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INTRODUCTION

Connie is a straight “A” high school student, ranks in the top 1% of SAT scorers in the state, and holds multiple state swimming records. Many outsiders assume that success comes easily for Connie because no matter what task she undertakes, she consistently exceeds other people’s expectations. With such a glowing life resume, I never understood why her mother would persistently worry about Connie’s future. I was so convinced that Connie’s mother had no reason to worry that I would playfully tease her about being a “worry-wart” and the typical “over-bearing mother.” All of this changed the day Connie’s mother, in a moment of startling seriousness, looked gravely into my eyes and said, “You don’t know my daughter; in a few years, she’ll either be graduating from Harvard or be strung out in a gutter.”

The objective of this thesis is to show that Nietzsche’s naturalism underlies and informs his critique of slave morality with the primary goal of liberating the higher types to become who they essentially are. My thesis begins by detailing Nietzsche’s unique naturalistic approach—that of seeking subconscious causal explanations for conscious phenomena such as morality. Next, it outlines the three descriptive components of slave morality which Nietzsche considers to be significant obstacles in preventing the higher types from flourishing. Throughout the thesis, a strong emphasis is placed on Nietzsche’s deterministic worldview (i.e. fatalism) which claims that the course of our lives is primarily determined by underlying hereditary traits that are unalterable and beyond our conscious will or choice. As such, the thesis concludes by addressing a fundamental question: If Nietzsche believes that our lives are primarily determined by biological and psychological type-facts which are outside of our control, then what does he mean by freedom? On my reading, Nietzsche believes that slave morality has intentionally inverted all of the natural life-affirming values in an effort to promote the interests of the weak. Effectively, morality is nothing more than an instrument of the weak to persuade/force the
strong to conform to their life-denying demands. Consequently, noble souls are born into a world that presents genuine external resistance against them reaching their full, predetermined potential. For Nietzsche, therefore, freedom is for the rare noble souls who are able to overcome the guilt and constraints imposed by an external morality in order to fully express their unique biological and psychological dispositions. In other words, freedom is the ability of the strong to become who they already are essentially. Therefore, Nietzsche's life task is to alert the nascent higher types to the real genealogy of values in order to free them from the impositions of morality, thereby clearing a path for their ascent to greatness.

In Chapter One, I set out to demonstrate the naturalistic worldview that Nietzsche possesses and describe its leading influences. Contrary to the “Received View,”\(^1\) that Nietzsche is a post-modern skeptic who doubts the validity of truth and knowledge, I show that Nietzsche’s approach to philosophy, particularly in his mature works, is firmly rooted in an empirical understanding of the causal forces operative in the natural world. Further, Nietzsche’s naturalism extends to the contents of human consciousness where he reveals the natural, yet subconscious, causes of conscious phenomena. Nietzsche asserts that hidden underneath the guise of rational arguments lie causal forces that explain all conscious phenomena, including a person’s actions, choices, and morality. Although a person may claim to believe in a specific morality or attempt to justify certain actions, these conscious phenomena are actually derivative

\(^1\) The term “received view” is used by Brian Leiter to denote the near-orthodox reading of Nietzsche’s ‘perspectivism’ amongst a majority of commentators since the 1960s. According to Leiter, the “Received View” describes Nietzsche as claiming that the universe is without a determinate nature, and as a result, any notion of truth or knowledge which derives from it is merely a human construction based upon utility. Moreover, since we are unable to access the universe objectively (i.e. disinterestedly), all epistemological viewpoints are equally false. This means that there is no epistemic privileged viewpoint—specifically, the natural sciences have no privileged claim to knowledge over the common man. Cf. Brian Leiter, “Perspectivism in Nietzsche’s Genealogy of Morals,” in Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche’s On The Genealogy of Morals, ed. Richard Schacht, (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 334-357.
of underlying forces that the person is neither aware of nor able to control. Influenced by figures such as Schopenhauer and Spinoza, along with the multiple discoveries made by the German Materialists of his day, Nietzsche’s naturalism develops into a deterministic fatalism of causal necessity. As a result, Nietzsche believes that we do not consciously control our own lives, but rather that we are primarily a product of underlying physiological and psychological traits with which we are born. With this said, it is important to note that Nietzsche’s fatalism does not rule out the affective power of external forces such as societal values, norms, and knowledge—Nietzsche is NOT a reductionist. However, these external forces are secondary affects (i.e. causes) and serve only to hinder or enhance the internal forces one already possesses at birth. In other words, external forces are necessarily interpreted through and by a person’s underlying internal forces. And herein lies the crux of the problem as I understand Nietzsche: as an external affect, morality serves to severely hinder those born with a noble soul from achieving their full potential. Because slave morality attempts to mold people into who they are not, the higher types are obstructed from becoming who they are—namely, great. Nietzsche’s weapon of choice in combating the moralists’ claims is knowledge because Nietzsche believes that spreading his new knowledge of the genealogy of morals will serve as the most powerful of (external) affects. In short, by equipping the noble souls with an awareness of the insidious origins of ascetic morality, Nietzsche aims to eradicate the negative effects of morality so that the underlying type-facts within the higher types can reign supreme.

Once I have established Nietzsche’s naturalistic method and his overarching mission, Chapter Two addresses the specific knowledge that Nietzsche wants to impart to the noble soul. Nietzsche believes he has uncovered the genealogy of morality, and its existence is firmly rooted in a hatred of life. Nietzsche asserts that slave morality is based upon a reactive psychology of
the weak against the strong. Because the weak were resentful of their insignificant role in society, they systematically inverted all values by making the virtues of the weak (i.e. humility, poverty, charity, compassion, etc.) appear Good, and the virtues of the strong (i.e. pride, wealth, self-interest, strength, etc.) appear Evil. Chapter Two addresses the slave's evaluative process by delineating three primary objections that Nietzsche has to slave morality—namely, (1) the idea of free will, (2) the transparent and stable ‘self’, and (3) the notion that morality can be universally applied since all humans are essentially similar—and then illustrates how each of these components function to undermine the natural flourishing of the higher types.

Regarding component (1), free will undermines the higher types by asserting that if an agent possesses the will to freely choose how one acts (or who one becomes), then the moralists have every right to hold the agent accountable. Free will assumes that the strong can choose to become weak, and if they do not, then the strong may be justifiably punished. Regarding component (2), the notion of a transparent or stable ‘self’ undermines the higher types by asserting that there is always a doer behind every deed—a transparent ‘self’ by which all motives for action can be extracted and evaluated by the moralists. The idea of a stable ‘self’ dismisses all of the underlying internal forces at work in producing an action, thereby rendering the higher type responsible for actions which are natural to them. Finally, regarding component (3), the idea that morality can be universally applied undermines the higher types by asserting that mankind is fundamentally the same. The similarity doctrine ignores the fact that people are born with a variety of underlying type-facts (i.e. that mankind is essentially dissimilar) by asserting that all men are (or should be) weak and are therefore required to conform to the universal herd morality. As expected, the higher types are punished when their differences from the herd are expressed. For these reasons, Nietzsche sets out to demonstrate
that these three components of slave morality are unhealthy and serve only the interest of the weak. Furthermore, on my reading, Nietzsche’s naturalism undercuts the possibility of anyone, weak or strong, from being held responsible for their actions, thereby declaring everyone innocent. Morality, on the other hand, was invented precisely to hold people responsible for his actions, particularly the strong, thereby declaring everyone guilty. To my mind, Nietzsche primarily views morality as an insidious justification for the weak to punish the strong. As such, only when the morality of the slave and its corresponding inversion of reality have been exposed can the higher types reclaim their rightful (superior) place in the natural order.

Throughout Chapters One and Two, much emphasis is placed on Nietzsche’s naturalism as being concerned with the causal primacy of physiological and psychological traits of the individual. In effect, Nietzsche believes that one’s life trajectory is severely determined by these underlying inner forces. This deterministic worldview naturally leads to two questions: (1) If people have no conscious choice in determining who they ultimately become, then why does Nietzsche spend so much time talking about freedom? (2) If the masters are biologically determined to be great, then what possible effect could slave morality have on the higher types? These are both valid questions and are addressed in Chapter Three. Regarding question (1), we discover that Nietzsche does indeed utilize freedom terminology throughout his corpus; however, he does so in a revisionary way. Nietzsche’s writing style departs significantly from the traditional philosophical writing style in that Nietzsche wants to reach his readers at an emotional level, because he does not believe that providing a systematic argument has much affective power. As a result, Nietzsche employs what is called a “persuasive definition” on many terms, such as “freedom,” in order to capitalize on the emotive meaning of the term while significantly altering its conceptual content. In short, Nietzsche’s notion of “freedom” has little
in common with its traditional meaning. Instead, Nietzsche asserts that “freedom” is unmediated action which is expressed naturally and involuntarily from one’s underlying inherited traits. For the higher types, such “freedom” is expressed in acts of strength, selfishness, war, overcoming, and possessing a cheerful attitude towards one’s own fatality. In effect, to be “free” is to embrace the necessary circumstances that one finds oneself in without wishing them to be any different. As I understand him, Nietzsche viewed his own life in this manner, even embracing his illness as a necessary catalyst for his life mission: the discovery that morality’s origin is rooted in the sick man and his hatred of life. Regarding question (2), we learn that Nietzsche himself was a complex man who incessantly battled his instinct towards decadence in his early adulthood. Nietzsche, like so many of the higher types, was born with conflicting type-facts—namely, an instinct towards greatness and an instinct towards decadence—that caused him to be susceptible to decadent values and idealism. As we have seen, external forces, such as morality, can play a substantial causal role in a person’s life. As such, the higher types are likely to experience conflicting influences: (a) the terrifying internal drive towards greatness (becoming great is no easy task; one must possess a resilient remedial instinct), and (b) the ceaseless external demands of the herd to conform to their life-denying values. Not surprisingly, many higher types succumb to the external pressures of the herd, thereby resorting to self-destructive and decadent behavior. But this outcome is not determined; there is hope. Nietzsche’s personal overcoming of both his illness and his early idealism prepared him to share new knowledge with other predestined higher types. Nietzsche’s target readers become others like himself; those born for greatness but who must instinctively battle their susceptibility towards decadence—whether from inherited decadent traits or from the external demands of the moralists. Nietzsche’s goal is to eradicate the moral
obstacles that hinder the higher types from expressing their strength, and in doing so, liberate them to become who they were born to be. In this sense, and only in this sense, is one truly “free.”

Here’s to Connie discovering her “freedom.”
CHAPTER 1

NIETZSCHE’S NATURALISM AND ITS INFLUENCES

1.1 Nietzsche’s Speculative-Methodological Naturalism:

What does it mean to call a philosopher a “naturalist”? According to the Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy, naturalism is “a sympathy with the view that ultimately nothing resists explanation by the methods characteristic of the natural sciences.” As helpful as this definition is, we will proceed carefully in ascribing the term “naturalist” to Nietzsche because not only does the term have multiple uses in the modern philosophical/scientific vernacular but because the “received view” of Nietzsche—and his supposed rejection of the possibility of possessing any truth and knowledge—usually precludes many commentators from including Nietzsche among the ranks of naturalist philosophers. Nevertheless, Christopher Janaway claims that there is a consensus among modern commentators that Nietzsche is a naturalist, but only in the broadest sense of the term. Janaway states that Nietzsche opposes transcendent metaphysics, whether that of Plato or of Christianity or of Schopenhauer. He rejects notions of the immaterial soul, the absolutely free controlling will, or the self-transparent pure intellect, instead emphasizing the body, talking of the animal nature of human beings, and attempting to explain numerous phenomena by invoking drives, instincts, and affects which he locates in our physical, bodily existence. Human beings are to be ‘translated back into nature’, since otherwise we falsify their history, their psychology, and the nature of their values—concerning all of which we must know truths, as a means to the all-important critique and eventual revaluation of values. This is Nietzsche’s naturalism in the broad sense...3

The above explanation is, for the most part, uncontroversial and accurately articulates Nietzsche’s naturalism in a “broad sense.” However, it does not identify the specific approach that Nietzsche employs: particularly the methodological and speculative features of Nietzsche’s naturalism. Therefore, in order to show that Nietzsche’s naturalism is far more pervasive to his philosophical thought than is traditionally recognized, we must first delve into the type of naturalist Nietzsche is and how this came to influence his philosophical project.

In the book *Nietzsche on Morality*, Brian Leiter argues that philosophical naturalism can be categorized into two general doctrines: “substantive naturalism” and “methodological naturalism.” The substantive naturalists (S-Naturalists) hold a metaphysical view “that the only things that exist are natural (or perhaps simply physical) things... [and] that only those properties picked out by the laws of physical sciences are real.”⁴ As one familiar with the Nietzschean corpus might expect, apart from the S-Naturalist’s rejection of supernatural truth claims, there is little to no evidence that suggests that Nietzsche is an S-Naturalist.⁵ This is a crucial point for our purposes here because, as we will see, when Nietzsche critiques science and/or materialism, his critiques are leveled against S-Naturalism (such as physicalism), not all types of naturalism.

Alternatively, the methodological naturalists (M-Naturalists) dismiss the notion that everything can be reduced to scientific facts. Instead, they claim that “philosophical inquiry...should be continuous with empirical inquiry in the sciences.”⁶ The M-Naturalist is concerned with how and what one is doing when undertaking a philosophical inquiry, not necessarily establishing a scientific law. As such, M-Naturalists require that their methods align

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with the sciences. For some M-Naturalists, a distinction may be made to seek *continuity* with only the hard physical sciences, while other M-Naturalists utilize any successful science: natural or social. On Nietzsche’s account, although the *hard sciences* provide a suitable explanatory model for his methods to emulate – primarily because of their appeal to deterministic causes – he embraces all sciences that prove to be successful. For instance, sciences such as evolutionary biology and cognitive psychology have been extremely successful despite the fact that their theories haven’t yet been (or cannot be) reduced to the physical facts of physics. Nonetheless, when an M-Naturalist claims to have continuity with the sciences, the type of science he or she emulates is not the only distinction. For instance, some M-Naturalists might suggest that “philosophical inquiry should be both *modeled on* the methods of the successful sciences, and, at a minimum, *consistent with* the results of those sciences.”7 Here, Leiter is alluding to an additional distinction among M-Naturalists: “Results Continuity” and “Methods Continuity”. Results Continuity requires that any philosophical theory of knowledge or morality should align with the results of scientific inquiry, whereas Methods Continuity requires that such theories merely “emulate the methods” of the successful sciences. As such, an M-Naturalist that simply relies on Methods Continuity to formulate his theory (i.e. he does not wait for or rely on specific results of science before formulating a theory) is what Leiter calls a “Speculative Methodological Naturalist.” Although M-Naturalists may seek to apply well-established scientific data (Results Continuity) when formulating their theories, such established knowledge is not always readily available. This is the situation that Nietzsche finds himself in during the second half of the 19th century. With the possible exception of the burgeoning field of physiology found in the German

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Materialists (which will be discussed shortly), Nietzsche does not have an established scientific paradigm to draw upon regarding human psychology. Consequently, Nietzsche employs the methods of other successful sciences in order to ‘speculate’ about human nature and psychology. This is the heart of Nietzsche’s naturalism; as one who “aims to offer theories that explain various important human phenomena (especially morality), and that do so in ways that both draw on actual scientific results...but are also modeled on science in the sense that they seek to reveal the causal determinants of these phenomena...”\(^8\)

As straightforward as this last explanation is, we must be careful not to oversimplify or overstate Nietzsche’s reliance on science. In fact, Janaway argues for a weaker naturalism in Nietzsche than the one discussed above – one that deemphasizes the Results Continuity of science. Janaway states that there is “nagging worry about Results Continuity [because] Nietzsche presents will to power as a *counter* to what he sees as the dominant paradigm in science... [Therefore,] on a straightforward reading, Nietzsche goes out of his way to reject Results Continuity with scientific biology.”\(^9\) While this observation is insightful and accurate, Janaway’s formulation tends to overlook the ‘speculative’ nature of Nietzsche’s naturalism. In fact, Merold Westphal calls Nietzsche an “intellectual experimenter.”\(^10\) As previously discussed, Speculative M-Naturalists may appeal to results found within the dominant sciences, but they are certainly at liberty to reject them; this is what makes them speculative! What is most important to Speculative M-Naturalists is that their theories be informed by the science’s methods (Method Continuity), not necessarily the science’s results. This is precisely what we find throughout Nietzsche’s corpus: a respect for the practices and methods of the sciences, but

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\(^8\) Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 8.


often a rejection of their conclusions. Moreover, Nietzsche believes that it is not science per se’ that distinguishes the 19th century, but the scientific method. Nietzsche proclaims that “it is not the victory of science that distinguishes the 19th century, but the victory of the scientific method over science!” He also declares, “scientific methods...one must say it ten times, are what is essential, also what is most difficult, also what is for the longest time opposed by habits and laziness.” Furthermore, although Janaway’s concern discounts the ‘speculative’ aspect of Nietzsche’s naturalism, his formulation does nonetheless “serve as a way of stating a pertinent constraint on speculative explanations: namely, that they not invoke entities or mechanisms that science has ruled out of bounds.” In other words, although Nietzsche may reject certain scientific results, his observations remain thoroughly rooted in the natural world. Consequently, one should understand Nietzsche’s naturalism as providing an explanatory framework to work within, while the specific conclusions can be modified as our understanding of the natural world evolves. As we will see, Nietzsche envisions a day when all of the sciences will work, together with philosophy, to accomplish his ultimate mission: the revaluation of values.

There is little doubt that Nietzsche disagreed with many of the results of science in his day; however, there is one significant Result Continuity from the German Materialists of the mid 19th century that resonates throughout his corpus: namely, that man is a natural organism like every other living organism. Nietzsche writes:

To translate man back into nature...[we must be] hardened in the discipline of science...before the rest of nature, with intrepid Oedipus eyes and sealed Odysseus ears,

deaf to the siren songs of old metaphysical bird catchers who have been piping at him all too long, ‘you are more, you are higher, you are a different origin...14

This sentiment is echoed in the writings of the famous German Materialist Ludwig Buchner (with whom Nietzsche was familiar) when he wrote that “Man is a product of nature in body and mind. Hence not merely what he is, but also what he does, wills, feels, and thinks, depends upon the same natural necessity as the whole structure of the world.”15 Leiter interprets this excerpt, and others like it, as asserting that each person possesses fixed psycho-physiological facts (i.e. type-facts) and dispositions that define one as a particular type of person, a view that he terms “Nietzsche’s Doctrine of Types.” This Doctrine of Types is the basis for Nietzsche’s naturalism as a ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’16 which attempts to reveal the real causes of conscious phenomena (such as morality) in naturalistic terms. Nietzsche explains:

[O]ur thoughts, values, every ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘if ’ and ‘but’ grow from us with the same inevitability as fruits borne on the tree – all related and referring to one another and a testimonial to one will, one health, one earth, one sun. – Do you like the taste of our fruit? – But of what concern is that to the trees?17

In this telling analogy, Nietzsche is imploring his readers to understand, in naturalistic terms, human nature in the same manner that one would understand a tree. Through a careful analysis of a tree’s fruit, we can achieve great insight into the type of tree it is. This insight is

16 Paul Ricoeur, in his 1965 essay “Freud and Philosophy: an Essay on Interpretation,” is credited with coining the phrase “school of suspicion” in referring to the similarities found in the philosophical approaches of Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx. As Ricoeur notes in the essay, suspicion is not to be mistaken for skepticism because although both attack established norms, suspicion unmasksthe prevailing false consciousness in order to clear the path for a true understanding of reality, whereas skepticism has no such goal. For the purposes of this paper, Nietzsche’s ‘Hermeneutics of Suspicion’ will be synonymous with his naturalistic project; namely, to reveal the underlying natural causes for conscious phenomena, such as morality, in order to expose it as a hindrance to human excellence.
achieved because the natural facts about the tree determine the type of fruit it will bear. Likewise, Nietzsche observes that the natural type-facts of a person—a person’s psychophysiological facts and unconscious drives—produce a person’s morality, and thereby, a careful analysis of this morality would generate great insight into the type of person one is at one’s core. In other words, Nietzsche is asserting that human actions and values are derivative of the natural psycho-physiological constitution of the individual person, not the product of one’s rational thought, will, or choice. As Merold Westphal aptly puts it, “Nietzsche comes to call his hermeneutics of suspicion ‘genealogy’ because it inquires into the concealed origins of action and belief. But genealogy is to be sharply distinguished from archaeology, for it seeks no origin ‘behind the world,’ nothing that would count as an archē in the classical sense…” Further, the goal of Nietzsche’s genealogy is not to gain a complete understanding of scientific facts, but rather to understand how said facts affect our values. Rutherford states that Nietzsche’s project “is to interpret [scientific] facts in such a way as to establish mastery over the origins of value, freeing oneself in the process from the mastery that those values have over him.” As such, Nietzsche’s hermeneutical approach stands in stark contrast to the Western philosophical tradition, which grounded morality and beliefs firmly in God and Reason. As Westphal explains, “this is why Nietzsche treats Christianity and Platonism as the (virtually identical) twin opponents of his immoralist project of replacing the quest for transcendent origins with a quest for origins within the world, even if not exactly on its surface.” Effectively, Nietzsche is suspicious of moral belief systems because he finds that they do NOT admit of rational

18 Westphal, Suspicion and Faith, 221.
20 Westphal, Suspicion and Faith, 221.
vindication. In fact, Nietzsche proclaims that “to supply a rational foundation for morality…inspires laughter.”

Therefore, if we cannot trust what people profess about their beliefs and morality, then there must be something else at work that forms these belief systems. That something else, Nietzsche speculates, is the psycho-physiological type-facts that make up the individual; this is an assertion where Nietzsche’s Speculative M-Naturalism becomes most noticeable. Nietzsche, in essence, is developing a speculative psychological theory that is predicated on certain accepted claims about what human beings are like and then utilizes these claims to help explain such conscious phenomena as beliefs (morality) and practices. Because he doubts the rational justification for holding a given belief, Nietzsche employs certain basic scientific results (i.e. physiology) in order to speculate about the natural causes that provide a more plausible explanation. As Nietzsche summarizes, “our moral judgments and evaluations…are only images and fantasies based on a physiological process unknown to us [so that] it is always necessary to draw forth…the physiological phenomenon behind the moral predispositions and prejudices.”

This is precisely the role of the modern philosopher as Nietzsche sees it: to embrace the “duty to suspicion today, to squint maliciously out of every abyss of suspicion.”

1.2 Nietzsche’s Opposition to Materialism:

The assertion that Nietzsche utilized the physiological results of the German Materialists of the mid 19th century is not without controversy. In fact, Nietzsche identifies himself as the

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21 Nietzsche, BGE V: 186
22 Friedrich Nietzsche, Daybreak, (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Book II: 119 & Book V: 542. (Later abbreviated as: D.)
23 Nietzsche, BGE II:34.
“sternest opponent of all materialism.”  

Nietzsche repeatedly condemns scientists such as materialists, *mechanicians*, or physicalists for interpreting the world mechanistically, which is “an interpretation that permits counting, calculating, weighing, seeing, and touching, and nothing more, such an idea is a piece of crudity and naiveté, provided it is not a lunacy and idiocy.”

This quote, and many others like it, appears to outright condemn the German Materialists. However, if we take these passages in context, we see that Nietzsche is opposing a particular type of naturalism – specifically the S-Naturalism discussed earlier. Recall that S-Naturalism asserts that the only things that exist are natural/physical things and that only those properties picked out by the laws of physical sciences are real. This approach is certainly objectionable to Nietzsche because, as the above passage from The Gay Science concludes:

> An essentially mechanical world would be an essentially meaningless world! Assuming that one estimated the value of a piece of music according to how much of it could be counted, calculated, and expressed in formulas: how absurd would such a “scientific” estimation of music be! What would one have comprehended, understood, grasped of it? Nothing, absolutely nothing of what is really ‘music’ in it!

Here we see Nietzsche’s criticism leveled against the S-Naturalists who claim that everything is reducible to physical phenomena. However, such a critique does not contradict Nietzsche’s M-Naturalism because, although Nietzsche affirms that psychological phenomena are explicable in physiological terms, he is not making a metaphysical claim that ALL psychological phenomena are explicable in these materialistic terms. Nietzsche opposes hard S-Naturalism and reductive materialism because they omit the qualitative and aesthetic aspect of our experience – the aspect that “makes music beautiful!” As an M-Naturalist, Nietzsche draws upon the methods of

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26 Nietzsche, *GS* V: 373.
successful sciences—even materialism—while still reminding his readers of his staunch opposition. In fact, he declares himself the “sternest opponent of materialism” only after delineating an entire section in which he substantiates many of the physiological results of materialism. Here is the passage in context:

When someone cannot get over a ‘psychological pain,’ that is not the fault of his ‘psyche,’ but...more probably even that of his belly... A strong and well constituted man digests his experiences... as he digests his meals, even when he has to swallow some tough morsels. If he cannot get over an experience and have done with it, this kind of indigestion is as much physiological as is the other—and often in fact merely a consequence of the other.—*With such a conception one can, between ourselves, still be the sternest opponent of all materialism.*

As we can see, when his opposition is taken in context, the closing disclaimer serves to distance Nietzsche from the materialism that he had just seemingly endorsed. This is no accident because, although Nietzsche rejects the reductive aspect of materialism, he certainly utilizes the information provided by it. As Leiter nicely summarizes, “Nietzsche is, indeed, hostile to ‘materialism’; the mistake is to equate ‘materialism’ with naturalism *simpliciter.* Rather, the type of reductive materialism about which Nietzsche is skeptical is only one type of naturalistic position, one whose rejection is compatible with a thorough-going M-Naturalism...”

In addition to his contempt for reductive materialism, another major objection Nietzsche has with the science of his day is scientists’ arrogance in thinking that they could dispense with philosophy. Nietzsche explains that “after science has most happily rid itself of theology whose ‘handmaid’ it was too long, it now aims with an excess of high spirits and lack of understanding to lay down laws for philosophy and play the ‘master’ herself—what am I saying?

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27 Nietzsche, *GM* III: 16 (emphasis added).
the philosopher.” Nietzsche is appalled at the increasing contempt towards philosophy by the scientific community, insisting that the sciences are actually the servants of their master: philosophy. Nietzsche asserts that “it may be necessary for the education of a genuine philosopher that he himself has also once stood on all these steps on which his servants, the scientific laborers of philosophy, remain standing.” In other words, a person may need to progress through multiple stages of learning and knowledge (including a stage of scientific knowledge) in order to become a genuine philosopher, “but all these [stages] are merely preconditions of his task: this task...demands that he create values.” In other words, Nietzsche contends that the cold and austere nature of certain scientists and materialists makes them ill-equipped to lead society because they cannot produce the instrumental values necessary to do so. The creation of values, and therefore the creators of values (i.e. philosophers), are imperative to the flourishing of society because “around the inventors of new values the world revolves.” Nietzsche believes that values are “among the most powerful levers in the involved mechanisms of our actions” and that:

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29 Nietzsche, *BGE VI*: 204.
30 Nietzsche, *BGE VI*: 211.
31 Nietzsche, *BGE VI*: 211.
32 It should be noted that Nietzsche’s task of ‘creating values’ is separate from, though a derivative of, his naturalistic project discussed in this paper; however, it is mentioned here only to clarify the ‘received view’ of Nietzsche’s hostility towards science and materialism. For all intents and purposes, Nietzsche’s objections to science are not against science per se, but against the scientists’ conceit that their discipline can eliminate the role of philosophy.
33 As is true with the sciences, Nietzsche holds that philosophy qua philosophy is not necessarily good in-and-of-itself. When Nietzsche expresses that philosophy is indispensable, he has a certain type of philosophy in mind – namely, his own philosophy. As such, at the conclusion of the quoted passage from *BGE VI*: 211, Nietzsche inquires, “Are there such philosophers today? Have there been such philosophers yet? Must there not be such philosophers?”
35 Nietzsche, *GS IV*: 335.
The noble type of man experiences itself as determining values; it does not need approval; it judges ‘what is harmful to me, is harmful in itself’; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value-creating.\textsuperscript{36}

In short, Nietzsche recognizes that the knowledge provided by the sciences is beneficial, but it will never preempt philosophy as the creator of values. As such, a genuine philosopher should view scientific knowledge as “a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their ‘knowing’ is creating, their creating is a legislation…”\textsuperscript{37}

1.3 The German Materialist Influence on Nietzsche:

Now that we have seen the two features of science that Nietzsche opposes – namely, reductive materialism and its contempt for philosophy – we must turn our attention to the positive and lasting influence that the German Materialists of the mid 19\textsuperscript{th} century had on Nietzsche’s naturalism. As evidenced earlier, Nietzsche was convinced that man is first and foremost an animal, a natural product like all other organic beings. This breakthrough was the springboard for the German Materialists to conduct their inquiry into the mental and corporal aspects of human beings. Influenced by the works of Ludwig Feuerbach, Jacob Moleschott, and Ludwig Buchner of the 1830s and 1840s, materialism really exploded onto the intellectual scene in the 1850s under the impetus of the startling new discoveries about human beings made by the burgeoning science of physiology. After 1830 in Germany, ‘Physiology...became the basis for modern scientific medicine, and this confirmed the tendency, identifiable throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, towards integration of human and natural sciences.’\textsuperscript{38}

Because of influential books such as Feuerbach’s \textit{Philosophy of the Future} (1843), Moleschott’s \textit{The Physiology of Food} (1850), and Buchner’s \textit{Force and Matter} (1855), the German Materialists’

\textsuperscript{36} Nietzsche, \textit{BGE} IX: 260. The manner in which a noble person is free to create these values will be discussed in Chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{37} Nietzsche, \textit{BGE} VI: 211.
\textsuperscript{38} Leiter, “Nietzsche’s Naturalism Reconsidered”, 5
naturalistic worldview took the world by storm during the 1850s. In fact, as a young man in the early 1860s, Nietzsche was familiarizing himself with Feuerbach, Buchner, and other popular materialists. As such, young Nietzsche was learning from the materialists that humans – physically and mentally – were subject to the same natural forces as plants and animals: specifically, their physiological traits, environment, and nutritional diet. To provide a taste of this influence, Leiter selects several examples from the aforementioned materialists and compares them to Nietzsche’s later positions. For instance, Feuerbach’s dictum that “the body in its totality is my ego, my very essence” is resonated in Zarathustra’s proclamation that “body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body.”

Likewise, Buchner’s postulation that “man is subject to the same laws as plants and animals… [and is] the product of such external influences…as ‘sex, nationality, climate, soil’… [and is] certainly not that morality independent, free-willing creature as he is represented by the moralists” echoes a prominent deterministic theme throughout the Nietzschean corpus (which will be addressed in greater detail in Chapters Two and Three). As Nietzsche declares in The Anti-Christ:

Descartes was the first who, with a boldness worthy of reverence, ventured to think of the animal as a machine: our whole science of physiology is devoted to proving this proposition. Nor, logically, do we exclude man, as even Descartes did: our knowledge of man today is real knowledge precisely to the extent that it is knowledge of him as a

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39 In a letter to Raimund Granier in 1862, Nietzsche claimed to have been reading about materialism from an unknown source. Based on the work of Thomas Brobjér, which chronologically lists the reading material read by Nietzsche throughout his life, Brobjér concludes that Nietzsche was referring to a modern materialist journal titled Anregungen für Kunst, Leben und Wissenschaft which he subscribed to from at least 1861 until 1862. This journal featured articles from renowned materialists such as Buchner and Feuerbach. Additionally, Nietzsche read multiple books during the early 1860s by Feuerbach, which played a significant role in Nietzsche losing his faith in Christianity. Cf. Thomas Brobjér, Nietzsche’s Philosophical Context: An Intellectual Biography (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois, 2008): 44, 134 FN11, 187-188.

40 Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, in The Portable Nietzsche (1954), Section 1: 14, quoted in Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 68.
machine. Formerly man was presented with ‘free will’ as a dowry from a higher order: today we have taken even will away from him.41

But perhaps the most striking influence on Nietzsche’s notorious speculation about the role that food, climate42, and bodily functions play in creating a person’s mental state and beliefs was fostered by the research conducted by Moleschott. While it may seem commonplace to us today, Moleschott controversially proposed that the chemical components of food and nutrition substantially impact both a person’s physical health as well as their mental health. In fact, in the *Physiology of Food*, Moleschott prescribes various diets for people based upon the intellectual demands of the individual’s pursuits. In a review of Moleschott’s book, Feuerbach stated, “If you want to improve the people, then give them better food instead of declamations against sin. Man is what he eats!”43 Buchner added that “a copious secretion of bile has, as is well known, a powerful influence on the mental disposition.”44 In effect, the entire scientific community of the mid 19th century was pursuing physiological explanations for mental traits and dispositions, and Nietzsche adopted much of its zeal. For instance, in the preface to *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche draws a clear connection between a person’s physical health and his or her subsequent philosophy by stating that when one “falls sick...it is his defects which philosophize.”45 Later in the book, Nietzsche speculates about the need for a “philosophy of

41 Nietzsche, A: 14.
42 Because of his illness, Nietzsche visited many cities throughout Europe in an attempt to alleviate his sufferings; this explains the source of his abundant speculations about place and climate. For example, Nietzsche states that “The influence of climate on our metabolism, its retardation, its acceleration, goes so far that a mistaken choice of place and climate can not only estrange a man from his task, but can actually keep him from it.” He further “reflects with horror” on the multitude of cities he lived in, “so many disastrous places for my physiology.” (Ecce Homo II: 2.)
43 Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 70.
44 Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 70.
45 Nietzsche, GS Preface: 2.
nutrition” in order to understand “the moral effects of different foods.” In Ecce Homo, Nietzsche states, “I am more interested in...the question of nutrition...‘how do you, among all people, have to eat to attain your maximum strength.’” He further estimates that “sinfulness in man is not a fact, but rather the interpretation of a fact, namely a physiological upset, — the latter seen from a perspective of morals and religion which is no longer binding on us.” Consequently, Nietzsche insists that previous explanations about human bodily functions have been detrimental to a flourishing life. Nietzsche declares:

> Whatever proceeds from the stomach, the intestines, the beating of the heart, the nerves, the bile, the semen — all those distempers, debilitations, excitations, the whole chance operation of the machine of which we still know so little! — had to be seen by a Christian such as Pascal as a moral and religious phenomenon, and he had to ask whether God or the Devil, good or evil, salvation or damnation was to be discovered in them! Oh what an unhappy interpreter....Oh how he had to twist and torment himself so as to be in the right!

In effect, through the work of these 19th century Physiologists, Nietzsche recognized the importance that the natural environment has on a person’s physical and mental dispositions. While the moralists had condemned the body and its instincts through their insistence that the “Good life” could be achieved through reason alone, apart from the body’s physiological needs, Nietzsche declared that “these small things—nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness—are inconceivably more important than everything one has taken to be important so far. Precisely here one must begin to relearn.”

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46 Nietzsche, GS I:7.
47 Friedrich Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, (NY: Random House, Inc., 2000), Section II: 1. (Later abbreviated as: EC.) In this revealing passage, Nietzsche stresses the importance that diet and climate have on the type of person one becomes, providing personal insight into his aversion to alcohol and his insistence that “one has to know the size of one’s stomach...[because] everybody has his own measure.”
48 Nietzsche, GM III: 16 (emphasis added).
49 Nietzsche, D I: 86.
50 Nietzsche, EH II: 10.
1.4 The Influence of Lange on Nietzsche:

As influential as these physiological ideas were on young Nietzsche, possibly no other book (with the exception of Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation*) had as much influence on him as Friedrich Lange’s *History of Materialism* (1865).51 Lange’s book exposed Nietzsche to the extensive history of philosophical materialism from the Ancient Greeks to Kant (including Feuerbach, Moleschott, and Buchner), providing him with “infinitely more than its title promises... [by being]... the best account... [of] the materialist movement of our times, of natural science and its Darwinian theories.”52 In fact, Nietzsche was so taken by this book that he wrote, “Kant, Schopenhauer, this book by Lange – I don’t need anything else!”53 Because this book was so influential on young Nietzsche, its content warrants exploration.

Lange represented the beginning of the Neo-Kantians who, like Kant, were impressed with the advances made by the natural sciences, but at the same time he worried about the moral and philosophical consequences of these successes. As Julian Young observes, Lange “was worried, not by science as... an estimable and vital enterprise, but rather by science turned into metaphysics – the metaphysical thesis of materialism, the thesis that ultimate reality consists of matter in motion, and nothing else.”54 As a result, Lange’s book set out to demonstrate the limitations of the sciences – particularly that of the physiology of perception – by returning to the Kantian contention that humans are unable to know the ‘thing-in-itself’.

51 To emphasize the importance of this book to Nietzsche, Brobjer notes that Nietzsche reread Lange’s book multiple times throughout his adult life. Though he is uncertain about the exact number of times, Brobjer projects that Nietzsche reread the book in 1868, 1873, 1881, and 1883, based upon known excerpts or paraphrasing of Lange’s book by Nietzsche during those years. (Cf. Brobjer, *Nietzsche’s Philosophical Context*, 35-36)


54 Young, *Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography*, 89.
According to Lange, modern physiology actually vindicated Kant’s position because of its complete dependence on the human senses. In other words, since the human senses are incapable of illuminating the ‘thing-in-itself’, physiology and materialism are only able to provide knowledge of the “phenomenal world.” Therefore, Lange concluded that the jurisdiction of science should remain squarely in the “phenomenal world”, and that it must remain silent regarding the ultimate reality found within the “noumenal world.”

Lange’s Neo-Kantian views would appear to give Nietzsche reasons to doubt the usefulness of physiology and materialism. However, there are two factors that are noteworthy regarding Lange’s influence on Nietzsche:

(1) Although Lange valued many of the discoveries made by the natural sciences, Lange was greatly concerned about science turning into metaphysics—specifically, that science was positioning itself as the sole authority regarding the nature of reality. We have seen that such a concern mirrors that of Nietzsche’s own critique of S-Naturalism discussed earlier in section 1.2.

(2) Leiter observes that “Lange’s general intellectual sympathies were clearly with the Materialists as against the idealists, theologians, and others who resisted the blossoming scientific picture of the world and of human beings. Thus for example, [Lange] remarks “if Materialism can be set aside only by criticism based upon the Kantian theory of knowledge... [then] in the sphere of positive questions it is everywhere in the right.” In short, with regard to the phenomenal world, the materialists were regarded by Lange, in terms of methods and results, as being “everywhere in the right.” As such, Lange provided Nietzsche an overall

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positive impression of the Materialists – so long as the Materialists remained squarely in the phenomenal world.

In the late 1870s, Nietzsche eventually breaks with the Kantian distinction (how this break occurred will be discussed in the next section 1.5) between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds in favor of one world: namely, the empirical world of our senses. So while the young Nietzsche would have maintained that the natural sciences were able to speak about only the phenomenal world, the mature Nietzsche would have made no such distinction. Consequently, once the Kantian distinction was removed, it follows that the Materialists’ claims about the phenomenal world—as depicted by Lange—could now be applied to the one reality that Nietzsche accepts. Effectively, Lange’s book, stripped of its Kantian leanings, provided substantial insights and influence on Nietzsche’s naturalism as it applied to the one empirical world of our senses.

1.5 Nietzsche’s Break with Kant and Its Aftermath:

Nietzsche’s rejection of the Kantian distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds was pivotal to Nietzsche’s naturalism. To understand how this development occurred, John Wilcox was the first to suggest that the six stages in Nietzsche’s fable ‘How the ‘Real World’ at Last Became a Myth’ were “meant to be suggestive; and that it is—suggestive about both the history of the concept and the development of Nietzsche’s own thought about it.”56 Wilcox’s notion that Nietzsche’s ‘fable’ was a veiled description of his own epistemological evolution was later advanced in Clark’s Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, which showed that each of the successive stages in Nietzsche’s thought did indeed mirror the stages found within the fable.

Clark’s conclusion integrally supports this theory: “[Nietzsche’s] history of the ‘true’ world indicates that he gives up ascribing reality to any world other than the empirical world (stage 5), and that he recognizes that this requires him to relinquish his claim that the empirical world is illusory (stage 6).”57 In fact, in Stage Six of his fable, Nietzsche enthusiastically claims, “We have abolished the real world: what world is left? The apparent world perhaps?... But no! with the real world we have abolished the apparent world!”58 In effect, as Nietzsche declares elsewhere, “to talk about ‘another’ world [other] than this is quite pointless... to divide the world into a ‘real’ and an ‘apparent’ world, whether in the manner of Christianity or in the manner of Kant (which is, after all, that of a cunning Christian) is only a suggestion of decadence – a symptom of declining life.”59 As such, with this understanding of Nietzsche’s epistemological evolution and his eventual denunciation of the ‘thing-in-itself’ in the late 1870s, Clark concludes that in Nietzsche’s mature writings:

Nietzsche no longer claims that science falsifies reality. Instead, he celebrates science as ‘the wisdom of the world’ (i.e. of ‘this world’)... and presents science as the great liberator from the falsifications perpetuated by religion and metaphysics... He identifies science with ‘the sound conception of cause and effect,’ and claims that the concepts of guilt and punishment... were invented against science... Nietzsche’s final six works... exhibit a uniform and unambiguous respect for facts, the senses, and science.60

In the above quote, Clark classifies Nietzsche’s ‘mature writings’ – the books that celebrate science – as his last six books following Beyond Good and Evil. However, in a subsequent article titled “On Knowledge, Truth, and Value” in 1998, Clark clarifies her position by claiming that as early as 1878, in Human, All-too-Human, Nietzsche’s skepticism about truth and knowledge

60 Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 103-105.
ends. In it, Clark asserts that “if empirical truths are illusions, [then Nietzsche] thinks we are deprived only of a truth that is of absolutely no use to us... [As such, Schopenhauer and Kant’s metaphysical systems] blinded him to science, i.e. to the cognitive value of science... that science gives us our only access to truth... the only truth that could be of any real concern to us.”

In short, once Nietzsche breaks from the Kantian idealism, Nietzsche’s naturalism becomes rooted in the empirical world of our senses.

Additionally, Nietzsche’s break from the Kantian ‘thing-in-itself’ in the late 1870s corresponds with, and seemingly ignites, a renewed zeal and purpose for life—a passion that seems as momentous as his earlier discoveries of Schopenhauer and Lange did during the mid 1860s. In his autobiographical Ecce Homo, Nietzsche proclaims that “a truly burning thirst took hold of me: henceforth I really pursued nothing more than physiology, medicine, and natural sciences.” It was during this period that Nietzsche’s dominant instinct—his “‘organizing idea’ that is destined to rule”—began to “manifest itself to such a high degree that I never suspected what was growing in me... and one day all of my capacities, suddenly ripe, leaped forth in their ultimate perfection.” As a result, this renewed curiosity for science and physiology becomes a central theme within his mature works in order to accomplish his primary task: the “revaluation of all values.” Furthermore, an interesting aspect of the previously quoted passage is the fact that Nietzsche’s “burning thirst” commences after a decade long drought of “not learning anything new that was useful.” Nietzsche laments, “how useless and arbitrary my whole existence as a philologist appeared in relation to my task... to see myself utterly emaciated,

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63 Nietzsche, EH II: 9. Rutherford states that Nietzsche believes “there is a hierarchy of drives, ruled by a ‘dominating instinct’ that determines value for that individual.” (Rutherford, 529).
utterly starved…” Nietzsche’s dissatisfaction with philology as a profession stemmed from his growing interest in philosophy and the natural sciences. Nietzsche began to see philology as being too specialized and existentially irrelevant since philologists were “endlessly chewing over the great creative thoughts of the past but creating nothing themselves.” Nietzsche implored the philologists of his day to “learn to judge on a larger scale so that they can exchange the minutiae of particular matters for the great considerations of philosophy.”

1.6 Influences on Nietzsche’s Fatalism (Spinoza and Schopenhauer):

Central to Nietzsche’s naturalism is the insight that man is fundamentally determined in his essential ‘self.’ Contrary to much of the Western philosophical tradition from Socrates to Kant, according to Nietzsche, man is not free to change himself on a whim or by an act of will. As we have seen, this idea was found in many of the texts of the German materialists that Nietzsche encountered. However, the ideas that were most influential to Nietzsche’s fatalism came from Arthur Schopenhauer and Baruch Spinoza.

Arthur Schopenhauer rejected the freedom of the will by virtue of each person possessing an unalterable, or fixed, character (this includes physical, mental, and moral

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64 Nietzsche, EH III: HAH-3.
65 Brobjjer asserts that Nietzsche’s dissatisfaction with philology actually began after reading Lange’s History of Materialism, seeing it as “proof of the enormous influence that Lange (and Schopenhauer) had on Nietzsche’s thinking...[because afterward] his mind and heart was being filled by an interest in and concern with philosophy and the natural sciences instead.” (Brobjer, 35.)
66 Young, Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography, 68 (emphasis added).
68 Schopenhauer was arguably the most influential philosopher in Nietzsche’s life. Nietzsche himself became a Schopenhauerian nearly overnight upon reading The World as Will and Representation. “In a word,” writes Young, “Nietzsche’s discovery of Schopenhauer had the character of a ‘conversion’, almost ‘born-again’ experience: it was the rediscovery of religion, a recasting of the old religion in a new form.” (Young, 87) However, due to the limited scope of this paper and abundance of literature written on this topic, the discussion of Schopenhauer’s influence on Nietzsche will be condensed to his influence on Nietzsche’s ‘theory of agency.’
character). As a result, no amount of instruction or cultural influence could alter the type of person one is. Schopenhauer states that “the tendency of [a man’s] innermost nature and the goal he pursues in accordance therewith, these we can never change by influencing him from without, or by instructing him.”69 In other words, there are certain immutable type-facts that determine who a person is, and when these facts are met with external forces or natural conditions, the said person responds (i.e. acts) in a deterministic manner. In his essay On the Freedom of the Will, Schopenhauer compares the choice of a man leaving work to that of water:

“I can now go for a walk, or go to the club... climb a tower... go to the theatre; in fact I can also run out by the city gate... and never come back. All that is entirely up to me; I have complete freedom; however, I do none of them, but just as voluntarily go home to my wife.” This is just as if water were to say: “I can form high waves...rush down a hill...jet into the air, I can even boil away and disappear; however, I do none of these things now, but voluntarily remain calm...” Just as water can do all those things only when the determining causes enter for one or the other, so is the condition just the same for the man with respect to what he imagines he can do.70

Hence, just as everything in nature has its necessary reactions when acted upon by another force/object, so too does human action when the fixed character of a person interacts with the outside ‘representations’ of the world. As Schopenhauer states, “every individual action follows with strict necessity from the effect of the motive on the [fixed] character.”71 Comparably, Nietzsche concurs when he states that “deep down, there is... something unteachable, some granite of personal fate or destiny, of predetermined decision and answer to predetermined selected questions... there speaks an unchangeable ‘this is I.’”72 Such a proposition may feel counter-intuitive to our conscious intellect because it feels as though we are in control of

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72 Nietzsche, BGE VII: 231.
ourselves, but the terrible truth is that we are mere spectators to our actions. It is an illusion that our reason and conceptual moralities dictate our actions because our fixed character—our “Will”, as Schopenhauer refers to it—has primacy over the intellect. Janaway articulates this insight by stating, “Our modes of empirical cognition are [the Will’s] instruments, expressed physiologically in the brain, which is but one of the organism’s tools for living successfully and perpetuating the species.”

Thus, as a living and natural organism, our Will instinctively and blindly strives for life, while the mediation of our consciousness is simply a means to this end. In this respect, we are no different than the animals. In fact, Julian Young depicts Schopenhauer as anticipating Darwinian ideas some forty years earlier. Young states that when we survey “the animal world, we see that the Will – the Will to ‘live’ – of one creature has no option but to hunt and kill another... nature is a place where only the fit and murderous survive... Turning to the human world, we find the Will to be equally a curse.”

Nietzsche certainly conveys such sentiments when he praises Schopenhauer for his “insight into the strict necessity of human actions...” stating that every philosopher that postulates the ideal of free will, “reveals behind [himself] every time, a brazen wall of fate: we are in prison, we can only dream ourselves free, not make ourselves free!” As such, we can trace much of Nietzsche’s fatalism back to Schopenhauer’s influence. Just like the natural world, there are certain natural facts about a person that severely circumvent a person’s possible life trajectories and actions. The human life is subject to fate because one’s psycho-physiological type-facts determine the type of person one is essentially.

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73 Janaway, Willing and Nothingness, 3.
74 Young, Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography, 83.
The influence of Schopenhauer on Nietzsche’s fatalism, and his philosophy as a whole, is well documented. However, just as he did with Kant, Wagner, and many other early influences, Nietzsche began to significantly distance himself from Schopenhauer during his middle period. One aspect of Nietzsche’s dissatisfaction with Schopenhauer was that Schopenhauer’s determinism allowed for and affirmed moral responsibility. In fact, in the aphorism quoted above (Human All-Too-Human II: 33), Nietzsche states that Schopenhauer “dare not admit” the strict necessity of action into the realm of moral responsibility. In other words, even with the deterministic picture that Schopenhauer painted, Schopenhauer still believed in moral responsibility—a point that the mature Nietzsche comes to radically oppose. Nietzsche’s opposition to moral responsibility was significantly influenced by the discovery of Baruch Spinoza, who held that the strict necessity of life and action necessarily rules out the possibility for moral responsibility.

Although Nietzsche had known and encountered Spinoza as a young man—primarily through the writings of Goethe and Schopenhauer—76 it was not until 1881 that Nietzsche was profoundly impacted by him. Brobjer observes that Nietzsche’s encounter with Spinoza during the summer of 1881 represents the “transition from his middle period to his late [i.e. mature] period... when he made several of his most important philosophical discoveries and inventions, such as eternal recurrence and amor fati [to love thy fate].”77 In a July 8, 1881 letter that Nietzsche had written to Franz Overbeck, he enthusiastically declares:

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76 Cf. Brobjer, Nietzsche’s Philosophical Context, 77-82.
77 Brobjer, Nietzsche’s Philosophical Context, 77. (Interpolations my own.) Brobjer suggests that Nietzsche’s knowledge of Spinoza does not come from Spinoza’s actual writings, but from secondary literature such as Kuno Fischer’s History of Modern Philosophy: Volume 2 on Spinoza. Nonetheless, Brobjer recognizes that “there is probably no other philosopher whom Nietzsche so explicitly considered his predecessor. Spinoza is mentioned... approximately one hundred times—both with high praise, such as, for example, of him as a “genius of knowledge,” the “purest sage,” and, with severe criticism...”
I am utterly amazed, utterly enchanted! I have a precursor, and what a precursor! I hardly knew Spinoza . . . Not only is his over-all tendency like mine—namely, to make knowledge the most powerful affect—but in five main points of his doctrine I recognize myself in his teachings: he denies the freedom of the will, teleology, the moral world-order, the unegoistic, and evil. Even though the divergences are admittedly tremendous, they are due more to differences in time, culture, and science.  

Nietzsche declared himself a ‘Spinozist’ on July 30, 1881. But what exactly did this mean to Nietzsche? According to Young, “Spinoza was a pantheist. God is not a separate world-creator but rather just is the world. ‘God’ and ‘nature’ are simply different aspects of one and the same totality.” In other words, Nietzsche sees in Spinoza the idea that when the world is viewed as a unity of necessary causes, then moral responsibility is senseless. Accordingly, Nietzsche wonders why would we hate someone who has no choice? Even more to the point, why would anyone feel guilt if one’s actions could not have been different? These questions are what Nietzsche has in mind when he wrote the following:

No one is responsible for man’s being there at all, for his being such-and-such, or for his being in these circumstances or in this environment. The fatality of his essence in not to be disentangled from the fatality of all that has been and will be... One is necessary, one is a piece of fatefulness, one belongs to the whole, one is in the whole; there is nothing which could judge... or sentence our being, for that would mean judging... and sentencing the whole. There is nothing besides the whole.

In other words, because the whole acts in accordance with causal necessity—including the human body, mind, and actions—there can be no moral responsibility for becoming what you are. Rutherford asserts that Nietzsche learned from Spinoza that “in a world in which

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(Brobjør, 77) The intent of this section is not to undermine Nietzsche’s disagreements and critical remarks regarding aspects of Spinoza’s philosophy, but rather to highlight the aspects of Spinoza’s thought that had a positive and lasting import on Nietzsche’s naturalism.


79 Young, Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography, 320.

80 Young, Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography, 320.

81 Nietzsche, TI VI: 8.
everything is inextricably connected to everything else... the concept of responsibility has no metaphysical significance. There is no fact about our existence for which we are individually accountable."82 As we will see, the ‘innocence of becoming’ (i.e. the end of moral responsibility) develops into an important consequence of Nietzsche’s underlying naturalism, and it was heavily influenced by Spinoza.

Another striking aspect to Nietzsche’s discovery of Spinoza is the role that knowledge plays in making one free—in making “knowledge the most powerful affect.” To understand this proposition, we must first understand the role that knowledge plays in Spinoza’s thought. Spinoza observed that:

Most of those who have written about the Affects, and men’s way of living, seem to treat, not of natural things, which follow the common laws of nature, but of things that are outside nature. Indeed they seem to conceive man in nature as a dominion within a dominion. For they believe that man disturbs, rather than follows, the order of nature, that he has absolute power over his actions, and that he is determined only by himself.83

Spinoza asserts that mankind’s passions and actions follow from the strict necessity of nature. According to Spinoza, man is unable to determine himself because, like everything else, he is affected by, and a part of, the causal whole. As such, Spinoza states that “I shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were a question of lines, planes, and bodies.”84 Moreover, Spinoza believes that all things possess a nature—namely, the power to strive—and that all affects on a person serve either to increase or decrease this inherent power to act in accordance with one’s nature. Consequently, Spinoza distinguishes between two types of affects that humans can experience: passions and actions. Passions—such as love, jealousy, or

82 Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 524.
greed—arise from external stimuli acting upon a person and therefore originate outside of one’s nature. In effect, passions represent a passive state of being and serve to decrease a person’s power to act in a meaningful way. On the other hand, actions—such as adequate ideas and knowledge of the intelligible causes—originate within a person (i.e. from the human nature). In this sense, actions (achieved via knowledge) represent an active state of being and serve to increase a person’s power to act. Instead of being acted upon by external stimuli, knowledge enables one to become the cause of an event. In other words, the causal power of the human being resides in the mind, as the power of understanding and knowledge. Once we come to this knowledge—i.e. once we understand the deterministic nature of the universe and the subsequent lack of free will—we are no longer subject to the relentless passions that bind us. As Spinoza states, “as an ideal, freedom is the condition in which an individual’s power is least constrained by external things [i.e. the passions] and maximally expressive of a principle of action internal to the agent.” As such, Spinoza asserts that a life of action is desirable to that of the passions because only then can one be ‘free’ from a life of turbulence—a life of merely being acted upon. As Rutherford articulates:

For Spinoza, freedom is directly linked to an individual’s degree of causal power, which determines the extent to which he is capable of acting, as opposed to being acted upon. In the case of the human mind, Spinoza interprets this causal power as the power of understanding, and he explicitly equates acting under the guidance of reason and acting freely.

Like Spinoza, Nietzsche views nature as a struggle between power relations. However, unlike Spinoza, Nietzsche does not believe that nature possesses an intelligible order (or ‘laws’) that can be grasped or understood. Nietzsche states:

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85 Rutherford, *Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal*, 514 (Interpolations and italics my own).
86 Rutherford, *Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal*, 519.
I take good care not to talk of chemical “laws”: that has a moral aftertaste. It is rather a matter of the absolute establishment of power relations: the stronger becomes master of the weaker to the extent that the weaker cannot assert its degree of autonomy—here there is no mercy, no forbearance, even less a respect for “laws”!87

On the surface, this seems as though Nietzsche is outright rejecting the possibility of ‘knowledge,’ let alone the possibility of it being “the most powerful affect”. However, as Rutherford points out, “in place of the Spinozistic axioms, Nietzsche proposes instead that all knowing is interpreting, or ‘perspective knowing.”88 In other words, Nietzsche wants to replace the notions of understanding or comprehending the ‘laws’ of nature as depicted by Spinoza with the notion of interpreting the brute necessity of power relations from a particular perspective. In fact, Nietzsche is adamant that we need to “guard against the snares of contradictory concepts such as ‘pure reason’... and ‘knowledge-in-itself’... There is only a perspective seeing, only a perspective knowing.”89 To be sure, Nietzsche’s account of knowledge is more nuanced than Spinoza’s; however, their account of the relationship between knowledge/interpretation and its effect on human ‘freedom’ remains the same. We see this most strongly in Nietzsche’s ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’, which attempts to uncover and understand the relevant causes in the determination of our values. Nietzsche’s examinations and speculations about the historical, psychological, and physiological causes of our modern values are not an attempt to understand scientific or historical facts per se’, but rather to interpret them in a way that frees one from their oppressive grasp—to free one to become who one is. For Nietzsche, the current value system represents a genuine resistance, particularly to the higher types, to becoming the person one essentially is. By affectively making his readers aware of the causal influences

87 Writings from the Late Notebooks, ed. Rüdiger Bittner, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 24, quoted in Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 523. (Cf. BGE 22)
88 Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 530.
89 Nietzsche, GM III: 12.
involved in modern values, Nietzsche aims to free mankind from its bondage. As Nietzsche articulates, “everything is necessity—so says the new knowledge, and this knowledge itself is a necessity. Everything is innocence, and knowledge is the road to insight into this innocence.”

As we will see in Chapter Three, although the details may differ, this is what Nietzsche had in mind when he praised Spinoza for making “knowledge the most powerful affect.” Only through the perspectival knowledge of how values are determined in general, and in oneself, can one be liberated from the chains of morality.

1.7 Summary:

In no way is this chapter an exhaustive list of the numerous influences on Nietzsche; however, it does provide a framework in which Nietzsche’s naturalistic project or ‘task’ can be understood. Nietzsche wants a ‘revaluation of morals’ in order to facilitate the higher types to “become who they are.” He believes that his outright assault on morality is necessary because its unchallenged cultural dominance has been an obstruction to human excellence for far too long. Therefore, Nietzsche’s naturalism (i.e. ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’) intends to plumb the depths of human nature to reveal the underlying naturalistic causes of values and morality. By exposing the natural causes that produce morality, Nietzsche’s ultimate aim is to free the nascent higher types from the false belief that morality is in any way good for them.

However, before we continue to explore the specific features of morality that Nietzsche finds detrimental to the cultivation of human excellence, it may be helpful to recap what we have just learned regarding the influences on Nietzsche’s naturalistic project. As we have seen, Nietzsche’s ambition in his critique of morality is to effectively “translate man back into nature.”

90 Friedrich Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984): Part I: S2-107. (Later abbreviated as: HAH.)
Although Nietzsche considered himself to be the “sternest opponent of all materialism,” we saw that his disagreements were twofold: reductive materialism and the scientists’ hostility towards philosophy. These objections, however, only show that Nietzsche is opposed to certain types of science – specifically, hard Substantive Naturalism – and not to the scientific enterprise as a whole. In fact, as a Speculative Methodological Naturalist, Nietzsche utilizes not only the methods of science, but also many of the results discovered by the sciences as well. One prominent ‘result continuity’ that influenced Nietzsche’s naturalism was the discoveries being made in the science of physiology by the German Materialists in the mid 19th century. Nietzsche’s naturalistic project draws heavily on their notion that man is first and foremost an animal – a natural product just like all other organic beings. As such, the research done by the German Materialists on nutrition, climate, and bodily functions was used to support many of Nietzsche’s insights and speculations. Most significant to Nietzsche, however, was the materialists’ pursuit of physiological explanations for mental traits and dispositions. Nietzsche began learning that mental phenomena, such as morality, are actually derivative of the underlying psycho-physiological type-facts of a person and is not the product of rational contemplation as the Western philosophical tradition had assumed. In this regard, Nietzsche developed a “burning thirst” later in his life to naturalistically understand the origins of morality. Dissatisfied with the idealism of Kant and his life as a philologist, Nietzsche’s “organizing idea”—or dominant instinct—began to manifest itself into a cohesive and unified drive to re-evaluate all values. Additionally, Nietzsche became dissatisfied with the moral responsibility allotted for in the determinism of his great teacher Schopenhauer, thereby enabling Nietzsche to discover a predecessor in Spinoza who finds no grounds for moral responsibility in nature. Through Spinoza, Nietzsche learns that although everything is one and necessity, “freedom” and “fate”
can co-exist, but only to the extent that “knowledge” leads to the recognition of one’s fate—
amor fati! As such, the mature Nietzsche embarks on task that seeks to make the nascent higher types aware of the origins of morality, so that they may be liberated from moral responsibility and become who they essentially are—great!
CHAPTER 2

NIETZSCHE’S NATURALISM AS A CRITIQUE OF MORALITY’S DESCRIPTIVE COMPONENTS

2.1 The Descriptive Components of Morality:

In the first essay of the On the Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche asks, “Which of us would be a free spirit if the church did not exist? It is the church, and not its poison, that repels us.—Apart from the church, we, too, love the poison!”91 In this passage, Nietzsche is making a provocative claim that the poison—i.e. morality—which the church was established to proliferate, has by now infected the entire body of mankind. Even when a person rejects the Christian cosmology, metaphysics, and institutions, the poison of its morality continues to reign within the individual and the culture at large. Accordingly, Nietzsche observes that “everything is visibly becoming Judaized, Christianized, mob-ized,” in spite of the church being a “repellent to a more delicate intellect.”92 Janaway remarks:

We, his readers, are not slaves, but we have inherited an affective allegiance to what counted as good in the conceptual scheme of slave morality. And in turn that conceptual scheme (including the thought that it is good not to express strength, good to suppress natural instincts, that all agents ought to feel responsibility and guilt for acting in certain ways, that all are equally capable of acting in the same way, and so on) arose because it resolved certain affects and drives for its inventors: in brief, it enabled them to resolve their feelings of powerlessness and resentment into a feeling of superiority over their masters.93

As a result, the triumph of ascetic morality and its continued dominance in the modern world is made possible because of our ignorance of its causes—that is, our ignorance of its genealogy.

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91 Nietzsche, GM I: 9.
92 Nietzsche, GM I: 9.
93 Janaway, Beyond Selflessness, 46.
As such, the insidious nature of the moral poison running through the veins of mankind is what Nietzsche sets out to expose. Nietzsche’s hypothesis is that Christian morality sought to create a certain type of person and society—namely, altruistic and egalitarian—in order to advance the interests of the weak and powerless. In order to achieve this goal, Christianity needed to construct several fallacious descriptive doctrines about the nature of mankind that would underlie and rationalize its moral agenda: (1) the doctrine of free will, (2) the transparency of the self, and (3) the similarity doctrine. In essence, these three descriptive components assert that humans possess (a) a will capable of free and autonomous choice, (b) a sufficiently transparent ‘self’ that makes it possible to evaluate the motives behind one’s actions, and (c) a similar nature such that one moral code can be universally applied.94 In short, through an evaluation of freely chosen motives which underlie an act, it is possible for the moralists to hold a person responsible for his or her actions. As we will see, these three moral components are at the heart of Nietzsche’s attack against slave morality, because all three features must be believed in order for slave morality to have power and authority over individuals and society. In what follows, we will clarify what Nietzsche sees as the fundamental errors in relying on these three doctrines for explanations of being human.95

94 Cf. Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 80-81.
95 It should be noted that although Nietzsche often uses the moralities of Judaism, Christianity, Kantianism, etc. as the focal points of his attack, this is due to the fact that, in general, these moral traditions exemplify the components of morality that Nietzsche finds most objectionable. Nietzsche states that “whoever knows how seriously my philosophy has pursued the fight against vengefulness and rancor, even into the doctrine of ‘free will,’ the fight against Christianity is merely a special case of this.” (EH I: 6) As such, Nietzsche’s critique of morality should not be seen as confined only to these ideologies, since his critique would apply to any religious, philosophical, or social ideology that prescribes any antagonisms against excellence. As Leiter points out, these antagonisms include, though they are not limited to, such things as: (a) the devaluing of the body and intellect in favor of the soul, (b) the endorsement of equality, pity, or selflessness, and (c) the desire to eradicate or suppress the animalistic instincts. (Cf. Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 75.) Consequently, although many may suggest that
2.2 Nietzsche’s Critique of Free Will and Consciousness:

As we saw in Chapter One, Nietzsche holds that a person’s life proceeds along a fixed trajectory, fixed by the natural psycho-physiological type-facts about the individual. In this regard, Nietzsche’s view of man is similar, for instance, to that of an apple tree in that the essential type-facts about the tree severely limit its possibilities to produce anything other than apples. However, the particulars about the tree (i.e. its height or the sweetness of its apples) can be affected by a host of external factors such as the soil or weather conditions. In effect, the natural internal type-facts of the apple tree significantly constrict its range of potential life trajectories, but they do not determine the specific outcome of the tree or its fruit. So it is with humans as well. As Leiter articulates, Nietzsche holds that “natural facts about a person are causally primary in fixing the trajectory of that person’s life... [that is,] they are always necessary... [but] may not be sufficient.”\(^96\) As an illustration, imagine one desires to be a basketball player. Although one would necessarily need to be tall, adequate height is not sufficient to guarantee success since other variables would need to be present for the individual to succeed. Consequently, Nietzsche can be categorized as a Causal Essentialist. Causal Essentialism states that a substance has essential properties that are causally primary and therefore play a significant (non-trivial) role in determining the possible trajectories for an individual substance. However, causal essentialism must be contrasted against Classical Fatalism which holds that everything that happens necessarily had to happen and could not have happened any other way.\(^97\) As we will see, this is an important distinction because

\(^96\) Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 81-82.

\(^97\) In *Human, All Too Human*, there is evidence of Nietzsche’s apparent acceptance of Classical Fatalism. For instance, he states that “we imagine that there is freedom of will and fancy in the countless turnings,
Nietzsche’s critique of free will does NOT imply that the outcomes of our lives are pre-determined or set in stone in any way. Instead, the natural psycho-physiological facts about us severely circumscribe our possible life trajectories, but external factors—particularly societal values (i.e. morality)—also play a causal role in determining what we ultimately become.

2.2a Causa Sui:

Traditional moral thought presupposes that agents are morally responsible for their actions because they possess a free and autonomous will to choose. This assumption is known as the Causa Sui argument and asserts that action is self-generated or the “cause of itself” because one’s will is unencumbered by prior events and the natural type-facts that constitute the agent. In effect, each individual is able to become the author of his or her own destiny because each action undertaken is the product of a conscious and mediated choice. Not surprisingly, Nietzsche asserts that “the concept of causa sui is something fundamentally absurd.”

According to Nietzsche, philosophers have (intentionally?) failed to recognize that our thoughts and choices—which lead to action—have already been determined by the underlying type-facts about us. In other words, everything about our conscious choices—our thoughts, desires, and beliefs—has already been causally determined by our psycho-physiological type-facts. If this is true, then it follows that our actions are not caused solely by our conscious mental states, but rather by the type-facts that bring about our mental states and desires. Nietzsche observes that up until now, we have been “accustomed to exclude all the twistings, and breakings of the waves; but everything is compulsory, every movement can be mathematically calculated. So it is also with human actions... If the world’s wheel were to stand still for a moment and an all knowing, calculating reason were there to make use of this pause, it could foretell the future of every creature to the remotest times, and mark out every track upon which that wheel would continue to roll.” (HAH I: S2-106) However, as it will be shown, Nietzsche’s dominant view of free will resembles that of CE, particularly in his mature works.

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98 Nietzsche, BGE I: 15.
unconscious processes from the accounting [of an act] and to reflect on the preparation for an act only to the extent that it is conscious. In other words, traditional evaluations of actions have only taken into account the desires and motives that present themselves to consciousness, but they have neglected the underlying type-facts that have produced the said desire and motive. As a result, Nietzsche critiques the traditional theories of action by positing that (a) nothing can be \textit{causa sui}, (b) consciousness is superfluous and aware of only surface phenomena, and (c) our conscious life is derived from our underlying psycho-physiological type-facts (i.e. it is epiphenomenal).

\subsection*{2.2b Nietzsche’s Theory of Action as a Critique of Responsibility:}

In order to understand the role of consciousness found in Nietzsche, we must first understand Nietzsche’s theory of action. In Nietzsche’s theory of action, consciousness does indeed play a role, but it serves only as a means of expression between the underlying type-facts of a person and the action itself (i.e. type-facts $\rightarrow$ conscious thoughts and desires $\rightarrow$ action). In other words, our conscious \textit{will} emerges as merely an effect of the underlying type-facts which explain the genesis of both consciousness and the subsequent action. As such, Nietzsche’s view of consciousness in no way resembles \textit{causa sui} or an autonomous creator of action as traditionally suggested. In fact, as we just saw, Nietzsche views the \textit{causa sui} argument as one of the greatest injustices perpetrated by the moralists because it places ultimate responsibility squarely on the agent. Nietzsche states:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Causa Sui} is... a sort of rape and perversion of logic... the desire for ‘freedom of the will’ in the superlative metaphysical sense [is] the desire to bear the entire and ultimate responsibility for one’s actions oneself, and to absolve God, the world, ancestors, ancestors,
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{99} Nietzsche, \textit{D II}: 129. \\
\textsuperscript{100} Cf. Leiter, \textit{Nietzsche on Morality}, 87-93 for a full discussion of Nietzsche’s theory of action.}
\end{flushright}
chance, and society involves nothing less than to be precisely this *causa sui* and... to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness!\(^{101}\)

From this passage we see that Nietzsche’s primary objection to postulating an autonomous free will is the devastating moral responsibility it imposes on mankind. Janaway observes that for the moralists, “the notion of a radically free subject of action is required in order to make human beings controllable, answerable, and equal.”\(^ {102}\) Additionally, Rutherford remarks that Nietzsche believed that the freedom of the will was “perpetuated by defenders of a ‘moral world-order’...designed to support claims of moral responsibility: that we are accountable—subject to reward and punishment—for our actions.”\(^ {103}\) However, like his predecessor Spinoza, Nietzsche insists that the necessity of nature undermines all responsibility, and therefore man “may no longer either praise or blame, for it is absurd to praise or blame nature and necessity.”\(^ {104}\) He further asserts that:

> Whoever has completely comprehended the doctrine of absolute irresponsibility can no longer include the so called punishing and recompensing justice in the idea of justice, should this consist of giving to each man his due. For he who is punished does not deserve the punishment... he who is rewarded does not merit this reward, *he could not act otherwise than he did!*\(^ {105}\)

Nietzsche’s ‘hermeneutic of suspicion’ reveals that the desire for *justice*—to hold mankind accountable for its actions—has its origin in the desire of the slave to gain power over the master. He states that “the wise Oedipus derived consolation... that we cannot be blamed for what we dream... Need I add that... we are really not responsible for our dreams any more than for our waking hours, and that the doctrine of free will has as its parents man’s pride and sense

\(^{101}\) Nietzsche, *BGE* I: 21.

\(^{102}\) Janaway, *Beyond Selflessness*, 112.

\(^{103}\) Rutherford, *Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal*, 512.

\(^{104}\) Nietzsche, *HAH* I: S2-107.

\(^{105}\) Nietzsche, *HAH* I: S2-105 (emphasis added).
of power! Nietzsche insists that “wherever responsibilities are sought, it is usually the
instinct of wanting to judge and to punish which is at work. Becoming has been deprived of its
innocence when any being-such-and-such is traced back to will, to purposes, to acts of
responsibility.” In effect, because the human being, understood in naturalistic terms—
namely, as the product of psycho-physiological type-facts—does not provide an appropriate
target for blame, the moralists retreated to the construction of metaphysical arguments to
gain authority over man’s actions. These metaphysical arguments of causa sui and free will
enabled the moralists to elevate the feeble passivity of the slave-type to a status of virtue, while
simultaneously degrading the dominant self-assertion of the master-type to a status of vice.
However, when one recognizes that actions are not determined by a person’s free will, but
rather by the natural type-facts about the person, then Nietzsche’s theory of action serves to
exonerate mankind from the burden of bad-conscience and guilt imposed by the moralists. In
fact, it is only in lieu of the fact that our actions derive from underlying type-facts and
unconscious drives that make them impervious to moral responsibility. As such, Nietzsche’s
revaluation of values envisions a world where “nobody is held responsible any longer... that
alone is the great liberation; with this alone is the innocence of becoming restored.”

2.2c The Superficiality of Consciousness:

But if consciousness is not the primary cause of one’s actions, what then is
consciousness? According to Nietzsche:

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106 Nietzsche, D II: 128.
107 Nietzsche, TI V1: 7.
108 Janaway notes that this construction “reinforces Nietzsche’s idea, expressed so clearly in section 6 of
Beyond Good and Evil, that no metaphysics is morally neutral.” (Janaway, Beyond Selflessness, 113.)
109 Nietzsche, TI V1: 8.
Consciousness is the last and latest development of the organic and consequently the most unfinished and least powerful of these developments... it is thought that here is the quintessence of man; that which is enduring, eternal, ultimate, and most original to him... This ludicrous overvaluation and misconception of consciousness has as its result the great utility that a too rapid maturing of it has thereby been hindered.\textsuperscript{110}

In this passage, Nietzsche is claiming that because consciousness has been misconstrued as a stable and the most important attribute of mankind—even a divine inheritance of God—man has misused it by not permitting it sufficient time to develop and mature. Nietzsche warns us that “before a function is fully formed and matured, it is a danger to the organism.”\textsuperscript{111} Unfortunately, in our hastiness, we have developed a view of ourselves as something altogether different in-kind and superior to nature, as opposed to something different in-degrees and in accord with nature. Moreover, this inflated image of ourselves has led us to condemn the natural instincts given to us by nature, resulting in us interpreting such instincts as “temptations” to be overcome, suppressed, mastered, or eliminated. Accordingly, all “anti-natural morality... turns... against the instincts of life – it is a now secret, now loud and impudent condemnation of these instincts.”\textsuperscript{112} In effect, Nietzsche insists that any morality that wages war against these instincts is a product of an overestimation of our consciousness and a symptom of decadence. Therefore, in order to “translate man back into nature,” Nietzsche sets out to reveal the superficiality of our consciousness. He does this by demonstrating that our consciousness is aware of so little of what is actually going on around us—specifically the happenings within our bodies and our physical surroundings. Nietzsche states that “the thinking that rises to consciousness is only the smallest part of all this—the most superficial and worst part... the world of which we become conscious of is only a surface... [and] by the same token shallow,

\textsuperscript{110} Nietzsche, GS I: 11.
\textsuperscript{111} Nietzsche, GS I: 11.
\textsuperscript{112} Nietzsche, TI V: 4.
thin,... [and] a danger... anyone who lives among the most conscious Europeans even knows that it is a disease.” \[113\] Further, Nietzsche claims that:

The problem of consciousness... meets us only when we begin to perceive in what measure we could dispense with it: and it is at the beginning of this perception that we are now placed by physiology and zoology. For we could in fact think, feel, will, and recollect, we could likewise ‘act’ in every sense of the term, and nevertheless nothing of it at all need necessarily ‘come into consciousness.’ \[114\]

Here again, Nietzsche is expressing the impotence and inability of consciousness to cause anything; so much so that we may even be able to dispense with it altogether and life would still continue as it always has. This is because “everything of which we become conscious of is a terminal phenomenon, an end—and causes nothing.” \[115\] Yet, as little as consciousness is able to gather, retain, or recollect, philosophers and moralists have continued to “step before consciousness with the request that it should [provide us with] honest answers.” \[116\] As Wilcox aptly summarizes, Nietzsche’s misgivings about consciousness “cast suspicion on the ability of human beings to grasp enough of reality to make possible a rational appraisal of human values.” \[117\] Therefore, Nietzsche’s *revaluation of values* abandons the need for consciousness in determining values in favor of the natural and unmediated instincts of our subconscious—i.e. our psycho-physiological type-facts.

### 2.2d Consciousness as Epiphenomenal:

As we have seen, the immutable physiological and psychic traits that constitute a person are *causally* primary, but for Nietzsche, they are also *explanatorily* primary as well. This means

\[\begin{align*}
113 & \text{ Nietzsche, GS V: 354.} \\
114 & \text{ Nietzsche, GS V: 354.} \\
116 & \text{ Nietzsche, BGE II: 34.} \\
117 & \text{ Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche*, 17.}
\end{align*}\]
that all other facts about a person, including one’s consciousness, beliefs, and actions, are *explainable* by these type-facts. Nietzsche exclaims, “the will no longer moves anything, hence does not *explain* anything either—it merely accompanies events.”

Leiter interprets this passage to mean that “our conscious life is essentially epiphenomenal; that what rises to the level of consciousness is simply an effect of something unconscious, or perhaps even something physical.” Broadly speaking, the term “epiphenomenon” means an effect or result of a primary phenomenon. Nietzsche’s adaptation of epiphenomenalism posits that it is the body in its entirety (i.e. its physiological facts, drives, and instincts) that produces the needs, goals, and desires which the conscious *will* can efficaciously accomplish in service of the body. As Wilcox points out, Nietzsche’s epiphenomenalism is closely related to “instrumentalism—the idea that the intellect or reason is the instrument of something non-rational.”

In fact, Wilcox titles a section in his book “The Intellect as Instrument” where he quotes Nietzsche as follows:

> The unconscious disguising of physiological requirements under the cloak of the objective, the ideal, the purely spiritual, is carried on to an alarming extent, and I often

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118 Nietzsche, *TI VI*: 3.
119 Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 87. Leiter astutely distinguishes between ‘Kind’ and ‘Token’ epiphenomenalism. Kind-Epiphenomenalism asserts that “conscious states are only causally effective in virtue of type-facts about that person; that is, not simply in virtue of their being conscious states.” Token-Epiphenomenalism, on the other hand, asserts that “conscious states are simply effects of underlying type-facts about the person, and play no causal role whatsoever.” (Cf. Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 91-92.) For the purposes of this paper, all references to the term “epiphenomenal” will signify “Kind-Epiphenomenalism” since, as we have seen, Nietzsche’s theory of action recognizes that conscious states do indeed play a role in causing action, but only to the extent that they are causally derived from the underlying psycho-physiological type-facts of the person.

120 Wilcox categorizes Nietzsche’s treatment of consciousness into two camps: (a) epiphenomenal – meaning that consciousness is completely impotent and able to cause nothing, and (b) superficial – meaning that consciousness can have ‘slight’ causal powers. According to Wilcox, Nietzsche can be interpreted as stating both positions. (Cf. Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche*, 172-179.) For the purposes of this paper, terms such as “impotent”, “superfluous”, and “epiphenomenal” will be treated synonymously and represent an interpretation consistent with Nietzsche’s theory of action: namely, that consciousness does indeed cause action, but only to the extent that it is caused by the underlying type-facts of an individual.

enough asked myself whether... philosophy hitherto has not generally been merely an interpretation of the body, and a misunderstanding of the body.122

Whereas traditional Western philosophers have placed the conscious will at the seat of action, Nietzsche holds that everything about an action “that can be seen, known, ‘conscious,’ still belongs to its surface and skin—which, like every skin, betrays something but conceals even more.”123 In other words, because our consciousness is aware of so little that goes on around us, it would be careless to rely on consciousness to reveal the true causes or motives behind an action. As such, the fact that our conscious will is merely an effect renders the origin of our actions unknowable. We may witness an action take place or even listen to someone provide a rationalization for an action, but such details represent merely a covering, or skin, that conceals the true origin of the action. Nietzsche explains:

We believed ourselves to be causal agents in the act of willing; we at least thought we were there catching causality in the act. It was likewise never doubted that all the antecedentia of an action, its causes, were to be sought in the consciousness and could be discovered there if one sought them – as ‘motives’: for otherwise one would not be free to perform it, responsible for it!124

As such, the intentional or conscious aspects of an action are not what interests Nietzsche because there is no autonomous causal power within consciousness. Instead, Nietzsche’s hermeneutic intent is to uncover the unintentional and unconscious aspects of an action because that is where the real causal powers reside. As Nietzsche explains, “because all actions are essentially unknown”125 to an agent, “the decisive value of an action lies precisely in what is unintentional in it.”126 Therefore, the duty of a genuine philosopher is to explore the agent’s

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122 Nietzsche, GS Preface: 2.
123 Nietzsche, BGE II: 32.
124 Nietzsche, TI VI: 3.
125 Nietzsche, D II: 116.
126 Nietzsche, BGE II: 32.
psycho-physiological type-facts that lie beneath conscious understanding and “to squint maliciously out of every abyss of suspicion.”

2.3 Nietzsche’s Critique of the Transparent “Self”:

As was mentioned in Chapter One, Janaway argues for a weaker form of naturalism in Nietzsche than that of Leiter and what is put forth in this paper. Janaway’s softer naturalism derives primarily from his view that when Nietzsche rejects the \textit{causa sui} argument, he does not entirely exclude the existence of an active agent capable of making choices. Regarding the possibility of active agency, Janaway states:

Nietzsche imagines that by examining our own deep-seated attitudes of inclination and aversion, by accepting hypotheses about their origin in past psychological configurations such as those of the ancient masters and slaves, by reflecting on which values we feel as most congenial to our characters, we may attach ourselves to a new set of values. The latter step of \textit{becoming free} from the inherited values of morality requires, I argue, the conception of oneself as \textit{deciding, choosing, and trying as a genuine agent}. In this passage, Janaway insists that an agent, if given enough time to examine his or her deeply seated beliefs, can consciously decide to change and adopt a new set of values. In effect, Janaway is claiming that the decisions and actions of an agent are (or at least ‘can be’) actively made by the agent’s conscious will. But this is not what Nietzsche actually says about agency or selfhood. For instance, Nietzsche states that “the will to overcome an emotion, is ultimately only the will of another, or of several other, emotions.” In other words, the “will to overcome an emotion” is not determined by the \textit{conscious} will, but by the unconscious \textit{will} of another emotion, drive, or instinct. In fact, as we will see, Nietzsche views the \textit{self} as the battlefield or arena in which these competing emotions, drives, instincts, and psycho-physiological traits

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127 Nietzsche, \textit{BGE} II: 34.
128 Janaway, \textit{Beyond Selflessness}, 123. (My italics added.)
129 Nietzsche, \textit{BGE} IV: 117.
struggle for dominance. By virtue of this struggle occurring underneath the agent’s consciousness, the motives behind an action will be more or less unknown to the self. Accordingly, since the identification of a person’s motives (which are unknown to the self) is necessary to make a moral judgment, moral judgments are rendered meaningless—even harmful—to the higher type of man.

To elucidate on this re-active conception of self, Nietzsche asks us to imagine a person who is pondering the possibilities involved in a future action. This person has resolved for himself the type of action he will undertake based upon what he has determined to be the consequences that are most favorable to him. Therefore, before the premeditated action is performed, the agent possesses both an idea of the possible consequences and a motive for carrying out the action. However, as Nietzsche informs us:

At the moment when we finally do act, our action is often enough determined by a different species of motives... quite incalculable physical influences come into play; caprice and waywardness come into play; some emotion or other happens quite by chance to leap forth: in short, there come into play motives in part unknown to us... a struggle takes place between these [motives] as well, battling to and fro... something quite invisible to us of which we would be quite unconscious... the struggle itself is hidden from me, and likewise the victory as victory; for, though I certainly learn what I finally do, I do not learn which motive has therewith actually proved victorious.130

This passage emphasizes that the self is not transparent because the agent does not have epistemic access to what was causally effective in determining the action at the time of the action. At any given moment, there are an incalculable number of variables that cause an action to occur that never reach the conscious awareness of the agent. As such, the agent is never in a position to actively ‘choose’ which drive will ultimately win out, but is merely a spectator to the struggle. In Leiter’s words, “a person is an arena in which the struggle of drives [i.e. instincts

130 Nietzsche, D II: 129.
and type-facts] is played out; how they play out determines what he believes, what he values, what he becomes. But, qua conscious self or ‘agent’, the person takes no active part in the process.”  

Furthermore, observe how this notion of a re-active agent is consistent with Nietzsche’s theory of action as outlined above in section 2.2b: namely, that the agent’s actions, and correspondingly his motives, are for the most part unknowable to the agent because they are causally determined by the unconscious psycho-physiological type-facts of the agent. Nietzsche insists that:

Nothing... can be more incomplete than one’s image of the totality of drives which constitute his being. He can scarcely name even the cruder ones: their number and strength, their ebb and flow, their play and counter play among one another, and above all the laws of their nutriment remain wholly unknown to him.

As we saw earlier, Nietzsche’s theory of action recognizes that the conscious self indeed plays a role, but only to the extent that it is a conduit between the underlying type-facts of a person and the act itself. This can be seen in the fact that the totality of our drives “remains wholly unknown” to us. We may feel as though our conscious will is causing or choosing our actions, but such a feeling is an illusion. Nietzsche is emphatic that “a thought comes when ‘it’ wishes, and not when ‘I’ wish; so that it is a perversion of the facts of the case to say that the subject ‘I’ is the condition of the predicate ‘think.’ One thinks; but that this ‘one’ is precisely the famous old ‘ego,’ is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an ‘immediate certainty.’

Therefore, the Socratic and Christian idea of combating, overcoming, or

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131 Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 100.
mastering our underlying drives is beyond the power of the agent’s will, intellect, or ‘ego’. As Nietzsche explains:

What is clearly the case is that in this entire procedure our intellect is only the blind instrument of another drive, which is the rival of the drive whose vehemence is tormenting us. While we believe we are complaining about the vehemence of a drive, at bottom it is one drive which is complaining about the other; that is to say, for us to become aware that we are suffering from the vehemence of a drive presupposes the existence of another equally vehement or even more vehement drive, and that a struggle is in prospect in which our intellect is going to have to take sides.¹³⁴

Notice that Nietzsche calls the intellect a “blind instrument” to our underlying drives. Even if the intellect eventually has to “take sides”, it simply means that the intellect is doing the bidding of the victorious drive, NOT determining which drive actually prevails. As Nietzsche articulates, “everything happens involuntarily in the highest degree but as in a gale of feeling of freedom.”¹³⁵ As such, if a person is able to ‘overcome’ or ‘master’ the vehement drive which is harassing him, this is not accomplished by the will or ego of an autonomous agent, but is rather an effect of another, more powerful drive that is characteristic of the agent. In other words, any change that occurs within an agent is ultimately determined by who one already was.¹³⁶

2.4 The Role of Language in Establishing Free Will and the Self:

Nietzsche recognizes that what makes the conceptions of free will and the transparent self so difficult to reject is the philosopher’s abiding “faith in grammar.” For Nietzsche, language “sees everywhere deed and doer; this which believes in will as cause in general... which projects its belief in the ego-substance on to all things – only thus does it create the concept ‘thing’.”¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Nietzsche, D II: 109.
¹³⁵ Nietzsche, EH III: 2-3.
¹³⁶ For Nietzsche, as we will see in Section 3.4, Goethe represents the ideal agent who is able to ‘master’ himself (i.e. unify his psycho-physiological type-facts), not through an act of conscious will, but by embracing his particular fatality (amor fati!). (Cf. TI IX: 49-51.)
¹³⁷ Nietzsche, TI III: 5.
Clark observes that philosophers were able to believe in their capacity for metaphysical knowledge (such as self-agency and ego) “because they assumed that grammar reflected the structure of reality.”\(^{138}\) Hence, philosophers claimed that they were able to gain a greater insight into the structure of reality by reading it off of the structure of language. Unlike our senses, which merely reveal a world in constant flux and ‘becoming’, language reveals a reality that possesses an underlying substrate that is stable and permanent. Clark explains:

> If the subject-predicate structure of language reflects the nature of the world, it can seem plausible... that all change involves an underlying substrate, something that does not itself change. Because the senses showed no such thing, philosophers could then seem to have a non-empirical mode of access to reality and a reason to reject the relevance of sense testimony.\(^{139}\)

It is precisely this “non-empirical mode of access to reality” that Nietzsche’s naturalism sets out to extinguish. Nietzsche insists that the postulation of a permanent or metaphysical reality is a deliberate falsification of reality promulgated by the moralists. But such a falsification is not the fault of the senses, but rather of the intellect. Nietzsche states that “‘Reason’ is the cause of our falsification of the evidence of the senses,”\(^{140}\) and therefore the major culprit in our acceptance of the autonomous and stable self. However, since Nietzsche’s naturalism stresses that the faculty of reason—i.e. perspectival knowledge—is necessary to the development of the noble type, we must briefly elucidate on a crucial distinction between the types of “reason” Nietzsche accepted and those he rejected.

First, in the passage quoted above, Nietzsche places the term “Reason” within quotation marks, implying that he is referring to a faculty of reason that humans do not ‘naturally’ possess.

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\(^{138}\) Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 106.

\(^{139}\) Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 108. Grammar rules assert that in all subject-predicate relationships, all predicates require a subject, which the predicate modifies. For instance, the term “red” independent of a subject would tell us very little about reality; however, once an underlying subject is added, such as “barn”, a grammatically correct phrase is created: “the red barn”.

\(^{140}\) Nietzsche, *TI III*: 2.
According to Clark, this non-faculty is “capable of knowledge of reality uncontaminated by any connection to the senses... [therefore] ‘reason’ means ‘pure reason,’ the faculty of a priori knowledge.”\textsuperscript{141} A priori knowledge, or pure reason, is knowledge that is obtained independent of our empirical experiences. Yet as we saw in Section 1.6, Nietzsche warns us against such “contradictory concepts as pure reason”, claiming that such ideas always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which seeing alone becomes seeing something, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense... to suspend each and every affect, supposing we were capable of this—what would that mean but to castrate the intellect?\textsuperscript{142}

In other words, we are always and necessarily seeing—i.e. interpreting and evaluating—from a particular perspective or vantage point. It is impossible to obtain a “Godlike view,” and yet this is precisely what the proponents of pure reason uphold—castrating the perspectival intellect in the process. Secondly, as Rutherford observes, the elevation of pure reason “as a source of moral and epistemic authority is symptomatic, in Nietzsche’s eyes, of an underlying physiological degeneracy.”\textsuperscript{143} Out of their ressentiment of the strong, philosophers became idealists—“tyrants of reason”—through the construction of a pure world—or “permanent daylight”—that existed beyond our senses, instincts, and body. Therefore, it is a priori reasoning to which Nietzsche rejects, not the reasoning that emerges from sensual and empirical facts. According to Nietzsche, pure reason represents “the harshest daylight, rationality at any cost... cold, circumspect, conscious, without instinct, in opposition to the instincts, has itself been no more than a form of sickness... and by no means a way back to

\textsuperscript{141} Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 106.
\textsuperscript{142} Nietzsche, GM III: 12.
\textsuperscript{143} Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 521.
‘virtue’, to ‘health’, and to ‘happiness’.\textsuperscript{144} In this passage, Nietzsche recognizes that pure reason became an indispensable component of the moralist’s position because it makes the evidence of our senses irrelevant to establishing moral truths. In effect, since our natural instincts and sense perceptions would have outright rejected the ascetic and moral ideal, moralists were forced to construct \textit{a priori} rationalization to validate their positions. Moralists were able to plausibly construct the immutable conceptions of identity, \textit{self}, and ego (among other things) through their misunderstanding and manipulation of language. But such concepts as the ‘self’ or ego are merely a false interpretation of our senses because “in so far as the senses show becoming, passing away, [and] change, they do not lie.”\textsuperscript{145}

To illustrate this point, Nietzsche provides an example of ‘lightning flashing.’ Because of our subject/predicate language bias, grammar (not our senses) leads us to believe that there is a doer (a subject: lightning) separate from the deed (the predicate: flashing). However, as Nietzsche points out, what is lightning if not the flash? Ultimately, Nietzsche concludes that “there is no ‘being’ behind doing, effecting, becoming; ‘the doer’ is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything.”\textsuperscript{146} Accordingly, just as it would be considered absurd to demand of lightning not to flash, it is just as absurd to demand of a person not to become who he or she essentially is—i.e. for the strong not to be strong.\textsuperscript{147} Yet this is precisely what the moralists have demanded through the exploitation of language of subject/predicate (i.e. doer/deed): “the belief that the \textit{strong man is free} to be weak... thus [the weak] gain the right to

\textsuperscript{144} Nietzsche, \textit{TI} II: 6.
\textsuperscript{145} Nietzsche, \textit{TI} III: 2.
\textsuperscript{146} Nietzsche, \textit{GM} I: 13 (emphasis added).
\textsuperscript{147} These expressions of strength by the strong include desires to overcome, throw down, become masters, and seek resistance (enemies) in order to triumph. (Cf. \textit{GM} I: 13.) To demand that the strong act in any other way, Nietzsche responds, “a well-constituted human being... must perform certain actions and instinctively shrink from others, he transports the order of which he is the physiological representative into his relations with other human beings and with things.” (\textit{TI} VI: 2.)
make the bird of prey (i.e. the strong) *accountable* for being a bird of prey. As such, Nietzsche wants to expose our language prejudices in order to reevaluate the erroneous notions of a stable doer, *self*, or *ego*. Once one interprets the evidence of one’s senses naturally as Nietzsche insists, the *doer* becomes merely a re-active entity within which the natural instincts are free to produce the actions that are in accord with the type of person one already is. As Leiter aptly summarizes, “there is just the *doing*, and no *doer* who bears the responsibility for it.”

### 2.5 The Role of Language in Establishing the Similarity Doctrine:

That language is misleading was not only confined to the philosopher’s conceptions of an autonomous and stable doer or *self*; it also served to foster a falsification and inversion of all reality. According to Nietzsche, in no way is this inversion more pervasive than in its power to make humans believe that they are all essentially the same—to make the unequal equal. In fact, Nietzsche posits that “every concept originates through equating the unequal. As certainly as no one leaf is exactly equal to any other, so certain is it that the concept ‘leaf’ has been formed through an arbitrary omission of these individual differences.” In this passage, Nietzsche is claiming that language (or concepts) over-simplifies and conflates what is individual to what is universal. Based on this illusionary premise, moral judgments could now be universally applied to every individual—regardless of their actual differences. As we have just seen, because philosophers and moralists relied on language, and not their senses, in order to investigate “reality,” they failed to recognize the variations, nuances, and diversities that

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actually exist in reality. Wilcox states that “because our concepts did not square perfectly with the empirically given, philosophers reached precisely the wrong conclusion, namely, that there was something wrong with the empirical! The conceptual, then, was thought to refer to the real, the true world; and the senses were thought to reveal only the apparent, or false, world.”\textsuperscript{151} Nietzsche declares that such a misunderstanding arose from the philosophers’ “lack of historical sense, their hatred of even the idea of becoming, their Egyptianism... [to] be a philosopher [is to] be a mummy...”\textsuperscript{152} Moreover, once the belief in universals became embedded in the culture (i.e. metaphysically real), philosophers were able to invert the hierarchy of concepts, making “the highest concepts, that is to say the most general, the emptiest concepts, the last fumes of evaporating reality, at the beginning as the beginning.”\textsuperscript{153} According to Nietzsche, this is how the theologians “acquired their stupendous concept ‘God’... the last, thinnest, and emptiest [concept] is placed as the first, as cause in itself, as the most real being!”\textsuperscript{154} In other words, philosophers employed language to pull off the grandest illusion of all: making the empirical world of our senses and instincts the effect of an invisible and non-existent cause. What is relevant for our discussion of morality is that these concepts of permanence—\textit{Being} and \textit{God}—became instrumental in causing men to accept that we were all essentially similar—that humans possess a universal essence and nature. Effectively, just as the concept “leaf” obscures the multiplicity and variations of billions of leaves, the concept of “human” obscures the multitude of differences among mankind. Therefore, morality is predicated on the idea that mankind is essentially similar; thereby establishing that what is good

\textsuperscript{151} Wilcox, \textit{Truth and Value in Nietzsche}, 135.
\textsuperscript{152} Nietzsche, \textit{TI} III: 1.
\textsuperscript{153} Nietzsche, \textit{TI} III: 4.
\textsuperscript{154} Nietzsche, \textit{TI} III: 4.
for one is good for all. As we will see, “the demand of one morality for all is detrimental to the higher men.”

2.6 Nietzsche’s Critique of the Similarity Doctrine:

As we have seen, Nietzsche holds that an individual consists of his/her unique psycho-physiological type-facts. To the extent that these type-facts vary from individual to individual, mankind is essentially dissimilar. Since each person is unique in this regard, it is each individual’s particular type-facts that ultimately determine what is in an individual’s self-interest. Nietzsche explains that “the noble type of man experiences itself as determining values; it does not need approval; it judges, ‘what is harmful to me is harmful in itself’; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value creating.” In other words, Nietzsche is arguing that what is good for one person—i.e. “prudential goodness”—may be bad for another, and the distinction depends upon the psycho-physiological type-facts of the individual. As such, the noble person’s mode of evaluation is a direct expression of his or her psycho-physiological type-facts. This implies that there is nothing that can be universally applied to all humans, yet this is precisely the intent of morality. Nietzsche observes that “morality is baroque and

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155 Nietzsche, BGE VII: 228.
156 Nietzsche, BGE IX: 260.
157 “Prudential goodness” is the term used by Leiter to reconcile both the ‘relative’ and ‘objective’ aspects of Nietzsche’s perspectivism. On one hand, Nietzsche asserts that nothing can be universalized—that every event or encounter is necessarily viewed from a unique perspective. As such, Nietzsche’s perspectivism has been interpreted to rule out any notion of objective knowledge and to show that genuine knowledge is more-or-less impossible. However, as we saw in Chapter One, Nietzsche is not as ‘skeptical’ about knowledge as he is often portrayed to be. In the case of diet, for instance, the interaction between food and the physiological type-facts about an individual represent ‘objective’ knowledge, but only as it pertains to that individual. In other words, such knowledge is necessarily subject-interested and perspectival, but it nonetheless remains contextually ‘objective’ or ‘true’ for that individual. As such, the term “prudential goodness” emphasizes the ‘objective’ good as it pertains to the individual’s type-facts only. Leiter states, “Let us be clear... the claim is not that Nietzsche clearly articulates [this view, but] that Nietzsche holds the view that facts about prudential goodness are both relational and objective.” (Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 111.) (Cf. Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 13-21 & 104-112 for a further discussion on prudential goodness.)
unreasonable... because they address themselves to ‘all’, because they generalize where one must not generalize.” Nietzsche provides an illustration—Cornaro’s diet—to demonstrate how harmful such a universal conception can be. Cornaro was a small man who attributed his long life to the meager diet he maintained throughout his life. Naturally, others wanted to live a long life as well, so they enthusiastically purchased his book in hopes of learning Cornaro’s dietary secret. But as Nietzsche points out, Cornaro possessed a specific physiological type-fact—namely, a slow metabolism—that prevented him from eating large portions. Nietzsche explains that “he was not free to eat much or little as he chose, his frugality was not an act of ‘free will’: he became ill when he ate more.” In other words, Cornaro’s meager diet was not the result of a conscious choice, but the result of his inability to digest large portions of food. In effect, Cornaro was making the error of confusing the cause and the consequence; Cornaro’s diet did not cause his long life, but his slow metabolism (i.e. his digestive type-facts) caused his diet. According to Nietzsche, Cornaro’s long life was achieved because he simply listened to his body’s physiological requirements. Nietzsche insists that Cornaro’s diet would produce the same result only for those who possessed the same digestive type-facts. As Nietzsche observes, if a person does not possess Cornaro’s digestive type-facts, then that person should consume a different diet—otherwise, a person “with [a] rapid consumption of nervous energy, would kill himself with Cornaro’s regimen.” As Leiter explains, “Cornaro’s mistake consists, in effect, in

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158 Nietzsche, BGE V: 198.
159 Nietzsche, TI VI: 1.
160 This is the first of “The Four Great Errors” that Nietzsche outlines in Twilight of the Idols section VI, all of which contributed to the acceptance and perpetuation of slave morality.
161 Nietzsche, TI VI: 1.
his belief in absolute—rather than relational—prudential goodness; he thought the ‘good’ diet was good for everyone, when in fact it was only good for certain types of bodies.”

The notion of prudential goodness as it applies to diet—that certain physiological type-facts require different foods for maximum nourishment—seems plausible enough and is met with little resistance by most people. All organisms require nutrition, but not all organisms require the same nutrients; therefore, there is no such thing as a “universal nutrient.” However, part of Nietzsche’s *revaluation of values* is to assert that *values* are like nutrients in that values are dependent upon the psycho-physiological type-facts of each individual. To demand that an individual reject one’s *prudential* values and accept a universal value is the equivalent of demanding that a mighty warrior survive on Cornaro’s meager diet. For Nietzsche, “the individual is... a piece of fate... To say to him ‘change yourself’ means to demand that everything should change, even in the past... And there have indeed been consistent moralists who wanted man to be different, namely *virtuous*, who wanted him in their own likeness, namely that of a bigot!”

By imposing moralities that demand that everyone be the same—that is *virtuous*—moralists have intentionally thwarted great men from becoming who they essentially are—namely: great!

Nietzsche’s emphasis on the uniqueness of each individual—their *dissimilarity*—recognizes that “when a decadent type of man ascended to the rank of the highest type, this could only happen at the expense of its countertype, the type of man that is strong and sure of life.” As a consequence, Nietzsche laments that “our weak, unmanly social concepts of good and evil and their tremendous ascendancy over the body and soul have finally weakened all

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162 Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 111.
164 Nietzsche, *EH* III: 5.
bodies and souls and snapped the self-reliant, independent, unprejudiced men, the pillars of a strong civilization. In fact, Rutherford explains that “the contrast between the noble and the base, the master and the slave, the independent and the dependent, is the most basic value distinction recognized by Nietzsche.” Nietzsche is appalled at how accustomed we have become to the doctrine of human equality. Unlike the mighty cultures of antiquity (i.e. Greece and Rome), modern societies have lost all sense of the differences between men—between the ‘free’ and the slave. Nietzsche observes that “one who is not at his own disposal and who lacks leisure does not by any means seem contemptible to us for that reason.”

He further states:

A Greek of noble descent found such tremendous intermediary stages and such distance between his own height and that ultimate baseness that he could scarcely see the slave clearly... [And] the Greek philosophers went through life feeling secretly that there were far more slaves than one might think... Their pride overflowed at the thought that even the most powerful men on earth belonged among their slaves. This pride, too, is alien and impossible for us; not even metaphorically does the word ‘slave’ possess its full power for us.

In Nietzsche’s eyes, the modern idea of human equality has weakened our bodies and spirit beyond recognition. We no longer recognize the inherent differences that set the higher types apart from the herd, the differences which make them superior. And to make matters worse, it is now the weak that are in control, demanding that the higher types conform to the baseness of their universal slave morality. According to Nietzsche, such an inversion to the natural order of things is the greatest offense perpetrated against the unsuspecting higher types. As a consequence, Nietzsche is clear that to the extent that humans possess different type-facts, they are dissimilar and should pursue the values that are in their best interest. Nietzsche

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165 Nietzsche, D III; 163.
166 Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 520.
167 Nietzsche, GS I: 18.
168 Nietzsche, GS I: 18.
summarizes it best when he states, “The doctrine of equality... there exists no more poisonous poison... [Instead], ‘Equality for equals and inequality for unequals’ – that would be the true voice of justice: and what follows from it, ‘Never make equal what is unequal.’”169

2.7 Summary:

Part of Nietzsche’s project to “translate man back into nature” is to critique the descriptive components of slave morality that have waged war on the instincts, senses, and the body. In Nietzsche’s critique, he recognizes three dominant descriptive components that underlie slave morality: (a) free will, (b) the transparent self, and (c) the similarity doctrine. Nietzsche holds that a person’s life proceeds along a fixed trajectory—fixed by the natural psycho-physiological type-facts about the individual. As such, Nietzsche is a Causal Essentialist because he believes that the individual’s type-facts are both causally and explanatorily primary when investigating phenomena such as human actions and morality. Accordingly, Nietzsche’s theory of action asserts that these psycho-physiological type-facts are the primary cause of our conscious thoughts and desires, which then lead to the action itself (i.e. type-facts —> conscious thoughts and desires —> action). To be sure, consciousness does indeed play a role in determining action, but only to the extent that it serves as a bridge between the individual’s type-facts and the action itself. As a result, Nietzsche holds that the traditional notions of morality, which put the conscious will in the driver’s seat of action, are absurd because nothing can be causa sui or self-generated. According to Nietzsche, the conceptions of “free will” and “autonomous self” were developed by the moralists to hold people responsible for their actions, thereby making them controllable. To combat the moralist claim of an autonomous self,

Nietzsche’s naturalism sets out to demonstrate that consciousness is both (a) superfluous – aware of only the “skin” or surface aspects of reality, and (b) epiphenomenal – a derivative of, and a slave to, the underlying psycho-physiological type-facts of the individual. In addition to his critique of free will, Nietzsche also attacks the ability of the moralists to evaluate the “motives” behind an agent’s actions, claiming that an agent’s actions and motives are, for the most part, unknowable to the agent. For Nietzsche, it is the passions and instincts which are in the driver’s seat—while the self is merely the arena in which they battle it out for dominance. As such, the self does not actively participate in this battle, but is rather a re-active spectator, unable to willfully master or control its underlying drives. Further, beyond showing that consciousness and the self were severely overestimated by the moralists, Nietzsche also observed how the moralists were able to plausibly construct such stable conceptions as the self and ego.

According to Nietzsche, because of the philosopher’s “faith in grammar” (Subject/Predicate, Doer/Deed), philosophers claimed that they were able to gain greater insight into the structure of reality by reading it off of the structure of language. As a result, the moralists and philosophers dispensed with the evidence of their senses in favor of language (and “pure reason”) because language revealed a reality that possessed an underlying substrate that was stable and permanent. This new metaphysical reality of the moralists served to justify (a) the concept of a stable self, and (b) that mankind possessed essentially the same nature. Effectively, through the manipulation of language, the moralists were justified in universally applying their moral values onto every individual. In opposition, Nietzsche maintains that the greatest crime of morality is to make the unequal equal—that is, the higher types equal to the slave. Nietzsche uses the example of Cornaro’s diet to illustrate that to the extent that we each possess different psycho-physiological type-facts, we are, in fact, dissimilar. Therefore, in the
same manner that no one diet can be universally applied to every individual, no one morality can be universally applied either. Effectively, Nietzsche’s naturalistic argument undercuts each of these three aforementioned descriptive components of morality by demonstrating that our unique psycho-physiological type-facts determine the type of person we are essentially. Nietzsche recognizes that if he can effectively convince mankind (or at least the higher types) to return to nature—i.e. by embracing who they essentially are—then the moralists will no longer have any *metaphysical* legs to stand on.
CHAPTER 3

THE PARADOX BETWEEN NIETZSCHE’S FATALISM AND “FREEDOM”

3.1 The Paradox:

Wilcox states that Nietzsche’s fatalism and critique of free will often comes as quite a surprise to many of his casual readers because they “receive the impression that he is an exponent of something like a Sartrean freedom.” This misunderstanding is primarily due to the abundant passages found throughout the Nietzschean corpus that appear to promote a positive conception of freedom. As a result, Leiter observes that “commentators, even those sensitive to naturalistic and quasi-fatalist themes in Nietzsche’s work, have resisted... the depth of Nietzsche’s fatalism.” Accordingly, many commentators insist that even with Nietzsche’s adamant attacks on free will and the autonomous self, Nietzsche supports the idea of self-creation and freedom, even if only for the rare and noble type of person. For instance, Rutherford asserts that Nietzsche categorizes the freedom of the will into two broad classes: (1) “freedom that represents the will as an unconditioned power of choice”, and (2) a “freedom of great souls... with the independence and elevation of mind characteristic of the ‘free spirit’.” Additionally, Janaway articulates:

The extent to which Nietzsche succeeds in combining a naturalistic account of the human ‘material’ with an account of creative agency may be subject for debate. But it is wrong to think that [Nietzsche] wishes to exclude creative agency from his picture of

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170 Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche*, 76.
humanity, because without it his proposed critique of moral values and his project of learning to think and feel in healthier ways would make little sense.\footnote{Janaway, Beyond Selflessness, 123.}

These arguments seem plausible, since if there is no opportunity or freedom to create oneself, then what would be the point of Nietzsche’s revaluation of values? If an individual’s morality is not the product of a free choice (at least to some extent), but rather a derivative of the underlying psycho-physiological type-facts about the person, then why would Nietzsche bother to critique slave morality at all? In order to answer these questions, we must explore several of the passages on freedom that gives rise to such accounts. In doing so, it will become clear that Nietzsche uses the concept of freedom in a revisionary sense; that is, he is employing a “persuasive definition” in order to re-appropriate the content within the term. Further, it will be shown that not only does Nietzsche’s revisionary conception of “freedom” accommodate his fatalism, it requires it. As such, it will become apparent that only through acquiring knowledge and awareness of one’s fate can one become free from the chains imposed by slave morality.

\textbf{3.2 Therapeutic Approach and Persuasive Definitions:}

As we have seen, Nietzsche’s hermeneutics of suspicion recognizes that our beliefs and morality are not the products of our conscious will or rational thought. Therefore, providing a rational or systematic critique of morality would do little in bringing about the transformation Nietzsche desires. Nietzsche states that “even if a morality has grown out of an error, the realization of this fact would not so much touch the problem of its value.”\footnote{Nietzsche, GS V: 345. This statement provides evidence of Nietzsche’s Anti-Realist position regarding moral facts. Nietzsche states, “There is no such thing as moral phenomena, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena.” (\textit{BGE IV}: 108.) As such, Christianity and slave morality are, in general, not attacked by Nietzsche on the grounds that they are “false” (as opposed to “true”), but because their values serve to enfeeble the noble individuals.} Consequently, Nietzsche’s writing style attempts to engage the reader at an emotional level—beneath
consciousness—in order to affect the unconscious causal levers that produce a person’s values and actions. As Janaway observes, “without the rhetorical provocations, without the revelation of what we find gruesome, shaming, embarrassing, comforting, and heart-warming, we would neither comprehend nor be able to revalue our current values.” As such, Janaway refers to Nietzsche’s writing style as “therapeutic” because it attempts to affectively reorient the reader’s values in two stages: (1) to diagnose the function that our evaluation of values, beliefs, concepts, etc. fulfills in our lives, and (2) to overcome these inherited moralities and embrace new evaluations expressive of oneself. These stages are reflected in Nietzsche’s new demand for the philosopher of the future:

We need a critique of moral values, the value of these values themselves must first be called into question—and for that there is needed a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances in which they grew, under which they evolved and changed (morality as consequence, as symptom, as mask, as tartufferie, as illness, as misunderstanding; but also morality as cause, as remedy, as stimulant, as restraint, as poison)... One has taken the value of these “values” as given, as factual, as beyond all question.

Since we take many of our values for granted, Nietzsche intentionally employs a therapeutic writing style because he sees it as a highly effective means to alter the reader’s evaluative process. Were Nietzsche to write and theorize in the conventional philosophical manner—i.e. through rational argument—then many of the causal and affective aspects of his critique would most likely be overlooked, thereby rendering his message ineffective. Janaway observes that “without Nietzsche’s provocations, our temptation might be to rest upon our learned attitude and concepts... justifying them by argument that we tell ourselves is rational, impersonal, and

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175 Janaway, Beyond Selflessness, 4.
177 Nietzsche, GM Preface: 6 (emphasis added).
detached—nothing to do with the affects."  

As such, Nietzsche recognizes that by being emotionally provocative, his desired effect of reevaluating all values is far more likely to succeed.

Nietzsche’s *therapeutic* approach is an important backdrop when determining how and why Nietzsche chose to use specific terms and phrases in the manner he did. Because Nietzsche’s intent in using language is to affect his readers emotionally, Nietzsche employs many familiar concepts—such as the term “freedom”—in revisionary ways. Leiter suggests that in doing so, Nietzsche is engaging

in what Charles Stevenson would have called a ‘persuasive definition’ of ‘freedom’: he wants to radically revise the content of ‘freedom’ while exploiting the positive valence that the word has for his readers. This is because Nietzsche recognizes that to really transform the consciousness of his preferred readers, he must reach them at an emotional, even sub-conscious level; and one way to do so is to associate Nietzschean ideas with values in which his readers are already emotionally invested.  

According to Stevenson, “a ‘persuasive’ definition is one which gives a new conceptual meaning to a familiar word without substantially changing its emotive meaning, and which is used with the conscious or unconscious purpose of changing, by this means, the direction of people’s interests.” Stevenson’s article set out to demonstrate that “persuasive definitions” were often employed in philosophical works, but since these definitions were rarely recognized as “persuasive”, they tended to lead to great confusion. Not surprisingly, great confusion is precisely what we find in the case of Nietzsche’s *persuasive* use of the term “freedom”. Nietzsche wants to utilize the emotive aspects of the term “freedom”, while re-appropriating its content. Words or phrases such as “freedom” or “freedom of will” possess strong emotive

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179 Leiter, “Who is the ‘Sovereign Individual’?”, 17.
meaning to almost everyone; and this is what Nietzsche aims to exploit in order to awaken the emotions of his readers. For instance, at the conclusion of *On the Genealogy of Morals* III: 10, Nietzsche questions whether it is possible for philosophers to rise above their past reliance on the ascetic ideal. Nietzsche inquires: “Is there sufficient pride, daring, courage, self-confidence available today, sufficient will of the spirit, will to responsibility, *freedom of will*, for ‘the philosopher’ to henceforth—possible on earth?—”\(^1\) In posing this question, Nietzsche’s rhetorical aim is to ignite his readers’ passions in order to usher in a new age of philosophy. By using the phrase “freedom of will” in this manner (which, it is worth noting, is italicized in the original text, indicating the *persuasive* usage of the phrase), Nietzsche is utilizing the emotive meaning of the phrase to awaken the dormant instincts of his readers while simultaneously revising its content by implying that this *freedom* is interchangeable with dispositions such as pride, courage, and responsibility for oneself—dispositions that one could possess without developing them *freely*. Because the phrase “freedom of will” had already acquired an affective meaning within the common vernacular, Nietzsche takes advantage of its emotive meaning in order to awaken his readers to who they are essentially. To be sure, as Leiter points out, Nietzsche could “just as well called his new ideal agents ‘causally coherent’ (as opposed to *free*) since his picture really has nothing to do with ‘freedom’ at all.”\(^2\) However, because Nietzsche recognizes the importance of an affective *therapeutic* writing style, he chose to define certain words *persuasively*, knowing that such a style of writing would function far more effectively. Throughout this chapter, multiple passages will be explored that demonstrate the revisionary way in which Nietzsche viewed “freedom.”

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3.3 The Sovereign Individual:

In the *On the Genealogy of Morals* II:2, we meet the “Sovereign Individual” (SI) who has been referred to as the exemplar of “selfhood” and “genuine agency” within recent Nietzschean scholarship. For instance, Keith Ansell-Pearson states that “the SI is in possession of a free will and conscience [and is] the product of a specific historical labor of culture and civilization.”\(^{183}\) Likewise, Ken Gemes declares that the SI represents “what exactly it is to be a genuine self.”\(^{184}\) Further, Janaway asserts that the SI signifies Nietzsche’s “positive conception of free will… involving acting fully within one’s character, knowing its limits and capabilities, and valuing oneself for what one is rather than for one’s conformity to an external standard or to what one ought to be.”\(^{185}\) With such powerful statements being made about the SI representing Nietzsche’s idealized *self*, one might have expected Nietzsche to mention this individual quite often in his writings. However, this is not the case. In fact, this is the only time that the SI is mentioned in the entire Nietzschean corpus. Such an omission leads Leiter to propose two possible interpretations (i.e. deflationary readings) of the SI that avoid the exaggeratory presentations of him: (1) the SI is a parody of the bourgeois who think they have actually achieved *freedom*, or (2) the SI does indeed represent the ideal *self*, “but such a *self* is, in Nietzschean terms, a fortuitous natural artifact (a bit of ‘fate’), not an autonomous achievement for which anyone could be responsible.”\(^{186}\)

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For the sake of readability, the SI passage under examination is included here in its entirety:

This precisely is the long story of how responsibility originated. The task of breeding an animal with the right to make promises evidently embraces and presupposes as a predatory task that one first makes men to a certain degree necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and consequently calculable. The tremendous labor of that which I have called ‘morality of mores’—the labor performed by man upon himself during the greater part of the existence of the human race, his entire prehistoric labor, finds in this its meaning, its great justification, notwithstanding the severity, tyranny, stupidity, and the idiocy involved with it: with the help of the morality of custom and the social straitjacket, man was made truly predictable.

Let us place ourselves, on the other hand, at the end of this immense process where the tree actually bears fruit, where society and its morality of custom finally reveal what they were simply the means to: we then find the sovereign individual as the ripest fruit on its tree, like only to itself, having freed itself from the morality of custom, an autonomous super-ethical individual (because ‘autonomous and ‘ethical are mutually exclusive), in short, we find a man with his own, independent, durable will, who has the right to make a promise—and has a proud consciousness quivering in every muscle of what he has finally achieved and incorporated, an actual awareness of power and freedom, a feeling that man in general has reached completion. This man who is now free and who really does have the right to make a promise, this master of the free will, this sovereign—how could he remain ignorant of his superiority over everybody who does not have the right to make a promise or answer for himself, how much trust, fear and respect he arouses—he merits all three—and how could he, with his self-mastery, not realize that he has necessarily been given mastery over circumstances, over nature and over all creatures with a less durable and reliable will? The ‘free man, the possessor of a durable, unbreakable will, thus has his own standard of value: in the possession of such a will: viewing others from his own standpoint, he respects or despises; and just as he will necessarily respect his peers, the strong and the reliable (those with the right to give their word),--that is everyone who makes promises like a sovereign, ponderously, seldom, slowly, and is sparing with his trust, who confers an honour when he places his trust, who gives his word as something which can be relied on, because he is strong enough to remain upright in the face of mishap or even in the face of fate --: so he will necessarily be ready to kick the febrile whippets who make a promise when they have no right to do so, and will save the rod for the liar who breaks his word in the very moment it passes his lips. The proud realization of the extraordinary privilege of responsibility; the awareness of this rare freedom and power over himself and his destiny, has penetrated him to the depths and become an instinct, his dominant instinct:--what will he call his dominant instinct, assuming that he needs a word for it? No doubt about the answer: this sovereign man calls it his conscience.187

187 Nietzsche, GM II: 2.
To begin unpacking this passage, we must first recognize the context in which the SI emerges. Nietzsche begins the second essay by questioning “How does one breed an animal with the right to make promises?” This question immediately alerts the reader to the fact that mankind is an animal, and therefore, like all other animals, does not possess an inherent autonomous choice to act in a specific manner. Rather, man must be bred and trained to perform particular functions that are not a part of his natural disposition. In the case of the SI, man is being bred to keep promises and therefore must develop an oppositional force against his natural disposition of forgetfulness—that is, he must develop a memory. Nietzsche informs us that instinctually, forgetfulness was a “positive faculty of repression” which served as “a preserver of psychic order... No happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no present [could exist] without forgetfulness.”

Because forgetfulness was so valuable to the human’s psyche, the tactics necessary to breed a memory into him were bloody and severe because “pain is the most powerful aid to mnemonics.” Moreover, through a long historical labor consisting of the “morality of custom” and the “social straitjacket,” mankind developed this memory, even a conscience, which enabled him to be predictable, “calculable, regular, necessary... [and] able to stand securely for his own future, which is what one who promises does.”

Within this context, we see that the SI emerges from the “social straitjacket” with the ability to make and keep promises. As we have seen, Nietzsche recognizes that morality and values within a society can and do play an external causal role in the development of individuals.

Here, in the On the Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche is interested in uncovering the values,

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188 Nietzsche, GM II: 1.
189 Nietzsche, GM II: 3.
190 Nietzsche, GM II: 1.
customs, and morals that were at play in making the human animal predictable and accountable. As Clark and Leiter highlight, Nietzsche is drawing an etymological connection between the terms “Custom” (Sitte) and “Morality” (Sittlichkeit) in order to “advance the plausible hypothesis that customs constituted the first morality, that traditional ways of acting played the same role during early human life that ‘rarified and lofty’ moral codes, rules, and principles play today: that is, they provided criteria for moral right and wrong.” Moreover, at the end of this torturous moralizing process stands the SI, the perfected animal which is no longer bound to the morality that bred him. The SI is “super-ethical” (i.e. above morality), “autonomous,” “a man with his own independent, durable will,” and possessing the “awareness of power and freedom.” But what exactly is the SI free to do? The answer Nietzsche provides is puzzling indeed: the SI is simply free to make promises and remember his debts. Certainly, if Nietzsche intended the SI to represent an idealized self, then one would expect the SI to possess far more abilities than merely keeping a promise. To be fair, making and keeping a promise is by no means a small achievement, but it hardly justifies the lofty language Nietzsche employs throughout the passage. Furthermore, it would appear that the “conscience” that the SI develops is nothing more than a moral memory—the product of centuries of guilt and shame (via the social straightjacket) imposed onto mankind for forgetting his responsibilities and duties to others. As such, it is possible, even plausible, that the entire passage is nothing more than a parody of the contemporary bourgeois. In other words, Nietzsche most likely is doing nothing

192 On the reading that the SI passage represents a parody, Leiter suggests that the disparity between the overblown rhetoric and the SI’s ability to keep a promise “might explain why Nietzsche gives this self important animal, the so called sovereign individual, a suitably ridiculous and pompous name... in the original, as the ‘Souveraine Individuum,’ a mix of French and (perhaps) Latin, meaning, literally, a sovereign atom.” (Cf. Leiter, “Who is the ’Sovereign Individual’?”, 11.)
more in these passages than mocking the pompous bourgeois of his day who thought they had achieved something exceptional (i.e. freedom and autonomy), when in reality, they were nothing more than trained animals.

Nevertheless, even if we are to take the SI passage seriously—that is, as a positive conception of freedom—there is nothing in it to suggest that it is incompatible with Nietzsche’s fatalism as discussed in the previous two chapters. For instance, a central theme in the passage is the notion that the SI attains “self-mastery” which includes “mastery over circumstances, over nature and over all creatures with a less durable and reliable will.” According to Janaway, this “self-mastery” gives the SI the rare ability to:

Count upon himself to act consistently, to be the same in the future when the time comes to produce what he promised in the past. Understanding oneself in this way, one will presumably attain a justified sense of satisfaction in one’s power and integrity, and value others, not according to their conformity to some general practice imposed from without, but according to their manifestation of the power and integrity one recognizes in oneself.\(^{193}\)

On the surface, it would appear that Nietzsche thinks that the SI has achieved “self-mastery” by an act of will and conscious choice. However, as we have seen, Nietzsche denies that anyone has conscious control over himself, his circumstances, or his fate. Nietzsche is clear that “no one gives people their qualities, not God or society, parents or ancestors, not even people themselves... Nobody is responsible for people existing in the first place, or for the state or circumstances or environment they are in.”\(^{194}\) Recall in Section 2.3 that Nietzsche views the self as the arena in which competing drives and instincts struggle for dominance. Nietzsche states that “while we believe we are complaining about the vehemence of a drive, at bottom it is one drive which is complaining about the other; that is to say, for us to become aware that we are


\(^{194}\) Nietzsche, *TI V*: 8.
suffering from the vehemence of a drive presupposes the existence of another equally
vehement or even more vehement drive.”¹⁹⁵ This passage clearly articulates that everything
which comes into consciousness, including our drives, is epiphenomenal (Section 2.2d) – a
derivative of our psycho-physiological type-facts. Therefore, although “self-mastery” and the
subsequent qualities of the SI as described by Janaway are indeed possible, the “mastering” is
not through an act of will performed freely. We may feel we are responsible for such actions,
but such a feeling is delusional. As a result, there is no self to speak of in self-mastery, at least
not one that freely contributed to the process.

As further evidence to the claim that there is no self in the process of self-mastering, we
must explore Nietzsche’s own “self-mastery” as described in Ecce Homo. In this
autobiographical work, Nietzsche thinks of himself as wise, clever, and the author of great
books—as these are the first three chapter titles. Based upon these chapter titles, one might
suspect that Ecce Homo is nothing more than a work of self-congratulatory boasting; however,
from its opening line—which reads, “The good fortune of my existence... lies in its fatality.”¹⁹⁶ —
the reader is struck by its fatalistic themes. Nietzsche spends a significant portion of the book
explaining the importance that location, recreation, climate, and nutrition had on his physiology
(as we saw in Section 1.3) in order to demonstrate the causal necessity these aspects
contributed to his inevitable achievements. “One will ask,” Nietzsche begins, “why on earth
have I been relating all these small things (i.e. climate, nutrition, etc.) which are generally

¹⁹⁵ Nietzsche, D II: 109.
¹⁹⁶ Nietzsche, EH I: 1.
considered matters of complete indifference...”

Nietzsche’s response is indicative of his fatalism:

Answer: these small things—nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness—are inconceivably more important than everything one has taken to be important so far. Precisely here one must begin to relearn. What mankind has so far considered seriously have not even been realities but mere imaginings—more strictly speaking, lies prompted by the bad instincts of sick natures that were harmful in the most profound sense—all these concepts, ‘God,’ ‘soul,’ ‘virtue,’ ‘sin,’ ‘beyond,’ ‘truth,’ ‘eternal life.’—But the greatness of human nature, its ‘divinity,’ was sought in them.—All the problems of politics, of social organization, and of education have been falsified through and through because one mistook the most harmful men for great men—because one learned to despise ‘little’ things, which means the basic concerns of life itself.

Nietzsche’s response stresses that his greatness was achieved by paying attention to the “little things”—i.e. his physiology, his health, and his “prudential goodness” — in short, to what his selfish nature demanded. Nietzsche refused to suppress his life-affirming instincts to a “divine morality” prescribed by men with “sick natures.” In other words, like the SI, Nietzsche was able to achieve greatness (assuming, of course, that keeping one’s promises is considered a great feat) by being aware of and obeying the natural psycho-physiological type-facts with which he was endowed. In Leiter’s words, “Nietzsche wrote such wise and clever books for the same reason the tomato plant grows tomatoes: because it must, because it could not have done otherwise.”

Moreover, throughout the account of his life, Nietzsche radically opposes the “heroic nature” which strives with all of one’s might to will and bring about change to one’s circumstances. Nietzsche asserts that “‘willing’ something, ‘striving’ for something, envisaging a ‘purpose,’ a ‘wish’—I know none of this from experience... I do not want in the least that

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197 Nietzsche, EH II: 10.
198 Nietzsche, EH II: 10 (emphasis added).
199 Leiter, Nietzsche on Morality, 85.
anything should become different than it is; I myself do not want to become different.”

Nietzsche’s greatness was not achieved as a conscious choice or an act of ‘heroic’ will, but as a fortuitous and necessary natural fact (i.e. fate). One cannot will to be great, one must be born for it. According to Nietzsche, to will something is to wish reality were otherwise and attempt to escape the necessity of one’s fate and the whole. The nature of greatness (and the nature of freedom), as Nietzsche envisions it, is to embrace one’s fate without grievance—*amor fati*!

Nietzsche proclaims that “what is necessary does not hurt me; *amor fati* is my inmost nature.”

Greatness, according to Nietzsche, is effortless because one does what is natural for oneself—all of one’s drives and instincts act as a unified and cohesive whole. “As long as life is ascending,” Nietzsche declares, “happiness and instinct are one.” Furthermore, when we look at the last few lines of the SI section, we discover that certain experiences of the SI mirror Nietzsche’s own experiences. The SI section concludes with the SI coming to a “realization” or “awareness” of a freedom which “has penetrated him to the depths of an instinct, his dominant instinct…” This sentiment possesses similar overtones to Nietzsche’s own experience of realizing that his life task is to revalue all values as we saw in Section 1.5. Recall that Nietzsche’s dominant instinct—his “‘organizing idea’ that was destined to rule”—began to “manifest itself to such a high degree that I never suspected what was growing in me… and one day all of my capacities, suddenly ripe, leaped forth in their ultimate perfection.”

In this sense, the “dominant instinct” can be seen as the successful integration of the myriad of instincts and drives that make up a person into a cohesive unity. Nietzsche and (presumably) the SI merely come to an awareness of something

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202 Nietzsche, *TI* II: 11.
that was there all along—their “dominant instinct”—which would eventually guide all of their subsequent actions. This awareness (i.e. knowledge) of the “dominant instinct”—that is, of one’s fate—thereby becomes pivotal in the development of both Nietzsche’s and the SI’s attainment of freedom and greatness. Consequently, the character of the SI was no less fated to become what he is—an unyielding and reliable promise keeper—than Nietzsche was to write great books. So even if Janaway, Ansell-Pearson, and Gemes are correct in their assertion that the SI represents a positive conception of freedom for Nietzsche, there is nothing to suggest that the SI’s freedom is incompatible with Nietzsche’s fatalism.

3.4 What Nietzsche Really Meant by “Freedom”:

As we saw in Section 3.2, Nietzsche employs a persuasive definition of the term “freedom” in order to utilize the emotive aspects of the term, while re-appropriating its conceptual content. For instance, in contrast to the peculiar context in which freedom is achieved by the so-called “Sovereign Individual,” Nietzsche is unambiguous about the type of freedom possessed by one of Nietzsche’s “higher types”: Johann Wolfgang Goethe. According to Nietzsche, Goethe was not just a German event, “but a European one: a magnificent attempt to overcome the eighteenth century by returning to nature, by coming towards the naturalness of the Renaissance...” In fact, Nietzsche’s admiration for Goethe was so great that no other person is mentioned more in the Nietzschean corpus than Goethe himself; Nietzsche mentions Goethe some 135 times, with each mention being uniformly positive.

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204 Nietzsche, *TI* IX: 49 (emphasis added).
speaks about Goethe, the sentiments expressed—particularly those on *freedom*—are not meant as a parody. The passage under consideration is quoted at length here:

[Goethe] made use of history, science, antiquity, and *Spinoza* too, but above all he made use of practical activity... [H]e did not remove himself from life, he put himself squarely in the middle of it; he did not despair, and he took as much as he could on himself, to himself, in himself. What he wanted was *totality*; he fought against the separation of reason, sensibility, feeling, will (—preached in the most forbiddingly scholastic way by *Kant*, Goethe’s antipode), he disciplined himself to wholeness, he *created* himself... In the middle of an age inclined to unreality, Goethe was a convinced realist: he said yes to everything related to him,—his greatest experience was of that *ens realissimum* [the most real thing] that went by the name of Napoleon. Goethe conceived of a strong, highly educated, self-respecting human being, skilled in all things physical and able to keep himself in check, who could dare to allow himself the entire expanse and wealth of naturalness, who is strong enough for this *freedom*: a man of tolerance, not out of weakness, but out of strength, because he knows how to employ to his advantage what would destroy an average nature; a man to whom nothing is forbidden, except it be *weakness*, whether that weakness be called vice or virtue... A spirit like this who has become *free* stands in the middle of the world with a cheerful and trusting *fatalism* in the belief that what is separate and individual may be rejected, that everything is redeemed and affirmed in the whole... *he does not negate any more*... But such a belief like this is the highest of all possible beliefs: I have christened it with the name *Dionysus*.206

From this passage, it is clear that Nietzsche’s admiration for Goethe is due to Goethe’s naturalistic and realistic approach to life. Naturalism, as Nietzsche explains, entails the outright rejection of the ascetic ideal in favor of the practical and selfish activities of life. Instead of pining after non-existent metaphysical truths that detach one’s reason from the empirical world, one places oneself squarely in the center of physical reality through a unification of “reason, sensibility, feeling, [and] will.” In this manner, Goethe encounters reality—with all of its trials and tribulations—as it really is, without wishing it to be any different. And what does Nietzsche call a person such as this? Free! In other words, Nietzsche is explicitly equating Goethe’s “cheerful and trusting fatalism” with his notion of “freedom.” Goethe does not become *free*  

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206 Nietzsche, *TI* IX: 49 (emphasis added).
through an act of will, creative agency, or choice, but by possessing a cheerful attitude and recognition of his own fatality. Needless to say, the notion of freedom consisting of inner-strength, selfishness, indifference, and cheerful acceptance of one’s fate is clearly a persuasive definition, since it has nothing to do with freedom at all—at least not any of the traditional definitions of “freedom.” As Leiter aptly explains:

Nietzsche would rather persuade select readers to the fatalism of a Goethe by co-opting the language of freedom itself to commend to them an attitude that is premised on the profound denial of one liberal ideal of freedom: namely, a denial of the Enlightenment hope that men, through free will and their rational capacities can all become equal.207

Nietzsche insists that mankind is not equal, and reality can be harsh and unforgiving. Nevertheless, to be free, as Nietzsche conceives it, demands that one be bold and indifferent in the face of such an unfair, unequal, and terrifying reality. In fact, in the section titled “My Conception of Freedom,” Nietzsche informs us that:

War is training for freedom. For what is freedom? That one has the will to self‐responsibility. That one preserves the distance which divides us. That one has become more indifferent to hardship, toil, privation, even to life. That one is ready to sacrifice men to one’s cause, oneself not excepted. Freedom means that the manly instincts that delight in war and victory have gained mastery over the other instincts – for instance, the instinct of ‘happiness.’ The man who has become free—how much more the mind that has become free—spurns the contemptible sort of well-being dreamed of by shopkeepers, Christians, cows, women, Englishmen and other democrats. The free man is a warrior!208

To be free is to be a warrior—a disposition of indifference to the circumstances and hardships one encounters while assuming full responsibility for oneself. But this self-responsibility that Nietzsche mentions in this passage is far different than the type of responsibility that the moralists decree in Section 2.2b. As Leiter explains:

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208 Nietzsche, T/ IX: 38 (emphasis added).
Assuming ‘responsibility’ for oneself is not the same thing as actually being responsible for one’s actions. The former is an attitude, a disposition—that of the warrior it turns out, since the attitude is immediately equated by Nietzsche with the characteristics of the warrior, e.g. indifference to difficulties, hardships, privations, even to life itself.209 As such, freedom is not for the faint of heart. In The Gay Science, Nietzsche asserts that “every philosophy that ranks peace higher than war... permits the question whether it was not sickness that inspired [it].”210 Accordingly, the notion that peace or happiness serves to foster freedom is a fictitious construction of the sick: e.g. the Christian, the feminine, and the Englishmen. In either case, equality amongst men is their rallying cry. As we saw in Section 2.6, wherever equality is preached, it is always to the detriment of the higher types. Consequently, the free warrior will not only recognize, but “preserve the distance” that separates him from the herd. According to Nietzsche, Napoleon was such a warrior, recognizing that his higher nature demanded of him a higher calling. Like Goethe, Napoleon was also “a piece of ‘return to nature’” who ascended “up into a high, free, even frightful nature and naturalness, such as plays with great tasks, is permitted to play with them...”211 As a great warrior, Napoleon embraced his higher calling and was willing to risk everything in order to achieve it — including himself and others. In short, to claim that freedom means taking pleasure in warfare and victory is revisionary to say the least, but this is what Nietzsche says. Nevertheless, this is a salient example of how Nietzsche utilizes the language of “freedom” in order to persuade the higher types of the truth of fatalism.

210 Nietzsche, GS Preface: 2.
211 Nietzsche, TI IX: 48 (emphasis added).
3.5 The Battle: Greatness vs. Decadence:

Nietzsche does not deny that the higher types of people, such as Goethe and Napoleon (and possibly the SI), can exhibit characteristics of an autonomous or creative agency, only that such agency is an expression of a person’s underlying psycho-physiological type-facts. As a result, expressions of creative agency and freedom are rare since only a few humans are fortunate enough to possess the necessary type-facts. Nietzsche challenges the noble by stating, “let us therefore limit ourselves to the purification of our opinions and valuations and to the creation of our own new tables of what is good… [We] want to become those we are—human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves.”\(^{212}\) This passage is clearly addressed to an elite few—those who possess the natural (i.e. determined) characteristics of “genuine” agency and thereby those who are predisposed to create new laws and tables of value applicable to them. In other words, creative expression is possible only to the extent that the said creation expresses the characteristics already determined by one’s psycho-physiological type-facts. In this sense, the creation of values cannot be viewed as an arbitrary whim—where there are limitless options to what one could value or create—but rather as a natural outgrowth of the underlying type-facts imbued in the agent.

At this point, one may wonder: if Nietzsche is correct that the type of person one becomes is naturally determined, then what possible effect could slave morality have on those who possess the noblest psycho-physiological type-facts? Certainly, if one’s values are an expression of one’s underlying type-facts, then wouldn’t the higher type of person naturally exhibit the noblest values? In order to answer this question, recall that in Section 2.2d,

\(^{212}\) Nietzsche, GS IV: 335 (emphasis added).
Nietzsche not only gives the psycho-physiological type-facts of an agent causal primacy, but he also affirms their explanatory primacy. This means that all other facts about the agent, including one’s values, beliefs, and actions, are explainable by the underlying type-facts as well. As such, the external values to which an agent is exposed can affect the agent, but it is only in virtue of that agent’s underlying type-facts. Therefore, if the moral values of the slave were to affect a higher type of person, then it is due to the underlying type-facts about that person which make him or her susceptible. To this point, Leiter observes that according to Nietzsche, “agents can come to accept values that are, overall, harmful to that type of agent, [but] only in virtue of type-facts about agents that would lead them to do so—this, in fact, is the very essence of ‘decadence’ for Nietzsche.”\(^\text{213}\) Nietzsche states in multiple places that when an agent combats his or her natural instincts, it is a symptom of sickness and decadence. For instance, in The Anti-Christ, Nietzsche states, “I call an animal, a species, an individual depraved when it loses its instincts, when it chooses, when it prefers what is harmful to it.”\(^\text{214}\) He also states in Twilight of the Idols that “to have to combat one’s instincts – that is the formula for decadence.”\(^\text{215}\) Consequently, when a higher type of person accepts certain values which will actually harm him (such as slave morality), it is a decadent type-fact that is at work.

Such an answer may seem unsatisfactory to some readers. After all, if Leiter’s analysis is correct, then is Nietzsche really suggesting that the highest types of people possess decadent type-facts that make them susceptible to self-destructive values and behaviors? In short, yes, and again, Nietzsche is the exemplary case study. In the opening of Ecce Homo, Nietzsche states, “I have a subtler sense of smell for the signs of ascent and decline than any other human

\(^{213}\) Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 158.
\(^{215}\) Nietzsche, *TI II*: 11.
being before me; I am the teacher par excellence for this—I know both, I am both.\(^\text{216}\) He later states, “this dual series of experiences, this access to apparently separate worlds, is repeated in my nature in every respect... I have a ‘second’ face in addition to the first.”\(^\text{217}\) In effect, Nietzsche is informing his readers that he was tormented most of his life by two opposing forces: his instinct toward greatness and his instinct toward decadence. As we later learn, Nietzsche explains that his inclination or “instinct” toward decadence was causally determined by two things: his physical illness and his mental “idealism”. Regarding his illness, he states, “if anything at all must be adduced against being sick and being weak, it is that man’s remedial instinct, his fighting instinct wears out.”\(^\text{218}\) In effect, Nietzsche is claiming what is obvious to most: that when one battles a physical ailment, the sickness can slowly chip away at one’s remedial instinct and therefore at one’s ability to strive after greatness. In such a physical state, it would have been easy for Nietzsche to console himself with the hope (i.e. ideal) of a reward—the promise of a “heaven”, a “redeemer”, an “eternal life”—to justify such suffering; but Nietzsche was bold enough to overcome this temptation in favor of embracing his illness as the catalyst to his greatness (amor fati). Moreover, as difficult as his illness was to overcome, he claims, “it was the ignorance in physiologicis—that damned ‘idealism’—that was the real calamity in my life... The consequences of this ‘idealism’ provide my explanation of all blunders, all great instinctual aberrations and ‘modesties’ that led me away from the task of my life...”\(^\text{219}\) As we saw in Section 1.5, Nietzsche’s idealism—the affects of Kant and Schopenhauer’s philosophy—haunted his nature until the time of Human, All Too Human. He states that during

\(^\text{216}\) Nietzsche, EH I: 1.
\(^\text{217}\) Nietzsche, EH I: 3.
\(^\text{218}\) Nietzsche, EH I: 6.
\(^\text{219}\) Nietzsche, EH II: 2.
this time, “I liberated myself from what in my nature did not belong... Idealism... [I became a] ‘free spirit’...a spirit that has become free, that has again taken possession of itself.”\(^{220}\) In other words, Nietzsche’s merciless quest to expose the ‘secret dungeons’ of ideals marked the period of becoming a “free spirit” and his return to nature—that is, the reclaiming of his nature. In effect, Nietzsche realized that the pursuit of the ideal, any ideal, was an escape from one’s nature and circumstances—the epitome of decadence. These passages reveal that Nietzsche’s life task of revaluing all values was marked by an overcoming of his decadent instincts; and to emerge from his plight to the heights of greatness took the courage and fortitude of a warrior. It would have been far easier for Nietzsche to succumb to his illness or submit to the idealism of the herd than it was to fight for the noble, yet terrifying life Nietzsche was fated to live. And herein lies the circumstances of nearly all higher types: they must battle both the external pressures of the moralists and their unconscious susceptibility towards decadence in order to possess the freedom predestined for them. Need we count the number of great souls who have grown empty and apathetic in their attempt to suppress their dominant instinct in favor of the values of the herd? And how many great men and women have self-destructed under the guilt imposed by the moralists for simply being who they were born to be? Nobody knows this battle better than Nietzsche himself; a man who became free only when he had shrugged off the chains of idealism and embraced his terrifying, yet noble fate. Nietzsche, more than any other person, can testify that the pressure from external values and illness is “entirely sufficient, once it has become a bad habit, to turn a genius into something mediocre.”\(^{221}\) It is Nietzsche’s great

\(^{220}\) Nietzsche, \textit{EH} III: HAH-1.  
\(^{221}\) Nietzsche, \textit{EH} II: 2.
task to inform other higher types of his journey—of *becoming free*—to ensure that such an outcome never happens again.

### 3.6 The Role of Knowledge and Science:

If the higher types can and do possess type-facts that make them susceptible to slave morality, then it would follow that knowledge plays a considerable role in making the higher types aware of the causal nature of values. In other words, for an agent to be truly liberated from the life-denying morality that thwarts the ascending life, knowledge of its causes plays an essential role. Rutherford observes that “an agent can only achieve *[freedom]* on the basis of relevant knowledge of nature: a knowledge of how value is determined in general and how it is determined for her in particular.”

Recall from Section 1.6, Nietzsche’s enthusiasm in discovering that Spinoza, like himself, viewed knowledge as “*the most powerful affect*” in liberating the higher types from the chains of morality. As a result, Nietzsche believes that only through acquiring knowledge—that is, knowledge of the genesis of values—can one be *free* to act in accordance with one’s nature. Like Spinoza, Nietzsche views the world—with its societal institutions and morality—as presenting genuine resistance to one’s ability to achieve excellence. Knowledge, therefore, is a precondition to *freedom* because only through its acquisition is one able to combat the aforementioned negative external forces. Rutherford aptly observes, “For our power to be expressed *[freely]*, we must have knowledge of the external forces—physical, social, historical—that can prevent that power from being expressed.”

In short, we *become free* only to the extent that we acquire knowledge of the forces that infringe

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222 Rutherford, *Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal*, 525.
223 Rutherford, *Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal*, 530.
upon who we are essentially. Nietzsche’s mission is to utilize this knowledge in order to clear a path for greatness and freedom to emerge.

So who are we to look towards to aid us in gaining a better understanding of ourselves, our values, and our world? “To this end,” Nietzsche declares in *The Gay Science*,

we must become the best learners and discoverers of everything that is lawful and necessary in the world: we must become physicists in order to be able to be creators in this sense—while hitherto all valuations and ideals have been based on ignorance of physics or were constructed so as to contradict it. Therefore: long live physics! And even more so that which compels us to turn to physics—our honesty.\(^{224}\)

This passage clearly expresses that creative freedom is made possible only through the knowledge acquired through scientific inquiry. To be sure, as we saw in Section 2.3 (and from the context of the passage above), an agent's actions are for the most part unknown and “indemonstrable” to an agent, but that does not mean that the task of understanding the effects of values is a futile endeavor. In fact, the opposite is true: because we know that “our opinions, valuations, and tables of what is good certainly belong among the most powerful levers in the involved mechanism of our action,”\(^{225}\) science should all the more investigate and identify those values which figure into the causal chain of action. Apart from the two biases of science that we saw in Sections 1.1-1.3—namely, its tendency towards reductionism and desire to dispense with philosophy as the creator of values—Nietzsche envisions a future in which philosophers can utilize the methods and results provided by the natural sciences. Nietzsche elucidates on this point in the note at the end of Essay 1 in the *On the Genealogy of Morals*, where he insists:

It is equally necessary to engage the interest of physiologists and doctors in these problems (of the value of existing evaluations); it may be left to academic philosophers

\(^{224}\) Nietzsche, *GS* IV: 335 (emphasis added).

\(^{225}\) Nietzsche, *GS* IV: 335.
to act as advocates and mediators in this manner, after they have on the whole succeeded... in transforming the originally so reserved and mistrustful relations between philosophy, physiology, and medicine, into the most amicable and fruitful exchange... All of the sciences have from now on to prepare the way for the future task of the philosophers: this task understood as the solution of the problem of value: the determination of the order of rank among values.\(^{226}\)

These passages are indicative of the mature Nietzsche’s belief that the goal of science—particularly physiological and medicinal sciences—should be to investigate the effects that particular values have on different kinds of people. Such statements in Nietzsche’s later works leads Clark to posit that the mature Nietzsche no longer claims that science falsifies reality. Instead, he celebrates science as ‘the wisdom of the world’ (i.e. of ‘this’ world)... and presents science as the great liberator from the falsification perpetuated by religion and metaphysics... He identifies science with ‘the sound conception of cause and effect,’ and claims that the concepts of guilt and punishment... were invented ‘against science, against the emancipation of man from the priest to destroy man’s causal sense: they are an attempt to assassinate cause and effect.’\(^{227}\)

As such, according to Leiter, Nietzsche believes that “the task for the sciences is to discover the laws of cause-and-effect governing particular values and actions... to examine the effects of different kinds of valuations on different kinds of people.”\(^{228}\) In this way, science will aid the philosopher of the future in developing the appropriate hierarchy of values, not for the “preservation of the greatest number... [but for] producing the stronger type.”\(^{229}\)

Furthermore, the new sciences of psychology, physiology, and physics are paramount to leading mankind out of the ignorance of the past two millenniums and into the future knowledge of the causal nature of ourselves, our values, and our world. In this way, freedom is made possible because one learns that necessity and fate reign over everything we are and

\(^{226}\) Nietzsche, GM I: End Note.
\(^{227}\) Clark, Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy, 103-104. In this passage, Clark is quoting from Nietzsche, The Anti-Christ: 47 & 49. (emphasis added)
\(^{228}\) Leiter, “Who is the ‘Sovereign Individual’?”, 22.
\(^{229}\) Nietzsche, GM I: End Note.
everything we do—that nothing could have been different. As Rutherford observes, “Nietzsche envisions a freedom that assents to fate as a condition of its own possibility.”\(^{230}\) This assent to fate is far more than just resigning oneself to the necessity of all things; it is the embracing of all things without regret. “My formula for greatness,” Nietzsche declares, “is amor fati: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it—all idealism is mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary—but love it!”\(^{231}\) In one’s assent to fate, knowledge becomes the most powerful affect because it ensures the innocence of becoming without the undue guilt of responsibility perpetrated by the moralists. No longer does the higher type need to apologize for being strong, independent, and selfish. Nietzsche declares that “everything is innocence, and knowledge is the road to insight into this innocence.”\(^{232}\) Knowledge, once and for all, liberates one to act in accordance with one’s underlying psycho-physiological type-facts, where all of one’s instincts and values become unified in affirming one’s life, one’s circumstances, and one’s fate.

Unfortunately, as promising as this new knowledge and freedom sound, it would be a mistake to assume that Nietzsche intended his message for just anyone willing to pick up his books. As we have seen, the assent to freedom is possible only for those with the natural disposition of a warrior; one must “be accustomed to living on mountains… [to] become indifferent, [to] never ask whether truth is useful or a fatality… strength which prefers questions for which no one today is sufficiently daring…”\(^{233}\) Consequently, the only person capable of

\(^{230}\) Rutherford, Freedom as a Philosophical Ideal, 533 (emphasis added).
\(^{231}\) Nietzsche, EH II: 10.
\(^{232}\) Nietzsche, HAH I: S2-107.
\(^{233}\) Nietzsche, A: Foreword.
becoming free is the person in whom fate favors. In Nietzsche’s mind, only the exceptional individual—born with superior psycho-physiological type-facts—is capable of identifying with the enormity of his writings and becoming free. In other words, knowledge alone does not and cannot make one great, rather, one must be born for it. Therefore, Nietzsche intentionally and severely circumscribes his reading audience. For instance, the opening of The Anti-Christ begins with: “This book belongs to the very few. Perhaps none of them is even living yet.”234 Elsewhere, Nietzsche declares that “those who can breathe the air of my writings know that it is an air of the heights, a strong air. One must be made for it.”235 Further, he recognizes that his “highest insights must – and should – sound like... crimes when they are heard without permission by those who are not predisposed and predestined for them.”236 From these passages, and many others like them, it is clear why Nietzsche chose to write therapeutically: he wanted to limit his audience to those predestined with the ears to hear. Probably no other passage outlines Nietzsche’s therapeutic intent as poignantly as the one we find in The Gay Science:

It is not by any means necessarily an objection to a book when anyone finds it impossible to understand: perhaps that was part of the author’s intention – he did not want to be understood by just ‘anybody.’ All the nobler spirits and tastes select their audience when they wish to communicate; and choosing that, one at the same time erects barriers against ‘the others.’ All the more subtle laws of style have their origin at this point: they create a distance, forbid ‘entrance,’ understanding, as said above – while they open the ears of those whose ears are related to ours.237

Therefore, if one is not fated, predisposed, or predestined to have ears for Nietzsche’s message, then one is forbidden entrance into the depths of its content. Nietzsche’s therapeutic writing

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234 Nietzsche, A: Foreword.
235 Nietzsche, EH Preface: 3.
236 Nietzsche, BGE II: 30.
237 Nietzsche, GS V: 381 (emphasis added).
convention intentionally bars those of the herd, while awakening the war-like passions of the noblest pedigree. In this sense, the *therapeutic* convention can be seen as Nietzsche’s unique method of conveying the new knowledge to his readers. Without Nietzsche’s message, the higher types—susceptible to *decadent* values—may continue to wallow in self-destructive behaviors from their passive acceptance of the slave’s standard of values. However, by exposing the slave morality for what it is—a reactive psychology based upon the *resentment* of the strong—the guilt and responsibility for one’s nature is abolished, and the *innocence of becoming* is at last restored. Nietzsche firmly establishes a new standard of value—one based upon strength, ability, and power as expressed by the psycho-physiological type-facts of the higher individual. In doing so, he finally liberates the higher individuals from the chains of morality and makes them *free* to embrace their fate—to *become* what they were destined to be all along. “Such things,” Nietzsche states, “reach only the most select. It is a privilege without equal to be a listener here. Nobody is free to have ears for Zarathustra.”238 For those select few, their *assent to fate* is their *return to nature*; and only they are able to claim such *freedom* and live outside of the moral—beyond good and evil.

### 3.7 Summary:

Throughout Chapters 1 and 2, we have learned that Nietzsche’s naturalism is interrelated with his fatalistic view of the universe and human agency. For many of Nietzsche’s readers, this deterministic position is difficult to reconcile with the abundant number of passages regarding *freedom* used throughout the Nietzschean corpus. As such, many commentators have suggested that Nietzsche makes room, even if only for the rare noble soul,

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for a positive conception of *freedom*. For instance, many Nietzsche scholars have suggested that the Sovereign Individual represents the prototype of genuine creative agency within Nietzsche’s thought—an agent *free* to make and keep his promises. Yet when we look further into the context in which the Sovereign Individual emerges, we see that this Sovereign Individual’s achievements are little more than socially accepted habits bred into him through the labors of the ‘moral straightjacket.’ Furthermore, even if we were to assume that the Sovereign Individual represents Nietzsche’s *ideal* agent, there is nothing in the text that is incompatible with Nietzsche’s fatalism. In other words, although noble souls, such as (presumably) the Sovereign Individual, may exhibit characteristics of creative autonomy, those creative expressions are simply the products of the agent’s underlying psycho-physiological type-facts, not the expressions of a free or autonomous will. We may think we are responsible for creating ourselves, but such a feeling is a delusion. But then why would Nietzsche continually employ the terminology of *freedom* if we are not truly *free* to create ourselves? Nietzsche’s rhetorical aim is to engage his readers at an emotional level so as to affect the causal levers that produce values and actions. If Nietzsche were to provide a purely rational account of his message, then many of the affective aspects of his critique would be overlooked. Consequently, Nietzsche employs what we have called the “therapeutic” writing convention—full of penetrating psychological insights and provocations—in an effort to expose slave morality as a morality of the sick, while simultaneously awakening the higher types to the greatness of their fate. As part of his *therapeutic* approach, Nietzsche intentionally uses familiar concepts—such as the term “freedom”—in revisionary ways. This rhetorical device is called a “persuasive definition,” and it seeks to capitalize on the emotive meaning of a term while altering its conceptual content. As such, Nietzsche’s frequent use of the term “freedom” seeks to exploit the emotional meaning of
the term, while at the same time substantially revise its conceptual meaning. For instance, we learned that for Nietzsche, *freedom* is representative of an agent who *returns to nature*, preserves the distance that divides us (men are not equal), embraces his fate (*amor fati!*), and takes pleasure in warfare. Such *freedom*, according to Nietzsche, is not for the faint of heart, but instead is reserved for the rarest of warriors. Consequently, the suggestion that Nietzsche’s notion of *freedom* is “persuasive” is an understatement since it really has nothing to do with “freedom” at all. At this point, a puzzle arises: if we are not *free* to create our own values, then why would slave morality have any bearing on the higher type of person? As we learned, Nietzsche recognized that many of the higher types possess *decadent* type-facts that make them susceptible to values that ultimately harm them. In fact, Nietzsche identifies himself as such a person, since he possessed both the instinct towards greatness and the instinct towards decadence. It was not until Nietzsche had fully eradicated these *decadent* aspects of his nature that he was able to become the ‘free spirit’ that ascended to the truth of his fate. Moreover, because Nietzsche recognized that many higher types are susceptible to idealism, he knew that knowledge would become “the most powerful affect” in liberating them. For Nietzsche, *freedom* is possible only to the extent that one acquires knowledge of one’s nature and the determination of values. Therefore, in order to disseminate this new knowledge, Nietzsche calls upon science to contribute to our understanding of the causal mechanisms that generate values. In this manner, the new sciences will partner with the philosophers of the future to *create* the values necessary to produce the stronger type. However, until that day, Nietzsche is forced to circumscribe his audience through his *therapeutic* writing style, in order to awaken the higher types from their passive acceptance of slave morality. Until those born with the ears for
Nietzsche become aware of their noble, yet terrifying calling, mankind will forever remain in the chains of morality.
CONCLUSION

Moral Psychology is the branch in ethics which explores the capacity and motivation, if any, of an agent to act morally. Traditionally, two schools of thought have dominated the field: Virtue Ethics and Deontology. In general, Virtue Ethics posits that moral actions derive from habituated behaviors that we learn and practice throughout our childhood. Alternatively, Deontology asserts that moral actions derive from a sense of duty and can therefore be rationally chosen. In the former case, the environment is said to possess the primary affective power over one’s moral behavior; in the latter case, it is one’s reason. In both cases, the underlying psycho-physiological type-facts that make up a person are all but ignored. This lack of attention is startling considering the fact that a growing amount of empirical evidence suggests that our biologically inherited traits play a far more significant role in our moral behavior than the environment or rational choice.

Throughout this thesis, I have argued that Nietzsche’s primary goal was liberating the higher types; however, I believe that Nietzsche’s naturalism has significant implications which can be practically applied to everyone. If Nietzsche is right correct in believing that each individual is born with a particular biological makeup that is primarily responsible for that person’s life trajectory (as the mounting evidence is suggesting), then emphasizing those inherited traits would not only serve the interests of the individual, but also the interests of society as a whole. In education, for instance, the primary goal would shift from training all

children to fit a preset mold to guiding each child in the direction determined by his or her innate talents. In a classroom setting, this would mean identifying a particular student’s abilities and developing a more individualized curriculum that would enhance those skills. If a student showed a high aptitude in math and science, then the student’s coursework would emphasize learning in those subjects. By focusing our resources on the innate talents of the student, not only would the student’s underlying skills be enhanced, but the student would be far more engaged in the educational process as a whole. As one quick example, a mother told me once that her son’s interest in airplanes compelled her to use books about airplanes to teach him reading, grammar, and spelling. Such a small change may seem insignificant, but according to her, it made a profound impact on her son’s overall subject retention and school involvement. Furthermore, emphasizing innate skills should not be confined to just the classroom setting; it can be applied in the workforce as well. For instance, my current employer has recently implemented a training program called “Strengths Finder.” The purpose of this training program is to identify an employee’s strengths—i.e. his or her natural abilities—and then find ways to match the employee’s skill set with an appropriate workload and department. This has been an incredibly successful program, because not only are the employees doing more of the work they enjoy, but they are far more productive and engaged as a result. Therefore, practically speaking, Nietzsche’s naturalism shows us that focusing our attention on a person’s inherent abilities is a far more beneficial approach than finding ways to improve or develop a person’s weaknesses—we are who we are.

Nietzsche recognized that external forces—such as morality—are affective and all too often hinder the full expression of who one actually is. As a result, Nietzsche’s primary mission was to remove any and all obstacles which interfered with the possibility of a person reaching
his or her full potential. Like Nietzsche, it is my contention that until we recognize the primacy of one's psycho-physiological type-facts in determining behavior, universalized moralities and societal norms will continue to thwart not just the higher types, but the rest of mankind as well. It is time we take seriously the hazards of universalizing ideals and take the first steps towards our return to nature.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


