BEYOND TRUTH AND FALSITY: AN ANALYSIS OF PART ONE OF NIETZSCHE'S
BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

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by

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Introduction

This thesis is a close textual reading of the preface and first Part of Beyond Good and Evil. Beyond Good and Evil is not a typical philosophical work and, as such, is more in need of a close analysis. Interpreters such as Arthur Danto have claimed that Nietzsche’s aphorisms can be read in any order and from any period of Nietzsche’s writing. Danto says, “any given aphorism or essay might as easily have been placed in one volume as in another without much affecting the unity or structure of either…although there undoubtedly was a development in Nietzsche’s thought and in his style, his writings may be read in pretty much any order, without this greatly impeding the comprehension of his ideas.”1 It is one of the goals of the present work to show that Beyond Good and Evil contains a complex of themes that can only be properly understood by considering the manner in which these themes are presented as a stylistic unity that displays Nietzsche’s approach to philosophy. This thesis is designed to show that Part One of Beyond Good and Evil carefully introduces and develops a methodology for evaluating philosophical positions and that the order of the sections is essential in understanding how Nietzsche introduces and develops his philosophy. The majority of the present work is dedicated to the close, section by section analysis that clarifies the underlying themes and connections that show Beyond Good and Evil is thematically developed and coherent.

There have been two close textual readings of Beyond Good and Evil. Laurence Lampert and Douglas Burnham present works that discuss every section of the entire book. However, each of these attempts has a major drawback. In Reading Nietzsche Burnham is more concerned with finding themes that run throughout Nietzsche’s corpus than those that
make *Beyond Good and Evil* a coherent whole. On the other hand, in *Nietzsche’s Task* Lampert tries to show underlying themes within *Beyond Good and Evil*, but only does so by making an argument that, on my reading, contradicts the central argument of the first Part of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Burnham and Lampert both provide analyses of the entire book. Although the breadth of their analyses is helpful to a casual reader of Nietzsche, their analyses of the first Part of the book are lacking in depth. Burnham’s and Lampert’s attempts to interpret Part One are limited by length considerations. Both of them had to interpret the rest of the book. The present work focuses solely on Part One and therefore presents a more detailed analysis. By this I simply mean that in the attempt to provide an analysis of every section of the book, Burnham and Lampert often gloss over individual sections and important metaphors and themes are not fully developed or ignored altogether. By focusing solely on the first Part of *Beyond Good and Evil*, this thesis intends to show that the coherent themes in Part One are more detailed and nuanced than understood by either Burnham or Lampert.

Burnham attempts to provide a “helpful guide and introduction to Nietzsche, and particularly helpful for someone attempting to read *Beyond Good and Evil*.”

2 Burnham does not simply strive for an analysis of *Beyond Good and Evil*, but he wants to use his analysis of the text to provide a broader introduction to “Nietzsche’s thought as a philosophical whole.”

3 Although Burnham is concerned with a textual analysis of *Beyond Good and Evil*, his goal is to see the work “as a pivot point... around which we can usefully construct that bird’s-eye picture of Nietzsche’s work.”

4 Burnham’s attempt to use *Beyond Good and Evil* as a platform for a broader discussion of themes throughout Nietzsche’s work is accomplished through “careful analyses of individual concepts but, more important, in laying out how,
across and throughout the compositional strategies of a single text, ideas and
interconnections are elaborated.”5 Burnham wants to explain Nietzsche’s ideas, and this is
accomplished by searching for themes that appear throughout Beyond Good and Evil and the
rest of Nietzsche’s works.

Burnham’s approach begins by assuming that each aphorism is “eminently readable”6 and that the greatest difficulty for the reader is realizing that “Nietzsche’s writing comprises
more than a series of observations.”7 This strategy has several drawbacks. First of all, the
emphasis on thematic connections between aphorisms is often accomplished at the expense
of a detailed analysis of the content of an aphorism. Burnham is often so preoccupied with
pointing out general themes that important subtleties are glossed over. Any close textual
analysis of Beyond Good and Evil must negotiate between discussions of specific details and
general themes. Burnham’s goal is to guide a reader in understanding general aspects of
Nietzsche’s philosophy and therefore falls short of a close analysis of Beyond Good and Evil.
The second major drawback of Burnham’s approach follows from the first. Because
Burnham’s goal is a more general discussion of Nietzsche’s thought, he seems to ignore the
development of themes within Beyond Good and Evil itself. Burnham does not seem to look
at the parts of the book or the book itself as a conscious attempt to integrate ideas and themes
in a cohesive manner. Instead of exploring why the book (and the parts of the book) are
organized in a specific manner, Burnham prefers to analyze each section in respect to
Nietzsche’s overall thought. The effect of this is that the reader is left wondering whether
there is more to Beyond Good and Evil than wayward discussions of Nietzsche’s general
ideas.
Lampert’s discussion of *Beyond Good and Evil* does not make this kind of mistake. Lampert sees *Beyond Good and Evil* as a stylistic yet unified expression of Nietzsche’s philosophy. Lampert provides a close analysis of each aphorism that attempts to explain the specific content, the development of themes, and Nietzsche’s many cultural references. The problem with Lampert’s analysis does not lie in its strategy but with its conclusion. Lampert reads *Beyond Good and Evil* as an attempt to devise an ontological system based on Nietzsche’s notion of will to power. Lampert sees the 36th section as the crucial point in Nietzsche’s argument. He interprets the rest of *Beyond Good and Evil* as explicating the ramifications of section 36. Lampert interprets every section and theme in the book as a build up to, or development of, section 36. This means Lampert interprets every section in terms of 36. There are several problems with Lampert’s position. Section 36 construes itself as an experiment. Even if Lampert isn’t bothered by this, it is even more troubling that Lampert understands 36 and the book as a whole as a philosophical system grounded in will to power. In *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche says, “I mistrust all systematizers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity.” 8 It would, in the least, be odd for Nietzsche to see systems as lacking integrity and then present one himself. Even more problematic is Lampert’s claim that Nietzsche is searching for “a perspective that could claim to be true.” 9 If Lampert is correct in thinking of Nietzsche’s philosophy as an ontology of will to power, he would have to argue that Nietzsche believes that such an ontology is the case, in other words, that it is true. The problem with this is that Nietzsche claims “the falseness of a judgment is to us not necessarily an objection” 10 and that “to renounce false judgments would be to renounce life, would be to deny life.” 11 If Nietzsche was attempting to, as Lampert puts it, come up with “a perspective that could claim to be
true”12 it would not make much sense to embrace false judgments. If Nietzsche embraces false judgments, there is no reason to prefer or search for a true perspective. The problems with Lampert’s analysis are apparent in nearly every section he discusses. This often manifests itself in Lampert’s uncanny ability to bring in historical themes that do not appear in the text so that he can construe every section as a development towards section 36. I hope to demonstrate in my reading of Book One that truth is not the standard Nietzsche uses to judge philosophies. Nietzsche views philosophies as the reflections of the psychology of the philosopher who espouse them.

The goal of the present work is not to provide a direct argument against Burnham or Lampert. Instead, my goal is simply to show that Part One of Beyond Good and Evil is a nuanced presentation of a coherent philosophical position. My goal is to show that Nietzsche develops a standard for evaluating theories other than their truth. The importance that Lampert and Burnham play in the thesis is to show that, although similar attempts have already been made, those attempts have had serious shortcomings. The general discussion of Lampert and Burnham above is designed to provide context for the brief comments about Burnham and Lampert that appear as footnotes to each section. After most sections I have provided a brief footnote discussing both Burnham’s and Lampert’s discussion of the section. These brief comments are not intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of those interpretations. Instead, these brief discussions point out the aspects of Burnham and Lampert that are most related to my own interpretation. This often means pointing out major differences of interpretations but at other times pointing out important similarities and even the influences Lampert and Burnham have had on my own interpretation. In the few cases
that there is not a footnote, it is because Burnham and Lampert are either in agreement with me or because they have very little to say about that particular section.

In the present work I employ a few conventions that should be understood at the outset. First, instead of referring to the smallest units of Nietzsche's writings as aphorisms, I refer to them as sections. It is one of the major goals of this thesis to show that these passages are done an injustice by referring to them as aphorisms. They are not isolated individual units that can be rearranged or extracted and retain their full force. The word "section" better connotes the related and thematic nature of the writings that I care to point out. Part One is also capitalized here so that it always reads as Part One instead of part one. This is to remind the reader that a reference to Part One of Beyond Good and Evil is a reference to the textual unity that Nietzsche entitled "On the Prejudices of Philosophers." The Part that is referred to is much more a unity than an arbitrary indication of the first half or first twenty pages of a work. Part One is presented as a unified section and it is my intent to explain why and how it is unified and coherent. Because the present work is such a close analysis, it should be read alongside Part One of Beyond Good and Evil. Although this work can stand alone as an interpretation of Part One, the importance of this interpretation can best be understood when read with the text itself.

Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations in the body of this thesis are from the corresponding section of the text. In other words, within my discussion of section six the quotations without citations are from section six of Beyond Good and Evil. The quotations in the introduction and conclusion are cited in a manner consistent with Nietzsche studies. The citations indicate the book (Beyond Good and Evil) and section number (not page number). The citation (BGE 14) refers to section 14 of Beyond Good and Evil.
Although Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil* presents discussions of important Nietzschean concepts like perspectivism and will to power, the present work does not present a sustained discussion of these concepts. Instead the sections are presented and discussed so that the content and themes can present themselves more clearly than they do on an initial reading of the text itself. The present work does not argue that Nietzsche’s positions are more plausible than any other. Before it is possible to debate the validity of the philosophical themes of *Beyond Good and Evil*, it is important come to a better understanding of the text itself. Nietzsche is more concerned with style than traditional philosophers, and it seems that Nietzsche would not be bothered if most readers failed to grasp the depth of this thought. Nietzsche’s texts do not clearly present themselves and must therefore be painstakingly analyzed. It is the goal of this thesis to present a close reading and not endorsement of “On the Prejudices of Philosophers,” the preface and Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil*. 
Reading of Part One

Preface

The preface of *Beyond Good and Evil* begins with the infamous line “supposing truth to be a woman.” Nietzsche’s opening metaphor compares truth to a woman in order to point out the inability of philosophers to get their hands on either. Philosophers “when they have been dogmatists, have had little understanding of women.” The dogmatic approach is inflexible and unable to seduce women or truth: “the gruesome earnestness, the clumsy importunity with which [dogmatists] have hitherto been in the habit of approaching truth [has] been inept and improper means for winning a wench.” The opening metaphor implies that questions about truth require more finesse and strategy than an inflexible dogmatic approach. The rest of the preface does not explain the strategy and finesse one must employ when discussing truth and how it avoids dogmatism. However, the first several sections of Part One offer a discussion of truth in a non-traditional and non-dogmatic manner. Instead of employing truth as a standard for judging philosophies, the discussion in these sections questions the desire for truth. Nietzsche claims truth “has not let herself be won – and today every kind of dogmatism stands sad and discouraged.” The dogmatic assumption that truth has value has not resulted in a philosophical theory that meets the requirements of truth. Therefore, dogmatism is discouraged and unfulfilled like an unrequited love. Although dogmatism has consistently failed to acquire truth, it has not disappeared even though “there are scoffers who assert [dogmatism] has fallen down, that dogmatism lies on the floor, more that dogmatism is at its last gasp.” These scoffers only believe dogmatism is over because
they don’t understand the nature of this kind of dogmatism. The scoffers must think philosophers search for truth and try to remove bias, even though the scoffers do not realize the preference for truth over untruth is itself a bias.

Nietzsche wants dogmatism to end and “there are good grounds for hoping that all dogmatizing in philosophy…may none the less have been no more than a noble childishness and tyronism.” Nietzsche believes philosophy can realize the preference for truth over untruth dogmatically biases theories, and that this realization does not bring an end to philosophy. The manner in which philosophy can continue without a prejudicial preference for truth is discussed in the rest of Part One. The preface shifts to a discussion of the origin of dogmatism. Nietzsche claims to know “what has been sufficient to furnish the foundation-stone for such sublime and unconditional philosophers’ edifices as the dogmatists have hitherto been constructing.” The reason philosophy has been unknowingly dogmatic is the influence of “some popular superstition or other from time immemorial (such as the soul superstition which, as the subject-and-ego superstition, has not yet ceased to do mischief even today), perhaps some play on words, a grammatical seduction, or an audacious generalization on the basis of very narrow, very personal, very human, all too human facts.” The preface simply states that the dogmatic preference for truth over untruth is rooted in grammar, generalizations and subjectivity.

Nietzsche also claims that although dogmatic philosophy should be overcome, it has nevertheless had a positive influence. Nietzsche claims the astrology of the Egyptians was ultimately misguided and demanded the expenditure of “more labor, money, ingenuity and patience [than] has perhaps been expended for any real science hitherto,” but it still produced the “grand style of architecture.” Just as the non-existent Egyptian gods inspired a great style
of architecture, dogmatic philosophy has had positive consequences. Once again Nietzsche does not explicitly state what he has in mind, but it must be the case that philosophy after dogmatism will be more refined because of the centuries of philosophers who dogmatically searched for the truth. Nietzsche says “it seems that, in order to inscribe themselves in the hearts of humanity with eternal demands, all great things have first to wander the earth as monstrous and fear-inspiring grotesques: dogmatic philosophy, the doctrine of the Vedanta in Asia and Platonism in Europe for example, was a grotesque of this kind.” Just as the dogmatic preference for truth has served to set the stage for non-dogmatic philosophy, Platonism laid the groundwork for Christianity. Plato made “a dogmatist’s error, namely [the] invention of pure spirit and the good in itself.” Platonic dogmatism persisted for centuries and inscribed itself so that the escape from Platonism is still determined by Platonic thought. Nietzsche says when Plato “has been overcome, when Europe breathes again after this nightmare and can enjoy at any rate a healthier – sleep.” Kant famously said Hume awoke him from his dogmatic slumber. Here Nietzsche claims that Europe woke up from Platonic dogmatism into another sleep, the sleep of dogmatic Christianity. Just as Platonism prepared the way for Christianity, dogmatic philosophy has made non-dogmatic philosophy possible. Nietzsche goes on to say “we whose task is wakefulness itself have inherited all the strength which has been cultivated by the struggle against this error.” Dogmatic philosophy has served a purpose in that the fight against it has provided the strength to overcome dogmatism.

Nietzsche goes on to say that “to speak of spirit and the good as Plato did meant standing truth on her head and denying perspective itself, the basic condition of all life.” Nietzsche claims Platonism is a form of dogmatism and it is therefore important to
understand how Nietzsche opposes this form of dogmatism. Plato argued that there is a Form of the good that exists independent of objects or actions that are good. This Form of the good exists apart from any particular point of view. Nietzsche opposes this by claiming perspective is “the basic condition of all life.” This means that any form of life must exist in particular conditions such as place and time. These conditions define the perspective of that life form. Denying perspective means preferring a fixed Form of the good to the particular perspective of any and every living creature. Nietzsche does not claim that Plato’s arguments for a Form of the good are inconsistent. Instead he looks at Platonism as a point of view that denies life in favor of a fixed understanding guaranteed by Forms. Nietzsche claims Platonism indicates an underlying sickliness and says “one may ask a physician: ‘how could such a malady attack this loveliest product of antiquity, Plato? Did the wicked Socrates corrupt him after all? And have deserved his hemlock?’” Nietzsche’s view of Platonism sees the theory of the Forms as a symptom of a sickness that is betrayed through the preference of fixed Forms over the particular perspective of any living creature.

After explaining the problem with Platonism, Nietzsche explicitly ties Platonism and Christianity. Nietzsche claims “the struggle against the Christian-ecclesiastical pressure of millennia – for Christianity is Platonism for ‘the people’ – has created in Europe a magnificent tension of the spirit such as has never existed on earth before.” Nietzsche already claimed Platonism is a dogmatism that had to “wander the earth as [a] monstrous and fear-inspiring grotesque” before it could “inscribe [itself] in the hearts of humanity with eternal demands.” When Nietzsche claims “Christianity is Platonism for ‘the people’” he shows that the Platonic desire for timeless and universal Forms paved the way for Christian notions of God and heaven. Just as the timeless Forms give meaning to particular spatio-
temporal objects (one understands why something is good or whether an act is brave with reference to the Forms of the good and the brave), Christianity’s heaven gives meaning to life in this world. Both involve a denial of perspective, and therefore life, by positing meaning through downplaying the importance of everyday sense experience in this world.

Nietzsche claimed dogmatic Platonism set the stage for dogmatic Christianity, and in the same way he argues dogmatic philosophy will play a role in producing non-dogmatic philosophy. This is why Nietzsche claims Christianity “has created in Europe a magnificent tension of the spirit... with so tense a bow one can now shoot for the most distant targets.” Nietzsche introduced this metaphor in Thus spoke Zarathustra This tension of the spirit is experienced as “a state of distress” and “there have already been two grand attempts to relax the bow.” Nietzsche claims Jesuitism and the democratic enlightenment have attempted to reduce the tension. The tension produced by the fight against the influence of dogmatic philosophy has been reduced by these forces because Jesuitism and enlightenment make dogmatism more palatable. Nietzsche does not offer specific arguments against Jesuitism and the enlightenment; instead he claims that there are individuals that will not be duped into dogmatic thinking by these influences. These individuals will move beyond dogmatism.

Section 1
Before going into a discussion of the first Part of *Beyond Good and Evil* we must take note of the title Nietzsche gives this Part One, especially in light of the preface. In the preface Nietzsche mocked dogmatic philosophers and warned that many current systems of thought are unknowingly mired in dogmatism. It is essential to keep this in mind when one sees that the title of Part One is “On the Prejudices of Philosophers.” The preface claimed dogmatism and prejudice abound even though “scoffers...assert [dogmatism] stands sad and discouraged,” and the title of Part One promises a more thorough analysis of the prejudices that unknowingly warp philosophical systems.

Section one opens with a discussion of the “will to truth.” Nietzsche claims the will to truth still “tempt[s] us.” The will to truth is “that celebrated veracity” that is pushing Nietzsche’s inquiry with questions this will has “already set before us.” These “strange, wicked, questionable questions” make up “a long story – yet does it not seem as if it has only just begun?” The will to truth has been at work for a long time (the history of philosophy stands testament to this) yet fundamental questions remain unanswered. The persistence of fundamental questions is a reason to “at last grow distrustful, lose our patience [and] turn impatiently away.” Nietzsche compares the will to truth to the sphinx. The mythological sphinx asked its riddle to passers-by, killing those who failed to answer correctly. When Oedipus answered the riddle of the sphinx, he was cursed. Nietzsche claims the will to truth puts questions before us in the same way that the sphinx demands that passers-by answer his riddles. The will to truth has been at work so long that the sphinx has “taught us to ask questions.” One follows the will to truth when one asks “*who* is it that here questions us? *What* really is it in us that wants ‘the truth’?” By following the will to truth, one must come to ask what the origin of that will is. The will to truth forces us to ask why we have this will
at all. Most philosophers simply follow a will to truth, but Nietzsche claims the unanalyzed desire for truth is a prejudice.

After claiming “we did indeed pause for a long time before the question of the origin of this will…we came to a complete halt before an even more fundamental question.” First Nietzsche showed that if one follows the will to truth, one must ask where this will comes from. After trying to figure out where the will to truth comes from, Nietzsche takes up a more fundamental question by trying to figure out the “value of this will.” The question is why truth is valuable: “why not rather untruth? And uncertainty? Even ignorance?”. Nietzsche is arguing that dogmatic philosophers don’t try to understand where the will to truth comes from, and more importantly, they don’t question why truth has value. By not questioning why truth has value, philosophers dogmatically assume truth is valuable. Nietzsche claims philosophers have no reason for preferring truth to untruth, and in later sections Nietzsche argues that untruth is not only valuable, it is necessary.

The end of section one questions whether “the problem of the value of truth stepped before us – or was it we who stepped before this problem? Which of us is Oedipus here? Which of us Sphinx?” To question whether truth has value can be understood as an attempt to get to the bottom of the situation, to figure out the truth. If one is trying to truly figure out whether truth has value, it seems that there is a certain circularity. If one tries to determine the value of truth, one is thereby playing the role of the sphinx asking questions about the value of truth, but at the same time one is trying to figure out the truth of the situation, and therefore plays the role of Oedipus. This is because in trying to figure out whether truth has value, one must already value truth and let the standard of truth guide the search as if it were the sphinx posing questions. The circularity involved in finding the truth about the value of
truth is clear to Nietzsche who claims “it is, it seems, a rendezvous of questions and question-
marks.” Nietzsche ends the section by claiming that the issue of the value of truth “has never
been posed before.” If Nietzsche is the first to point out this question, it must be the case that
previous philosophers presupposed truth has value. However, to claim that valuing truth
over untruth is a prejudice, Nietzsche must show how untruth could have value. He does this
by arguing that life could not exist without untruth.14

Section 2

The second section begins by quoting Plato’s Phaedo. Nietzsche quotes Plato asking
“‘How could something originate in its antithesis? Truth in error, for example? Or will to
truth in will to deception?...Such origination is impossible.’” The quote is intended to
display the “typical prejudice” that lurks behind all metaphysicians and their systems.
Nietzsche is pushing further in his attempt to show the prejudices behind dogmatic
philosophies. The prejudice of the metaphysicians is the belief that it is impossible for
“something [to] originate in its antithesis.” Nietzsche offers a list of things that, according to
the prejudice of the metaphysicians, must remain separate from each other: truth and
deception, unselfishness and self-interest, but perhaps most importantly, the “transitory,
seductive...world” and “the womb of being...the “thing-in-itself.”” Nietzsche’s claim is that
Plato and the other metaphysicians do not provide an argument that opposites are rigorously
separate. Instead they simply assert this in employing a certain “mode of evaluation.”
After explaining that the quote from the *Phaedo* serves as a general description of the prejudices of metaphysicians, Nietzsche makes it clear that the "faith in antithetical values" determines all metaphysical theories. This prejudice that separates opposites "stands in the background of all their logical procedures." The same point is reiterated as we see that this prejudice is a faith and that it is the basis for Nietzsche putting quotation marks around the "knowledge" of the metaphysicians. This prejudice, faith, and dogmatism is never doubted by the metaphysicians. To them it appears self-evident. However, Nietzsche finds plenty of reason to doubt the systematic separation of opposites. For Nietzsche there may not be an antithesis at all, it may just appear as if there is. In other words, the separation of the world into opposites may only be "foreground valuations, merely provisional perspectives." The preface spoke of perspective as "the basic condition of all life" and claimed that Plato denied perspective and life by "making the dogmatist’s error." Just as Plato separated the good in itself and the realm of the Forms from particular sensations, the prejudice of the metaphysicians is to separate things into their opposites ruthlessly, dogmatically, and naively. Section two of Beyond Good and Evil is important in Nietzsche scholarship because it is one of the most detailed discussions of perspectivism. Because this work is a close textual analysis of one part of Nietzsche’s work instead of a general discussion of recurring themes, I do not present a sustained discussion of perspectivism. The language and title of Part One is frequently centered around prejudice instead of perspective. My discussion of personal prejudice could be understood in terms of perspective instead of prejudice.

At this point Nietzsche offers an alternative, albeit a hypothetical one. If the metaphysicians are wrong and prejudiced in dividing the world into opposites, there must be some alternative. Nietzsche offers the possibility that things are necessarily tied to their
opposites, the good with the wicked, truth with deception. Nietzsche goes as far as claiming such a valuation may be a “higher and more fundamental value for all life.” Nietzsche does not go so far as to claim that this is the case. Instead he merely says “perhaps” it is the case and then goes on to say that some “new species of philosopher” is arriving that will think in the “dangerous perhaps.” The reference to future philosophers who engage in the dangerous perhaps is more important considering the book carries the subtitle “Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future.” In understanding what Nietzsche has in mind in terms of future philosophers, one must keep in mind the other points Nietzsche makes in Part One. Nietzsche argues that traditional philosophers are dogmatic because they blindly value truth. For Nietzsche, life would not be possible without untruths. Therefore, Nietzsche judges theories according to the kind of person who would need to believe that theory. Keeping this in mind, the philosophers of the future would clearly not come up with a true philosophy. Instead it seems like Nietzsche hints that they would experiment and try to figure out what beliefs could be tolerated and incorporated. In other words, the philosophers of the future would employ the dangerous perhaps by trying to live according to radical philosophies. Doing so would not prove or disprove those philosophies. Instead those different philosophical “perhapses” would be tested and valued in accordance with the person who employed such a theory.15

Section 3
Section three begins with the claim that Nietzsche has, when understanding philosophers, “read between their lines.” Nietzsche’s mode of analysis goes beyond finding logical fallacies in the explicit arguments of philosophers. Reading between the lines is warranted because, “the greater part of conscious thinking must still be counted among the instinctive activities, and this is so even in the case of philosophical thinking.” Because thought is guided by instinct, Nietzsche critiques the explicit arguments of philosophers in terms of surface phenomena shaped by unseen instincts. Here Nietzsche begins to add substance to the issues raised in the first section. Section one put the search for truth on hold so that Nietzsche could raise more fundamental issues. These issues were the value of truth, the origin of the desire for truth and the value of that longing after truth. The desire for truth can now be understood as an expression of an underlying instinct that guides and shapes philosophical inquiry. In terms of strategy, when Nietzsche has “kept a close eye on philosophers and read between their lines” he has attempted to discover those underlying instincts that have unknowingly guided the arguments of philosophers. This mode of analysis will appear in Nietzsche’s later discussions of the Stoics, Kant, Descartes, Spinoza and others.

Nietzsche offers an analogy of childbirth to help explain the role instinct plays in conscious thought. The act of birth it doesn’t actually play an active role in the process in the process of heredity. The unborn child has already inherited everything before it is actually born. The comparison with thought is that when a thought becomes conscious it has really already been formed by instincts that have shaped it. When the thought is “born” or becomes conscious it is merely coming out into the world but this should not serve as a basis for the position that thought is separate, different or opposite from the instincts that formed it.
Section three provides a more detailed explanation of the manner in which thought is formed by instinct. Nietzsche claims that, “most of a philosopher’s conscious thinking is secretly directed and compelled into definite channels by his instincts.” The reference to “definite channels” shows that Nietzsche has more in mind than an argument that the will to truth is the product of an unseen instinct. Besides the general desire for truth, the specific content of a philosophical theory is determined by physiological factors despite any apparent logical rigor. Nietzsche makes this clear by claiming that “behind all logic too and its apparent autonomy there stand evaluations, in plainer terms physiological demands for the preservation of a certain species of life.” Although philosophers attempt to argue on the basis of ironclad objectivity, those arguments are nevertheless directed, guided and controlled by physiology.

Nietzsche offers examples of valuations that show philosophers unknowingly exercising prejudice at a fundamental level: “that the definite shall be of greater value than the indefinite, appearance of less value than ‘truth’: but such valuations as these could, their regulatory importance for us not withstanding, be no more than foreground valuations, certain species of niiserie [foolishness] which may be necessary precisely for the preservation of beings such as us.” Nietzsche points out that when philosophers attempt to avoid appearance in searching for truth or search for truth as certain and definite, they employ these valuations for a reason. These valuations are employed because they have been necessary for the survival of a creature with a certain physiology. This means that such valuations are not objectively grounded and instead serve as the basis of philosophy because of a physiology that values truth over appearance and the definite over the indefinite. Nietzsche emphasizes the apparent relativity implied by his argument by ending the section
with a reference to Protagoras. After claiming that philosophy is determined by physiological valuations Nietzsche claims that philosophy is relative to physiological demands, “assuming, that is to say, that it is not precisely man who is the ‘measure of things.’” Protagorean relativism held that objective truth is impossible and that human knowledge cannot go beyond the relative position of human beings. A follower of Protagoras would have no problem with Nietzsche’s argument. Nietzsche is not claiming to be a follower of Protagoras. Instead, Nietzsche is claiming that any philosopher who values the definite more than indefinite and Truth more than appearance is therefore reduced to relativism because these valuations are relative to physiological demands.16

Section 4

Section three ended with an argument that philosophical theories are reducible to physiology and that they are therefore relative. However, if Nietzsche were simply a relativist, there would be no reason to think Nietzsche’s theory is preferable to any other. Complicating the issue is the fact that Nietzsche cannot claim his theory is closer to the truth than any other because he has already dismissed truth as a standard for judging theories. Nietzsche begins section four by making it explicit that he does not use truth as the basis for
his evaluations: “The falseness of a judgment is to us not necessarily an objection to a judgment: it is here that our new language perhaps sounds strangest.” Now that Nietzsche has made it clear that his strategy does not judge theories based on their truth value, he should explain what other standard he can employ. The use of another standard also means that if one is to judge Nietzsche’s theory, one should not do so using the standard of truth. Doing so would be to argue in a way that Nietzsche dismisses. One may defend truth as a standard from Nietzsche’s attack or else use Nietzsche’s own standard as the basis for judging his theory. If one cannot defend the use of truth as an objective standard for judgment, then blindly employing that standard against Nietzsche is fruitless.

Nietzsche suggests one must come to see whether a judgment is “life-advancing, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-breeding.” Section three argued that the conscious thought of philosophers is guided by instinct and physiology. Nietzsche takes this point further in section four by claiming theories should be judged based upon whether they sustain or enhance life. One would assume that Nietzsche, offering this new way of approaching philosophical theories, would quickly discount past philosophies as naively searching for truth without considering the underlying prejudices rooted in physiology. However, Nietzsche does not simply criticize past theories because they failed to utilize his standard. Nietzsche uses his approach to analyze theories with surprising results. Nietzsche does not argue Kant went astray because he searched for truth and was unknowingly pushed by physiology. Nietzsche claims Kant made the “falsest judgment” but truth is not Nietzsche’s standard. Even though Kant’s judgments were false, synthetic a priori judgments could nevertheless be “most indispensable.”
The necessity of employing false concepts goes beyond Kant’s synthetic a priori judgments. Nietzsche claims that “without a continual falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live.” In the same way that synthetic a priori judgments are false yet useful, causality is believed in because of its utility, not because it actually exists in the “real world.” For Nietzsche it is impossible to live without using false concepts. Nietzsche claims “to renounce false judgments would be to renounce life, would be to deny life.” When a certain judgment is necessary for the survival of the species, denying that judgment would entail denying the form of life that has to make such judgments.

Nietzsche’s point is broader than simply claiming that some concepts and theories are based in utility. If that were his point, it may be possible to figure out what theories are rooted in utility in order to figure out the places where philosophers have gone wrong. Nietzsche claims that “untruth [is] a condition of life”. Everyone must make some kind of false judgment. Since life without untruth is impossible for Nietzsche, he offers an alternative that provides a standard different from determining what is true or false. For Nietzsche to judge theories based upon whether they support or enhance life, he must set aside truth. This form of analysis leads Nietzsche to the conclusion that false judgments support life. To come to this realization “means to resist customary value-sentiments in a dangerous fashion.” To conclude that untruth is necessary is to oppose typical judgments that truth has value and is good and that untruth is bad and worthless.

Nietzsche ends the section by saying that a philosophy that argues life is dependent upon untruth “places itself, by that act alone, beyond good and evil.” Here Nietzsche implies that traditional philosophical accounts search for truth because it is good and avoid falsity because it is evil. This means typical philosophical accounts are reflections of morality. The
moral belief that truth is good and untruth is evil results in a desire to strive after truth. The desire to obtain the truth because of its moral status means the philosopher's quest is not an objective analysis but an axiological one. Instead of determining whether a claim is true or real, the philosopher attempts to christen personal prejudice as truth. This is why Nietzsche's account begins in section one by asking why we want truth in the first place and what the value of truth is. By section four Nietzsche has argued that life is not possible without untruth, and to get to this realization one must ignore the moral prejudice in favor of truth. Despite their affected objectivity, philosophers' arguments are ultimately the expression of an underlying morality. Nietzsche's discussion of epistemological issues involves exposing underlying ethical issues and going beyond them; hence, the title of the book and the reason it is a prelude to the philosophy of the future.17

Section 5

Section three claimed conscious thought is guided by physiology and section four argued life is only possible on the basis of untruth. In making these claims Nietzsche dismissed truth as a standard for judging theories. Section five continues these themes with a more detailed discussion of how past philosophers arrived at their theories. Section five mocks the presumed innocence of philosophers. When Nietzsche speaks of the "insufficient honesty" of philosophers approaching "the problem of truthfulness," he clearly cannot be arguing that they simply fail to obtain the truth. Section four has shown that human life is possible only on the basis of untruth. Instead of correcting philosophers' attempts to figure
out the truth, section five goes beyond questions of truth and into concrete examples of how philosophers make judgments that are ultimately determined by moral prejudice. Nietzsche claims philosophers “pose as having discovered” their theories in a “cold, pure, divinely unperturbed dialectic,” but this is clearly not the case. Instead there is a “prejudice” that is “made abstract.” The section is beginning to train the reader to judge any philosophy as a perspective that reflects something about the philosopher. The title of Part One is “On the Prejudices of Philosophers.” The importance of this title can be seen in Nietzsche’s claim that “a prejudice...is defended by [philosophers] with reasons sought after the event.” Nietzsche reduces the explicit content of a philosophy to rationalization on the part of “advocates who do not want to be regarded as such.” For Nietzsche, philosophers’ arguments are shaped by subconscious motives and the surface arguments can be analyzed according to the specific pathology of individuals in need of a certain kind of rationalization.

Nietzsche gives two examples, Kant and Spinoza. Kant’s categorical imperative is described as “stiff” and Kant himself as using “the subtle tricks of old moralists and moral-preachers.” On the other hand Spinoza uses the “hocus-pocus of mathematical form” that is designed to “strike terror into the heart of any assailant.” Nietzsche claims philosophies are not developed in an indifferent and objective manner, so instead of pointing out the logical flaws of Kant and Spinoza, Nietzsche points out the kind of person who would produce these arguments. Kant “lures us along the dialectical bypaths” by using “the subtle tricks of old moralists and moral-preachers.” Nietzsche is not taking issue with Kant’s argument for the categorical imperative but instead reduces Kant’s reasoning to the rationalization of a moralist who desperately wants an epistemology to support his moral prejudices. Kant himself did not decide to be a moral individual because he saw the force of his argument.
Kant held his moral beliefs first and on the basis of this prejudice searched out arguments to support his morality. In a similar manner Spinoza’s “hocus-pocus of mathematical form” did not develop simply because it was the most logical and true. Spinoza “masked his philosophy” so that it would “strike terror into the heart of any assailant” because, according to Nietzsche, Spinoza himself was a timid and vulnerable person. Spinoza’s personal disposition pushed him to argue in a certain way so as to protect his timidity and not because that argument was closest to the truth.

Section five should be seen as a transition from the themes of section four. Section four offered the challenge of another mode of judging theories and section five shows us how to start down that road by using Kant and Spinoza as examples of certain oddities of personality and perspective that produced their texts. In other words, instead of reading the texts of these philosophers as an objective quest for certainty, Nietzsche’s condescending comments force us to see these philosophers as certain kinds of people who produced theories indicating and promoting their eccentricities and moral beliefs as true for all humankind, despite any particular gender, class, or ethnic distinction.18
Section six seems very similar to section five. Once again we see Nietzsche claiming the theories of philosophers are involuntary “confessions” and “unconscious memoir[s].” Both sections argue at length for the need to get behind the surface of a philosophical text in favor of looking at the person who produced it. Nietzsche tells us “the moral (or immoral) intentions” of a philosopher are the “germ of life out of which the entire plant has grown.” This was seen in section five where Nietzsche argued that Kant’s morality drove him to develop an explicit philosophical theory. Here Nietzsche generalizes the point by telling us that every philosophy is really an indication of the morality of the philosopher. Even when attempting to understand “a philosopher’s most remote metaphysical assertions” Nietzsche would have one ask “what morality does this (does he-) aim at?” Once again Nietzsche reduces philosophical claims to questions of underlying physiological conditions. Part One began by questioning the value of the will to truth. The sections that followed reduced conscious thought to physiology and dismissed the possibility of truth (as life can only exist on the condition of error). Section five showed how one can judge philosophies by determining what kind of person or morality would produce a particular theory instead of determining whether the theory was true or not. In section six Nietzsche reduces the surface content of a philosophy to the drives that work to subconsciously shape a philosophy. If there were simply a drive to knowledge at work in a philosophy, it would not matter what the philosopher studied. Knowledge in the field of philology or even of fungus would fulfill an unadulterated drive for knowledge. Although such a drive for knowledge may exist for some scientists, in a philosopher “there is nothing whatever impersonal; and, above all, his morality bears decided and decisive testimony to who he is—that is to say, to the order of rank
of the innermost drives of his nature." While a scientist following a desire for knowledge is content in discovering something new about fungus, the philosopher devises a theory that is important not simply because it produces knowledge, but some other desire is fulfilled by the particular kind of knowledge the philosopher offers. The chemist or fungi specialist "is not characterized by becoming this or that." This means that the chemist doesn't have anything personally at stake when deducing the chemical properties of a substance. On the other hand, a philosophical position is extremely personal for the philosopher: "in the philosopher, on the contrary, there is nothing whatever impersonal; and above all, his morality bears decided and decisive testimony to who he is." Nietzsche is arguing that philosophical arguments are always prejudiced because philosophers want to justify their moral beliefs. Nietzsche claims the influence of morality can be used to determine "the order of rank [of] the innermost drives" of the philosopher. Nietzsche ends section six by claiming one can understand a philosophy by figuring out the morality of the philosopher, and one can even deduce which drives control a philosopher by understanding the morality that secretly directs an explicit philosophical theory.19

Section 7 & 8

These two brief sections reinforce the themes of the preceding sections before moving on. Section seven gives an example of Nietzsche's approach to philosophy. Nietzsche tells how Epicurus mocked Plato and his followers by calling them "Dionysiokolokes," meaning
they were sycophants, sucking-up to Dionysus of Syracuse. However, Nietzsche shows that this could also mean that the followers of Plato were actors and phonies. Just as Nietzsche claims that what is on the surface of philosophical accounts is determined by unseen prejudices beneath, he also shows that even in the ancient world Epicurus made similar accusations about Plato and his followers.

Section eight is even briefer and more to the point. Once again, Nietzsche stresses that what a philosopher explicitly argues for only serves to hide prejudices. Nietzsche puts his comment in the ancient world by claiming that an “ancient Mystery” said the conviction of a philosopher is like when “the ass came along, beautiful and strong.” The point is that what is on the surface should not be read in the traditional terms of true or false. One can read the explicit claims of philosophers and find where the “ass” (or prejudice) comes along and influences the theories themselves. These two sections reinforce Nietzsche’s point in a literary fashion and serve to bring into mind the ancient world for the discussion of the Stoics that follows in section nine.20

Section 9

Section nine begins with a challenge to the Stoic maxim. Nietzsche asks of the Stoic “you want to live ‘according to nature’?” The Stoic way of life entailed repressing one’s emotions in order to remain in a state of natural peace and quietude. This stolid indifference
to emotion is based on a presumption that nature is indifferent, emotionless and that the good life is one that mirrors nature. Nietzsche questions why the Stoic would want to “live according to nature.”21 The first line of section nine makes it clear that Nietzsche is not simply critiquing Stoic philosophy (although such a critique is implicit). Instead, Nietzsche’s question is why the Stoic would choose this particular life. Even when Nietzsche does explicitly critique a philosophical theory he does not simply argue that a theory is incorrect or that it is internally contradictory. When Nietzsche does make these kinds of claims, they are part of a greater argument about the kind of life that would produce a particular philosophy. Nietzsche critiques Stoicism both as a philosophy and as a way of life.

When Nietzsche accuses the Stoic of “fraudulent words,” he is challenging the notion that the Stoic would want to (or even could) live “according to nature.” Nietzsche says nature is “prodigal…indifferent…without aims or intentions, without mercy or justice.” This is the Stoic view of nature. The Stoic way of life entailed indifference because nature is indifferent. Nietzsche claims this view of nature is “indifference itself as a power.” This is more than a claim that the Stoics misunderstand nature. The question Nietzsche asks is “how could you live according to such indifference?” Opposed to this indifference, Nietzsche describes life as “wanting to be other than this nature.” Nietzsche sets up the Stoic view of nature and then offers an understanding of the concept of life that is opposed to the Stoic view. Nietzsche claims that to live is “valuating, preferring, being unjust, being limited.” This notion of life is the opposite of the indifference the Stoics ascribe to nature. By Nietzsche’s understanding of life, the indifference of the Stoic becomes nonsensical. Stoic indifference was an attempt not to value or prefer in an attempt to remain in a peace attained through passive indifference. Nietzsche’s understanding of life as preserving and valuing
would reduce the Stoic attempt at indifference to preferring not to prefer and valuing the absence of valuing. The Stoic values become nonsense. One must keep in mind the gesture that underlies Nietzsche’s attack on Stoicism. Nietzsche did not spell out the premises and conclusions of the Stoic argument. Instead, the Stoic dictum is seen as a choice made by people wanting to live a certain life. Once Nietzsche framed Stoicism as a way of life, he shows the paradoxes that result in choosing this value system. The point is subtle, but Nietzsche’s strategy of reducing value systems to choices people make in life reflects a general theme seen in previous sections.

After reducing the Stoic attempt to value and prefer not-valuing and not-preferring, Nietzsche allows for another interpretation of the Stoic dictum. Nietzsche says a Stoic claiming that to live “according to nature” is the same as to “live according to life.” One must keep in mind Nietzsche’s concept of life (valuing, preferring, and judging). To “live according to life” would mean embracing the valuing and judging that defines life. Here Nietzsche is allowing the Stoic an attempt to clarify Stoicism by saying the goal is not to live according to the indifference of nature, but is about living according to the valuing and preferring of life itself. However, Nietzsche does not allow this understanding of Stoicism either. If Stoicism meant “live according to life,” “how could one not do that?” Nietzsche has shown that one cannot save Stoicism by appropriating Nietzsche’s view of life into the Stoic dictum. Here we are faced with another form of the paradox. Earlier the Stoic was still valuing and preferring when attempting to value and prefer indifference. Here the Stoic who claims that one should live according to life is reduced to absurdity because one could not help but do so. In other words, if “live according to life” (with the Nietzschean understanding of life) meant to prefer to make preferences or value the act of valuing, these
would reduce to obvious absurdities. After all, any act of preference or valuing would have to be an instantiation of valuing valuations and preferring preferences. Nietzsche believes he has reduced Stoicism to either tautology or contradiction. At this point Nietzsche revisits how the Stoic came to the Stoic dictum in the first place.

Nietzsche addresses the Stoics saying, “you rapturously pose as deriving the canon of your law from nature, you want something quite the reverse of that.” After showing the Stoic goal is a contradiction, Nietzsche pushes forward and attacks the reasons the Stoics came to their conclusions in the first place. Here Nietzsche says “your pride wants to prescribe your morality, your ideal, to nature.” Nietzsche claims the Stoics did not simply observe nature. Instead, the Stoic already had a morality and attempted to take this morality and describe nature as if nature itself ascribed to that morality. Instead of the Stoics impartially observing nature and acting accordingly, they “demand that nature should be nature ‘according to the Stoa.’” The Stoics did not search for the best way to conduct their lives, but sought to justify the way they wanted to live. According to Nietzsche, by interpreting nature according to the Stoic view of life, the Stoics wanted to make “all existence…a tremendous glorification and universalization of Stoicism!” This last gesture should not be overlooked. First Nietzsche showed Stoicism was internally contradictory, then he argued the Stoics did not objectively view nature but imposed their own morality on it. It is tempting to think these two gestures were the completion of Nietzsche’s critique. One must keep in mind that as the Stoics interpreted nature according to their own morality, they also externalized and glorified the Stoic way of life. This form of megalomaniacal anthropomorphism entails the projection of personal prejudices onto the world. Nietzsche’s critique of Stoicism goes beyond claiming the Stoics make the simple mistake of projecting themselves onto nature; the Stoics attempt
to glorify Stoic morality. This point can be seen in the earlier discussion of Kant and Spinoza in section five. There Nietzsche was not simply claiming that Kant and Spinoza unknowingly projected their own personal prejudices and beliefs into their philosophies but argued that their philosophies were nothing other than the projection of personal morality.

Finally, after reducing Stoicism to contradiction and showing it as prejudice projected into a supposedly objective standard, Nietzsche pursues a psychological study of the Stoic. Nietzsche claims the “abyssal arrogance” of Stoicism that pushes the Stoic to his interpretation of nature has one final hope. The self-tyranny that Stoicism demands of the Stoic (the indifferent attitude that attempts to escape the influence of the emotions) becomes a “Bedlamite hope” that the Stoic can actually control nature. While on the surface Stoicism is a desire to escape the tyranny of the emotions and to offer respite from passion, Nietzsche ultimately reduces it to a mad, passionate attempt to rule nature itself. Stoicism is a form of self-tyranny, and Nietzsche asks “is the Stoic not a piece of nature?” The Stoic, when involved in self-tyranny is trying to tyrannize part of nature. The psychological analysis of the Stoic is complete here. Instead of objectively observing nature and attempting to live according to it, the Stoic glorifies the Stoic way of life and projects it onto nature in an attempt to control nature while claiming to be an impartial observer.

The depth of Nietzsche’s analysis of Stoicism is startling. By the end of the passage Nietzsche claims the Stoics are not the only ones guilty of this kind of maneuver. In fact, “what formerly happened with the Stoics still happens today as soon as a philosophy begins to believe in itself...[it] creates the world in its own image.” Nietzsche has not only offered us an analysis of the Stoics, but at the same time he has given us a paradigm to use in unraveling any philosophical system. “Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most
spiritual will to power, to ‘creation of the world.’” The Stoics seemed least concerned with tyranny, control and the active imposition of one’s personal morality. However, Nietzsche showed that not only were the Stoics not objective observers, they went so far as to create a view of nature in order to tyrannize nature. In a similar fashion, Nietzsche claims that no philosopher is an objective observer. A philosophy projects the philosopher’s prejudices and morality onto the world. In doing so a philosopher is able to gain a kind of power or control over the world. In this sense the “spiritual” power of a philosophy refers to the ability of a philosopher to reduce the world to concepts, not because those concepts are objectively in the world, but because his projection of concepts grounds the philosopher’s sense of control. Earlier Nietzsche questioned philosophy’s ability to follow a will to truth. This meant asking whether a philosophy followed a desire for or drive toward the truth. Nietzsche shows that philosophy has not searched for truth, but is a desire for power. Instead of being a desire to understand the world, Nietzsche reduces philosophy to a desire and drive to have power over the world. The Stoic wanted to tyrannize nature through the self-tyranny prescribed by an understanding of nature that was nothing other than personal moral prejudice masqueraded as an objective understanding of nature.22

Section 10

Section ten begins with a discussion of the “problem ‘of the real and apparent world.’” Nietzsche says the problem is put forth with both “zeal” and “slyness.” Nietzsche mistrusts the manner in which the problem is put. It is not the problem itself, but the
enthusiasm and “slyness” that others use to set up the problem that “makes one think hard and prick up one’s ears.” Nietzsche does not think the problem is an objective search for truth, “anyone who hears in the background only a ‘will to truth’ and nothing more, certainly does not enjoy the best of hearing.” Nietzsche does not approach the problem of the real and apparent world by arguing that there is or is not a real world that can be rationally understood and which serves as the basis for the apparent world. Nietzsche sees other influences and prejudices behind attempts to claim a real world lies behind or beneath the apparent one.

Nietzsche allows for some cases where a will to truth may play a role in a philosophical argument about real and apparent worlds. These “rare and isolated cases” include a “metaphysician’s ambition to maintain a forlorn position.” Such a metaphysician desperately grasps and clutches for truth in order to have a foundation for a philosophical theory. The metaphysician’s search for truth is not a desire for knowledge for its own sake. The metaphysician only wants an inarguable truth so that he can have a sure ground for his own philosophical edifice. Nietzsche says this desire for truth is the act of “puritanical fanatics of conscience who would rather lie down and die on a sure nothing than on an uncertain something.” These metaphysical systems are attempts at presenting a “real world” that can be deduced from a sturdy foundation. Metaphysicians desire any kind of certainty in order to use that certainty to create a philosophical system. One can assume Nietzsche doubts the validity of such systems when he claims these metaphysicians would “rather lie down and die on a sure nothing.” The philosophical system is “sure” because it is built upon a certainty that was the product of a will to truth. However, the metaphysician bases his theory on a supposed certainty in order to use that certainty as the basis for a system that is still the product of a particular prejudiced perspective. Nietzsche’s use of the phrase “sure
nothing” indicates that such philosophical systems are based on certainty but are dubious nevertheless.

Nietzsche claims the desire for certainty, truth, or the “real world” is to prefer a certain foundation to any kind of “beautiful possibilities.” Choosing a foundation of certainty over “beautiful possibilities” is “nihilism and the sign of a despairing, mortally weary soul.” Nietzsche is not simply pointing out that metaphysicians have a faulty methodology (of employing a supposed certainty as the ground of a biased system). Instead, Nietzsche claims the reason metaphysicians want certainty to ground an argument for the real world is because metaphysicians are nihilists and weary individuals as proved by their desperate need for certainty. Although Nietzsche does not help the reader by offering specific examples, it is clear that Nietzsche is not primarily concerned with the problem of the real and apparent world itself. Instead Nietzsche focuses on the kind of person who would need to ground an argument for the real word in a will to truth. This is why Nietzsche claims the problem is most often brought up with “slyness,” in other words, with ulterior motives. Even in the cases where arguments for a real world involve a will to truth, this desire for truth is the expression of nihilism and a “mortally weary soul.”

Nietzsche claims there are “livelier thinkers who are still thirsty for life” who also argue for the existence of a real world as the ground for the apparent one. When these “livelier” thinkers (that are not following a will to truth), “take sides against appearance” they “rank the credibility of their own body...low.” According to those that argue for a real world, the body dictates one’s perspective and it is therefore the body that gives us the world of appearance and hides the real world. Nietzsche is discussing the kind of people that would want an argument against appearance in favor of a “real” world. Nietzsche questions
whether thinkers who deny appearance and the perspective of the body are “trying to win back something.” Those who argue against the perspective of the body and appearance want to argue for something else, like “'the immortal soul,' perhaps 'the old God.'” These thinkers do not argue for a real world and against the apparent one out of cold logical deduction, but because they want “ideas by which one could live better.” Those who argue in this way prefer an older way of life and “distrust... modern ideas.” Most people who argue for a “real world” do so to escape a modern way of life (and not because they want the truth). The modern ideas from which one wants to escape include “the bric-a-brac of concepts of the most various origins such as so-called positivism brings to the market today.” Nietzsche discusses positivism to show that those who argue for a “real world” deny that everything that matters is empirically verifiable. The sole emphasis on the evidence of the senses fosters distaste in philosophers who cling to arguments for a “real world” in order to go back to a different way of life. Nietzsche is not simply arguing that arguments for a “real world” are prejudiced and invalid. Instead of focusing solely on the validity of the argument, Nietzsche is concerned with the kind of person and the way of life that would detest positivism.

The end of section 10 presents a kind of switch that is frequently found in Nietzsche’s writing. The section began questioning those who argue for a “real world.” Nietzsche claimed these thinkers were sly and, for the most part, not following a will to truth. Nietzsche claims these thinkers were not objectively concluding the apparent world hides the real world from us. Instead, the argument for a “real world” was built on a prejudice against modern ideas. One might expect Nietzsche to deliver the death blow to arguments for a distinction between the real and apparent worlds by showing they are merely a prejudice and should be dismissed. Instead, Nietzsche turns the discussion and argues that one is correct in
turning against modern ideas. Modern positivism turned people towards a distinction between the apparent and real worlds as an escape from a myopic emphasis on empirical evidence. Instead of coming down against those who argue for the distinction between the real and apparent worlds, Nietzsche claims that they should turn against the modern ideas they despise. Nietzsche says “we ought to acknowledge that these sceptical anti-realists and knowledge microscopists of today are in the right: the instinct which makes them recoil from modern reality stands unrefuted.” While the instinct to deny modern ideas isn’t bad, the way in which philosophers deny modern ideas is not ideal. For Nietzsche, the ability to deny modern ideas and return to earlier notions of the soul and God uses arguments that divide the real from the apparent world. Nietzsche claims one can deny these modern ideas without falling back into those old, religious notions. Although there is something positive in the “livelier thinkers” that makes them detest modern ideas, with “a little strength, soaring, courage, artistic power more, and they would want to go up and away—and not back!”

Nietzsche’s discussion of arguments for a “real world” show that his primary concern does not lie in the truth of arguments. Nietzsche does claim arguments for a “real world” are based in prejudice towards a certain (older) way of life, but the fact that the arguments are biased (and therefore questionable) does not negate their value. Instead Nietzsche looks at the life of a person that presents a metaphysical theory. Nietzsche presents a sliding scale of theories that indicate something about the believer. At the bottom is distasteful modern positivism. Nietzsche denounces a broad characterization of positivism instead of discussing its philosophical merits. This is because Nietzsche is not primarily concerned with the validity of philosophical theories. Nietzsche claims that when a metaphysician argues for a “real world” in order to escape from positivism this maneuver is a positive one. This is not
because arguments for a “real world” are closer to the truth, but because arguing against positivism is indicative of a person with a better way of life. By the same token, Nietzsche ends the section by claiming other denials of positivism do not have to employ the distinction between the real and apparent world. These denials of positivism would be better than arguing that there is a “real world.” Again, this preference is not based on how well a theory approximates the truth, but by the kind of person or life that would present such a theory. Nietzsche does not say exactly what kind of theory he has in mind. The important point is that such a theory would be better because it would be the product of “livelier thinkers.”23

Section 11

Section eleven is a discussion of Kantian philosophy. It is important to isolate the different themes and strategies Nietzsche takes in approaching Kantian philosophy and the influence Kant’s philosophy had on German philosophers and theologians. Section eleven begins by pointing out that there is an “effort...to distract attention from the actual influence exercised on German philosophy by Kant.” Nietzsche does not simply attack Kantian philosophy outright by undercutting its premises. Although section eleven contains an explicit challenge to Kantian philosophy, it also emphasizes the notion that Kantian philosophy dominated the German intellectual world for reasons that go beyond the logical force of Kant’s metaphysics. Nietzsche argues that Kant’s philosophy succeeded not because it was logically coherent but because it allowed other scholars to build upon the mistake Kant made in postulating synthetic a priori judgments. This is why the “effort...to distract attention from [Kant’s] actual influence...prudently gloss[ed] over the value he set upon
himself.” Nietzsche quotes Kant to show that pride lies behind Kantian philosophy. Kant claimed his table of categories was “the hardest thing that could ever be undertaken on behalf of metaphysics.” Nietzsche is not simply arguing that Kant’s philosophy was based on arrogance and therefore overreaches and makes grandiose claims. Although this point may be inferred from the passage, this is not all there is to Nietzsche’s critique. Nietzsche is showing that German philosophy after Kant chose to ignore the role Kant’s pride had in influencing the thinkers who followed Kant. The German thinkers after Kant made use of Kant’s table of categories and based their own ideas upon a Kantian edifice. The pride of Kant has been ignored so the philosophers following him could avoid the hard work of actually analyzing the logical structure of Kant’s arguments and instead make use of the same errors Kant made in arguing for the existence of synthetic a priori judgments. The first major theme of this section (to which Nietzsche returns later in the section) is the manner in which German philosophy embraced Kant for reasons having nothing to do with the logic of Kantian metaphysics. The second major theme is the actual analysis of the possibility and necessity of synthetic a priori judgments. The two themes are not dealt with separately, but are interwoven throughout the section. One must remember that Nietzsche’s discussion of Kant’s philosophy includes both an analysis of Kant’s argument and a discussion of the reasons for Kant’s popularity that go beyond the force of Kant’s arguments.

Before discussing the nature of Kant’s influence over German philosophy, Nietzsche must enter into a discussion of the logical problems with Kant’s metaphysics. Nietzsche must first show the logical problem with synthetic a priori judgments before claiming this Kantian notion has had an undue influence. Nietzsche begins the discussion of the problem with synthetic a priori judgments by questioning how Kant could have “discovered a new
faculty in man, the faculty of synthetic judgments *a priori.*” Synthetic judgments are judgments that provide new information (as opposed to the tautologies of analytic judgments such as “all bodies are extended”). *A priori* judgments are reached through reason alone, independent of experience. Therefore synthetic *a priori* judgments provide new information through reason alone. Kant claimed to have discovered a faculty in human beings that made synthetic *a priori* judgments possible. Kant attempted to escape the paradoxes that, according to Hume, resulted from empiricism. Hume argued that a strictly empirical philosophy could not account for concepts like causation. Kant claimed that Hume woke him from his dogmatic slumber. In other words, through the influence of Hume, Kant came to the conclusion that strict empiricism was lacking and introduced his transcendental philosophy. Transcendental philosophy allowed for *a priori* judgments (judgments that are *not* based on empirical observation) that could also be synthetic (provide new information). The question that Nietzsche asks of Kant is *how* synthetic *a priori* judgments are possible; how *could* one, through reason alone, obtain new information? Nietzsche claims Kant’s answer to this question is “by means of a faculty.” Nietzsche asks us to “stop and reflect: it is time we did so.” Kant, believing he was woken from a dogmatic slumber, found it necessary to postulate synthetic *a priori* judgments. The problem Nietzsche highlights is that, although Kant’s philosophy does allow a place for concepts such as causation and other concepts that were difficult to account for through a strict empiricism, Kant does not offer a convincing account of how humans could actually make synthetic *a priori* judgments. It is the question of *how* these judgments are possible that interests Nietzsche. Kant’s answer was “by means of a faculty.” Nietzsche argues that this was all Kant could say as far as an explanation of how these judgments are possible. For Nietzsche, Kant simply asserts that
such judgments exist. Nietzsche says Kant did not say so “in a few words...[but] with such an expenditure of German profundity and flourishes that the comical *niaiserie allemande*
involved in such an answer was overlooked.” Kant offered a lengthy explanation that covered up how naïve the answer really was. For Nietzsche, to say human beings can make synthetic a priori judgments by the means of a faculty says little and explains nothing.

After insinuating that Kant’s explanation is lacking, Nietzsche returns to the theme of the influence of Kantian philosophy. Nietzsche claims that after Kant “people even lost their heads altogether on account of this new faculty.” This “rejoicing” over Kant’s “discovery” of a new faculty “reached its climax when Kant went on further to discover a moral faculty in man.” Just as Kant’s sleight of hand duped people into thinking he offered an explanation for how synthetic a priori judgments are possible, Kant was able to swindle people into believing that there was a faculty that served as the basis of human morality. It seemed like synthetic a priori judgments were necessary and Kant also argued that a moral faculty must exist. Kant uses synthetic a priori judgments to solve Hume’s paradoxes and to provide a basis for a moral theory. Kant’s categorical imperative that could determine whether or not one has a moral duty in any situation is itself a synthetic a priori judgment. For Nietzsche, both cases are poor arguments. Although Kant offered a way out of the paradoxes discovered by Hume, along with a basis of morality, Kant has not actually showed that these faculties exist, only that it would help us if they *did exist*. This faulty reasoning served as the basis for “the young theologians” that set off “in search of ‘faculties.’” Nietzsche claims the romantic era that followed Kant latched onto the notion of faculties. It may appear odd that Nietzsche links romantic era thinkers with Kant, as the romantic movement was largely a movement away from the enlightenment spirit that made reason and rationality central for
thinkers like Kant. However, the continuity that Nietzsche points out is different from the focus on rationality. The young romantic movement that followed Kant may have denied that human experience can be reduced to rationality, but the romantics still made use of the kind of arguments Kant made. Kant invented faculties in human beings and, according to Nietzsche, romantics like Schelling used the same kind of faulty methodology. The Romantics falsely concluded that certain faculties or capacities must exist in human beings simply because if those faculties existed they would help explain something about human experience. These faculties explain how humans can have certain experiences, but Kant and the Romantics assert that faculties exist in order to make general claims about human experience. This is what Nietzsche means when he claims the “youthfulness” of romanticism “boldly...disguised itself in hoary and senile concepts.” The youthful spirit of romantic theology was, according to Nietzsche, based on Kant’s old “senile” argument for faculties. Schelling wanted a way to argue that humans can have direct access to objective truth, so all he had to do was postulate a faculty that made such knowledge possible. If Schelling begins by assuming we have objective knowledge and questions how, he can give the vacuous answer that human beings have a faculty that makes this knowledge possible. This kind of argument is spurious for Kant’s faculties and Schelling’s intellectual intuition.

After explaining how Kant’s invention of faculties influenced the generation that followed him, Nietzsche goes on to explain how Kant’s influence died out. The argument that synthetic a priori judgments are possible because of a faculty is reduced to a wish, a mere dream. When one stopped using such judgments one “rubs one’s eyes” with the knowledge that “one had been dreaming.” Although Kant claimed he was awakened out of a dogmatic slumber, Nietzsche sees the Kantian argument for the existence of faculties as itself
a dream: “first and foremost of the dreamers was- old Kant.” Nietzsche is pointing out that Kant merely replaced one form of dogmatic slumber with another. Nietzsche asks of Kant’s argument that a faculty makes synthetic a priori judgments possible: “is that – an answer? An explanation? Or is it not rather merely a repetition of the question?” To argue that there must be a faculty that makes synthetic a priori judgments possible is no different from repeating that synthetic a priori judgments must be possible. Kant has shown that one can make use of synthetic a priori judgments by means of a faculty to solve Hume’s paradoxes, but this is not the same thing as showing how we make synthetic a priori judgments. After showing his disdain for the Kantian argument, Nietzsche mocks Kant by quoting a comedy of Molière. In the comedy a character asks “how does opium induce sleep?” The answer: “because there is in it a sleep-inducing faculty whose property it is to make the senses drowsy.” The answer does not offer an explanation, but in response to the question of how it causes sleep, the answer is equivalent to saying “because something in it causes sleep.” The punch line of Nietzsche’s joke is that Kant’s belief in faculties is not only unsound in the manner of Molière’s opium, but Kantian philosophy is also a kind of opium that does not awaken one from dogmatic slumber, but ensures the continuance of another sleep and another dream.

After discrediting the cornerstone of Kantian philosophy, Nietzsche shifts the issue from the logical validity of Kant’s argument to the question of “why is belief in such [synthetic a priori] judgments necessary?” Nietzsche showed that the young romantics who followed Kant found such beliefs helpful in their own work in philosophy and theology. Nietzsche asserts that “for the purpose of preserving beings such as ourselves, such judgments must be believed to be true; although they might of course still be false
judgments.” Nietzsche again picks up the theme that philosophical systems are not believed in because they are true, but they display those things that must be believed in from a certain perspective. The belief in synthetic a priori judgments is “necessary as foreground belief...belonging to the perspective optics of life.” Belief in synthetic a priori judgments is unsound but necessary from a certain perspective. It is important to note that Kant’s morality is grounded in a synthetic a priori judgment. Kant searched for a philosophical theory on which to base his morality, and the use of a faculty that makes synthetic a priori judgments possible provides that foundation.

Nietzsche finishes the section with a discussion of the kind of person who would need to believe in a faculty for synthetic a priori judgments. Nietzsche explains that “German philosophy” (which he puts in scare quotes) has been wrapped up with a “virtus dormitiva.” German philosophy is characterized by an ability to put one to sleep. Again Nietzsche satirizes Kant’s notion that he was woken out of slumber. Nietzsche adds that German philosophy influenced “the noble idlers, the virtuous, the mystics, the artists, the three-quarters Christians and the political obscurantists of all nations.” These people must believe in synthetic a priori judgments. Nietzsche presents a group of self-righteous individuals. Such individuals can justify their self-righteousness by claiming their beliefs are synthetic a priori judgments. It would not be possible to be a mystic or noble idler unless one believed in the (ultimately false) ideas of synthetic a priori judgments and the existence of faculties that make them possible. The reason these people needed these Kantian (mis)judgments was as “an antidote to the still overwhelming sensualism which had overflowed out of the previous century into his.” This sensualism (the belief and preference of the evidence of the senses) is detested by the rag-tag group of people who Nietzsche has listed. In order to avoid
the emphasis on the senses, this group follows Kant in believing in synthetic judgments that are a priori and therefore based on reason alone, independent of empirical impressions. Not only does Kantian philosophy simply assert the existence of faculties, it is believed in so that certain people can continue to deny evidence from the senses. Once again Nietzsche is concerned with the kind of person who would hold a philosophical belief instead of simply judging whether or not the belief itself is true. Nietzsche finishes the section by returning to the quote from Moliere and claims the person that finds Kantian faculties necessary is involved in “sensus assoupire,” in making the senses drowsy. The joke once again emphasizes the idea that Kant was awoken from one dogmatic slumber into another.24

Section 12

After dismissing transcendental philosophy Nietzsche sets his sights on “materialistic atomism.” Nietzsche claims the belief in this kind of atomism is “one of the best-refuted things there are.” He claims that this defeat of material atomism has happened thanks to “the Pole Boscovich.” To put it briefly, Ruggerio Boscovich argued that what one may think of as matter is made up of tiny quantum packets of energy instead of solid material. Nietzsche’s point is not to discuss theoretical physics. Nietzsche ties Boscovich to Copernicus because these thinkers were “the greatest and most triumphant opponent of ocular evidence hitherto.” Nietzsche is pointing to scientists who argued that the sense evidence may be misleading. Copernicus argued that the earth was not the center of the solar system and it did not sit still
while everything else rotates around it. Although it may seem this way, Copernicus argued that evidence of our everyday sense experience is misleading and incorrect. In the same way Boscovich argued that it may appear like the universe is composed of physical material, but this is not the case. "Copernicus persuaded us to believe, contrary to all the senses, that the earth does not stand firm, [and] Boscovich taught us to abjure belief in the last thing of earth that 'stood firm'...it was the greatest triumph over the senses hitherto achieved on earth."

Section 12 is setup as a discussion of problems with everyday perceptual evidence.

Nietzsche is not agreeing with the ideas of these scientists but simply pointing out examples of scientists whose work was contrary to everyday sense experience.

Nietzsche states "one must, however, go still further and also declare war...on the 'atomistic need' which...still goes on living a dangerous after-life in regions where no one suspects it." Although material atomism had ended in Nietzsche's eyes "that other and more fateful atomism which Christianity has taught best and longest, the soul atomism" still hangs around. Nietzsche describes soul atomism as the "belief which regards the soul as being something indestructible, eternal, indivisible, as monad, as an atomon." Nietzsche makes it clear that "this belief ought to be ejected from science!" Just as material atomism and the belief in an Earth-centered universe seemed obvious to our normal perception but were nonetheless invalid, the belief in the soul as atom an easy mistake to make from an everyday perspective. Although our everyday experience makes it appear like the soul or the subject is an indivisible unity, Nietzsche claims this is not the case.

Nietzsche does not make clear what alternative he has in mind to soul atomism, but he does offer several possibilities. He claims the idea of the soul is "one of the oldest and most venerable of hypotheses" and he made it clear that the soul atomism is tied to
Christianity. Nietzsche rejects the Christian notion and leaves open “the road to new forms and refinements of the soul-hypothesis...such [as] conceptions as ‘mortal soul’ and ‘soul as multiplicity of the subject’ and ‘soul as social structure of the drives and emotions.’” For Nietzsche these different formulations “want henceforth to possess civic rights in science.” Instead of explaining what any of these formulations would mean, Nietzsche claims that notions will develop on their own once we have brought soul atomism to an end: “when the new psychologist puts an end to the superstition which has hitherto flourished around the soul-idea with almost tropical luxuriance, he has thrust himself out into a new wilderness.” Nietzsche’s use of the word “soul” is complicated. On the one hand Nietzsche’s argument against soul atomism would seem to eliminate any common understanding of the word. At the same time Nietzsche hints that different understandings of the soul should arise. It seems like Nietzsche uses the word “soul” in an economic fashion. This means that although he offers possible understandings of the soul, these formulations are so different from the current use of the word they appear to be something different altogether. Nietzsche rejects the traditional concept of the soul but continues to use the word. It is also important to notice that Nietzsche claims psychology will bring an end to soul atomism. According to Nietzsche, psychology will show how everyday perception is tricked into thinking of human experience in terms of an underlying unified soul.

The end of section twelve seems to take an odd twist. The section seemed to fairly clearly argue that just as Boscovich and Copernicus overcame the influence of the senses to correct our scientific notions of the universe, a revision of the concept of the soul could result in replacing the Christian soul atomism with any number of more scientifically rigorous possibilities. However, by the end of the section Nietzsche claims that when the new
psychologist puts to an end the superstition of the Christian notion of soul, that psychologist will also “condemn himself to inventing the new-and, who knows? Perhaps to finding it.” In the same way that Kant invented faculties and claimed to discover them, the new psychologist will invent and “discover” new versions of the soul hypothesis. While Boscovich and Copernicus condemned the evidence of the senses, they argued that their discoveries cleared up misunderstandings and explained how the universe actually is, despite our misleading sensual perspective. On the other hand Nietzsche does not claim that the new psychologist will clear up misunderstandings and put things right. When the new psychologist puts an end to notion of the soul as atom, his is “condemned” to inventing and finding a new concept of the soul. Although it may seem like Nietzsche muddies a comparison with scientists who correct mistaken beliefs, the reason Nietzsche does so is central to the rest of Part One. For Nietzsche to come out and argue that the old view of soul as atom was incorrect and that new psychologists will correct that view would seem to judge the belief in the soul according to its truth status. This would appear like Nietzsche was primarily concerned with finding the correct version of the soul hypothesis. Instead Nietzsche is at pains to make the point that his new psychologist is not engaged in the kind of correction that was indicative of Boscovich or Copernicus. One must keep in mind the standard that Nietzsche sets for judging philosophical theories. Instead of asking whether they are true or false, Nietzsche urges us to ask what kind of person would find a belief necessary. Keeping this in mind the new psychologist is not discovering the true nature or status of the soul. The new psychologist is wrapped up in producing a new vision of human subjectivity that must be necessary for some other perspective. Nietzsche is not arguing for a correct understanding of the soul in the way that Copernicus or Boscovich argued for a
correct understanding of the universe. The psychologist is as much inventing a new concept of the soul as he is discovering it.25

Section 13

The first sentence of section thirteen tells us: “physiologists should think again before postulating the drive to self-preservation as the cardinal drive in an organic being.” Nietzsche begins by pointing out that those who understand organisms according to their physiological or biological structures invariably attempt to understand those organisms as if they act chiefly out of a desire to preserve their own existence. Physiologists, according to Nietzsche, make use of the notion of self-preservation as the underlying assumption in any attempt to understand an organism. However, Nietzsche claims that when someone attempts to understand physiological structures according to a principle of self-preservation, that person unduly ignores other ways of understanding how and why an organism functions.

For Nietzsche “a living thing desires above all to vent its strength.” The attempt to interpret physiological structures solely with regard to self-preservation is countered with a principle that would have us understand forms of life by viewing them as entities that act from motivations of dominance, appropriation and the expression of strength. Nietzsche offers us a reason for using this alternative explanation. The typical physiologists interpret forms of life as if they only strive to continue existing while Nietzsche offers an alternative manner of understanding organic beings. Nietzsche offers “life as such is will to power” as an alternative to the sole focus on self-preservation. Nietzsche claims the drives and
struggles of biological life can be understood as will to power, and this can explain more than the view that organic beings act only to preserve themselves. This is because self-preservation can be understood as a manifestation of will to power (it is a “frequent and indirect consequence” of will to power). Because preservation can be reduced to will to power, will to power explains more than self-preservation. When organisms act out of self-preservation, they are not following self-preservation as an end in itself. According to Nietzsche, self-preservation can always be understood as will to power manifesting itself. For Nietzsche, organisms always act out of a desire to dominate and vent their strength. Acts of self-preservation occur only so that the organism can continue the struggle for power and dominance.

Interpreting organisms as if they follow a “drive to self-preservation” is merely a “superfluous teleological principle.” Self-preservation is teleological because it starts with an existing organic being as an end and then asks how this being got here. This approach to understanding organisms assumes that organisms simply strive to exist. Nietzsche’s alternative (will to power) is “a requirement of method, which has essentially to be economy of principles.” The “economy of principles” that Nietzsche mentions refers to the greater explanatory force of will to power. Will to power has more explanatory force because it can explain any act of domination or appropriation and can also account for any act of self-preservation. Nietzsche is arguing that his understanding of organic beings provides a better basis for the study of physiology.
Section 14

Section 14 begins with a discussion of physics. Nietzsche states that physics is “an interpretation...according to our own requirements...and not an explanation of the world.” Instead of arguing that physics cannot offer a real understanding of the world, Nietzsche emphasizes the *reasons* people believe science has this power in the first place. Nietzsche states the reason people believe science has explanatory force is because “it is founded on the senses...it has the eyes and the hands on its side.” The rest of the passage stresses the status of the evidence provided by the senses, “the canon of eternal, popular sensualism.”

The over-emphasis on the evidence of the senses is “fascinating, persuading, convincing [for] an age with fundamentally plebeian tastes.” The structure of the section places a critique of science, as it is founded on sense-evidence, within a broader discussion of sensualism, in order to discuss the *kind of people* who would emphasize sense-evidence. The dismissal of sensualism follows because, by definition, it only explains “that which can be seen and felt.”

If it is the case that science (as an embodiment or manifestation of sensualism) is reduced to “an interpretation...according to our requirements,” there must be other interpretations. In order to highlight the plebeian nature of a culture that would produce modern science, Nietzsche gives us a different case to consider. This is the “Platonic mode
of thinking” that “was precisely in opposition to palpability.” Nietzsche makes it clear that modern sensualism is not the result of an enhanced physiological makeup. Nietzsche makes the point that the ancient Greeks “rejoiced in even stronger and more exacting senses than our contemporaries” and this did not produce sensualist modes of thought. Nietzsche’s point that sensualism does not indicate an enhanced sense capacity seems strange and one may wonder how he could know such a thing. The emphasis in the current discussion is that the Greeks, with their “stronger and more exacting senses,” experienced “triumph in mastering” those senses. For Plato this mastering of the senses “involved a kind of enjoyment different from that which the physicists of today offer us.” Plato’s strategy had “pale, cold, grey conceptual nets thrown over the motley whirl of the senses.” Just as modern physics does not constitute a real understanding of the world, Plato’s philosophy is described as an “overcoming and interpretation.” Between the Platonic mode and the approach of modern science there are two competing interpretations that are not compared according to their truth value as both are reduced to interpretation.

The last sentence of this section gives a principle of sensualism that, for Nietzsche, could be used to guide scientific inquiry: “where man has nothing more to see or grasp he has nothing more to do.” The rest of the final sentence restates much of the passage. First Nietzsche distinguishes this principle as “a different imperative from the Platonic.” For Nietzsche, this sensualist principle “may well be the right one” for “an uncouth industrious race of machinists and bridge-builders of the future.” Nietzsche reiterates the connection between modern science (founded on sensualism) and the status of the people who would hold such a view. Once again Nietzsche is not concerned with the truth of a theory, but with the person who holds a particular view.27
Section 15

Section 15 is a discussion of sensualism and sense organs. The first sentence of the aphorism begins by stating that “the organs of sense are not phenomena in the sense of idealist philosophy.” The idealist definition of phenomena is the objects of experience that are determined by the mind. In Kantian terms, phenomena are given shape by the categories. Phenomena can be different than things as they appear in themselves. Therefore phenomena are not simple reflections of entities but are instead made intelligible by the mind. Nietzsche discusses sense organs here as those organs that cause or produce sensation. The idealist notion of phenomena is incompatible with the idea of sense organs as the cause of sensation. If sense organs are considered phenomena, this would mean that they are structured by the mind. If sense organs are phenomena, then because they are structured the mind, they “could not be causes” of sensation. The cause of sensation could not be something that is already an effect of the mind.

Section 15 is designed to show that one cannot pursue physiology by making use of a sensualist understanding of sense organs. If physiology attempted to use the sensualist distinction between phenomena and noumena, physiologists would have to see sense organs as phenomena instead of noumena because noumena are unknowable. This is ridiculous because a physiological understanding of sense organs attempts to explain how those organs cause sensations. The problem is that in idealist philosophy phenomena (such as sense
organs) cannot be the cause of sensation. This is why Nietzsche reduces sensualism to “a regenerative hypothesis...a heuristic principle.” By problematizing the apparently simple idea that sense organs cause sensation, Nietzsche has shown that sensualism lacks the firm ground it appeared to have. If the role of the sense organs can be doubted, then sensualism can only progress by asserting its fundamental premise and working as if that premise were true.

Nietzsche is attempting to show that whether or not one employs an idealist philosophy, sensualism (the belief in the evidence of the senses) is difficult to defend. An idealist basis for sensualism must insist that the sense organs are phenomena and, therefore, unable to cause sensation. An attempt to defend sensualism without idealism would argue that “the external world is the work of our organs.” If this form of sensualism is supported, “our body, as a piece of this external world, would be the work of our organs! But then our organs themselves would be – the work of our organs!” Sensualism without idealism must believe one knows the world through the senses. This means that our knowledge of our sense organs is also a product of sense perception. This explanation of sensualism must argue that our knowledge of sense organs is a product of our sense organs. Once Nietzsche has argued that either explanation of sensualism is unfounded, he goes on to end the section by asking “consequently the external world is not the work of our organs -- ?” Nietzsche has argued that whether or not one employs idealist philosophy, a sensualist explanation of the physiological function of sense organs is problematic. One would assume that Nietzsche denies sensualism altogether. However, the last sentence of the section seems imply that this may not be the case. In the section Nietzsche seems to imply that any form of sensualism employs a pseudo-idealist distinction between the world itself and the world presented to us through the senses. The question at the end of the section seems to imply that instead of
arguing against sensualism in general, Nietzsche is pointing out the fact that sensualism has employed an idealist distinction.

Section 16

This section begins a critique of "immediate certainties." Although most of the section focuses on Descartes' certainty, "I think," Nietzsche extends the point to other philosophical positions such as "Schopenhauer's superstition, 'I will.'" The philosophical strategy (employed by both Schopenhauer and Descartes) that Nietzsche critiques is introspection on the part of "harmless self-observers." The philosophical theories based on introspection and immediate certainty must believe that "no falsification occurred either on the side of the subject or that of the object." For Nietzsche, this method is not only an oversimplification, but "contains a contradiction in adjecto."

To show that the "immediate certainty" of "I think" falls short of actual certainty, Nietzsche claims that there are "a series of rash assertions which are difficult, perhaps impossible, to prove." The list of unanalyzed assumptions that lie behind the oversimplification of "I think" are that "it is I who think, that it has to be something at all which thinks, that thinking is an activity and operation on the part of an entity thought of as a cause, that an 'I' exists, finally that what is designated by 'thinking' has already been determined." This list encompasses several questions that could be interpreted logically or phenomenologically and, for Nietzsche, are presupposed when one attempts to argue based
on the immediate certainty of “I think.” If any of these issues are unresolved, then “I think” could not be as immediately certain as it first appears. Although Nietzsche seems to imply that any of these presuppositions could be used to doubt the simplicity of “I think,” he gives special weight to the last issue. This issue is “what is designated by ‘thinking’ has already been determined—that I know what thinking is. For if I had not already decided that matter within myself, by what standard could I determine that what is happening is not perhaps ‘willing’ or ‘feeling’?” If it is the case that the determination of “thinking” is determined before the experience, then the knowledge that “I think” is clearly not immediate. Nietzsche describes what occurs when someone states with supposed immediate certainty “I think”:

“this ‘I think’ presupposes that I compare my present state with other known states of myself in order to determine what it is: on account of this retrospective connection with other ‘knowledge’ at any rate it possesses no immediate certainty.” After laying that groundwork Nietzsche gives us several possible ways to doubt the immediate certainty of the Cartesian “I think” along with one detailed analysis of how such an immediate certainty must fail.

The remainder of the section is dedicated to displaying the method Nietzsche employs in disposing of Descartes’ attempt at immediate certainty. Nietzsche provides “questions of conscience for the intellect” to show how one can get beyond the apparent simplicity of an immediate certainty such as “I think.” These questions, ignored by Descartes, point out that one must already have certain metaphysical beliefs to see “I think” as an immediate certainty. If these metaphysical questions are not already settled, then the immediate certainty of “I think” vanishes. These questions are “whence do I take the concept thinking? Why do I believe in cause and effect? What gives me the right to speak of an ‘I’, and even of an ‘I’ as cause, and finally of an ‘I’ as cause of thought?” Nietzsche is able to show that Descartes’
account only works for an audience who shares the same deeply held metaphysical
presuppositions in order for “I think” to be an immediate certainty. It is not the case that a
follower of Descartes’ logic would explicitly answer these questions in a certain way.
Instead the bias that allows Descartes’ argument to work is hidden in “an appeal to a sort of
intuitive knowledge.” Although Descartes’ account is an attempt to ground an objective and
systematic philosophy, it does no such thing, according to Nietzsche. Unanalyzed
presuppositions guide both the method and content of Descartes’ strategy so that when he
argues that he is discovering the immediate certainty that is the bedrock of his system, he is
merely elucidating the ramifications that follow from his particular metaphysical biases.
Descartes is “inventing” based on his prejudices and only pretending to “discover” an
objective philosophical system.

The section ends with a quote from “a philosopher” who sees through Descartes’
system and is “ready with a smile and two question-marks.” Nietzsche has this philosopher
respond to Descartes by stating “it is improbable you are not mistaken: but why do you want
the truth at all?” While most of the section was dedicated to showing the flaws with
Descartes’ argument, Nietzsche needs to make clear that he does not wish to reduce
philosophical theories to their truth value. Nietzsche again and again points out hidden
assumptions and logical flaws in the arguments of philosophers, and because of this he must
keep reminding the reader that he has more in mind than judging whether a theory is true or
false. The question posed to the follower of Descartes clearly shows the dual gesture at work
in the first Part of *Beyond Good and Evil*. On the one hand Nietzsche goes to great lengths to
show that philosophers (such as Descartes) are wrong by their own standard of truth and on
the other hand he hints that he has some other standard in mind.28
Section 17

Section 17 provides another attack on subjectivity, this time based on “the superstition of the logicians.” For Nietzsche “it is a falsification of the facts to say: the subject ‘I’ is the condition of the predicate ‘think’.” In order to understand the first aspect of Nietzsche’s point, let us use another simple sentence, such as “I walk” or “I am walking.” Ultimately Nietzsche may argue that even these sentences are misguided oversimplifications, but let us use them to understand the first part of section 17. To say “I walk” is to say that there is an entity (the subject “I”) and that entity is engaged in the activity of walking. In this example one may be walking to the store or the couch, but one normally assumes that the subject is actively and purposely engaged in walking. We walk when we have some purpose in mind, but “a thought comes when ‘it’ wants, not when ‘I’ want.” Sentences like “I walk” share a grammatical form with “I think” but this shared form is misleading. Since “a thought comes when ‘it’ wants,” it would be closer to say “it thinks.” This form has the same problem because it again postulates a subject (this time the subject is ‘it’) that must exist in order for thought to occur. Nietzsche tells us that “it thinks” must mean “this ‘it’ is precisely that famous old ‘I’ [that] is, to put it mildly, only an assumption, an assertion, above all not an ‘immediate certainty.’” Logic and grammar dictate that saying there is thought necessitates postulating a subject that does the thinking, but Nietzsche warns us to be wary of thinking that this subject actually exists. Logic and grammar impose their form and ignore differences such as that between “I walk” and “I think.”
It is not merely the case that thought should be predicated of some other subject instead of “I.” If there was merely a mistake of predication, one could tentatively use “it thinks.” Nietzsche’s point is not to clarify a matter of predication but he instead argues that logical form itself is not an objective description of the world but is only an interpretation, “even with this ‘it thinks’ one has already gone too far: this ‘it’ already contains an interpretation of the event and does not belong to the event itself.” Logical form, “in accordance with the habit of grammar” imposes itself on its subject matter. Once Nietzsche has reduced logic (through the influence of grammar) to interpretation, he returns to the themes of section twelve. There Nietzsche argued that the senses can be misleading and that material atomism along with the belief in the soul can be transcended. Here Nietzsche tells us that “the older atomism sought, in addition to the ‘force’ which acts, that little lump of matter...the atom.” Section twelve stated that Boscovich was able to eliminate the concept of matter in favor of energy and thereby bring an end to material atomism. Nietzsche hopes to show that just as physics has rid itself of matter, “the logicians as well will...[get] along without that little ‘it’ (which is what the honest old ‘I’ has evaporated into).” Nietzsche does not come right out and tell us what logic would look like without the presumption that there is a subject that commits every action, nor does he promise that there is a form of logic that is not an interpretation. The argument in section 17 simply emphasizes the notion that logic masquerades as an objective tool for understanding the world, but it is nothing more than an interpretation. In other words, logic only works once it has interpreted the world into a certain determinate logical structure and this logical structure may be based on grammar instead of truth. By the end of the section Nietzsche hints that this structure could change according to some other interpretation.
Section 18

Section 18 begins with the claim that it is “not the least charm of a theory that it is refutable.” This means that at least some theories are appealing precisely because they can be proven wrong. Nietzsche tells us that such a theory “entices subtler minds.” As an example of a refutable theory that continues to appeal to people, Nietzsche offers “the hundred times refuted theory of ‘free will.’” Not only does the theory of free will appeal in this manner, but it “owes its continued existence to this charm alone.” The section ends by making the bizarre claim that the theory of free will only continues to exist because “again and again there comes along someone who feels he is strong enough to refute it.” Although there is very little to go on in this section, there are several possible interpretations. First of all the section can be read in line with section four where Nietzsche claimed “the falseness of a judgment is to us not necessarily an objection to a judgment.” Keeping this in mind, it is not such a problem to think that the theory of free will continues to exist despite it being false. The section also provides a transition from the “immediate certainties” of “I think” into a discussion of Schopenhauer and “I will.” This discussion will ultimately show that arguments for or against free will are both misguided and overly simplistic. It is important to keep in mind that the two sections that precede it provide arguments against traditional accounts of subjectivity. On the basis of these arguments against traditional subjectivity one can infer that Nietzsche could not believe in free will (or determinism) because there is no simple subject that could be free or determined. It would then seem that the theory of free
will may be easily refuted because it presupposes a faulty notion of subjectivity. However, once free will is thwarted there is no alternative because determinism also makes use of a faulty view of subjectivity. This would mean that arguments against free will may be successful, but lacking any alternative theory of subject or will, free will sticks around anyway.

Section 19

Section 19 continues the themes of subjectivity and immediate certainty. Section 19 moves from the “immediate certainty” of “I think” to the “immediate certainty” of “I will.” Nietzsche begins the discussion of will with reference to Schopenhauer because Schopenhauer thought the will was an immediate certainty and free will was evidence of it.

Nietzsche points out that philosophers make the mistake of thinking the nature of the will is self-evident. Nietzsche’s opening sentence argues that philosophers are “given to speak of the will as if it were the best-known thing in the world.” Schopenhauer may view the will as an immediate certainty, but Nietzsche claims it is “above all something complicated, something that is a unity only as a word.” The supposed unity of the will as reflected in one word is “the popular prejudice” that “has overborne the always inadequate caution of the philosophers.” Nietzsche explains the word “will” as an economy that serves as shorthand that encompasses several related concepts.
For Nietzsche, the complexity of the will lies in three aspects or “ingredients.” These are feeling/sensation, thought, and affect. Nietzsche first points out that in willing there is a “plurality of sensations, namely the sensation of the condition we leave the sensation of the condition towards which we go, the sensation of this ‘leaving’ and ‘going’ itself, and then also an accompanying muscular sensation.” Every act of will must involve sensation. Nietzsche claims an act of will must always include these sensations. In other words, if one did not have the sensation of leaving one state in favor of another, there would not be an act of will.

Secondly, willing must also involve thought: “in every act of will there is a commanding thought.” The “commanding thought” is an order that must be given for action to ensue. Although it may be tempting to separate thought from will, Nietzsche points out that this “commanding thought” is essential to an act of will: “do not imagine that this thought can be separated from the ‘willing’, as though will would then remain over!” Without the commanding thought, nothing would happen, and if no action occurred, one could not say there was an act of will at all. Therefore, the commanding thought is essential in an act of will. The economy of the word “will” always involves a reference to this commanding thought. This second aspect of the will means that an act of will must involve a commanding thought or order, this is why Nietzsche says that an act of will must always involve “that tense attention, that straight look which fixes itself exclusively on one thing, that unconditional evaluation ‘this and nothing else is necessary now.’”

Besides the sensation and the commanding thought that gives an order in an act of will, the third aspect of an act of will is the “the affect of command.” Nietzsche uses the word “affect” again in claiming “what is called ‘freedom of will’ is essentially the affect of
superiority.” Nietzsche uses the word “affect” to show that he is not arguing that there is a simple act of command. In this sense “affect” refers to the phenomenological appearance that there is an act of command. Nietzsche is arguing that an essential aspect of an act of will is that there is an appearance that there is a command, even if this appearance is an oversimplification. This affect of command makes it appear as if one freely commands acts of will. The third part of the complex relationships that are economically reduced in the word “will” is the role of the phenomenological appearance of command.

Nietzsche summarizes the discussion of will by saying, “a man who wills – commands something in himself which obeys or which he believes obeys.” Once Nietzsche has shown that will is tied to command he says “the strangest thing of all about the will” is that in an act of will “we at the same time command and obey.” Although we feel that we act with free will, we are also that which obeys the command. Willing involves a “side which obeys [and] know[s] the sensations of constraint, compulsion, pressure, resistance.” Although parts of us command and parts obey, “we are in the habit of disregarding and deceiving ourselves over this duality by means of the synthetic concept ‘I.’” Sections 16 and 17 provided critiques of the “I.” In section 19 the “I” returns to help explain how the concept of will has become so misunderstood. The use of “I” forces us into the habit of ignoring those parts of us that obey the commands involved in willing and focus only on the commanding affect. This use of the I sets off “a whole chain of erroneous conclusions and consequently of false evaluations.” It is because of the I that the complex commanding and obeying becomes free will and the sensation of (free) action. Nietzsche says, “he who wills believes wholeheartedly that willing suffices for action.” “He who wills” refers to someone who believes in the free will of the I that covers up the duality of commanding and obeying
and believes acts of will are simply commands. The person who does this does not doubt
that will causes action. Nietzsche argues, “in the great majority of cases willing takes place
only where the effect of the command, that is to say, obedience, that is to say, the action, was
to be expected.” The commanding aspect of the will is believed in because one “forgets” that
one at the same time commands and obeys. The effect of the command is also expected.
Once the concept “I” is imposed, it continually reinforces the view of a subject whose will
commands and causes action while ignoring that which obeys the commands. This
reinforces the misinterpretation that there is an “I” that wills and causes action.

Nietzsche declares “enough,” and then provides a brief synopsis. He starts by
claiming that “he who wills believes...that will and action are somehow one – he attributes
the success, the carrying out of the willing, to the will itself.” The person who does so has
not considered that the “freedom” of willing is an association with acts of commanding and
obeying. Nietzsche’s point is to show that “he who wills...enjoys an increase of that
sensation of power which all success brings with it.” Ultimately, will is misunderstood and
the “I” that wills encourages that misunderstanding because it produces a “sensation of
power.” “Free will” is “that complex condition of pleasure of the person who wills, who
commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the command – who
as such also enjoys the triumph over resistances involved but who thinks it was his will itself
which overcame these resistances.” Belief in free will, according to Nietzsche, is not an
immediate certainty nor a logical philosophical conclusion but a pleasurable interpretation of
experience. Added to these pleasures are “the sensations of pleasure of the successful
executive agents, the serviceable ‘under-wills’ or under-souls – for our body is only a social
structure composed of many souls – to his sensations of pleasure as commander.” Nietzsche
explains the complexity of the situation by saying it is like “what happens in every well-constructed and happy commonwealth: the ruling class identifies itself with the successes of the commonwealth.” In Nietzsche’s analogy, the ruling class is obviously being capricious in its selection of what it does and does not take credit for. Just as that ruling class does not take credit for the failures of the commonwealth, Nietzsche argues that the “I” is selective when it comes to looking at itself. We construe our existence in a manner that makes us feel good about the power and control that we have, but the price for this is we ignore or suppress those parts that are offensive, dependent or servile. Thus, traditional understandings of both the will and the subject are generalizations founded upon the feeling of pleasure that accompanies an act of command.

Earlier sections criticized traditional theories of subjectivity, and section 19 has already implied that notions of subjectivity work in tandem with a faulty understanding of will. Nietzsche’s insistence that will involves commanding and obeying undermines a view of the subject as unity. It is the unified “I” that covered up and glossed over the complex and contradictory commanding and obeying parts willing. The social structure that Nietzsche hints at seems to involve either a struggle between, or organizational oppression of, many diverse elements. For Nietzsche, traditional notions of subjectivity and will are indicative of a situation where certain parts of the individual (the parts that command) are emphasized and other parts have been suppressed, dominated, and neglected. The interaction of diverse parts leads Nietzsche to argue that acts of will should be “within the field of morality.” Nietzsche uses a peculiar description of morality to make sense of this claim, i.e. “the theory of the relations of dominance under which the phenomenon ‘life’ arises.” Willing understood as the commanding and obeying within a “social structure” would use morality as “relations of
dominance” to show that the complex parts of the will are in a struggle for dominance. Nietzsche’s alternative to subjectivity would understand human existence as a social structure of entities or drives (Nietzsche calls these drives “souls”) striving to dominate and suppress one another, and through this struggle “life” or a form of life comes into existence. This means that in one person certain aspects of the social structure of drives end up dominating, while in another person different drives or souls are victorious. When this struggle is settled “life” arises, and presumably the kind of life that comes about depends on the specific structure determined by which drives dominate and which are oppressed. Traditional accounts of the ego and free will are thereby understood as the end product of a struggle for domination among drives. The kind of life that arises depends on the relations of dominance among drives. Nietzsche’s revaluation of the ego is ultimately an attempt to understand arguments for subjectivity as a symptom, sign or product of a certain form of life, perhaps one of those “necessary errors” of section four. Given this, it is understandable that Nietzsche reduces theories to the exaggeration of the prejudices dictated by the specific organization of drives that produced a certain form of life.30

Section 20

In section 19 Nietzsche reduced the activity of philosophers to the exaggeration of prejudice. The argument was not that individual philosophers hyperbolize personal idiosyncrasies; instead Nietzsche claimed that philosophers take up “a popular prejudice.”
Section 20 provides an account of why the “prejudices of philosophers” (in the language of the title of Part One) are general biases and assumptions. Section 19 implied that these prejudices determine the content of philosophical systems. The list of prejudices includes “the faith in antithetical values,” (BGE 2) the belief in “immediate certainties”…for example ‘I think,’” (BGE 16) “Schopenhauer’s superstition, ‘I will’” (BGE 19) and Nietzsche claims that when philosophers “baptize ‘truths’” they are no more than “pleaders for their prejudices” (BGE 5). Section 20 is an attempt to show that beneath all the discussion and argumentation, philosophers have always been blind to certain shared assumptions and prejudices that constitute inquiry. Nietzsche concludes the section by arguing that language has determined the scope of philosophical endeavors and that, in turn, language is determined by “physiological value judgements.”

Nietzsche claims “philosophical concepts are not something arbitrary, something growing up autonomously, but on the contrary grow up connected and related to one another.” Nietzsche is not making the rather obvious argument that concepts within a certain philosophical system are related to one another. Philosophical systems “however suddenly and arbitrarily they appear to emerge in the history of thought…none the less belong just as much to a system as do the members of the fauna of a continent.” This common foundation has determined what kind of philosophical systems are possible: “the most diverse philosophers unfailingly fill out again and again a certain basic scheme of possible philosophies.” Nietzsche holds off on explaining what this foundation is and instead continues to drive home the point that philosophies must be limited to certain possibilities, that they are “under an invisible spell…however independent they may feel…something in them leads them, something in them drives them in a definite order one after another.” He
goes to the extent to claim that philosophies have an “innate systematism and relationship of concepts” and that “their thinking is in fact not so much a discovering as a recognizing, a remembering, a return and a homecoming.” More than halfway through section 20 Nietzsche’s metaphors are in dire need of explaining why the history of philosophy is so strictly determined by a groundwork that has tied the philosophical endeavor to an inevitable return to fundamental assumptions and prejudices.

The broad extent of the groundwork that undergirds the possibility of philosophical systems is shown in “the singular family resemblance between all Indian, Greek and German philosophizing.” The groundwork that determines the possibilities of philosophy is “a language affinity” (in this case the Indo-European language family has determined the possible philosophies of India, Greece and Germany). The groundwork of language determines the possibilities of philosophy to the extent that “it is quite impossible, thanks to the philosophy of grammar...to avoid everything being prepared in advance for a similar evolution and succession of philosophical systems.” Nietzsche is claiming that the grammar of a language is imbued with philosophical content to the extent that any explicit philosophical system is limited by the implicit philosophical assumptions and prejudices of the language a philosopher speaks. As an example Nietzsche points out the “Ural-Altaic languages (in which the concept of the subject is least developed),” where this language carries with it different assumptions (a different “philosophical grammar”) the speakers of these languages “will in all probability look ‘into the world’ differently.”

Nietzsche also claims there is an “unconscious domination and directing by similar grammatical functions” and underneath this the “spell of definite grammatical functions is in the last resort the spell of physiological value judgements.” To understand what Nietzsche
has in mind in terms of physiology, it is important to remember section 19. There Nietzsche claimed “the phenomenon ‘life’ arises” as the result of drives and forces struggling for dominance and control. These drives are the pre-condition for life and are therefore not yet life. Section 19 emphasized the resolution of a struggle between drives that results in a form of life that believes in free will. In section 20 when Nietzsche speaks of physiology, this understanding of life must not be forgotten. If life is the result of a struggle for dominance among drives, then a Nietzschean physiology must study the structures of a form of life in terms of the result of a struggle. The mention of “physiological value judgements” must mean that the struggle for dominance among drives results in a certain physiological structure that carries with it certain valuations or judgments based on the result of that struggle. This is what it means to say that there are value judgments that can be traced to physiological conditions. Certain drives come to dominate in an organism which in turn produces value judgments that are reflected in the language that the organism develops. In this sense the subject-predicate form is not simply an arbitrary convention but instead serves as a reflection of the interplay of drives at work in those who use a language with such a grammar.

“Locke’s superficiality” was the belief in a tabula rasa, the clean slate of a mind upon which ideas would be imprinted. Nietzsche argues that this is naïve. Not only is a philosophy determined by language, but language itself is determined by the physical makeup of the organism. A struggle between drives results in certain value judgments and a form of grammar that is permeated with those judgments. One such value judgment is the subject-predicate form. Section 17 argued that “the subject ‘I’” is merely one interpretation and section 19 argued that the belief in the “I” that wills (the notion of free will) is at its core
a sensation of pleasure and power that results from associating one’s experience with the
drives that have come to dominate and command. Grammar is a reflection of the result of the
struggle among drives, and philosophical systems are prejudiced and limited to possibilities
based on the outcome of that struggle.31

Section 21

Nietzsche begins the section by claiming that “causa sui,” the idea that something
(usually God) is the cause of itself, “is the best self-contradiction hitherto imagined.” The
section is framed in terms of causality. Causality entails the existence of a cause and an
effect. For Nietzsche, to postulate an effect as its own cause is so contradictory that it
constitutes “logical rape.” “Mankind’s extravagant pride” has such a “desire for ‘freedom of
will’” that “the half-educated” do not recognize the ridiculous logic that is behind a belief in
free will. To understand what Nietzsche has in mind when arguing that free will must
constitute an effect that is the cause of itself, it is helpful to remember section 19. There
Nietzsche argued that an act of will entails both commanding and obeying. Nietzsche
claimed that part of an individual (thought) commands an action and another part obeys the
command (bodily movement must obey the “commanding thought”). The belief in free will discussed in section 21 ignores the complexity of an act of will. The “half-educated” ignore the complexity involved in an act of will and instead desire the “metaphysical superlative” that is “the desire to bear the whole and sole responsibility for one’s actions and to absolve God, world, ancestors, chance, society from responsibility for them.” This lack of understanding the complexity of an act of will leads to an interpretation that believes free will must be responsible for itself. In other words, free will must mean that the will itself has not been caused or influenced by anything else (if it were the acts of the will would be at least partially determined by whatever caused or influenced the will). For free will to exist in the “superlative” sense, will must be solely responsible for itself, and to be solely responsible for itself, it must have been the sole cause of its own existence. To believe in free will in this manner is to have a foolhardy ability to lie in order to keep up the deception. The “Munchhausen temerity” involved in the belief in free will is an attempt “to pull oneself into existence out of the swamp of nothingness by one’s own hair.” Munchhausen syndrome is a pathological condition where an individual is compelled to prevaricate. Nietzsche’s comparison between Munchhausen syndrome and free will is based on the idea that the belief in free will involves a compulsion for taking the responsibility for things one is not in control of. Free will makes one responsible, and the “superlative” sense of free will involves taking responsibility for too much.

Nietzsche asks anyone who is able to do away with the belief in free will to “carry his ‘enlightenment’ a step further and also banish from his mind… ‘unfree will.’” Nietzsche explains “unfree will” as “an abuse of cause and effect.” In keeping with the theme of causality Nietzsche is careful not to argue that causality does not exist in any sense. Instead
“one ought not...make ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ into material things.” Nietzsche argues that “one ought to employ ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ only as pure concepts, that is to say as conventional fictions for the purpose of designation, mutual understanding, not explanation.” Nietzsche is arguing that one can go on using the concepts of cause and effect as long as one realizes that these are mental constructions employed as a useful shorthand and that they do not exist apart from the human implementation of the concepts. To think that cause and effect exist apart from human experience is to think “in accordance with the prevailing mechanistic stupidity which has the cause press and push until it ‘produces an effect.’” Nietzsche claims “it is we alone who have fabricated causes, succession, reciprocity, relativity, compulsion, number, law, freedom, motive, purpose; and when we falsely introduce this world of symbols into things and mingle it with them as though this symbol-world were an ‘in itself’, we once more behave as have always behaved, namely mythologically.”

The argument that causality does not exist in the world “in itself” is surprisingly Kantian. Kant argued that causality is an a priori category of the understanding which meant that cause and effect are found in the employment of that category instead of existing in the noumenal realm that is the world independent of human experience. Nietzsche is making a similar argument but has already attempted to debunk Kantian faculties. It appears that Nietzsche is claiming that cause and effect exist only as concepts and not in the world “in itself.” However, the Kantian categories were supposed to exist for everyone, while Nietzsche argues that belief in causality “is almost always a symptom of what is lacking in himself when a thinker detects in every ‘causal connection’...something of compulsion, exigency, constraint, pressure, unfreedom.” For Nietzsche the belief in causality indicates that a thinker has a weak will that is easily compelled and controlled. The belief in “unfree
will [causality] is a mythology: in real life it is only a question of strong and weak wills.” A thinker with a weak will interprets the world in terms of “constraint, pressure, unfreedom,” and “such feelings are traitors, the person who has them gives himself away.” Although causality does not exist in the world “in itself” for Nietzsche, it is not tantamount to a Kantian category. The belief in causality is a “symptom” of the kind of life or strength of the will that interprets the world according to the rubric of mechanistic causation. Kant and Nietzsche both argue that causation does not exist in the world in itself. Nietzsche argues that causation is not an a priori category but is instead indicative of the manner in which a weak will interprets the world.

After arguing that free will does not exist and that the causality of determinism does not exist in the world itself, Nietzsche claims that either position is “profoundly personal.” Once again Nietzsche reduces philosophical positions to symptoms of the kind of person who would hold such beliefs. On the one hand the belief in free will indicates someone who “will at no price give up his ‘responsibility’, his belief in himself.” On the other hand the belief in causality indicates a person who “will not be responsible for anything, to blame for anything, and out of an inner self-contempt wants to be able to shift off his responsibility for himself somewhere else.” Although the section began by adding another criticism of the belief in free will, the end of the passage has shown that such a belief has value for the believer. The belief in free will is a belief for “the vain races” but it also indicates a desire for control and responsibility. This must be a “strong will” (or at least stronger will) when compared to the belief in determinism. The belief in causality indicates that a person abhors responsibility and therefore “tends today to espouse the cause of the criminal” because the strict belief in causality would dictate that all actions are compelled wholly by causes. The belief in
causality amounts to “fatalism of the weak-willed.” The “good taste” of this weak-willed belief is “la religion de la souffrance humaine.” Here Nietzsche ties together “socialist sympathy,” Christianity, and the belief in mechanistic causality as symptoms of a weak will. Once again Nietzsche’s critiques of causality, socialism and Christianity are not based in rooting out the logical flaws of those beliefs. Nietzsche devalues those beliefs because they are symptoms of a weak will, the products of a certain person with a certain physiology. By the end of the section Nietzsche does not come around to a belief in free will. Instead he employs criteria related to the health of a person and the strength of will in order to compare two different beliefs. Using these criteria, Nietzsche comes to the conclusion that although it is the “Munchhausen temerity” of “the half-educated,” the belief in free will still indicates a stronger will than the belief in causality. Nietzsche thereby shows he can critique and favor theories on grounds other than their truth value.32

Section 22

In section 22 Nietzsche states that physics is an interpretation and goes on to offer an alternative interpretation of phenomena for physics. The section begins, “you must pardon me as an old philologist who cannot refrain from the maliciousness of putting his finger on bad arts of interpretation.” While other sections simply reduce and denounce the views of scientists and philosophers, in this section Nietzsche explicitly points out that his position is rooted in his own perspective and profession.
Nietzsche argues that “nature’s conformity to law...exists only thanks to...interpretation and bad ‘philology.’” Nietzsche’s mention of philology shows that he sees physics as an interpretation of nature in the same way that a philologist interprets a text. Physicists must assume nature conforms to laws because scientists attempt to provide a detailed account of the laws to which nature conforms. If science did not operate on the assumption that nature conforms to laws, experiments and observations could only describe arbitrary events that may or may not repeat. This kind of observation would amount to descriptions of happenstance occurrences that can provide an account of what has happened in certain experiments, but without conformity to law, there would be no basis for thinking that the occurrences would repeat themselves. Therefore, if one did not assume that nature conforms to laws there would be no reason to think that when a person drops an object, it will fall, even though it has in the past. A person who does not believe that nature conforms to laws could be presented with a detailed account of the law of gravity, but the response would be “you meticulously describe the details of how things have happened, but there is nothing in your argument that forces nature to keep acting that way!” Nietzsche claims nature’s conformity to law is “not a fact...but rather only a naïve humanitarian adjustment and distortion of meaning.” The physicist’s belief that nature conforms to law is useful for physics but is nevertheless a distortion.

Nietzsche claims that “the democratic instincts of the modern soul” give rise to belief in physical laws. This is because thinking that nature conforms to law is to use the sentiment: “everywhere equality before the law – nature is in this matter no different from us and no better off than we.” Nietzsche claims the modern perspective of democracy unknowingly influences the physicist’s interpretation of nature. This means the idea that
nature conforms to law is not just a regulative principle that makes science possible. Instead this idea is the product of a modern democratic perspective, a “vulgar hostility towards everything privileged and autocratic.” The thirst for democracy is typified by the French revolution that produced democratic equality out of spite and hatred of the nobility. However, just because one hates the nobility, it does not follow that everyone is really equal, and even less does hatred of the nobility mean that there is “equality before the law” of nature.

The scientific attempt to discover the laws of nature must also assume that laws of nature are at work instead of the hand of God. This “subtle atheism” is also a product of the resentment of nobility. The French motto “‘Ni dieu, ni maître’” (no God, no master) serves as a motto of both the revolution and scientific pursuit because modern science is a product of a modern democratic perspective. Enmity towards nobility first manifests itself by imposing equality on people. Then, from this modern democratic perspective, scientific study becomes another kind of “equality before the law” that banishes God and enforces an interpretation of nature that is ultimately grounded in spite and resentment. If there is equality before the law of nature, democratic equality before the law should follow. Once again, Nietzsche interprets a theory according to the person that believes the theory instead of whether or not the theory is true.

After arguing against an interpretation that is the product of a democratic perspective, Nietzsche claims “someone could come along who, with an opposite intention and art of interpretation, knew how to read out of the same nature and with regard to the same phenomena” could produce a very different interpretation. Before rushing into the details of this “opposite” interpretation, it is helpful to consider what the opposite of the modern
democratic perspective would be. If the modern democratic perspective were based on a
democratic resentment of superiors, the opposite perspective would think that some people
are better than others. The form of government that would be the opposite of democracy
based on resentment would be a tyranny enforcing rank. Nietzsche’s description of this
opposite interpretation is that it would “regard the same phenomena [as] the tyrannically
ruthless and inexorable enforcement of power-demand.” The argument that a different
perspective would offer a different interpretation of nature means that while a modern
democratic perspective interprets nature according to law and equality, the opposite
perspective would interpret nature as the tyrannical enforcement of power. Nietzsche goes
on to describe “an interpreter who could bring before your eyes the universality and
unconditionality of all ‘will to power’ in such a way that almost any word and even the word
‘tyranny’ would finally seem unsuitable.” Nietzsche describes interpretation as the product
of a perspective instead of discussing whether or not the interpretation lines up with the “real
world”, things-in-themselves or the truth.

Although Nietzsche has argued that he can provide an interpretation of nature as the
tyrranical exercise of power, it is not yet clear that this interpretation is as useful as the
interpretation rooted in a modern democratic perspective. It was clear above that the
interpretation that claimed nature conforms to laws could serve as the foundation for the
sciences because if nature does conform to laws, then we can figure out to what laws nature
is conforming. If Nietzsche’s interpretation denies that nature conforms to laws, it would
seem to make scientific inquiry impossible. However, Nietzsche emphatically argues that
this is not the case because his interpretation “ended by asserting of this world the same as
you assert of it, namely that it has a ‘necessary’ and calculable’ course.” If Nietzsche can
argue that his interpretation does make nature “necessary” and “calculable,” scientific inquiry can still occur. If there is necessity at work in nature, then nature would not be acting arbitrarily and the scientist can figure out the necessity behind observation and experimentation. Nietzsche argues that this kind of necessity does exist, but not in the form of law. Nietzsche says in nature there is necessity “but not because laws prevail in it but because laws are absolutely lacking, and every power draws its ultimate consequences every moment.” The democratic interpretation thought that the necessity and regularity of nature exists because nature is always following laws. Nietzsche’s alternative interpretation argues that nature does not follow laws, but necessity and regularity still exist because power is always at work and at “every moment” one can see the “ultimate consequences” of power. This would mean that when you drop an object, the object does not fall because it is following a law. Instead, every time you drop the object, forces of power determine what happens. The object always drops with necessity and regularity because every time you drop it, the same forces of power always act on the object. Nietzsche’s interpretation based on power can have the same function for scientific inquiry as postulating laws of nature. Scientists working with Nietzsche’s interpretation would simply say they were figuring out the forces of power that determine necessity and regularity instead of deducing “laws” of nature.

The section ends when Nietzsche says “granted this too is only interpretation – and you will be eager enough to raise this objection? – well, so much the better.” Nietzsche is aware that someone could come back at him and argue that just as he claimed the modern democratic view that nature conforms to law was just an interpretation, his view of tyrannical power is also just an interpretation. However, Nietzsche does not just show that he is aware
of that response, he embraces the fact that he is only offering an interpretation. Nietzsche is not proclaiming that his interpretation is an accurate description of the world. The question is why Nietzsche would say “so much the better” as if he were not only saying that he is not offering a true description of the world but that offering an interpretation in this way is better, even if it is just one interpretation among others. Nietzsche is willing to admit he is offering an interpretation, but in doing so he is showing that one interpretation comes from a modern democratic perspective that resents superiority and that his interpretation is the “opposite” of this. Nietzsche is not just describing two different interpretations. Instead he is arguing that different interpretations are reflections of underlying motivations and values and that these valuations can be exposed. Physicists deducing the laws of nature are motivated by democratic values and Nietzsche is motivated by valuing power and domination. In neither case does Nietzsche ask whether the interpretation is true, he is mainly concerned with the motivation and values behind particular beliefs.33

Section 23

Since Nietzsche proposes that interpretations are the results of interpreter’s motivations and values, it comes as no surprise that the first sentence of section 23 concerns psychology. Nietzsche begins the section by stating “all psychology has hitherto remained anchored to moral prejudices and timidities: it has not ventured into the depths. To conceive it as morphology and the development-theory of the will to power, as I conceive it – has never yet so much as entered the mind of anyone else.” Studying “morphology” means studying
the shape, form or structure of something. To understand psychology in this sense would mean thinking of the subject in terms of structured and developing will to power. Descartes’ subject was disembodied rationality, Plato’s soul housed the eternal Forms, and Nietzsche views the subject as drives striving for domination. Nietzsche’s conception of psychology is the study of the manner in which these drives develop and give rise to certain structures.

Nietzsche claims moral valuations determine the “spiritual” arguments of philosophers. “The power of moral prejudices has penetrated deep into the most spiritual world, which is apparently the coldest and most free of presuppositions — and, as goes without saying, has there acted in a harmful, inhibiting, blinding, distorting fashion.” Philosophical arguments are supposed to be “the coldest and most free of presuppositions,” but they are influenced by the “blinding, distorting” impact of morality.

In the following passage, Nietzsche states “a genuine physio-psychology has to struggle with unconscious resistances in the heart of the investigator, it has ‘the heart’ against it: even a theory of the mutual dependence of the ‘good’ and ‘wicked’ impulses causes, as a more refined immorality, revulsion to a conscience still strong and hearty — and even more a theory of the derivation of all good impulses from wicked ones.” Several things are going on in this passage. First Nietzsche mentions “physio-psychology.” Psychology in this sense ties the mental state of the interpreter to his physical state. Therefore, a sickly body would result in a sickly mind, which would greatly affect the interpretations produced by that mind. Second, Nietzsche suggests that moral valuations reside in the subconscious, as “unconscious resistances in the heart of the investigator.” Revealing these subconscious valuations might disturb someone if it were discovered that good impulses arise from wicked ones. Moral
prejudice has not allowed an approach to psychology or physiology that questioned the rigorous distinction between good and evil.

Nietzsche goes on to say, "supposing, however, that someone goes so far as to regard the emotions of hatred, envy, covetousness, and lust for domination as life conditioning emotions, as something which must fundamentally and essentially be present in the total economy of life, consequently must be heightened further if life is to be heightened further -- he suffers from such a judgement as from seasickness." Nietzsche advances the view that the traditional Judeo-Christian notion of evil might be necessary and fundamental to some human life and that the eradication of these evils might lead to a degradation of their lives. The realization of this would lead these people to nausea.

Next Nietzsche begins an extended metaphor to illustrate how profoundly new this form of psychology is. He uses the image of a voyager sailing on an open sea, which suggests there is no firm foundation (moral or otherwise) to anchor interpretations. The psychologist of the future would have to delve into a deeper understanding of human existence. This approach to psychology is like venturing into new and dangerous territory. "Never yet has a deeper world of insight revealed itself to daring travelers and adventurers: and the psychologist who in this fashion 'brings a sacrifice' -- it is not the sacrificio dell'intelletto, on the contrary! -- will at least be entitled to demand and return that psychology shall again be recognized as the queen of the sciences, to serve and prepare for which the other sciences exist. For psychology is now once again the road to the fundamental problems." Nietzsche ends Part One by arguing that we are in need of an approach to human experience that isn't tainted by moral prejudice. The adventurer who
dares to escape moral prejudice can then reevaluate the other sciences (and philosophy) without the ill effects of moral prejudice.
Conclusion

In the first Part of *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche presents an unorthodox challenge to philosophy. Instead of presenting a theory of truth, Nietzsche argues that the philosophical search for truth is prejudiced and dogmatic. For Nietzsche, philosophers blindly desire truth without asking why truth is preferred to untruth. At first it seems bizarre to argue that untruths may be more valuable than truth, but Nietzsche claims human existence would not be possible without "the fictions of logic" (BGE 4) and the "continual falsification of the world by means of numbers" (BGE 4). Math and logic are essential tools, but employing those tools means "measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical" (BGE 4). Math and logic are useful because they falsify the world in a particularly helpful manner, they distort by throwing a precise conceptual grid over the world. To recognize that this altered view of the world is indispensable is to "recognize untruth as a condition of life" (BGE 4).

Nietzsche claims "behind all logic too and its apparent autonomy there stand evaluations, in plainer terms physiological demands for the preservation of a certain species of life" (BGE 3). So behind logic there are certain "evaluations." If one were simply following a will to truth, one would presumably not use logic because it falsifies the world. The fact that one employs logic shows that there is not a will to truth, but other "evaluations" demand the use of logic. In addition to logic, Nietzsche claims that philosophy is riddled with concepts that are employed for reasons other than their truth. These concepts include
the “faith in antithetical values” (BGE 2), and the assumptions that “the definite shall be of
greater value than the indefinite, appearance of less value than ‘truth’” (BGE 2). These
positions are not philosophical conclusions, but are useful assumptions that get philosophical
systems started. To understand Nietzsche’s critique of philosophy, it is necessary to
understand what kind of valuations push philosophers into basing their theories upon
prejudicial assumptions.

Philosophers attempt to appear as if they come to their conclusions through a
“divinely unperturbed dialectic” (BGE 5) but are simply “cunning pleaders for their
prejudices” (BGE 5). Philosophers make a show of their objectivity precisely because they
are driven by subjective prejudices. Kant intended his argument for the categorical
imperative to be encased in “dialectical bypaths” (BGE 5) but at the heart of it Kant employs
“subtle tricks of old moralists and moral-preachers” (BGE 5). For Nietzsche, Kant was not
objectively trying to deduce a moral system. He was trying to give credence to his own
moral valuations through a complex philosophical system that was supposedly devoid of
particular preferences. In the same fashion Nietzsche claimed that Spinoza “encased and
masked his philosophy...so as to strike terror into the heart of any assailant” (BGE 5). By
putting his philosophy in the form of a mathematical proof, Spinoza made his theory seem
invulnerable. Nietzsche points out that Spinoza’s style wasn’t an attempt to get to the truth,
but simply an expression of “personal timidity and vulnerability” (BGE 5). Nietzsche’s
concern is not to show that Kant and Spinoza had inherently flawed philosophies. Instead
Nietzsche claims that philosophies reflect the person and the person’s morality that produced
those theories.
For Nietzsche “every great philosophy has hitherto been: a confession on the part of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir; moreover, that the moral (or immoral) intentions in every philosophy have every time constituted the real germ of life out of which the entire plant has grown” (BGE 6). Nietzsche’s approach to philosophy involves setting aside the discussion of whether a theory is true or false and determining what kind of moral valuations produced that theory. The question for Nietzsche is “what morality does this (does he --) aim at?” (BGE 6). Nietzsche states “I accordingly do not believe a ‘drive to knowledge’ to be the father of philosophy” (BGE 6). Philosophy claims to search for truth, but “another drive has, here as elsewhere, only employed knowledge (and false knowledge!) as a tool” (BGE 6). Philosophical endeavors use knowledge and truth in order to push a morality, according to Nietzsche under my reading of Part One. Philosophy is dogmatic because it asserts truth has value so that it can claim that certain moral valuations are true. Philosophers value and search for truth because they want their moral prejudices to have the status of infallible truth. This is why “to recognize untruth as a condition of life...[is to go] beyond good and evil” (BGE 4). The terms good and evil are moral terms and those who believe in them want their own morality to have the status of truth. In other words, philosophers desire truth to make their own morality appear infallible. In this sense, philosophical truth has a value other than an accurate description of the world, consciousness, or whatever other explicit topic a philosophy addresses. Philosophical truth is valued because it justifies, rationalizes, and enforces particular prejudices. However, morality is not bedrock in Nietzsche’s discussion of philosophers. As seen in the above discussions of Kant and Spinoza, Nietzsche is concerned with personal prejudice based on
issues such as morality or personality which leads Nietzsche to suggest that we look at the
psychology of the philosopher.

Nietzsche concludes Part One with a discussion of psychology. Nietzsche claims that
psychology "has hitherto remained anchored to moral prejudices" (BGE 23). Philosophy and
psychology have both been morally prejudiced. Nietzsche intends to expand a traditional
understanding of psychology so he can interpret philosophical theories through a
psychological analysis of the philosopher. Section 23 alone does not give an example of
what Nietzsche means to use psychology in order to interpret philosophical theories.
However, the rest of Part One has presented such examples. Nietzsche says he wants to
determine whether a theory is "life-advancing, life-preserving" (BGE 4). It is clear that
Nietzsche is not concerned with whether a theory is true or how to determine which theory is
true. Once it is clear that Nietzsche looks for prejudices that determine philosophical
theories, one must ask why certain prejudices should be favored over others. The preference
for one prejudice over another is based on the psychological origin of the prejudice.
Nietzsche's preference for life-affirming theories shows that he may assume that all attempts
at philosophical truth are prejudiced, but he prefers prejudice in favor of a psychology of
affirmation and strength. To use a more general term, Nietzsche favors theories whose
prejudices can be traced to the psychological health of the philosopher. It is important to
note that this does not mean that Nietzsche is judging theories according to whether or not a
theorist has a particular disease, ailment or mental illness. To claim that Nietzsche tries to
deduce the health of a philosopher is to make the argument that Nietzsche strategically
interprets philosophies to show that theories could only be the product of a life-denying
psychology. It is also important to note that even a close reading of Nietzsche cannot
honestly reduce Nietzsche’s strategy to a step by step formula that could be easily employed in understanding a philosophical theory. This strategy can be described as searching for hidden prejudices that inform philosophical systems and deducing whether these prejudices are symptoms of an affirmation or denial of life.

If one understands Nietzsche’s strategy in this light, one can attempt to emulate Nietzsche’s approach through the application of this strategy to philosophers and theories Nietzsche does not explicitly mention. Furthermore, one could attempt to apply Nietzsche’s strategy to the text of Nietzsche himself. Doing so would mean assuming that Nietzsche’s ideas are the prejudiced expressions of a certain kind of individual. This approach would ask what kind of person would produce an approach to philosophy that disregards truth in favor of psychological health. To question Nietzsche’s own thought would start by showing that Nietzsche does not pretend to arrive at the truth so that he can smuggle in his own biases. Because Nietzsche’s strategy replaces questions of truth with questions of affirmation, psychology, and health, one must ask what kind of person would want to analyze theories according to affirmation, life, psychology, and health. A greater understanding of Nietzsche’s own moral bias can be understood in terms of Part Nine of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Part Nine is titled “What is Noble” and discusses Nietzsche’s own values. Nietzsche’s preference for theories that are the product of a healthy individual indicates that his own bias favors the affirmation of life and strength. The question would become what kind of person (what psychology) would have that particular bias.

The goal of this thesis has been to analyze the philosophical themes and strategies Nietzsche developed in Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Nietzsche’s strategy, properly understood, can be applied to Nietzsche’s own writing and underlying psychology. The
application of Nietzsche's strategy to his own work is beyond the scope of this thesis but would be a natural extension of the present work. Hopefully, if nothing else, this thesis has shown that Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil* presents a coherent and sustained discussion and development of themes.

Danto claimed Nietzsche's "writings may be read in pretty much any order, without this greatly impeding the comprehension of his ideas." I hope to have showed that an understanding of any particular section of Part One is greatly enhanced through an understanding of the themes present throughout Part One. In Part One Nietzsche presents a sustained and coherent critique of philosophy. Nietzsche's critiques of philosophers do not simply argue that previous philosophical positions are incorrect. Instead, Nietzsche dismisses truth as a standard for evaluating theories. Instead of discussing the truth of a theory, Nietzsche interprets theories according to the personal prejudices of the philosopher. Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil* is a detailed presentation of Nietzsche's approach to philosophy.
ENDNOTES


3 Burnham, p. x

4 Burnham, p. x

5 Burnham, pp. xi-x

6 Burnham, p. ix

7 Burnham, p. x


12 Lampert, p. 1

13 Lampert interprets Nietzsche’s opening metaphor as an attempt to set up a new standard for philosophical truth. Lampert interprets Nietzsche as arguing that we need to be more truthful about truth instead of denying truth as a standard for evaluating judgments. Lampert sees Nietzsche’s preface as a critique of dogmatic philosophers so that Nietzsche can go beyond dogmatism to get to the truth. Burnham’s approach to the preface presents extra-textual evidence to discuss general themes in a broad philosophical context. Burnham compares Nietzsche’s title with the title of works by Kant and goes on to compare the use of hypothetical examples in Nietzsche, Locke and Kant. Although such discussions help the reader put Nietzsche’s work in a greater context, Burnham’s discussion of the text itself is lacking. Burnham’s discussion of Nietzsche’s opening metaphor focuses mainly on the tone and then goes on to make linguistic comparisons with Goethe’s *Faust.*

14 Lampert believes Nietzsche questions the value of truth in section one so the need for a fully developed theory of truth can be understood. Lampert sees questioning the value of truth as a step in the process of developing an improved theory of truth. Section one appears
to question and even doubt the value of truth. Burnham’s interpretation of Section one is that Nietzsche is not offering a simple denial of the possibility of truth. If Nietzsche were to simply deny the possibility of truth he would seem to be arguing that it is the truth that truth is not possible. Burnham argues that Nietzsche claims a simple denial of truth seems to be guided by a will to truth. Burnham argues that Nietzsche challenges theories of truth in an unorthodox manner. My own interpretation of section one is similar to Burnham’s. Burnham sees that Nietzsche replaces questions of truth with questions of value, but Burnham does not consistently follow this theme throughout Part One.

Lampert sees the presentation of dualisms at the beginning of Section two as mistakes that will be corrected on the progress towards an adequate theory of truth. Lampert believes Nietzsche wanted to show that dualisms are originally pre-philosophical assumptions that find their way into philosophical systems. Lampert believes Nietzsche is pointing this out so he can move on to his own theory of truth. Burnham makes sense of section two by bringing in discussions of Hegel, Marx, Kant, and Berkeley. These issues are interesting, but fail to put Section two within its proper context in Beyond Good and Evil. Burnham fails to see that Section two provides further elucidation of Nietzsche’s discussion of the role underlying values play in philosophical systems. Lampert sees the role of underlying values but argues that Nietzsche is trying to eliminate the role such values play in theories of truth.

Lampert’s discussion of section three briefly discusses Nietzsche’s point that physiology may help shape valuations and conscious thought. However, instead of offering a detailed discussion of the Section or the philosophical ramifications of the Section, Lampert dedicates most of his argument to information that goes far beyond the actual content of Section three. Lampert discusses ancient Greek physics, Human, All too Human, and Nietzsche’s earlier drafts of the section to make the case that Nietzsche is arguing that the role of physiology must be understood and overcome in an adequate theory of truth. In section three Nietzsche makes the point that physiology plays a role in shaping conscious thought. Lampert’s interpretation would lessen that point by arguing that it is possible to remove the influence of physiology in order to devise a theory of truth. Burnham’s interpretation of Section three is brief. Burnham’s major failing is the discussion of the Section’s use of Protagoras. Burnham’s explanation is complex and bizarre. I believe my own interpretation is simpler, clearer and a better fit with the section itself.

Burnham points out Nietzsche’s example of synthetic a priori judgments as false, yet necessary. Burnham thinks Nietzsche argues that false views become true out of utility. Nietzsche’s argument seems to be that judgments may be useful and untrue. Nietzsche urges one to “recognize untruth as a condition of life.” Instead of claiming that useful claims are in some pragmatic sense true, Nietzsche urges one to realize that useful claims are often mistaken for truth. Lampert’s interpretation of section four is, for the most part, in line with my own. Lampert sees that Nietzsche separates truth from value, and that which is life enhancing may not be true. Although Lampert sees that Nietzsche argues that human beings must engage in falsification, Lampert divides falsification into necessary and unnecessary. Lampert makes this point in order to interpret Nietzsche’s attacks on philosophers as
unnecessary falsification. This allows Lampert enough room to argue that Nietzsche meant that philosophers like Kant and Spinoza were engaged in unnecessary falsification while Nietzsche stuck to falsification that is tied to human existence. Lampert has to make this move because he wants to argue that Nietzsche does have a philosophical system that does engage in falsification, but only the necessary kind of falsification. This distinction does not appear in the text. Nietzsche is arguing that falsification is unavoidable and Lampert interprets this to mean one should avoid certain kinds of falsification.

18 Burnham’s discussion of section five is rather cursory. Burnham sees section five as a challenge to philosophers to realize they are prone to dishonesty. However, Burnham argues the challenge is not to change the content of philosophy, just to realize philosophy is a prejudiced endeavor. This interpretation misses the core of section five. Nietzsche gives specific examples of how personal influences manifest themselves in philosophy. Burnham’s interpretation simply claims there is prejudice in philosophy while Nietzsche is careful to give us specific examples of how personal prejudice can shape a philosophical system. Lampert sees section five as a continuation of section four. Lampert used section four to divide necessary and unnecessary falsification. After doing so Lampert argued that Nietzsche’s use of Kant and Spinoza in section five were examples of unnecessary and disingenuous falsification. Lampert attempts to divide philosophers according to whether or not their falsification is necessary because he wants to argue that Nietzsche presents a philosophy that only employs necessary falsifications.

19 Burnham’s discussion of section six is limited. He dedicates two paragraphs to the section and one of those is a summary of the passage. After providing this summary Burnham discusses drives, intention, will to power, and order of rank. This discussion is based on the section, but instead of showing these themes at work in the passage, Burnham digresses into a general discussion. These discussions take one away from a close analysis of the section and move toward a general discussion of Nietzschean themes. Burnham lives up to the goal of his book, which is more of a general discussion of the Nietzschean themes present in Beyond Good and Evil than a close textual analysis. Once again Lampert’s general discussion is not so far from my own interpretation. However, as is typically of Lampert’s interpretation, he builds a solid basis only in order to construct a system that goes beyond Nietzsche’s text. After summarizing the section Lampert returns to the discussion of the ranks among drives. Lampert uses this discussion to claim that philosophy is superior to science. Lampert takes a discussion of why a particular scholar would be attracted to philology, philosophy or chemistry and uses it to support the notion that science is subordinate to philosophy. The discussion is beyond anything that presents itself in section six.

20 In section seven Burnham attempts to import an understanding of Epicurean philosophy and misses the connection with the preceding sections. The prior sections have been arguing that philosophers are disingenuous and driven by unseen prejudice. Section seven follows this thought by using Epicurus’ claim that philosophers are phony and that they are all actors. Lampert’s interpretation of section seven invokes the lust to rule. Lampert believes that
Nietzsche brings up Epicurus to show that Epicurus hated Plato and followed his own lust to rule. Lampert strains to show how the details of Epicurus’ philosophy displays this lust to rule. Lampert, like Burnham, misses the simple point of section seven. Nietzsche quickly points out that Epicurus thought philosophers were disingenuous actors that displayed hidden prejudices.

Burnham lumps section eight in with section seven and has almost nothing to say about section eight by itself. Lampert’s discussion of section eight is as complex as it is inane.

Lampert wants to interpret Nietzsche as saying that philosophy can embrace prejudice and overcome it even though in section after section Nietzsche mocks philosophy as inescapably prejudiced. In section eight Nietzsche specifically mentions all philosophy. In order to bolster his point of view Lampert must take the brevity of section eight and argue that there are hidden arguments and implications and that one must understand the historical interaction between Plato and Epicurus. Lampert’s problem is the simple and explicit point of the passage contradicts his view that Nietzsche wants to construct a philosophical system that avoids the negative influence of hidden prejudice.

21 Nietzsche’s emphasis

22 Burnham’s discussion of section nine provides a helpful linguistic analysis of what Nietzsche means by indifference. Although I do not make use of his distinction in my own interpretation, Burnham’s work on this point is helpful. Besides this issue, Burnham treats section nine in a general manner. Burnham isolates discussions of indifference, power and life to show how these notions are present in other works by Nietzsche. Burnham focuses on general themes and misses the specific details of Nietzsche’s discussion of the Stoics. In section nine Nietzsche provides one of his most precise and detailed accounts of how and why a personal prejudice determines a philosophical system. Burnham’s focus on general issues misses the important manner in which Nietzsche shows that a supposedly objective belief is actually personal prejudice creating a worldview. Lampert’s discussion of section nine focuses on nature and human life. Lampert’s goal is to structure his interpretation as if Nietzsche argues for a complex evolution of an appropriate philosophical theory. Once again, Lampert tries to find a complex overarching structure that lies behind Nietzsche’s text. Section nine follows earlier discussions of the phoniness of philosophers and gives a specific example of how this phoniness manifests itself in a way that can dupe a naïve student of Stoicism. Lampert imposes an overarching and over-reaching discussion of nature and human life to support his view that Nietzsche is building to an adequate philosophical system.

23 Burnham’s interpretation of section 10 is, for the most part, in line with my own interpretation. Burnham shows that Nietzsche sees the benefit to a distinction between the real and apparent world (that it denies positivism) but that Nietzsche does not actually embrace the distinction. After making this point Burnham goes into a discussion of systematic philosophy that does not clearly follow from section ten itself. The main problem with Burnham’s interpretation is that it fails to notice the grounds upon which Nietzsche can first deny, then partially support, the distinction between the real and apparent world.
Nietzsche does not argue on philosophical grounds but comes to conclusions based on the kind of person that would believe in either the real/apparent world distinction or in positivism. Burnham once again misses the fact that Nietzsche urges one to look at the philosopher behind the philosophy. Lampert's discussion of section ten is fairly straightforward. Lampert, like Burnham, fails to see that Nietzsche's partial endorsement (and rejection of) the distinction between the real and apparent world (along with the rejection of positivism) are all rooted in the kind of person who would hold those beliefs. Despite this failing Lampert provides a concise account of section 10. Lampert sees Nietzsche as moving towards a preferable and adequate philosophy. However, even within section 10 one can see that Nietzsche is more concerned with the philosopher behind a philosophy than with an attempt to formulate an adequate philosophical theory.

24 Burnham's discussion of Kant in section 11 is close to my own interpretation. He shows Nietzsche's discussion of faculties in a manner close to my own interpretation. The main difference between my interpretation and Burnham's is the role of Romanticism following Kant. Burnham barely mentions the role Kantian methodology played in the theories of Romantic theologians. While Burnham and I focus on the details of Nietzsche's discussion of Kant, Lampert strives to show section 11 as something of a historical narrative. Lampert wants to argue that Nietzsche is showing the development of the history of philosophy towards Nietzsche's own theory. Although Lampert's discussion is not particularly deficient on any specific point in section 11, it is important to note that Lampert highlights this historical movement because he wants to interpret Nietzsche as providing a philosophical theory that corrects the theories of the past.

25 Most of Burnham's discussion of section 12 is in line with my own interpretation; however, Burnham's discussion of the new psychologist is a bit odd. Burnham claims Nietzsche may be pointing out a connection between all discovery and invention. Instead of imposing a discussion of the scientific method (which Burnham does), I believe it is simpler to remember that the previous sections have claimed that theories are inseparably tied to the individual who believes the theory. Although Nietzsche does not mention Plato or Epicurus in section 12, Lampert goes to great lengths to incorporate a historical discussion of physis and psyche. This discussion has little to do with the text of section 12, but Lampert is straining to show that Nietzsche sees his theory as a culmination of the history of philosophy into Nietzsche's own adequate philosophical theory. Lampert's lengthy historical discussion goes to great lengths to impose a historical perspective, but the biggest issue in Lampert's discussion of section 12 is how he deals with the issue of finding and discovering a new understanding of the soul. Nietzsche says that the new psychologist will invent (make up) a new way to look at human experience and then believe that he has found this notion of the soul in the actual empirical evidence. Nietzsche is showing that theories are originally inventions that are misunderstood as truths found in nature. Lampert reads the last part of the sentence as if Nietzsche wants to eliminate the invention of theories in favor of actual discovery.
The main faults of Burnham’s interpretation is that it does not go into enough detail about the specific aspects of the section. Burnham interprets Nietzsche as discussing a unique kind of life that has a will to power. This is significantly different from Nietzsche’s discussion. For Nietzsche, a drive to self-preservation exists in all organic beings, it is simply not the primary drive. Nietzsche is not claiming that some creatures just want to exist while others want power. Instead Nietzsche’s economical use of principles states that any drive for self-preservation is a certain form of a drive to power. Lampert’s discussion of section 13 is not significantly different from my own. Lampert does bring in other texts, such as Thus Spoke Zarathustra to bolster his interpretation, but in content it does not present any unique or troubling insights.

Burnham’s interpretation of section 14 begins with a discussion of positivism, Comte and the approach to science in the 19th century. These points are helpful and interesting but are little more than background information. Burnham sees that the Platonic mode is preferred in some sense to the modern approach to physics, but Burnham fails to see why Nietzsche makes this distinction. Although I agree with Burnham on this point, he fails to see the grounds upon which Nietzsche makes the distinction. Nietzsche once again sees philosophical beliefs as reflections of personality and personal prejudice. Nietzsche prefers the Platonic mode because of the kind of person Plato was. Nietzsche favors one idea over another because of the person who formulates the belief instead of whether or not the belief is true. Burnham’s construal is that Nietzsche thinks Plato would correct a modern view, but his own view is still short of the truth. It is important to see that Nietzsche disregards truth as a standard altogether. Lampert’s interpretation focuses more on the philosophical details of section 14 than Burnham’s. However, Lampert ignores the same central feature that Burnham did. He does not see that Nietzsche judges both modern physics and Platonism according to the person who holds those beliefs. Lampert sees section 14 as a discussion of the faults with sensualism. Lampert does not see that Nietzsche does not deny sensualism because it is not an adequate philosophical theory, but because it is a theory indicative of a plebian person.

Burnham does not go to great lengths to bring in other philosophical notions or the relationship between other parts of Beyond Good and Evil. On the other hand Lampert’s discussion avoids the text and brings in a discussion of Plato. Lampert wants to construe section 16 as if Nietzsche is becoming aware of and exorcising the prejudices of philosophy so that he can present a new and more adequate philosophy. The problem with this attempt is that Nietzsche does not (especially not in section 16) claim he is eradicating the prejudices of the past. Nietzsche is asking why philosophers strive for truth at all. Lampert avoids this interpretation by drawing a distinction between truth and certainty. Lampert argues that Nietzsche’s point is that philosophy has strived for certainty instead of truth. This distinction is recklessly imposed on the text. When Nietzsche asks the philosopher why he would want truth Lampert interprets it as if Nietzsche is saying philosophers should always want truth, and not confuse it with certainty.
Burnham’s discussion of section 17 is brief and to the point. Although Burnham makes the point here, I believe he does not see Nietzsche disregarding the truth of an idea as often as I do. Lampert’s discussion of section 17 is also straightforward. Lampert wants to understand Nietzsche’s discussion of subjectivity as correcting the errors of the past so that Nietzsche can develop a more adequate philosophy. However, as I have repeatedly noted, Nietzsche continually disregards the notion that any theory can be true in favor of looking at the kind of person that espouses a belief. Nietzsche continually sets truth aside and Lampert continually picks it back up.

The manner in which Burnham discusses the three aspects of will is not significantly different from my presentation. Burnham does not dedicate much time to discussing Nietzsche’s comparison between willing and a commonwealth. Burnham ends by connecting feeling to affect. The reason Burnham does so is unclear. The discussion of feeling and valuing seems to be a distraction from the actual content of the section. Nietzsche ends the section with a discussion of morality, dominance, and a social structure of drives. Burnham disregards these issues in order to discuss feeling and value. Although Lampert’s discussion is similar to both Burnham’s and my own account, he still finds it necessary to interpret the section in terms of the history of philosophy. Lampert brings up Plato so he can make the argument that Nietzsche sees the history of philosophy as a historical progression towards an adequate philosophy. Nietzsche has already claimed that physiology should interpret living beings as following will to power (section 13). Now Nietzsche claims acts of human will can also be understood as will to power. Lampert takes these two claims to mean that Nietzsche questions the relationship between human and non-human life. Lampert believes Nietzsche means one can look at how will to power operates in human acts of will and then draw conclusions about how will to power functions in non-human life (the general study of physiology). Lampert wants to make this argument because he wants to claim that Nietzsche sees will to power as an ontology. Lampert’s interpretation imposes this notion of will to power as an underlying ground of Being.

Burnham’s interpretation of section 20 is brief. He gives a general account of the section that is only surprising in that it brings up the concept of breeding. Burnham sees Nietzsche’s argument that an explicit philosophy is not separable from the grammar or physiology of the philosopher. Burnham takes this notion further and claims the process of physiology reinforcing belief systems leads to those belief systems perpetuating a physiological type. Although this is an interesting extension of the section, Nietzsche does not mention breeding here, and it seems to be beside the point. The core of Lampert’s discussion of section 20 is not troubling. Lampert sees Nietzsche’s argument that philosophical systems are inseparable from the physiology and grammar or the philosopher. Lampert sees Nietzsche as arguing that once one realizes a philosophy is tied to physiology and grammar, one can try and escape this influence. Lampert argues that one can avoid the influence of physiology and grammar, while Nietzsche explicitly argues this cannot happen.

Burnham’s discussion of section 21 is brief and not significantly different from my own interpretation. The most significant point here is that Burnham does see Nietzsche as
understanding the belief in either free will or determinism as tied to the kind of person who would have that belief. Lampert sees that section 21 denies both free will and determinism by claiming that they are both symptoms of a certain kind of person. Lampert argues that Nietzsche implies a resolution to the debate between free will and determinism is settled by a position that is in between these two extremes. Nietzsche does not mention such a resolution. Section 21 reduces belief in either free will or determinism to a symptom of a certain kind of person, and Lampert imposes the idea that Nietzsche has some third position that he does not explicitly mention.

33 Burnham uses section 22 as a platform for a broad discussion of interpretation. In doing so Burnham goes far beyond a discussion of the actual content of section 22. Lampert agrees with my construal of section 22 in so much as Nietzsche is not arguing that there is no text at all. Lampert also argues that Nietzsche sees conformity to law as one interpretation of nature and will to power as another.

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