesting body is permeable, unstable, invaded and inhabited by other (parasitic) bodies, constantly busy 'changing stuffs' which will in turn enter other bodies: 'a corpse is a beautiful thought for the worm' (KSA, I, p. 188). In classical terms, this is no longer 'a' body at all, but a dynamic process. Hence, the idea of a self-contained and self-containing body is relegated to the realm of the fantasmatic. Just as importantly, when Nietzsche asserts that "'spirit" itself is, after all, nothing but a kind of metabolism' (KSA, VI, p. 282), he leaves it open whether this 'kind of' marks the relationship between spirit and digestion as one of similarity, analogy or identity. In the latter case, we would indeed deal with an ultimately unproductive reduction; in the first case, he would merely repeat a long tradition, for the analogy between eating and reading itself is far from new: 'Traditionally, knowledge or truth is like food: it nourishes the soul. This association of food and knowledge is ancient and, I suppose, ubiquitous; it all began, after all, when Adam and Eve ate the apple.' ⁶

The analogy between reading and *Stoffwechsel*, while less ubiquitous or prominent, is ancient as well, ⁷ but it remains largely restricted to analogy, and to an analogy that has always focused on nutrition rather than on the two forms of expulsion that are also part of (failed or successful) digestion, excretion and vomiting. Attuned to the limits of the trope, Socrates already pointed out that we can examine food without eating it, but we cannot examine an idea without thinking it:

When you buy food and drink, you can carry it away from the shop or warehouse in a receptacle, and before you receive it into your body by eating or drinking you can store it away at home and take the advice of an expert. ... But knowledge cannot be taken away in a parcel. When you have paid for it you must receive it straight into the soul. ⁸

In this light, what is important in Nietzsche is precisely his break with a tradition of tropes that (a) conceives of the analogy of food and thought as a mere question of incorporation or ingestion; (b) remains indebted to the matter/spirit distinction that structures and limits it; and (c) sees thought as the conscious but materially unobservable analogue to the unconscious but empirically available process of digestion.

THE KINDS OF DIGESTION

So what 'kind of' digestion is thought? Nietzsche's anti-Kantian quip cited above would be of little interest if it were not much more than a provocation. Nietzsche is, I think, quite serious when he claims that digestion is 'more' venerable than the contemplation of morality and starry skies 'today' – the historicization of venerable objects is part of genealogy, and genealogy's first task is to get rid of all 'forevers', most of all when it comes to moral law. 'Today', that is, in the second half of the nineteenth century, 'digestion' is venerable first of all because it concerns the maintenance

and transformation of the body; it is the object of biology and medicine, the new master disciplines that – especially, but not only in the wake of Darwin – threaten to displace philosophy in articulating what it means to be human. For Nietzsche, who more than anything wants to rescue philosophy, be it even at the cost of transforming it into a science of shit, digestion is foremost a tremendously useful polysemic metaphor that he is ready to re-literalize whenever necessary. It covers chewing as well as defecating, mouth, teeth, stomachs, intestines, the rectum and all the considerable tropic potential these body parts offer; it implies the pleasures of both incorporation and excorporation, the chemical transformation of food-stuff into body-stuff and hence, ‘today’, the transformation of food into self – quite literally.

Ideally, digestion is a noiseless, tasteless, non-odorous, invisible and intangible operation that will yield its positive results in the secrecy of one’s body, offering to a reluctant contemplation only its offensive waste product – one of those things that one only notices if it goes wrong. One should also keep in mind, though, that nineteenth-century medicine attributed a great number of illnesses to digestive disturbances, many of them fatal. Hospital records from the period show that as many of twenty percent of both in- and outpatients were diagnosed with some form of ‘digestive disease’.⁹ Afflictions like infant diarrhoea, cholera and typhoid, black vomit and yellow fever claimed so many victims in the newly industrialized society that some doctors began to theorize that the stomach was the cause of most or even all diseases, a suspicion that gave rise to the conception of a new medical subdiscipline, gastroenterology. Thus, the term ‘digestion’ was not simply the semi-comical topic it is now – rather it evoked matters of life and death. That relative gravity may play a part in Nietzsche’s pre-occupation, but it hardly explains it. Certainly, and often

enough, Nietzsche talks about digestion in conjunction with his life-long desire for physical health, but even then its ramifications spread beyond mere bodily maintenance. In 1872, for example, Nietzsche writes to Erwin Rohde: ‘Oh, how much I long for health. As soon as one plans something that shall last longer than oneself, one becomes grateful for every good night, for every warm ray of sunshine, indeed for every well-regulated act of digestion.’¹⁰ Here, digestion – that is, the digestion that makes itself known, in other words indigestion – is in conflict with writing. It detracts from creation, much like history or too much memory in ‘Use and Abuse’, and the two are connected in more than one way: ‘Each historical period,’ Nietzsche notes in 1873, ‘needs as much history as it can displace [*umsetzen*] into flesh and blood, via digestion; so that the strongest and most powerful one can bear the most history. But what if weak times are being overcrowded by it! What digestive troubles, what fatigue and listlessness!’¹¹

No defecation, no philosophy. Those who write before they digest are worthy of only scorn: ‘there are dyspeptic authors who write only then when they cannot digest something, if it even got stuck in their teeth’.¹² The philosophy of indigestion yields nothing new: ‘all prejudices stem from the intestines’.¹³ The most local, as is its wont, interferes with the most global; another way to say this is that bad digestion creates the wrong kind of narcissism. In the course of his career, however, Nietzsche learns to respect illness; he never ceases to long for health, but later his gratitude extends to the pains of retention as well as to the pleasures of excretion (writing or defecation). Quick digestion is no longer the ideal – in its place, we will have chewing the cud, multiple stomachs, and the subtlety to which all pains can give rise – provided you recover from them. Hence this homage to illness, from the introduction to *The Gay Science*:

'Gay Science': that means the saturnalia of a spirit that has patiently withstood a terrible, long pressure – patiently, strictly, coldly, without submitting, but without any hope – and which now all of a sudden is attacked by hope, by the hope for health, by the drunkenness of health. (KSA, III, p. 345)

This terrible long pressure I want to read as the pressure of indigestion – a perverse reading, perhaps, but it is Nietzsche who, in the same preface, links his spiritual illness to diet:

... that pathologically clairvoyant misanthropy, this fundamental restriction to that which is bitter, sour, and painful in knowledge (Erkenntnis), as prescribed by he nausea that had slowly grown out of a careless mental diet and pampering – called romanticism ... (KSA, III, p. 346).

Which brings us to mental indigestion, the feeling of over-fullness that plagues decadent self-perception, and to the question of how to digest romanticism and idealism – that is, how to write *The Birth of Tragedy*, and, more importantly, how to proceed afterwards. Digesting romanticism means leaving *The Birth of Tragedy* behind, and, eventually, losing faith in all literature, tragic or romantic. They are all too dainty, food that spoils one's stomach, that is to say one's mind; life is precisely not literature, for literature, as a meal, is not substantial enough. As Nietzsche will explain in *Ecce Homo*: 'A strong meal is easier to digest than a small one. ... One needs to know the size of one's stomach. For the same reason, those lengthy meals are to be avoided, the ones I call interrupted sacrificial feasts. No snacks, no coffee – coffee darkens (verdüstert) the spirit' (KSA, VI, p. 281).

The image of Nietzsche speedily tearing huge chunks off the body of philosophy and stuffing them into his mouth seems apt enough, and he certainly seems to have the requisite size of stomach; *The Birth of Tragedy*

itself was already a digestive act of heroic proportions, incorporating Greek Tragedy, Romantic Theory, a century of modern aesthetics, and a good helping of Wagner (the latter, however, will sit heavily in Nietzsche's stomach for years to come).

One needs to know the size of one's stomach: the biggest stomach, however, is not necessarily the best one. *The Case of Wagner*, Nietzsche explains, must be read as 'an attack on the German nation which, with regard to spiritual things, becomes ever more lazy and poor in instinct; which, with an enviable appetite, continues to nourish itself with contradictions and swallows down faith as well as scientific method, "Christian love" as well as anti-Semitism, the will to power (to the "Reich") as well as the gospel of humility, without any digestive complaints' (KSA, VI, pp. 357–8). Since it is then hard to imagine a more voluminous stomach, a richer diet, or a better regulated digestion than the German one, there must be virtue in indigestion, too, and even in the aforementioned nausea – one must know the size of one's stomach, but one must also know when to throw up what is already inside: Romanticism, Wagner, both Anti-Semitism and Christian Love, for example, all those overly sweet stuffs that, if digested, will make you lazy and interfere with your instinct. Accordingly, Zarathustra counsels a more fastidious approach to diet:

All-satisfiedness which knows how to taste everything – that is not the best taste! I honour the refractory, fastidious tongues and stomachs, which have learned to say 'I' and 'Yea' and 'Nay'. To chew and digest everything, however – that is the genuine swine-nature!¹⁴

Zarathustra here foreshadows Freud who – most concisely in his brief and brilliant essay on Negation – will explain in greater detail why subjectivity – to say 'I' – is to say 'yea' and 'nay' to the things that go into our mouths,¹⁵

but Nietzsche, I think, here at least, is not so much interested in how subjectivity in general is constituted but in which specific subjectivities reflect but also emerge from the food choices we make or are able to make. It is precisely the refusal to differentiate and to individualize one's diet that characterizes modern man: 'The nutrition of modern man – he knows how to digest much, yes, almost everything – that is his sort of ambition: he would be of a higher order, however, if he were not capable of exactly that; homo pamphagus is not the most refined species' (KSA III, 152).

To eat fastidiously (with self-knowledge and self-respect) is not the same as to eat timidly, or without passion:

'He who learneth much unlearneth all violent cravings' – that do people now whisper to one another in all the dark lanes. 'Wisdom wearieth, nothing is worth while; thou shalt not crave!' – this new table found I hanging even in the public markets. ... The weary-o'-the-world put it up, and the preachers of death and the jailer ...: – Because they learned badly and not the best, and everything too early and everything too fast; because they ate badly: from thence hath resulted their ruined stomach: For a ruined stomach, is their spirit: it persuadeth to death! For verily, my brethren, the spirit is a stomach! Life is a well of delight, but to him in whom the ruined stomach speaketh, the father of affliction, all fountains are poisoned. (KSA, IV, pp. 257–8).

Bland diets, then, are for ruined spirits, even though it is hard to say whether it is the diet that ruins the mind or the mind that determines the diet. Christians and last men will graze like the herd animals they are, but you cannot, after all, expect the lambs to develop a taste for raw meat – much less their own – even though self-digestion is surely the ultimate challenge here. Enlightenment and democracy are poor philosophies of nutrition

precisely because they prescribe the same food for all – Nietzsche, in turn, wants to conceive of *Mündigkeit* (the Kantian term for enlightened autonomy that evokes the etymologically unrelated German word for mouth, *Mund*) in a whole new way. If Nietzsche as nutritional counsellor appears to give contradictory advice, then that is precisely because digestion and appetite are highly personal matters. If 'the spirit is a stomach', then subjectivity is digestion; as such, spirit is removed from sight and enters the mysterious realm of the inner workings of the body that must conceal itself from man in order to allow him to think of himself as spirit:

Does not nature keep nearly everything secret from [man], even about his own body, in order to ban him and lock him into a proud, delusional consciousness, detached from the windings of his entrails, the swift flow of his bloodstream, the intricate quivering of his fibres! (KSA, I, p. 877)

The proud delusional consciousness, I suggest, is idealism's scopically organized self-consciousness that blocks out everything that does not lend itself to vision or intuition. Nietzsche's remetaphorization of spirit as stomach – that is, as an organ involved in a dynamic process that is for the most part unconscious – is an attempt to end the reign of idealism which conceived of spirit as specular. Spirit as stomach, in other words, erases spirit as intuition, *Anschauung*, and the aesthetics of digestion replace the aesthetics of imagination. Insistence on the invisibility of most bodily matter breaks up the metaphoric structure in which tropes of vision dominated interior spaces. Digestion emerges as the new *Aufhebung*, *manqué*.

DIGESTION WITHOUT INGESTION _____
Nietzsche is not alone in sensing that modernity is a matter of stomach. Huysmans' A Rebours, decadence's representative if

controversial novel, is as obsessed with food and digestion as Nietzsche's dietary philosophies, but in a very different way. *A Rebours* is the story of the Duc Jean des Esseintes, the last offspring of a declining dynasty, who, disgusted by the vulgarity of modern Paris, retreats into a mansion in the countryside to devote himself in isolation to the radical aestheticization of life:

artifice was the distinguishing characteristic of human genius. As he was wont to remark, Nature has had her day; she has finally exhausted, through the nauseating uniformity of her landscapes and her skies, the sedulous patience of men of refined taste. ... There is no doubt whatever that this eternally self-replicating old fool has now exhausted the good-natured admiration of all true artists, and the moment has come to replace her, as far as that can be achieved, with artifice.¹⁶

In the second chapter, we find des Esseintes, shortly before his departure to Fontenay-aux-Roses, serving the famous black dinner in celebration of his newly achieved impotence, and its description is too fabulous not to quote at length:

From black-rimmed plates they ate turtle soup, Russian rye bread, ripe Turkish olives, caviar, salted mullet roe, smoked Frankfurt black puddings, game in gravies the colour of liquorice and boot-blackening, truffled sauces, chocolate caramel creams, plum puddings, nectarines, preserved fruits, mulberries, and heart-cherries; from dark-coloured glasses they drank the wines of Limmagne and Rousillon, of Tenedos, Val den Penas, and Oporto, and, after the coffee and the walnut cordial, they enjoyed kvass, porters, and stouts. The invitations to this dinner to mark the temporary demise of the host's virility were written out in a form similar to that used to announce a funeral. (p. 12)

This is the food you eat when you can't fuck; beautiful but monochrome, itself already a quotation of an early eighteenth-century meal, and, importantly, a feast for the eyes rather than for the palate. The meal is both hypersensual and strangely incomplete precisely because it is a bit too clever – served at the kind of party to which you want to be invited, but not the place to go if you're hungry. If des Esseintes is soon 'filled with contempt for those childish, outmoded displays' (ibid.), it is, I think, because he still approaches food through sight and vision; he still is – and will remain for much of the novel – devoted to life as spectacle, be it in gilding and jewelling his tortoise (which promptly dies) or in growing only those flowers that least resemble flowers. Des Esseintes still thinks that he can create a new self by recreating what the self sees. To pitch himself 'against nature' still means that nature that is external to him. He has, in other words, not yet given any thought to digestion. But he will.

In the course of the novel, des Esseintes moves from visual spectacle through literary gourmandise to those extravagant exercises in smell that first move his experiment away from experience gained through vision alone. Towards the end, he returns to the question of food, a kind of food that is as radically de-visualized as possible. It is this food – its digestion – which will make an end of his aesthetic career while allowing him his greatest triumph.

Nausea overtakes des Esseintes in chapter thirteen. Not surprisingly (Nietzsche would say), the trouble starts with meat, but it doesn't end there:

The sight of the meat which had just then been placed on the table made his gorge rise; he had it removed, ordered boiled eggs, attempted to eat some fingers of bread dipped in egg but they stuck in his throat; waves of nausea kept coming over him; he

drank a few drops of wine which stung his stomach like red-hot needles. ... He tried sucking a lump or two of ice to soothe his nausea, but to no avail. (p. 134)

Aptly enough, his aversion also marks the moment where his vision begins to fail him:

Never had he felt so apprehensive, so unwell, so ill at ease; on top of everything else, his vision became blurred; he was seeing things double, as though they were revolving; soon he lost his sense of distance; his glass seemed a league away; he kept telling himself he was suffering from sensory illusions and yet he could not shake them off. (pp. 134–5)

This is a contemporary portrayal of advanced neurasthenia, but the relationship between stomach and vision is not merely a medical one; it is also metaphysical. If des Esseintes can no longer keep in food, he has also lost his ability to digest the drugs that induce different kinds of visions: 'In the past he had tried using opium and hashish to generate mental fantasies, but these two substances had brought on vomiting and intense nervous disturbances' (p. 140) – again vision is pitched against the stomach, and the stomach wins.

Des Esseintes' first response is to externalize the process his body is no longer capable of; the anti-natural impulse of aestheticism joins with nineteenth-century science and turns to a machine to do the body's work:

He dispatches his servant to Paris in search of [a] precious piece of equipment and, following the manufacturer's instructions, he himself showed the cook how to chop the sirloin into tiny pieces, put these without any liquid into the metal pot with a slice of leek and one of carrot, then screw down the lid and set the whole thing cooking in a double-boiler for four hours. At the end of this time, you squeezed the shreds of meat and drank a spoonful of the cloudy, salty

juice which lay in the bottom of the pot. As you did so you felt something like warm bone-marrow, like a velvety caress, slide down your throat. (p. 144)

This machine is aptly called 'the sustainer', but after some brief initial respite, the prosthesis fails: 'His nervous dyspepsia, which had, initially, been pacified, returned; and then, that concentrated nourishment was so binding and caused such an irritation of the bowel that Des Esseintes was obliged to discontinue its use forthwith' (p. 164). Pre-digestion is not enough; the novel's climax – and des Esseintes' final, if short-lived, triumph – arrives only when his physician, prescribing a peptone enema, allows him to circumvent his stomach altogether:

The operation was successful, and Des Esseintes could not forbear from tacitly congratulating himself on the event, which was in a sense the crowning achievement of the life he had created for himself; his predilection for the artificial had now – without his even desiring it – achieved its supreme fulfillment; one could go no further; to take nourishment in this manner was unquestionably the ultimate deviation from the norm that anyone could realize. (pp. 170–1)

Des Esseintes enjoys a delightful interlude of anal feeding which includes written menus: 'Cod-liver oil: 20g, Beef tea: 200g, Burgundy 200 g, yolk of egg: 1' (p. 171). However, the cure works rather too well, and soon 'the doctor succeeded in controlling the vomiting and in getting him to swallow, by the normal route, a syrupy punch containing powdered meat, which had a vague aroma of cocoa that pleased his actual palate' (p. 172). The return of intra-body digestion marks the end of (des Esseintes' mode of) aestheticism:

Without giving him time to draw breath, [his physician] declared that he had set about restoring the digestive functions as rapidly

as possible, and it was now essential to tackle the neurosis which was not in any sense cured, and would require years of diet and medical care. He then added that ... he must abandon this solitary existence, return to Paris, get back into ordinary life, and try to enjoy himself, in short, like other people. (p. 173)

Mind and food, as Nietzsche had maintained, are inextricably linked: to digest badly is to live badly, but to live 'like other people' is the last thing that would appeal to des Esseintes' stomach (or rather it appeals only to his stomach). The novel's reactionary ending leaves no room for a new model of digestion; the failure is absolute. Des Esseintes' earlier quoted premise that 'there is not one single invention of [nature]...that the human spirit cannot create' founders on his belly. In his progressive externalization of digestion, des Esseintes bears an uncanny resemblance to Nietzsche's modern man who, as quoted at the beginning, 'defends [himself] against taking something in, taking it in deeply, to 'digest it' – weakening of digestive force results.' Nietzsche would also have predicted that the ideological regression (in Huysmans' case, a regression to Catholicism) is one of the routes such weakness may seek to cure itself.

FROM METAPHYSICS TO METAPHYSIOLOGY
Digestion is so attractive a theme for Nietzsche (and for the long fin-de-siècle in general) because it serves so many functions at once: as a process that encompasses transformation, retention and excretion, it stands for an unsentimental approach to history and memory; for Nietzsche especially, this implies the digestion of historicism itself. As a metaphor that retains its close proximity to the body that generates it, it allows Nietzsche to raise the question of the philosopher's body which had been neglected for millennia.¹⁷ As *A Rebours* shows, the fertility of the digestive

metaphor depends precisely on the degree to which it is not quite a metaphor, in other words, to the degree to which philosophy can retain, or – forgive me – digest, physiology. The philosophical physician, the need for whom Nietzsche stresses so memorably in *Beyond Good and Evil*, is, of course, a philosopher tout court, even if he talks of the body as if he meant it. If, as Nietzsche suggests in *The Gay Science*, 'philosophy until now has only been an interpretation of the body and a misunderstanding of the body' (KSA, III, p. 347), then all new medicine will be in the service of a new hermeneutic, and precisely not the other way around.

This is not to say that Nietzsche's involvement with 'the body' is a pretence; with him, it is always the body which thinks – not so much in dictating thought (that, too – why would Nietzsche's beloved sausages be any different from a handful of poppy seed in this regard?), but in silently limiting its possibilities. The decadent desire to submit this body to purely aesthetic considerations, appealing as it may remain to (some of) us, is doomed to failure because that very desire is always already also a bodily one – just as surely as the desire to submit the body to purely empirical study is doomed because our investments in our corporeality are always already aesthetic. This double bind remains the crux of all emancipations that, paradoxically, seek to ground themselves in anti-essentialism.

The challenge then – a challenge at which Nietzsche may fail often enough, but which he articulates with unprecedented and, to my mind, unrepeated clarity and urgency – is to stay with matter without sliding into vulgar materialism; to resist the twin lures of metaphor and literalization (the empty formalism of analogy as well as the reductions of biologism); to think thinking as a bodily process, but one for which the sciences of the body have no adequate language; to move from metaphysics to metaphysiology, a process

where the meta marks both an 'after' and a 'beyond'. ■

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NOTES

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe* in 15 Bänden (KSA), hg. Giorgio Colli und Mazzino Montinari (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1988), pp. 12, 464. All translations are my own.
2. Cf. Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990); Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
3. KSA, XII, 317.
4. Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 234.
5. Richard Beardsworth, 'Nietzsche, Freud and the Complexity of the Human: Towards a Philosophy of Digestion', *Tekhnema*, 3 (Spring 1996), pp. 113–40 (tekhnama.free.fr/3Beardsworth.htm).
6. Robert Durling, 'Deceit and Digestion in the Belly of Hell', in *Selected Papers from English Institute, vol. 2, Allegory and Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1981), pp. 61–93 (p. 61).
7. See Durling on Seneca, p. 62.
8. Plato, 'Protagoras', trans. by W.K.C. Guthrie, in *Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Series 71 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 314a–b.
9. Cf. Jeremy Hugh Baron, 'Gastroenterology and Hepatology – The Diagnostic Data', *Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine*, 67, no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 18–24: 19–20.
10. 'An Erwin Rohde, March 29th, 1872', in *Friedrich Nietzsche: Briefwechsel: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, hg. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1975), Abt. 2, Bd. 2.
11. KSA, VII, p. 637.
12. *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, KSA, II, p. 441.
13. *Ecce Homo*, KSA, VI, p. 281.
14. *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, KSA, IV, p. 421. English translation from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, trans. Thomas Common, The Modern Library (New York: Random House, n.d.).
15. And Freud, as so often, is foreshadowed here by Hegel's thoughts on food and self. See Simon Richter, 'Hegel and the Dialectics of Digestion', *Nineteenth Century Prose* 25 (Spring, 1998).
16. Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, tr. by Margaret Mauldon (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 20.
17. For illuminating commentaries on exceptional cases, see Michel Onfray, *Le ventre des philosophes* (Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle, 1989).