

**Dimitra-Mimika Koulaxidi: Benjamin on Nietzsche's Aestheticism, Tragedy and Trauerspiel in the Whirlpool of Art  
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Philosophical criticism pertaining to works of art has engendered unabated controversy with regards to the consolidation of its appropriate methodology. Walter Benjamin, in his 1925 *Habilitationsschrift The Origin of the German Mourning Play (Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels)*, embarks on precisely such an endeavor, handling Germany's theatrical baroque dramas as its subject matter. His critical historical-philosophical approach unfolds in a pivotal manner, one of his cardinal influences being Friedrich Nietzsche's seminal *The Birth of Tragedy*. Nonetheless, Benjamin distances himself from the famous Apollonian-Dionysiac interplay diptych for he considers this Nietzschean discovery as inadequate in accounting for the historical sensitivity of ancient Greek tragedy's character, succumbing, thus, to aestheticism. My talk shall be articulated in three intertwined parts: (i) the juxtaposition of Benjamin's and Nietzsche's interpretations of tragedy's *status* with a coextensive attempt to evaluate the former's objections to the latter's purported aestheticism, (ii) Benjamin's comprehension of allegory, in contrast to symbol, as the means of baroque view's expression and, finally, (iii) an endeavor to encompass their respective standpoints to the broader inquiry of the aesthetic experience's specificity.