Nietzsche's View of Christianity In On The Genealogy of Morals

by

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..ITEE INFERIEURE

Abstract

An exposition of Nietzsche's view of Christianity in On The Genealogy of Morals. Concentration on the text itself with a view to indicating some of the more problematic aspects of Nietzsche's treatment of Christianity in the Genealogy.

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INTRODUCTION

> But on the day we can say with all our hearts, "Onwards! our old morality too is part of the comedy." we shall have discovered a new complication and possibility for the Dionysian drama of "The Destiny of the Soul."[1]

This thesis is an attempt to state clearly Nietzsche's view of Christianity in On the Genealogy of Morals. Nietzsche invites such an attempt with his provocative statements in Ecce Homo that what sets him apart from the rest of humanity is that he uncovered Christian morality and that this uncovering is an event without parallel.[2] These statements are sufficient to suggest that Nietzsche may be the most formidable modern critic of Christianity. This thesis seeks to show why this may be so through an examination of the Genealogy, for in this book Nietzsche sets out with particular power and clarity what he understands Christianity at its deepest to be or, to use

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1. Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, (New York: Random House, 1967.) Preface, section 7. English translation of Zur Genealogie der Moral, hereafter referred to in the body of the thesis as the Genealogy and in the footnotes as GM.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, translated by Walter Kaufmann, (New York: Random House, 1967.) pp. 332, 333. Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as EH.

his language, his interpretation of the Christian interpretation of the whole.

An examination of the secondary literature reveals that a detailed exposition of the Genealogy and the view of Christianity expressed therein is a justifiable endeavour. There are numerous studies in English and English translation which comment on aspects of this book.[3] The master-slave distinction of essay one of the text and the novel psychology of the ressentiment of impotence which appears throughout the book are conspicuous themes in the various commentaries. But notably absent is a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the view of Christianity explicated in the Genealogy, an analysis which the book warrants.

Of the many examples which could be cited to support the foregoing claim, two only will be discussed. Martin Heidegger is widely considered to be among the foremost interpreters of Nietzsche's thought. Yet a scrutiny of his writings on Nietzsche reveals that Heidegger considers the genealogy of morals and Nietzsche's examination of Christianity as peripheral to

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3. The following representative books and articles are mentioned here but will not be discussed:
Phillipa Foot, "Nietzsche: The Revaluation of Values", in Robert Solomon, ed., Nietzsche, A Collection of Critical Essays, (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), pp. 156-168;
Michel Haar, "Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language" and Gilles Deleuze, "Active and Reactive", in David B. Allison, ed., The New Nietzsche, Contemporary Styles of Interpretation, (New York: Dell, 1977), pp. 5-36 and pp. 80-103.
Walter Kaufmann, Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, (New York: Meridian Books, 1950).
Tracy B. Strong, Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

his central concern.[4] In What is Called Thinking? Heidegger states that Nietzsche's interpretation of Christianity and what it means to be a Christian is based on his understanding of resentment and what this means for all representation.[5] Nietzsche's interpretation of revenge is in turn based on the fact that he thinks of all things in their relatedness to Being as will. Heidegger claims that Nietzsche's doctrine of will to power is a metaphysical doctrine and therefore the nature of resentment is metaphysical. As such the Genealogy must be understood as merely one application of Nietzsche's metaphysics. Nietzsche's real concern, claims Heidegger, is with the Being of beings, so that Heidegger's overriding concern in interpreting Nietzsche is to show how Nietzsche understands the Being of beings to be determined and not to dwell upon a particular application of that understanding.

Whereas Heidegger virtually ignores the Genealogy, a second widely acclaimed commentator, Karl Jaspers, does refer to the Genealogy in his succinctly stated study Nietzsche and Christianity.[6] While allowing that Nietzsche launched

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4. Martin Heidegger, What is Called Thinking?, translation and introduction by J. Glenn Gray, (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 48 ff; Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?, translation by Bernd Magnus in The New Nietzsche, ed. by David B. Allison, (New York: Dell, 1977); Nietzsche, Volume One, The Will to Power as Art, translated by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979).
5. Heidegger, What is Called Thinking?, p. 105.
6. Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche and Christianity, translated by E. B. Ashton, (Henry Regnery Company, U.S.A., 1961).

what may be the most merciless assault upon Christianity in our time, Jaspers proposes to show how much of a Christian the "Anti-Christ" Nietzsche really is.[7] He proceeds to examine Nietzsche's view of Christianity in terms of the question "Who was Jesus?", a question which is at the centre of Nietzsche's discussion in The Anti-Christ, with his analysis of "the psychological type of the redeemer."[8] With the exception of a cursory treatment of what he describes as a central concern of the Genealogy, the psychological discovery of the resentment of impotence,[9] Jaspers focusses almost exclusively on The Anti-Christ. At no point does he engage in a minute analysis of the Genealogy and the subtle approach to the questioning of Christianity exhibited in that book. Examples could be multiplied to support the contention that a comprehensive exposition of the Genealogy focusing on this single theme is lacking.

It must be emphasized that this thesis is an exposition of Nietzsche's view of Christianity in the Genealogy and is not a critique of that view. Based on a careful reading of the text, the thesis seeks to "open up" the book through a detailed analysis of the component preface and three essays.

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7. Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche and Christianity, translated by E. B. Ashton, (Henry Regnery Company, U.S.A., 1961), p. 16 ff.
8. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Anti-Christ, translated by R. J. Hollingdale, (Penguin Books Ltd., Great Britain, 1968), Section 24. Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as AC.
9. Jaspers, Nietzsche and Christianity, pp. 30-31.

The succeeding sections of this introduction draw on and expand upon the content of the preface to the Genealogy wherein Nietzsche identifies himself, gives some indication of the "method" employed in the text, outlines the basic questions of the text, and explains why these questions are basic. It is intended in this introduction to present an overview of those aspects of Nietzsche's thought which must be understood to grasp properly his discussion of Christianity in the Genealogy, and Nietzsche's discussion of these matters in the preface provides an obvious point of departure. Each of the chapters of the thesis is a discussion of the correspondingly numbered essay of the text. It should be noted that the titles of the thesis chapters are taken from Nietzsche's discussion of the Genealogy in Ecce Homo.[10]

There is no lengthy discussion of other books by Nietzsche in this thesis because the attempt is to understand and present what Nietzsche says about Christianity in the Genealogy specifically. Reference to other works by Nietzsche occurs only where it is necessary to develop or clarify an idea found in the Genealogy. For this reason also there is no analysis of secondary sources in the body of the thesis. Reading Nietzsche's works carefully and presenting the ideas contained therein clearly is the first necessary step in coming to terms with his overall position. A proper assessment of the secondary sources presupposes precisely this first step and it is this first step only that this thesis purports to take.

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10. EH, pp. 312-312.

I

Many of the basic affirmations underlying the argument of the component essays are only touched upon or are written about in such an impenetrable manner in the preface that it is necessary to proceed slowly while expanding upon the ideas contained therein. A prime example of such impenetrability is section one of the preface which is a densely metaphorical entrance to the text. This section seems to serve as an immediate warning that this "uncanny" text will make unusual demands upon the reader.[11] Nietzsche opens the section by identifying himself as a "man of knowledge" and then proceeds to speak cryptically about the characteristics of men of knowledge. The meaning of this section seems to be that Nietzsche wishes from the outset to set himself apart from those who have made and those who continue to make knowledge claims, namely traditional philosophers and objective scientists = scholars.[12] With regard to the former he asserts that men of knowledge are necessarily strangers to themselves, a clear indication that the ancient "know thyself" is an impossible command.[13] Nietzsche wants it to be

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11. In Ecce Homo Nietzsche describes the three inquiries which comprise the text as "uncannier" than anything else he had written so far and as "calculated to mislead". EH, p. 313.
12. The German term for science is Wissenschaft which refers to any rigorous, disciplined field of study.
13. cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), s-246: "We psychologists of the future-we have little patience with introspection: we almost take it for a sign of degeneration when an instrument tries to know itself..." Also Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1966) s-231, where Nietzsche refers to the great stupidity we are, to our spiritual fatum, to what is unteachable very "deep down". The Will to Power hereafter referred to in the footnotes as WTP and Beyond Good and Evil as BGE.

understood that in the Genealogy he is thinking outside the ambit of the tradition of philosophy which flows out of the Socratic dictum. For men of knowledge "each is furthest from himself" is a law which applies to all eternity.

Implied in this rejection of the ancient belief that man can come to know himself is a turning away from the authoritativeness of the past. This turning away is not prompted by a concern for the present for men of knowledge cannot give their hearts and ears to "present experience." Present experience is the preserve of the empirical scientists, both physical and social, which is to whom Nietzsche seems to be referring when he speaks of those who have the requisite "earnestness" and "time" to attend to present experience. Men of knowledge give their hearts and ears only to their "treasure" and their treasure is "where the beehives of our knowledge are."[14]

Nietzsche quotes approvingly from the New Testament "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."[15] But Nietzsche's counsel is not that of Jesus or of the writer of Matthew 6: 19-20 for the treasure to which men of knowledge give their hearts is not

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14. The beehive metaphor is reminiscent of The Fable of the Bees by Bernard Mandeville, the subject of which, very generally, is the irreconcilability of Christian morality and personal and national prosperity.
Bernard Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees, Two Volumes, Commentary by F. B. Kaye, (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924).
15. Matthew 6: 21, Revised Standard Version.

laid up in heaven.[16] Men of knowledge are "by nature winged creatures and honey-gatherers of the spirit" who are constantly making for the beehives of their knowledge. In the Gospel of Matthew the distinction is drawn between the earth and heaven or change and permanence, motion and rest. Men are urged to give their allegiance to that which is thought to be secure and permanent, beyond change. Nietzsche explicitly rejects the idea that men should seek such security or rest: a beehive connotes constant activity so that men of knowledge are never at rest. Being by nature free ("winged creatures"),they are not oriented to the "present experience" of the objective scientist nor to the "permanent heavens" of the followers of the Gospel but to the earth, the future, "bringing something home".

Nietzsche also compares men of knowledge to "one divinely preoccupied and immersed in himself" who rubs his ears after the twelve bell-strokes of noon or of his experience and only then men of knowledge ask "who are we really?".[17] They attempt to count the twelve strokes of their being and necessarily miscount. Nietzsche seems to be suggesting that just as at noon all shadows are dispatched and everything stands out clearly, the moment has arrived when the deepest questions and problems present themselves clearly. In Ecce Homo Nietzsche speaks of the "great noon" as the moment of the highest self-examination for humanity, when it

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16. The complete text of Matthew 6:19-20, Revised Standard Version: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break in and steal."
17. GM, Preface, section 1.

looks back and forward and for the first time poses, as a whole, the question of Why? and For What?[18] Men of knowledge do pose these questions, but the posing does not arise out of need.[19] They ask these questions only as an afterthought, not being "men of knowledge" with respect to themselves.

In the highly condensed opening section of the text Nietzsche reveals that he is writing this "genealogy" of morals as a man of knowledge and whatever else this study of morals may be it is not traditional philosophy nor is it an objective, scientific study. Nietzsche is presenting a genealogy of morals and not a science of morals or a metaphysics of morals. This is not to say that the Genealogy is not a philosophical study for it must be understood as a prelude to the "great noon" when the philosophical questions Why? and For What? will be posed by mankind as a whole. Nietzsche's description of philosophy as the most spiritual will to power and as the most tyrannical drive to the creation of the world indicates that he does not reject the primacy of philosophy.[20] As this description suggests, however, an essential aspect of Nietzsche's thought is a redefinition of philosophy.[21] It should

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18. EH, commentary on the Dawn, section 2.
19. "For assuming that one is a person, one necessarily also has the philosophy that belongs to that person; but there is a big difference. In some it is their deprivations that philosophize; in others their riches and strengths. The former need their philosophy... For the latter it is merely a beautiful luxury__." Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1974),s.2. Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as GS.
20. BGE, section 9.
21. cf. GM, Essay Three, section 8ff, and Beyond Good and Evil, the subject of which, speaking very generally, is philosophy.

suffice to say here that Nietzsche turns away from the understanding of philosophy as contemplation or "discovery" to an understanding of philosophy as "creativity" or invention. A critique of all previous philosophy is implied in Nietzsche's remarks about his understanding of philosophy in section two of the preface. Other aspects of this critique in the Genealogy are a reinterpretation of the relation between the philosopher and asceticism is essay three,[22] comments on the elevation of art[23], and a polemic with the "English psychologists",[24] not designated by name but a reference presumably to the line of moral and political theorists from Bacon and Hobbes to the nineteenth century utilitarians. As for modern science, various critical remarks are scattered throughout the text,[25] and the third essay ends with a fundamental attack on modern science and modern scientists.[26]

Nietzsche provides a cursory explication of his understanding of philosophy and therewith a preliminary statement of the method of the Genealogy in section two. Discussion of these matters is preceded by the bare assertion that the subject of his polemic is

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22. GM, Essay three, section 7 and 10.
23. GM, Essay three, section 25.
24. GM, Essay one, section 1 ff; GM, Essay two, section 1 ff.
25. eg. GM, Essay one, section 4; Essay two, sections 11 and 12.
26. The attack begins in The Birth of Tragedy and culminates in The Gay Science. Nietzsche quotes at length from the latter text in GM, Essay three, sections 23,24,25.
Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, translated by Walter Kaufmann, (New York: Random House, 1967). Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as BT.

the origin of our moral prejudices, an assertion which is developed more fully in the succeeding sections of the preface. With regard to philosophy and method Nietzsche explains that the ideas contained in the Genealogy were expressed previously in Human, all too Human,[27] but that the ideas have since become riper, clearer, more perfect. The perserverance and growth of the ideas suggests, writes Nietzsche, that they are deeply rooted, that they arose originally from a fundamental will of knowledge. The implication is that these ideas, and therefore this "genealogy", are not theoretical or objective because they stem from this originating will or root. Because philosophy attempts to speak about what is fundamental, philosophy is to be understood as articulation of this fundamental will. Borrowing from the language of the ancients, Nietzsche writes that it is "fitting" for a philosopher to attempt to speak more and more precisely about this fundamental will. Nietzsche expresses the "fittingness" or "naturalness" of articulation of the fundamental will through the use of the tree metaphor: a philosopher's ideas and values grow out of him with the same necessity with which a tree bears fruit.

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27. Friedrich Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human, Parts I and II, Part I translated by Helen Zimmern, Part II translated by Paul V. Cohn, in the Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, ed. Dr. Oscar Levy (Edinburgh and London: T. N. Foulis, Part I, 1909, Part II, 1911). Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as HATH.
Nietzsche states in Ecce Homo that the title means "where you see ideal things, I see what is human, alas, all too human." EH, p. 283.

In section one Nietzsche uses the metaphor of the beehive and speaks of men of knowledge as "winged creatures" and "honey-gatherers" of the spirit. In section two for the first time he uses the metaphor of the tree.[28] Nietzsche's extensive use of metaphor throughout the book evidences an attempt to bring philosophy and poetry together, that philosophy understood as articulation of the will is akin to artistic creativity. The importance of the use of the tree metaphor in section two, however, is not only to emphasize this novel union; it also constitutes an explicit rejection of the use to which the tree symbol was put in the founding story of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. It seems that raising the question of the origin of our moral prejudices will entail a criticism of previous accounts of the origins and especially the greatest previous account. Nietzsche is denying that the tree (of the knowledge of good and evil) was created by God, that it is located in a garden in the remote past or external to man, or that man has been commanded not to eat the fruit of this tree.[29] Rather, Nietzsche compares the philosopher himself to a tree, the roots being the will (buried deep in the earth or the unknown), the fruit being his ideas and values. Adam and Eve were tempted to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil by the promise that

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28. This is a recurring metaphor in the book to be found in the Preface, Section 2; Essay one, Section 8; Essay two, Section 2.
29. Genesis 2, Revised Standard Version.

their eyes would be opened, like those of God, to knowledge of good and evil. The desire to be equal to God was the root cause of the human condition: guilt and shame and the punishment of eternal banishment from the garden, with consequent toil, suffering and death.[30] For Nietzsche, this rationale for man's loss of innocence and present condition in terms of disobedience to God is human invention. There is no external authority to whom the philosopher owes obedience.[31] Being himself the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the philosopher possesses the knowledge which in Genesis is God's prerogative alone. The fruit of this tree is seductive, being a vital and necessary product of the philosopher's will, but its eating will not result in the "Fall" of man. Rather, it will result in the unprecedented health of man since as Nietzsche indicates, applying the tree metaphor to himself, his values and ideas evidence "one will, one health, one soil, one sun." As a philosopher, Nietzsche assumes the prerogatives of not only God but also the serpent as he tempts man to eat the health-bestowing fruit of his fundamental unity of will.

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30. Genesis 3.
31. In his discussion of the philosopher in GM, essay three, section 8, Nietzsche states that the three great slogans of the ascetic ideal are poverty, humility and chastity. He changes the traditional obedience to humility since obedience presupposes a higher authority and the philosopher does not recognize such.

II

Sections one and two of the preface have been examined closely because it is here that the broader purposes of the book are revealed, and the method by which these purposes are to be realized. The overriding purpose of the Genealogy is to prepare for the absolute moment, the moment of humanity's highest self-examination. The importance of this moment is that it is unprecedented, which means that Nietzsche's concern is decisively with the future and not with the past or present and most definitely not with eternity understood as timelessness. Nietzsche intends that at this moment there will be effected a "revaluation of all values"[32] which thereby necessitates an understanding of the dominant traditional values. This understanding is attained, according to Nietzsche, by an uncovering of the real origins of these values, origins which hitherto have been hidden. Nietzsche's contention that the phenomenon can be understood rightly only if the origins are uncovered must be seen as an offshoot of the Biblical account of man and of the whole which he attacks. Nevertheless, Nietzsche's uncovering of the origin of traditional values or what he calls "our moral prejudices" is a profound attack on the Genesis account of the origins. This attack is intended as an exposure of the real basis of the Genesis account and as a recreation of the beginnings as a first step toward explaining our dominant understanding

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32. EH, p. 313.

of good and evil.

This exposure and recreation is a philosophical undertaking with philosophy being understood as articulation of the will. Nietzsche emphasizes in Beyond Good and Evil that willing is above all something complicated, something that is a unit only as a word.[33] He suggests that the will is best thought of as a complex of sensation and thinking but above all an affect and specifically the affect of the command.[34] Articulation of the will is not a matter of seeing what is but of commanding something to be. Traditional philosophy as well as modern science and scholarship are predicated on the belief that reason can tell us what is. Nietzsche denies finally that this is possible: the human will, as part of the larger world of will to power[35], constantly throws up new interpretations of the world and of events which distort or erase previous interpretations. The givenness of creativity means that it is impossible for man to transcend the present meaning of an event except creatively. Certain inferences may be drawn about the original meaning from the basic insight that all natural entities manifest the operation of will to power, but it is erroneous to talk of the unvarying "objective" meaning of an event which is discoverable by reason.

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33. BGE, section 19.
34. IBID.
35. For a fuller discussion of will to power see below p. 20 ff.

For Nietzsche the belief that man can arrive at an "objective" understanding of things or grasp the truth about things, whether through reason or revelation, is at the very heart of the Western tradition. This belief is rooted philosophically in a particular concept which Nietzsche rejects: this is "the dangerous conceptual fiction that posited a pure, will-less, painless, timeless knowing subject."[36] Behind the strenuous argument against "truth" in essay three of the Genealogy is Nietzsche's conviction that the "human reality" has been misinterpreted. Nietzsche compares the will-less knowing subject to an eye in which the active and interpreting forces, through which seeing becomes seeing something, are lacking. For Nietzsche all seeing and all knowing involves a particular active and interpreting will. There is no "objective" point of view if this is meant to refer to a unique and passive vantage point which provides a "true" account of things but only "interpretation" or perspective seeing and knowing.[37]

According to Nietzsche the belief that man can come to know the truth is peculiar to all previous philosophy but receives its deepest articulation in the thought of Plato. Plato's teachings about the "pure mind" and the Good in

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36. GM, essay three, section 12.
37. Nietzsche retains the language of objectivity but defines it as the ability to employ a variety of perspectives in the service of knowledge. GM, essay three, section 12.

itself as distinct from mere appearances distinguish him as Nietzsche's most formidable philosophical opponent.[38] Nietzsche understands Plato's Good in itself as the suprasensory unchanging truth which is wholly distinct from the domain of appearance, and discoverable by the pure mind only. This suprasensory realm encompasses all that is valuable and desirable so that the domain of changing appearances, when compared to the eternal truth, appears to be without value. This dualistic understanding of the whole is also found, according to Nietzsche, in Christianity.[39] As in Platonism Christianity teaches love of the eternal which alone is valuable and deliverance from the travails of this earth to the world beyond.

Nietzsche's vigorous criticism of this dualism is not so much directed at the notion of the eternal which is loveable, since God or the Good in itself is dead.[40] Rather, Nietzsche focuses on the notion of the "pure mind", the timeless, will-less subject which became the Christian soul. Philosophers and theologians (and scientists) have spoken of the unchanging truth hidden "behind" appearances (and of heaven "beyond" the world by Christianity). Deeper than this, however, is the way in which the soul has been spoken of, especially within Christianity, as the unchangeable essence or substance, immortal and invisible "within" the body. The eternal truth - appearance

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38. BGE, Preface.
39. IBID, Nietzsche speaks of Christianity as 'Platonism for "the people"'.
40. Nietzsche's famous epithet "God is dead" first appears in The Gay Science, ss. 108, 125, 343.

distinction led to the denigration of appearances. So also the soul-body distinction has led to the denigration of the body. Denial of the body is prior to all other denials, as Nietzsche claims that all longing for eternal truth, God and salvation arises from an inability to live in the body.

> It was suffering and impotence---that created all afterworlds;...It was the body that despaired of the body... It was the body that despaired of the earth...and then it wanted to get its head through the ultimate walls-- and not its head only---over into the "other world".[41]

Surrounded by a "fearful void"[42], the meaninglessness of the pains of the body, men seek to escape the mutable body into the repose of an immutable, invisible world. The vehicle to this other world, whether called metaphysical truth or heaven, is the timeless, will-less soul.

Nietzsche understands modern philosophy at its deepest as an attack on the ancient soul concept[43] and intends to bring this attack to a conclusion.[44] The final act in "the Dionysian drama of the destiny of the soul" will be the definitive exposure of the

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41. Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, translated by R. J. Hollingdale, (Great Britain: Penguin Books Ltd., 1961), Part one, "Of the Afterworldsmen". Hereafter referred to in the footnotes as TSZ.
42. GM, Essay three, section 28.
43. BGE, section 24.
44. Nietzsche understands his task as a continuation of the tradition of Copernicus and Boscovich. Copernicus persuaded men to believe that the earth is not at rest, while Boscovich taught men to abjure belief in the last part of the earth at rest, the belief in "substance", "matter", the particle-atom. So Nietzsche intends to go still further and give the finishing stroke to "that other and more calamitous atomism which Christianity has taught best and longest, the soul atomism." BGE, section 12.

soul as a mutable creation of the body. Whereas Christians believe that understanding the "human reality" in terms of soul means that man is part of an immutable order which measures and defines him, for Nietzsche the substantive soul is merely the invention of the body. The body is prior to and much deeper than the soul.[45] Nietzsche uses the terms "body" and "self" interchangeably so that it is the creative "self" which measures and defines.

The understanding of the "human reality" in terms of "self" means that the Genesis account of the origins is not the inspired retelling of God's creative acts but one view among many that has issued out of the creative human will. The Genealogy must be understood also as a view of the origin of our moral prejudices which is rooted in the creative will, and in Nietzsche's will specifically. It would seem that for Nietzsche it is impossible to know outside of the will because knowing is a matter of willing. It follows that the Genealogy, as an examination of the origins of morality, must be understood as a tracing of the contours of Nietzsche's will and the ancestry or genealogy of the values and ideals rooted in that will. As a genealogy of Nietzsche's will, the Genealogy is a study of the antecedents of this will in the form of the human soul. It is not the truth about the soul, but Nietzsche's truth, the only truth available to Nietzsche, based on the primacy of will to power and the view of man as creative will.

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45. TSZ, Part one, "Of the Despisers of the Body".
46. IBID.

Nietzsche's attack on dualism is based on his understanding of the whole as creative will or will to power.[47] The ultimate dualism which he finds expressed in Platonism and Christianity is the source of the supposition that there is an opposition or antithesis of values.[48] For Nietzsche, definition of the whole in terms of will to power means that there are no antitheses but only many subtleties of gradation and degrees of will to power.[49] The phrase "will to power" is used to emphasize the essential priority of spontaneous, aggressive, form-giving forces, that all events in the natural world are a subduing, a becoming master.[50] This description is not to be thought of as exhaustive, however, for what Nietzsche calls will to power, along with the notion of eternal recurrence[51], is finally inexplicable. These are superordinate terms in Nietzsche's thought, that according to which all else is defined, and therefore defy final definition. Nietzsche does speak of will to power in terms of "art", "actuality", "creativity", "life" and

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47. The German phrase is "der Wille zur Macht". Macht is related to "machen", to do or to make so that a not inexact translation would be "the will towards making".
48. BGE, section 2.
49. BGE, section 24.
50. GM, Essay two, section 12.
51. Because of the sheer difficulty of the notion of eternal recurrence and because Nietzsche does not discuss it in the Genealogy, it will not be examined in this thesis.

"nature" but each of these terms merely highlight a nuance of the encompassing "will to power". For example, "actuality"[52] emphasizes that for Nietzsche the world is motion or change, a doing or becoming as opposed to changeless being. The term "creativity"[53] is used to emphasize that will to power is a production or giving of form. Understanding will to power as "life" expresses the fact that Nietzsche is not a materialist, that the whole cannot be reduced to lifelessness. In the course of a lengthy disquisition on the concept of "life" in Beyond Good and Evil he writes that

> Life is essentially appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker, suppression, hardness, imposition of one's own forms, imcorporation...exploitation.[54]

This description emphasizes the absence of any given measure or limit, an absence which characterizes Nietzsche's discussion of "nature". Nietzsche retains the language of "nature" but the term almost always appears in quotation marks[55] thereby emphasizing that his understanding of nature is a radical revision of all previous understandings. In stating that his prime concern

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52. The English term "actuality" is from Latin actus, a doing or moving. The German term is Wirklichkeit.
53. The English "creativity" is traceable to the Latin creare, to cause to grow. Nietzsche uses the German term schaffen for create which means to do something, accomplish something, to work rather than schopfen /which more exactly corresponds to the English term "create".
54. BGE, section 259.
55. See for example, BGE, section 188.

is "to translate man back into nature"[56] Nietzsche implies that those thinkers who have used nature to provide the standard for human life -- Plato perhaps, certainly Aristotle, the natural law philosophers, the natural right theorists -- have misunderstood nature. Nature according to Nietzsche is

> wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purpose and consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time.[57]

There is nothing unchanging in this nature, which means that it cannot be comprehended by reason as previous thinkers who appealed to nature as providing a standard for human conduct thought. Rather, this nature manifests itself from "within"[58], as the dictates of the deepest self, as the turbulent creative and destructive will. When Nietzsche speaks of men of knowledge as being by "nature" free or of the sovereign individual in essay two as having a "natural" right to make promises[59] he means that these natures display most fully the basic aspects of this interpretation of nature.

In describing the Genealogy as "three decisive preliminary studies by a psychologist for a revaluation of all values"[60] Nietzsche is identifying this book as the first stage in the process of translating mankind as a whole back into nature.

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56. BGE, section 230.
57. BGE, section 9.
58. GM, Preface, section 4.
59. GM, Essay two, section 1 ff.
60. EH, p. 313

This stage involves demolishing the remnants of the "two-world" thesis which Nietzsche refers to as "the lie of the ideal."[61] By inquiring into the origin of our good and evil Nietzsche intends to show that morality is a prejudicial invention of the will and is without reference to anything unchangeable. In so doing he will succeed presumably in loosening the grip of our "moral prejudices" and thereby free man for a greater and more natural future.

III

In sections three and four of the preface Nietzsche outlines the evolution of his formulation of the principal questions of the text and the reasons for originally publishing his thoughts. In obvious derision of Kant, Nietzsche describes the problem of the origin of good and evil as his unmoralistic "a priori" and as his "anti-Kantian, enigmatic categorical imperative."[62] This

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61. EH, p. 218. Nietzsche's understanding of "ideals" as imaginative creations which are often mistakenly thought to have an "objective" existence flows out of Kant's discussion of ideals in the Critique of Pure Reason. In this work Kant distinguishes "ideals" from Platonic ideas which he understands to be objective and to have creative power. Kant's ideals are not Platonic ideas in this sense; rather, they are regulative ideas which are wholly constructed by the mind. See Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Norman Kemp Smith, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 308 ff.
62. GM, Preface, section 3.

seems to suggest that Nietzsche cannot explain why he seeks the origins of good and evil but only the various answers which he has advanced to explain the origins. He confirms that initially, in a child's innocence, he ascribed the origin of evil to God. This childishness ended when he learned to separate theological prejudice and moral prejudice and ceased to look for the truth "behind the world". With his attention firmly fixed in "this world", training in the disciplines of history and philology and "an inborn fastidiousness of taste in respect to psychology" transformed his problem into the following two questions: under what conditions did man devise the value judgments good and evil? and what value do these judgments themselves possess? At the end of this evolutionary process the problem is redefined in terms of value judgments which are devised or created by man's will in response to the particular conditions in which man finds himself.

Nietzsche's concern is not so much to explore these particular conditions but to question the value of moral value judgment and especially "unegoistic" morality or the morality of compassion. What requires explanation according to Nietzsche is the extraordinary value attached to compassion for the suffering, self-sacrifice, the urge to give oneself or one's will away. The standard of value brought to bear in his examination of unegoistic morality is "futherance of human prosperity", prosperity being defined as "plenitude, will of life, courage, future."[63] Nietzsche

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63. IBID.

contends that the morality of compassion is not conducive to the proliferation of life or human prosperity, but marks a turning of the will against life, of the instincts against themselves.

The turning of the will against life is understood by Nietzsche to be a symptom of what he calls a profound sickness and the greatest danger: the impending nihilism of European culture.[64] The process of outlining the genealogy of morality as a preparation for a "revaluation of all values" is at the same time a detection of the roots of nihilism as a preliminary to its eventual overcoming. A succinct definition of nihilism is provided in Book One of The Will to Power:

> What does nihilism mean? That the highest values devaluate themselves. The aim is lacking; "why?" finds no answer.[65]

Nietzsche claims that the advent of this condition has become a fatality for Europe. Nihilism represents the ultimate logical consequence of the highest values and ideals of European culture, the hitherto hidden core of those values and ideals which now, of necessity, makes itself manifest.[66] His comments in the Genealogy detail the symptoms of this condition for modern man. In essay one he speaks of nihilism in terms of the diminution and

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64. GM, Preface, section 5.
65. WTP, Book One, section 2. In Book One, footnote 39, Kaufmann relates that Nietzsche intended The Will to Power to be subtitled "Attempt at a Revaluation of all Values" and to be comprised of four books, the first to be a presentation of "the danger of dangers", nihilism.
66. WTP, Preface, section 4.

levelling of European man which constitutes our greatest danger. The danger is that "things will continue to go down, become more good-natured, more prudent, more mediocre, more Christian"[67], because nothing today wants to grow greater. Modern men have lost their aspiration, their reverence and their will to man. "What is nihilism today if it is not that? We are weary of man."[68]

Nietzsche often uses the metaphor of illness or physiological debility when speaking of contemporary nihilism, which is consistent with his view of the primacy of the body. The overcoming of nihilism depends on the enquiry into the origins of European man's highest value judgments, which leads necessarily to an enquiry into the origins of unegoistic morality. This enquiry shows that unegoistic morality arises out of defects in the functioning of the body. Contemporary nihilism is traceable finally to that hatred of the body which underlies the morality of compassion. The overcoming of nihilism will necessitate, then, distinguishing clearly between those values and ideals which arise out of a fundamental hatred of the body and those which arise out of a love of the body and all that pertains to the body.[69]

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67. GM, Essay one, section 12.
68. IBID.
69. "Behind the highest value judgments that have hitherto guided the history of thought there are concealed misunderstandings of the physical constitution." GS, Preface for the second edition, section 2.

IV

In section six Nietzsche insists that with regard to the origin and value of unegoistic morality one must learn to ask questions. Contemporary men take the value of unegoistic morality as given and beyond all question. Nietzsche claims that it has never been seriously doubted that the unegoistic "good" man is of greater value than the egoistic "evil" man, of greater value in the sense of furthering the advancement of man. Because he asks "what if the reverse were true?" and questions man's understanding of what constitutes an "advancement", Nietzsche speaks of the knowledge that he advocates as "a knowledge of a kind that has never yet existed or even been desired."[70]

Nietzsche's conviction that this kind of knowledge is both necessary and wholly new leads him to ridicule previous modern attempts to uncover the origins of morality. Referring to the "English type of genealogical hypothesis" of which Paul Rees's The Origin of Our Moral Sensations is a prime example, Nietzsche claims that he first published his own hypothesis in Human, All-Too Human in response to this text.[71] His intention was to replace "the improbable with the more probable."[72], the perspective nature of knowledge preventing Nietzsche from dismissing Ree's hypothesis as simply false. While contending that the improbability of Ree's hypothesis arose from an inadequate method, Nietzsche asserts that rather than "gazing around

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70. GM, Preface, section 6.
71. GM, Preface, section 4.
72. IBID.

haphazardly in the blue after the English fashion" the genealogist of morals should attend to what can actually be confirmed and has actually existed, "the long hieroglyphic record so hard to decipher, of the moral past of mankind".[73]

The difficulty of deciphering this record of man's moral past is paralleled by the reader's difficulty in reading Nietzsche's account of that record in the Genealogy. Part of the reason for this is that Nietzsche could advance his genealogical hypothesis properly only after developing his own language.[74] The development of his own language was necessary because of the "hypocrisy of words...the shamefully moralized way of speaking which has made all modern judgments of men and things slimy".[75] Since "good men" are moralized to the depths and therefore ruined as far as honesty is concerned,[76] Nietzsche suggests that the incomprehensibility of the Genealogy is due to a deficiency in the reader and not in the text itself.[77] He assumes that his previous works have been read with care. In the preface the reader is directed to The Wanderer, Dawn, Human, All-Too Human and implicitly to Beyond Good and Evil since the Genealogy was written to supplement and clarify that text.[78] Nietzsche states

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73. GM, Preface, Section 6.
74. GM, Preface, section 4.
75. GM, Essay two, section 19.
76. IBID.
77. GM, Preface, section 8.
78. The title page of the German edition of the Genealogy is followed by the words: Dem Letztveroffentlichten ' Jenseits von Gut und Bose' zur Erganzung und Verdeutlichung beigegeben.
F. Nietzsche, Werke in Zwei Banden, Band II, Carl Hanser Verlag, Munchen, 1967.

further that his writings will not be understood as long as the aphoristic form is not taken seriously. Like the long hieroglyphic record of the moral past of mankind an aphorism must be "deciphered" and such deciphering is possible only if the art of reading or of exegesis is relearned. Reading as an art implies a creative, participative response to the material, a reader who is in motion, so to speak, rather than at rest. Nietzsche's word for the one thing necessary if reading as an art is to be practised is "rumination"[79], an ability "for which one has almost to be a cow and in any case not a 'modern man'."[80] Unlike "contemplation" which connotes rest and receptivity, "rumination" is consonant with the will of life and the primacy of the body. Nietzsche's manner of expressing this is that a strong and well-constituted man digests his experience as he digests his meals.[81]

Nietzsche doubts that he could find such men and repeats this doubt throughout the book.[82] In the penultimate section of the book, referring to the problem of truth, Nietzsche writes "Here again I touch on my problem, on our problem, my unknown friends (for as yet I know of no friend.)"[83] Similarly at the

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79. The English "rumination" is from the Latin, rumen, meaning stomach.
80. GM, Preface, section 8.
81. GM, Essay three, section 16.
82. GM, Preface, section 7; Essay two, section 24; Essay three, section 27.
83. GM, Essay three, section 27.

close of the second essay he suggests that man must be made guilty about his unnatural inclinations and asks "To whom should one turn today with such hopes and demands?". He concludes that the demands that he makes require a different kind of spirit from that likely to appear in the present age.[84]

Nietzsche writes that out of his questioning grew "a country of my own, a soil of my own, an entire discrete, thriving, flourishing world, like a secret garden the existence of which no one suspected."[85] In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the garden in Genesis may be understood as the setting for the definitive account of man's place within the whole, an account which applies to all men. Nietzsche's garden is in secret and is his alone[86], which seems to confirm the suggestion above that it is not clear that there can be for Nietzsche anything outside of his own will.[87] Man suffered the loss of innocence and expulsion from the garden in Genesis because of his disobedience to God; Nietzsche considers himself above such a fate for he and not God is the overseer of his garden.

Not only is Nietzsche the creator and overseer but he claims also to be the authentic redeemer. Christ redeemed man by relinquishing his will on the tree of the cross[88], the

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84. GM, Essay two, section 24.
85. GM, Preface, section 3.
86. The style in which the book is written follows from this. The book as a whole, and particularly the preface, is written in a deeply personal style. The first person plural pronoun is used throughout section one and the first person singular pronoun occurs some forty times in the succeeding seven sections. This emphatic pointing to himself serves to confirm that this "genealogy" of morals occurs within Nietzsche's encompassing wil
87. See above, p. 19.
88. Nietzsche refers to the cross as "the worst of all trees". TSZ, Part three, 'Of old and new law-tables.'

atonement for the primordial sin of disobedience. Nietzsche's rejection of the Genesis account of the beginnings and revision of the tree symbol means that he has a radically different understanding of redemption. In Thus Spoke Zarathustra he writes

> To redeem the past and to
> transform every "it was" into
> "I wanted it thus"---that
> alone do I call redemption.[89]

The overcoming of the will's antipathy to the passage of time and things past which is implied in this passage is central to Nietzsche's comments in the Genealogy. Here he writes that the redeeming man of great love and contempt must come one day, the creative spirit who redeems man from both God and nothingness.[90] This man of the future, whose strength precludes rest in any "beyond" does not deny the will but liberates the will from its bonds to nothingness or God and restores its goal to the body and to the earth. Not only must this antichrist and antinihilist come, but he has come claims Nietzsche for he is Zarathustra the godless, the creation of Nietzsche's will.

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89. TSZ, Part two, of Redemption, pp. 161-162.
90. GM, Essay two, section 24.

Chapter One

The Birth of Christianity

> "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome": -- There has hitherto been no greater event than this struggle, this question,[1] this deadly contradiction.

Although Nietzsche does not refer directly to Christianity in the preface to the Genealogy there are oblique references to Genesis and the opening section of the book contains a short quotation from the New Testament. These and the statement of Nietzsche's project as an inquiry into the origin and value of "unegoistic" morality or the morality of compassion lead the reader to suspect that a fundamental questioning of Christianity, and specifically Christian morality, will follow. This questioning emerges in the first essay wherein Nietzsche describes the process by which slave morality is set in motion. Nietzsche argues that Christian morality is essentially slave morality or "ressentiment"[2] morality; it is not morality per se but a particular type of morality, the heir of the Jewish "revaluation of values" precipitated over two thousand years ago and which is now so completely victorious that modern men no longer see it.[3]

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1. GM, Essay one, section 16.
2. See below, p.47 and especially footnote 35.
3. GM, Essay one, section 7.

Nietzsche's purpose in the first essay is to establish, with the aid of the tools of scholarship, that there is a distinction to be drawn between master morality and slave morality and to delineate the specific characteristics of each of these types of morality. In so doing he begins to identify the many guises of slave morality and to suggest the profound questionability of this type of morality.

I

Nietzsche opens the essay not with a direct criticism of Christian morality but with a fundamental questioning of the "English psychologists", the most important of whom he does not name.[4] It may be surmised from the text that he is referring primarily to the utilitarian thinkers such as Hume, Bentham and Mill but also to the social contract theorists such as Hobbes and Locke.[5] Nietzsche opens his inquiry by addressing himself to these thinkers for two reasons. The first is that

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4. Nietzsche does mention Herbert Spencer in section 3 but he does not bear the brunt of Nietzsche's criticism.
5. Nietzsche claims that they seek the directing agent of man "in the vis inertiae of habit,....in forgetfulness, or in a blind and chance mechanistic hooking together of ideas..." section 1. See also section two on the origin of the concept "good" discussed below, p. 37 ff.

"modern ideas" are of English origin, therefore these thinkers are responsible for what Nietzsche terms the vulgarity and plebeianism of the modern world.[6] The second reason is that these psychologists represent the only attempts prior to Nietzsche to arrive at a history of the origin of morality.[7] Although he rejects their theories Nietzsche acknowledges a debt to these thinkers in so far as they preceded him in the attempt to uncover the origin of morality. In general it may be said that Nietzsche agrees with the assessment of Rousseau that the thought of these psychologists was intended to be and is in opposition to the Judaeo-Christian tradition.[8] Although Nietzsche believes that their thought is a milestone in the destruction of Christian morality, he shows clearly that the debt of the "English psychologists" to the tradition is very great. This debt is apparent in the view of the social contract theorists that all men are endowed with certain natural rights and therefore are fundamentally equal; among utilitarians it takes the form of arguing that morality is useful and particularly to the weak majority. Nietzsche's criticism of these thinkers is designed to show that their concern with the basis of equality and with "the greatest good for the greatest number" is merely a

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6. BGE, section 253.
7. GM, Essay one, section 1.
8. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men in The First and Second Discourses, edited by Roger D. Masters, translated by Roger D. and Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martins Press, 1964), pp. 102-105.

restatement of Christian morality, and thereby destroy the belief that these thinkers have seriously undermined Christian morality. Further, Nietzsche wishes to dislodge the assumption bequeathed by Christianity to liberalism that men are fundamentally equal[9] and, while admitting that morality may be useful, to point out the necessity of asking "useful for whom?".

Nietzsche does not begin by attacking their theories; rather, just as these psychologists turned to man's soul and redefined the soul in the course of their investigations of morality so Nietzsche turns the psychological question on these psychologists themselves. After pointing out that they "drag the shame of our inner world into the foreground and seek the directing agent of man where his intellectual pride would least like to find it"[10] Nietzsche asks, what is it in these psychologists that compels them to do this? He is restrained in his speculation, suggesting that they may be moved by an instinct for belittling man or by a secret rancor toward Christianity and Plato. Although their theories arise out of a defect of will, Nietzsche expresses the hope that they are proud and magnanimous animals who have the probity "to sacrifice all desirability to truth, particularly harsh, ugly, unchristian, immoral truth--for such truths do exist."[11]

Apart from the personal attack Nietzsche claims that the fundamental defect of these "historians" of morality, ironically,

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9. 'You Higher Men' --thus the mob blink--'there are no Higher Men, we are all equal, man is but man, before God--we are all equal!' Before God! But now this God has died. TSZ, "Of the Higher Men", section 1.
10. GM, Essay one, section 4.
11. IBID.

is that they lack the historical spirit or historical sense.[12] Nietzsche speaks most clearly about the historical spirit near the very centre of the Genealogy[13], emphasizing perhaps that this is at the centre of his thought. Fundamental to the historical spirit is the insight that the cause of the origin of a thing and its eventual utility are separate matters. This follows from Nietzsche's basic claim that whatever exists is continually reinterpreted to new ends by some superior power. All events in the organic world are a subduing, a becoming master, and all subduing and becoming master involves a new interpretation through which prior interpretations are obscured or obliterated. It follows that the present utility of a social custom, for example, or a physiological organ means nothing or nearly nothing with regard to its origin.

This theory, which Nietzsche calls a major point of historical method[14], underlies Nietzsche's criticisms of the English psychologists. He claims that their thinking is by nature unhistorical, implying that their natures prohibit them from thinking historically or that they are limited by an inadequate understanding of nature. They failed to grasp that nature must be understood as will, a process of subduing and becoming master, and therefore failed to grasp the "historical" aspect of nature

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12. GM, Essay one, section 2.
13. GM, Essay two, section 12.
14. IBID.

and the full significance of this historicism. Nietzsche states that here as elsewhere they lack <u>will</u> to knowledge of the past.[15]

To illustrate their defect of will and knowledge Nietzsche turns to their investigation of the origin of the concept and judgment "good".[16] This provides Nietzsche with the opportunity to distinguish clearly between two fundamentally opposed moral perspectives or viewpoints. The first is the "unegoistic" perspective, the perspective taken for granted by the English psychologists. According to Nietzsche this perspective explains the origin of "good" as follows: originally unegoistic actions were called good by the recipients of such actions or by those to whom such actions were useful; later it was forgotten how this approval originated and since unegoistic actions were habitually praised as good it became pervasively felt that unegoistic actions were good in themselves.

Nietzsche attacks this view from the opposite perspective arguing that the source of the concept "good" is sought by adherents of the "unegoistic" perspective in the wrong place. Nietzsche does not present historical evidence initially but states simply that the judgment "good" did not originate with those to whom goodness was shown, the passive recipients of useful actions. Rather, it was those who performed those actions, the noble and powerful, who first felt and established not merely

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15. GM, Essay two, section 4.
16. GM, Essay one, section 2.

their actions but themselves as good in contradistinction to the powerless.[17] The powerful seized the right to create values, to designate what is good on the basis of their superior power. Nietzsche ridicules the idea that it had anything to do with calculating prudence or the calculus of utility as the English state of nature theorists and utilitarians assume. Applying his major point of historical method, he shows that "good" was not linked originally and so not by necessity to "unegoistic" actions.

Nietzsche's argument is that the English psychologists simply accepted the opinions about morality which prevailed at the time they were thinking and writing, opinions which were basically Christian or at least imbued with the spirit of Christianity. They then attempted to explain the origin of morality on the basis of these English bourgeois opinions, but because they lacked the historical spirit they succeeded only in absolutizing the opinions of their time. They presumed to argue against the Judaeo-Christian tradition but failed to get outside the view that the passive recipients of useful actions originally designated what is good. Nietzsche suggests that the failure to question the priority of this perspective is traceable finally to the assumption that nature, and therefore man, is, at the deepest, unchanging. The failure to grasp the historicist implications of the understanding of the world as will to power caused these psychologists to assume that morality has always

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17. IBID.

had the purpose it had at the time they were thinking and writing.

Nietzsche criticizes the theories of the English psychologists on a second ground: they are psychologically absurd.[18] An understanding of elementary psychology points to a contradiction in their theories. They argued that the utility of unegoistic actions is the source of the approval accorded to those actions but that this source is forgotten. Nietzsche points out that this could not be possible since the utility has been an everyday experience and, therefore, should have been impressed on the consciousness more and more.

II

Having cast doubt on the assumption that the English utilitarian perspective on the question of the origin of good is the only possible perspective or that modern utilitarian accounts of morality represent morality per se, Nietzsche proceeds to present the evidence for his thesis. While acknowledging that it is as hard to empathize with this second perspective today as it is to uncover it[19], Nietzsche relies for the most part on etymological analysis to support his theory that there has been a second moral perspective which was very different from the perspective of unegoistic morality. He also presents the views of two ancient Greek thinkers and two Christian theologians to support his view and to undermine

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18. GM, Essay one, section 3.
19. BGE, section 262.

adherence to the "unegoistic" perspective.

Nietzsche turns first to speech, not to speeches but to language, the etymological significance of designations for "good" coined in various languages. Elsewhere in his writings Nietzsche understands language as confining, almost tyrannizing[20], but here language is understood as liberating. It may be said that here Nietzsche views language as an archive of human history and human creation, as an externalization of the soul, and therefore the surest signpost to the "truth" of the matters under investigation. Nietzsche argues that the designations for "good" in various languages all manifest the same conceptual transformation. In all cases cited by Nietzsche "noble" or "aristocratic" proved to be the basic concept from which "good" developed. "Good" originally meant "with noble or aristocratic soul." Nietzsche claims further that there appears a parallel transformation of "common" or "plebeian" into the concept "bad".

Nietzsche draws on the Greek, Latin, Gaelic, and German languages to illustrate these transformations. He claims that nobles designate themselves by superiority in power ("the powerful", "the masters"), by visible signs ("the possessors") or by a typical character trait. Quoting from the poet Theognis, whom Nietzsche designates as the spokesman of the Greek nobility[21], he

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20. eg. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Wanderer and His Shadow, Part II of Human, All-Too Human, Part II, section II: "We are led astray by words and think of things as simpler than they are." Also BGE, s. 16, "We really ought to free ourselves from the seduction of words!".
21. GM, Essay one, section 5.

points out that in Greek esthlos (good, brave) signifies one who possesses reality or is true. In time the true became the truthful which passed over into a sense of "noble", or distinct from the lying common man. So also Nietzsche translates agathos, which in Plato's thought refers to the transcendent Good or Good in itself, as "well-bred" in contradistinction to deilos meaning cowardly or worthless. He traces the Latin malus (bad) to the Greek melas (black, dark), malus designating the common, black-haired pre-Aryan native of Italy who was distinguished from the blond, Aryan conqueror race. In the same way the Gaelic fin, the distinguishing word for nobility in that language, originally meant the blond-headed in contradistinction to the dark aboriginal inhabitants. Nietzsche traces the Latin bonus (good) through bellum (war) to duonus (warrior) and conjectures that the German gut (good) originally signified "the godlike".

Nietzsche contends that with regard to moral genealogy the insight provided by this linguistic hermeneutics, that there was a second, noble moral perspective, is fundamental. Modern scholars and especially the English psychologists were prevented from understanding the noble origin of "good" by what he calls the "democratic prejudice".[22] Simply stated this prejudice is the unfounded assumption, based on a profound need, that all men are fundamentally equal. This assumption and need is at the root not only of modern accounts of the origin of morality but also of

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22. GM, Essay one, section 4.

so-called 'objective' science. Nietzsche argues that 'scientific fairness' gives way to enmity when confronted with active affects such as lust for power and avarice.[23] This enmity causes the sciences to place "adaptation" in the foreground and to define life as more and more efficient adaptation to external conditions. In so doing the essence of life as Nietzsche understands it, the priority of the aggressive, form-giving forces that give new interpretations and directions, is denied.[24]

Both modern science and modern accounts of the origin of morality presuppose a particular stance or perspective fundamental to which is "adaptation to external conditions." This adaptation is understood by Nietzsche as reaction to aggressive and creative forces, including noble and creative human beings, and therefore as proceeding from the spirit of ressentiment.[25] This reaction is necessarily a denial of life or of nature since life just is "appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker, suppression, severity..."[26]

Nietzsche's thesis is that originally the powerful masters or nobles designated what is good and what is bad. Only later did the plebeian or slave perspective, fundamental to which is reactivity, ascend and establish itself as the only, true morality.

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23. GM, Esay two, section 11.
24. GM, Essay two, section 12.
25. IBID. see also below p.47.
26. BGE, section 259.

The English psychologists, who understood themselves to be arguing against the tradition, to be relaying the very foundations of morality, did not in fact break with the tradition but were captives of the "democratic prejudice", the slave perspective based on reactivity. Nietzsche claims that this captivity may be ended only through appropriation of the historical sense which opens up the possibility, and indeed points to the inevitability of a second perspective, that of the masters which actually preceded the perspective of the slave.

III

Nietzsche must show how it came to be that the perspective of the slave came to dominate that of the masters and so completely that master morality is now barely discernible. That this occurred seems prima facie impossible since nature is an ongoing process of subjection of the weaker by the stronger. This takes Nietzsche into general considerations of politics and the structures of society.[27] He posits as a general rule that a concept denoting political superiority always resolves itself into a concpt denoting superiority of soul.[28] The suggestion seems to be that political power is fundamental and the souls of those who exercise political power eventually come to be viewed as superior in all respects. Nietzsche states that this

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27. GM, Essay one, section 6 ff.
28. GM, Essay one, section 6.

rule applies even when political superiority lies with priests. Originally political superiority did not lie with priests but with the nobles or masters. At a certain point in history priests gained ascendancy over the nobles, an event which Nietzsche understands as the most decisive for the history of mankind.[29] It was the most decisive event because the human soul for the first time acquired depth and became evil, the two basic respects in which man has been distinguished from the beasts. Priests are responsible for the differentiation of the mass of men from the beasts, for the emergence of a specifically human type. Man became an interesting animal only under the priest's shaping hand.

It was through the agency of priests that the perspective of the slaves came to dominate that of the masters. The noble--base distinction ceased to be primary with the ascendancy of the priest; "good" and "bad" came to refer not to "noble" and "base" but to purity and impurity. Nietzsche insists that ancient man did not understand purity in an abstract or symbolic way but the term simply referred to the man who washes himself, who abstains from certain foods and so on. The truly significant development in priestly aristocracies, however, is that antithetical valuations became deepened and internalized.[30] This internalization follows from "something unhealthy" in priestly aristocracies which turns them away from external action

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29. IBID.
30. IBID. It was pointed out above, Introduction, p. 20 that the attack on the very idea of antithesis is fundamental to Nietzsche's view.

to internal brooding. Nietzsche claims that this leads to physiological breakdown in the form of digestive and nervous dysfunction. This physiological breakdown forced the priests to turn to certain remedies which Nietzsche claims proved to be more dangerous than the sickness. These remedies are fasting, sexual continence, antisensualistic metaphysics, and autohypnosis.[31] The most radical remedy for bodily dysfunction is the desire for mystical union with God which Nietzsche understands as a desire for the complete cessation of physiological torment or, in a word, nothingness.

Nietzsche brings the following assumptions to his analysis of priests, assumptions which have been touched on above.[32] The first is that action or motion is natural and necessary, which follows from his discussion of man as being at the deepest will to power. The second is that man just is a chaos of passions and drives, instinctual energy which must be discharged. If the energy that would otherwise be released in external action is stifled, it will find alternative channels of release. The primary alternative involves a turning inward, an internal motion, which eventually leads to physiological breakdown. If this dynamic of internalization and the above assumptions are accepted it follows that the various practices engaged in and taught by priests such as fasting and sexual continence are really attempted remedies for a problem which is primarily physiological.

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31. IBID.
32. Introduction, p. 15 ff.

In concurrence with his statement in the preface that he learned to separate moral prejudice and theological prejudice[33], Nietzsche does not even consider whether or not God or a metaphysical domain may be the inspiration or basis of these practices, as well as of mystical experience.

Nietzsche explains the development of the priests mode of existence and how the priests gained ascendancy as follows. Originally part of the noble or aristocratic mode, the priestly mode separated from the noble mode and developed into its opposite. Aristocratic value judgments presuppose bodily power and health, and free, joyful activity. The priests were aristocrats who reacted to aristocratic value judgments because of impotence, 'something unhealthy" within, that prevented them from releasing instinctual energy outwardly.

To support his contention that the priestly mode of valuation is a reaction to aristocratic values and that this reaction is rooted in impotence Nietzsche turns to "the most notable example", the Jews. Nietzsche goes so far as to say that "all that has been done on earth against the nobles, "the masters", fades into nothing compared with what the Jews have done against them."[34] What the Jews accomplished in opposing their noble conquerors was a revaluation of their conquerors values, "an act of the most spiritual revenge." With the Jews began the "slave revolt" in morality under the leadership of the priests. This revolt

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33. GM, Preface, section 2.
34. GM, Essay one, section 7.

involved the inversion of the aristocratic value equation which identified good with noble and powerful into a new equation whereby good was identified with the sick, suffering, poor and impotent. The powerful nobles were then viewed from within this slave perspective as cruel and lustful or, in a word, "evil."

The slave revolt in morality initiated by the Jews begins when ressentiment[35] becomes creative and gives birth to values. Nietzsche argues that when "natures" are denied the natural reaction, deeds, they compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. Unlike noble morality which develops from a primary affirmation of itself, slave morality begins with a reaction to what is outside, to what is "not itself". A discontinuity is felt between the "inside" and what is "outside", and this "outside" is felt to be threatening. This reaction or "No" to what is "outside" based on fear is the slave's creative deed. The slave does not act spontaneously out of the instincts deep within but out of the need to direct his view outward. It is this need to direct one's view outward that is the essence of ressentiment.[36]

Nietzsche uses the metaphor of giving birth to describe the creativity of the slave.[37] The implication is that the process

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35. From the French ressentir, to feel again. Ressentiment refers to a condition involving disease and pain and so is much deeper than mere resentment. It refers to the efficacy of feelings in a context different than that which gave rise to those feelings.
36. GM, Essay one, section 10.
37. What Nietzsche states here should be compared to his suggestion in Beyond Good and Evil, section 248, that there are two types of genius: one which begets and wants to beget and another which prefers being fertilized and giving birth. The Greeks are the prime example of the latter type, while the Jews, Romans and Germans exemplify the former type.

by which energy is denied outward discharge and turns inward is comparable to the process of sexual fertilization. Instinctual energy turned inward is the "active" part while the deep inner need to direct one's view outward is the "passive", receptive part. This deep inner need is the essence of ressentiment and it is ressentiment that becomes creative. The fertilization of ressentiment gives rise to a pronounced "inner-outer" dichotomy and to an extraordinary growth of the inner world. The growth of the inner world into "consciousness" or a "soul" produces a condition much like pregnancy. The offspring are values and ideals which are wholly new creations but retain the fundamental characteristics of the parents: ressentiment and instinctual energy or will to power.

The slave revolt in morality and the birth of values and ideals which it engendered was precipitated by the Jews but reached its most sublime height in Christianity.[38] Again employing the tree metaphor Nietzsche claims that Christian charity grew from the trunk of the tree of Jewish vengefulness which created ideals and reversed the nobles' values. Christian love is the branches of the tree of vengefulness, the extremities of that tree spreading into the heights in pursuit of the goals of vengefulness. Jesus himself, as love incarnate, must be understood as the branches of the tree of vengefulness. A serpent does not seduce men into eating the fruit of this tree; Jesus himself, by bringing victory to the suffering and weak, seduces men to these new Jewish values and ideals. Nietzsche's

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38. GM, Essay one, section 8.

view is that Israel nailed this professed enemy of Israel to the cross as a ruse to deceive their enemies. On a superficial view Israel denied Christ and crucified him. All of Israel's enemies could then accept Christ but in so doing they were really accepting the Jewish revaluation of values. The crucifixion of Jesus was a stroke of genius by the Jewish people whereby their values and ideals born of ressentiment were transformed from a tribal event into a universal faith. Nietzsche acknowledges the power of the symbol of the cross in calling it "enticing", "intoxicating", "the ghastly paradox of a 'God on the Cross'", and claims that under this sign Israel has triumphed repeatedly over all other ideals.[39]

IV

In contrasting noble morality and slave morality Nietzsche emphasizes that the former is exactly the reverse of the latter.[40] Whereas slaves feel indignant toward the nobles, the nobles feel only contempt for the slaves. The vengefulness of the impotent slaves seriously falsifies the masters, while the contempt of the latter falsifies the slaves only slightly. The nobles felt themselves to be happy, a feeling that was not established or reinforced by examining their enemies or appealing to any

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39. IBID.
40. GM, Essay one, section 10.

external criteria. Happiness for the nobles was connected necessarily with vigorous activity.[41] Men of ressentiment on the other hand find happiness in rest, peace, passivity. Whereas cleverness (intelligence, rationality) is a prime condition of the slaves existence, cleverness for the nobles is secondary due to the healthy functioning of their regulating instincts. Also, whereas the slaves' ressentiment turns inward to poison, the nobles' ressentiment is dissipated in immediate reaction and therefore does not poison.

The noble individual conceives the basic concept "good" first and spontaneously out of himself and then creates an idea of "bad". The man of ressentiment on the other hand conceives the "evil enemy" first and only then develops a concept of "good". Whereas "bad" is of noble origin, "evil" is of slave origin. Both are the opposite of "good" but not of the same concept "good". "Good" for the masters means noble and powerful whereas "good" for the slaves refers to weakness and suffering. The respective distinctions "good-bad" and "good-evil" are Nietzsche's shorthand way of designating the two distinct modes of valuation, master morality and slave morality.

Having delineated these deep differences between master morality and slave morality Nietzsche turns to a consideration of what he anticipates will be a major criticism of his view

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41. See above, p. 21 ff.

that there has been a second moral perspective which preceded that of the slave. This criticism is that his view is historically and psychologically inaccurate in that the aggressive nature of the nobles would render them unfit for culture or civilization.[42] Nietzsche seeks to rebut this objection by arguing that there is no fatal imcompatibility between the nobles' natural mode of behaviour and culture. Within civil society the nobles are restrained by custom and mutual suspicion. Outside of society, however, the nobles compensate themselves for their confinement within society by reverting to the "innocent conscience" of the beast of prey.

Nietzsche refers to two historical documents to support his theory that barbarism and the height of culture are not incompatible in the noble races. The first is Pericles's Funeral Oration by Thucydides which as a whole is a glorification of Periclean Athenian democracy in contradistinction to the Spartan regime. The glorification of democracy would seem to be contrary to Nietzsche's intentions but he interprets the following excerpt as supporting his elevation of the "beast of prey":

> Our boldness has gained access
> to every land and sea, everywhere
> raising imperishable monuments
> to its goodness and wickedness.[43]

Nietzsche understands Pericles to be commending the rhathymia

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42. GM, Essay one, section 11.
43. Quoted in GM, Essay one, section 11.

of the Athenians, their indifference to security and comfort, and their joy in destruction.

Nietzsche also quotes from the ancient Greek poet Hesiod. He does not turn to the philosophers for support of his view but to a historian and a poet, again emphasizing his redefinition of philosophy. Hesiod devised a scheme wherein a succession of cultural epochs were expressed in terms of gold, silver and bronze. In a decidedly psychological rather than historical interpretation Nietzsche argues that Hesiod divided the Homeric world into two: first the epoch of the heroes and demigods of Troy and Thebes, the form in which that world had survived in the memory of the noble races who were those heroes' true descendants; then the cruel and destructive bronze age, the form in which that world appeared to descendants of the weak. In essence Nietzsche argues that the golden and bronze epochs refer to the same kind of man but looked at from two distinct points of view.

Nietzsche's references to the noble Greeks directs his discussion back to a deeper consideration of the reasons why the "good" as conceived by the man of ressentiment gained ascendancy.[44] He points out that men of ressentiment, as lambs ("lambs of God"), naturally dislike beasts of prey. Therefore what the lambs or slaves do in order to subdue the beasts of prey is demand that they not express their strength as strength. For Nietzsche this is as absurd and impossible as demanding that weakness express itself as strength. A quantum of force or strength is equivalent to a quantum of drive or will. By Nietzsche's

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44. GM, Essay one, section 13.

definition a quantum of will must express itself and as strength or force. Men are not free to express strength or not to do so. The belief that men are free in this way is based on the belief that there is a neutral, will-less subject or soul behind effects, that there is a "doer" which performs the deed. Nietzsche's view is that there is no such "doer" or "soul"; there is no "being" behind becoming, no "reality" behind appearances. There is the deed only. The strong must be strong and the weak must be weak, and this natural necessity is not a choice.

For Nietzsche there are no free wills and no unfree wills; there are only strong and weak wills.[45] But there is no belief more fervently adhered to by the weak than the belief that the strong man is free to be weak. This belief enables the weak to hold the strong accountable for their actions.[46] Moral responsibility, the whole world of guilt and the rationale for punishment are grounded in the belief in freedom of choice, and this belief is based on the erroneous separation of doer and deed. Nietzsche designates this belief in the unchanging doer or soul behind the deed as the primary weapon in the slaves' revolt against the masters.[47]

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45. BGE, section 21.
46. "Everywhere accountability is sought, it is usually the instinct for punishing and judging which seeks it...the doctrine of will has been invented essentially for the purpose of punishment, that is, of finding guilty." Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, translated by R.J. Hollingdale, (Great Britain: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), "The Four Great Errors", section 7.
47. Nietzsche claims the soul has been believed in more firmly than anything else on earth. GM, Essay one, section 13.

Wielding this primary weapon, the slave calls "good" the individual who harms no one, who does not attack or retaliate, and who leaves revenge to God. The slave presents himself as virtuous and calmly resigned, as if this resignation is a voluntary achievement. In the case of slave ideals weakness is lied into something meritorious and desirable. Impotence which cannot requite is lied into "goodness of heart". Inability to revenge is called unwillingness to revenge. The masterpiece of slave ideals in Nietzsche's view is the way in which the weak do not retaliate but sate their hatred of the strong through use of the concept "justice". Through the use of this concept the weak can say that it is not their enemy they hate but "injustice" and "Godlessness", not the "sinner" but the "sin".

Christianity, as a religion of slaves, condemns pride and strength but Nietzsche finds that some of the greatest Christian writers advocate in their work precisely these characteristics. The hypocrisy of Christians is that they condemn strength and joy in the release of instinctual energy, while concurrently longing for superiority and bliss in their kingdom, the Kingdom of God. All Christians believe that they will be superior to the powerful of this world in the world to come. Regarding this superiority and eternal bliss Nietzsche quotes from the Summa Theologica:

> The blessed in the kingdom of heaven will see the punishments of the damned, in order that their bliss be more delightful for them.[48]

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48. Quoted in Latin in GM, Essay one, section 15. Nietzsche does not footnote the quotation but Kaufmann points out that the wording is very close to that in Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, III, Supplementum, Q. 94, Art. 1. GM, Essay one, section 15, footnote1

This quotation, which emphasizes the delight in revenge to be experienced by Christians in the hereafter, is from the supplement of Summa Theologica and was not written by Thomas Aquinas as Nietzsche seems to believe. He also quotes at length in Latin from the Latin church Father Tertullian to support his view that Christians too look forward to the joy of unopposed willing.[49] The gist of the quotation is that on the day of judgment the sight of monarchs, governors, philosphers and poets suffering will givejoy and rouse the blessed to exaltation. But just as Nietzsche's argument was weakened somewhat by the fact that the quotation from the Summa Theologica was not by Thomas Aquinas, so also Tertullian has been regarded by many Christians as expressing an extreme and heretical view of Christianity.

At the close of essay one Nietzsche claims that the struggle between master morality and slave morality has been going on for thousands of years. Contradicting his earlier assertion that slave morality has been completely victorious[50], he states that there are still places where the struggle is undecided.[51] These places are the "higher natures" who are marked as such by the fact that they are a battleground of these opposed values. Within the Greek world the master-slave

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49. Tertullian, DeSpectaculis, ch. 29 ff. Quoted in GM, Essay one, section 15.
50. GM, Essay one, section 8.
51. GM, Essay one, section 16.

or noble-base distinction held sway and men fell into either one or the other category. Christianity claimed to overcome this distinction, although Nietzsche understands Christianity as a religion of slaves. The "higher natures" referred to by Nietzsche mark an internalization of the master-slave struggle, an encompassing of both poles within an individual soul.

The symbol of this struggle between master morality and slave morality, which Nietzsche finds to be the greatest event in history, is "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome." For Nietzsche the Romans were the strongest and noblest people who have yet existed while the Jews were the greatest nation of ressentiment. Rome was defeated and disappeared, but through their "revaluation of values" the Jews triumphed and survived, principally through Christianity. The history of the West has witnessed several subsequent confrontations but every time Judea has triumphed. The noble mode of valuation reawakened during the Renaissance and in Rome itself within the Roman Catholic Church but Judea triumphed again through the Reformation. The French Revolution and the "rights of man" (equal rights for all) marked a third major triumph of the Biblical heritage over the noble ideal of pagan antiquity. But at this time "the ideal of antiquity incarnate" appeared to represent the "supreme rights of the few". This was Napoleon whom Nietzsche understands as "the noble ideal as such made flesh....this synthesis of the inhuman and superhuman."[52]

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52. IBID.

The appearance of Napoleon seems to confirm for Nietzsche that the struggle is not ended, that it is possible to pass beyond "good and evil" even if this means not passing beyond "good and bad".[53]

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53. GM, Essay one, section 17.

Chapter Two

The Psychology of the Conscience

> Oh this insane, pathetic beast-man! What ideas he has, what unnaturalness, what paroxysms of nonsense, what bestiality of thought erupts as soon as he is prevented just a little from being a beast in deed![1]

In essay one Nietzsche sets out the basic distinction between "good-bad" morality and "good-evil" morality, or master morality and slave morality. His concern is to show how slave morality became priestly morality, a conjunction first forged by the Jews, but which reached its fullest and most seductive expression in Christianity. The slave revolt in morality precipitated by the Jews was a political act by which the nobles' values were subverted, in Nietzsche's view an occurrence without parallel in history. History from ancient times to the present is understood by Nietzsche as an ongoing dialectical struggle between master morality and slave morality, with the latter time and again conquering the former.

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1. GM, Essay two, section 22.

Nietzsche's discussion in essay one is wholly bounded by history. His etymological analyses are directed toward uncovering the understanding of "good" of historical peoples and he uses historical documents to support his thesis. In essay two Nietzsche moves to a more basic stratum. He deems it necessary to speak of "guilt", "right", and "sovereignty", a proper discussion of which requires a return to "pre-history". Nietzsche understands "pre-history" as the era of morality of mores which preceded "world-history" and which is the truly decisive history.[2] He says also of pre-history that it is present in all ages or may always reappear.[3] The implication is that an understanding of "world-history" is insufficient to comprehend notions such as "guilt" and "right", that what is required is an investigation into the "history" before recorded history, as learned from a kind of archaeology. Not only do the English psychologists lack the historical sense but they also lack the "pre-historical" sense and therewith the ability to understand man prior to "world-history". Nietzsche is claiming to have such a sense and in essay two he presents his "archaeology" of man before history, which amounts to an archaeology of the human soul.

In essay two Nietzsche scrutinizes the "sick soul", the soul of the slave, far more minutely than in essay one. The focus of the second enquiry is on the origin and nature of the guilty conscience, the supreme creation of the man of ressentiment.

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2. GM, Essay three, section 9.
3. GM, Essay two, section 1.

Nietzsche explains in The Will to Power that having unlearned the habit of supposing that the goal must be given by some superhuman authority, man still seeks another authority that can speak to him unconditionally. The prime example of such an authority is the conscience, to which man clings in order to rid himself of the responsibility of willing a goal.[4] In a world without God or "eternal values" men who cling to the notion of a stable moral order do so by appealing to man's conscience. Nietzsche argues in the second essay that the guilty conscience is not the voice of God in man nor is it determined by any other external authority, but is the instinct of cruelty that turns inward after it can no longer discharge itself externally.[5] Leading up to this explanation of the bad conscience are extensive analyses of the phenomenon of promising, the process by which memory is created, the notions of guilt and punishment, the function of law, and the meaning of justice. Circumscribing his discussion of these phenomena is the contention that the fundamental relationship between men is the debtor-creditor relationship. Nietzsche argues that the conquered-slave misconceives and distorts these phenomena. It is only now with the emergence of the fundamental insight of the primacy of will-to-power that the slaves' misconceptions may be exposed and the more natural understanding of punishment, law, justice and divinity which prevailed in "pre-history" be recovered.

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4. WTP, Book One, section 20.
5. FH, Commentary on the Genealogy, p. 312.

I

Nietzsche opens the essay with a discussion of the concept of right, a discussion which points to the future, thereby revealing that his primary concern is not with "pre-history" after all but with what might be termed "post-history". At the close of essay one Nietzsche merely alludes to the slogan of slave morality, "equal rights for all", and the slogan of master morality, "supreme rights of the few".[6] In essay two his concern is to provide a theoretical justification of the latter slogan, while exposing the baselessness of the former slogan.

The primary right for Nietzsche is the right to make promises. Seeming to accept a teleological view of nature, he states that nature has set itself a paradoxical task, to breed an animal with the right to make promises. Nietzsche claims that such an animal has finally appeared in spite of the strength of the opposing force, forgetfulness. Forgetfulness is an active means of preserving psychic order which is a prerequisite for health and happiness. Paradoxically man has bred in himself an opposing faculty, a memory, which abrogates forgetfulness where promises are made. Nietzsche understands the faculty of memory not as the inability to rid oneself of an experience but as an active desire not to rid oneself, as a memory of the will. Without forgetfulness there is no present but only a preoccupation with the past. Nietzsche suggests

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6. GM, Essay one, section 16.

that without memory there can be no future. Memory is a prerequisite of willing the past to be in the future or willing the future simply. In promising man wills to remember a past event and to act on that event in the future.

This willing of the future presupposes causal thinking, the ability to decide upon goals and calculate the proper means to those goals. In order to stand security for his future, which is what promising is, man must have first made himself predictable by turning his will against himself. According to Nietzsche this turning of the will by man towards himself is the origin of responsibility in prehistory.[7] The emergence of the animal with the right to make promises presupposes the "morality of mores" or the morality of custom which preceded the master morality-slave morality distinction. Originally man was not calculable or uniform but with the aid of the prehistoric "morality of mores" and the "social straitjacket" man was made calculable.

In order to understand the end of the task which nature has set itself Nietzsche claims it is necessary to return to prehistory. At the end of the process, "the tree at last brings forth fruit": society and the morality of mores are shown to be merely the means by which the sovereign individual, autonomous and supramoral, is liberated from the morality of custom. The terms used by Nietzsche to describe the sovereign individual show clearly that the nobles of whom he spoke in essay one would

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7. GM, Essay two, section 2.

not be sovereign in the sense in which this individual is sovereign. The sovereign individual is described as having his own independent will and the right to make promises. He is conscious of his power and freedom, that he is mankind come to completion. In essay one Nietzsche asks to be granted the sight of a man who justifies man, a complementary and redeeming "lucky hit" on the part of man for the sake of which one may still believe in man.[8] In essay two Nietzsche shows that this "complementary man" is the sovereign individual but this individual is not a "lucky hit". The emergence of the sovereign individual coincides with the overcoming of chance which is accomplished by an unprecedented act of will. This act of will, and therewith the sovereign individual, is the necessary end of the paradoxical task which nature has set itself, the fruit toward production of which the entire growth of Nietzsche's tree is directed. The sovereign individual is the "natural" man who emerges on the other side of the morality of custom and society.

Sovereignty is vested by nature in this individual. He alone has the right, and right pertains to promising or willing the future. The primary right is not a natural right to self-preservation based on the fear of violent death[9] but a natural and acquired right to make promises. This natural right is

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8. GM, Essay one, section 12.
9. cf. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, edited by Michael Oakeshott, (London: Collier-MacMillan, 1962), p. 103 ff.; John Locke, Two Treatises of Civil Government, (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1960), p. 118 ff.

acquired in history; natural man does not appear at the beginning but only at the end of a lengthy process.[10] The sovereign individual is by definition supreme in power, rank and authority and there is nothing or no one higher than this individual. Being fully emancipated, he is master of a free will and aware of his superiority over those who lack the right to make promises. In essay one Nietzsche criticizes the notion of free will arguing that it is based on the misconception that there is a "doer" or soul behind every deed. In essay two he shows that there is another understanding of free will which applies to the sovereign individual only. A fully emancipated will is an "unbreakable will" which bestows a mastery over oneself, over circumstances and over nature.[11] Between the noble of essay one and the sovereign individual of essay two occurs the overcoming of chance, the subjection of nature to the definitive rule of the will. Whereas the noble is not as clever (rational, conscious) as the slave, Nietzsche emphasizes that the sovereign individual is <u>conscious</u> of the privilege of responsibility, of his freedom and of his power over himself and over fate.[12] This consciousness has penetrated to the depths of this individual and become his dominating instinct. This acquired dominating instinct is the sovereign individual's conscience.

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10. cf. <u>Twilight of the Idols</u>, section 48: "Progress in my sense--I too speak of a 'return to nature', although it is not really a going-back but a going up--up into a high, free, even frightful nature and naturalness, such as plays with great tasks..."
11. GM, Essay two, section 2.
12. <u>IBID</u>.

What is evidenced in Nietzsche's presentation of the emergence of the sovereign individual with a conscience, which is the consciousness of power become instinct, is a deeper critique of the English psychologists and particularly the social contract theorists. This is evident from the outset where Nietzsche makes promising the thing to be explained. Hobbes and Locke argued that all men possess certain natural rights.[13] The one original natural right is the right of each and every man to preserve his life. Government and civil society do not exist by nature but are entered into because the state of nature, the original situation of man, is not desirable. Hobbes describes the state of nature as nasty, brutish and short,[14] while Locke understands this state to be riddled with inconveniences.[15] Men therefore enter into civil society to bring an end to the insecurities and hazards of the state of nature and to thereby preserve their rights. Men strike a bargain: they promise to surrender the unlimited right to be the sole judges of what tends towards their self-preservation in exchange for the securing of their rights.

Hobbes and Locke both drew back from the possibility of the complete subjugation of nature in so far as both found in nature a limit which defies change and beyond which man cannot go. This limit is the paramount natural right to self-preservation.

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13. Hobbes, Leviathan, pp. 103-105; Locke, Two Treatises of Civil Government, p. 118 ff.
14. Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 100.
15. Locke, Two Treatises of Civil Government, p. 123.

Nietzsche attacks the liberal theorists at precisely this point arguing that the one right is not the right of self-preservation but the right to make promises. This is not a natural right in the Hobbesian or Lockean sense, an original right that belongs to all men by nature. It is a right acquired by the few after a long process. The majority lack this right or any other right since "right" is intelligible only in relation to promising. The acquisition of this right by the few presupposes the prehistory of the morality of custom and the history of society. Morality in all its forms proves to be merely a means to this end: the sovereign individual with an autonomous will who alone has the right to make promises and to affirm himself, who alone has attained mastery over himself and over nature. Sovereignty is vested in this individual and not in government or the civil authority as Hobbes and Locke argued.[16]

The sovereign individual is truly responsible because he has, through willing, attained mastery over himself and over nature. The right to affirm oneself and with pride, which is how Nietzsche understands the conscience of this individual, is rooted in the will or the instincts. This understanding of conscience is not the sole understanding or even the dominant understanding in the Western tradition. It is a "late fruit" which could not have been promised although everything in the tree of the soul was preparing and growing toward it.[17]

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16. Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 134 ff.; Locke, Two Treatises of Civil Government, p. 164 ff.
17. GM, Essay two, section 3.

Just as Nietzsche moves in essay two to rehabilitate the concept of free will within the framework of his own fundamental affirmations, so also he attempts to show that there is a valid understanding of concepts such as "responsibility" and "conscience". The latter concept proves to be at the very heart of Nietzsche's discussion is essay two as he examines the crucial components of the emergence of this "late fruit" in the individual with the right to make promises.

II

Beginning with the question of how a memory was created, memory being indispensable to promising, Nietzsche surmises that there was nothing more fearful and uncanny in the history of man than his mnemotechnics. "Only that which never ceases to hurt stays in the memory"[18] is the oldest psychology on earth. Nietzsche finds this psychology in all religions since the cruelty of torture and sacrifice is a central feature of religious rites. The whole of asceticism may be understood as contributing to the creation of memory, as the attempt to make a few ideas "unforgettable". Similarly, social customs such as severe penal codes reflect the degree of effort required to overcome forgetfulness without which the continuance of civil society is impossible.

The processes by which a memory is formed finally give rise to reason which is one of the "sombre things" designated by

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18. IBID.

Nietzsche, the other being the consciousness of guilt or the "bad conscience".[19] Referring to this "bad conscience" as the "most uncanny and most interesting plant of all earthly vegetation"[20] Nietzsche turns to a consideration of how it came into existence. Clearly the conscience of the sovereign individual has nothing to do with guilt. The joining of the conscience with guilt understood as a moral concept may be explained, avers Nietzsche, only if we return to the most primitive human relationship. Nietzsche argues that the major moral concept Schuld (guilt) has its origin in the material concept Schulden (debts). Morality, the entire moral conceptual world of "guilt", "conscience", "duty", is derived from prior modes of interpersonal conduct. Nietzsche finds in the debtor-creditor relation the primary mode, arguing that it is prior to all social forms of organization.[21]

Focusing on the debtor-creditor relation, Nietzsche examines the idea of punishment as a means of "opening up" the concept of guilt. He contends that punishment as requital evolved among primitive mankind independently of any notion of free will. Punishment was imposed by primitive mankind out of anger at an injury inflicted by the criminal and not because the wrong-doer could have acted otherwise. The injury sustained has an equivalent in the pain inflicted on the wrong-doer which is how the wrong-doer must repay. This equivalence of injury and pain

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19. GM, Essay two, section 4.
20. GM, Essay two, section 14.
21. GM, Essay two, section 8.

drew its power from the contractual relation of creditor and debtor which in turn points to those basic relations which are necessary for survival: buying, selling, barter and trade.

Mere survival dictates that men enter into primitive commercial arrangements which give rise to the debtor-creditor relationship. This relationship precedes any characterization of human interaction in moral terms. By entering into such arrangements the debtor becomes accountable to the creditor, while both parties agree that henceforth their conduct will be governed by an external standard, their contractual agreement. An exchange is effected between the parties, the debtor providing security for the promise which he provides by contracting that if he should not repay he would substitute something else he possessed such as his freedom, life or body. The creditor restrains himself for the duration of the contract due to the attractive possibility of inflicting indignity and pain upon the body of the debtor. The logic here is that the creditor receives as a remedy for breach of promise recompense in the form of pleasure, the pleasure of venting his power freely upon one who is powerless. Nietzsche points out that in venting his power and thereby inflicting suffering on the debtor, the creditor participates in the right of the masters. This right, which is a right to mistreat those who are inferior to the masters[22], has nothing to do with revenge: the cruelty involved

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22. GM, Essay two, section 5.

in the infliction of suffering constituted the great festival pleasure of primitive mankind.[23]

Fundamental to Nietzsche's analysis of punishment among primitive mankind is the view that the creditor's perspective is primary and not the debtor's perspective. The understanding of punishment as a means by which the defaulting debtor is made to suffer for his irresponsibility is actually rooted in the debtor's point of view. From the creditor's vantage point punishment developed as an institution because the creditor must be compensated for his loss. The compensation for such loss is the pleasure felt in venting one's power freely, in engaging in acts of cruelty at the debtor's expense. The attempt to understand punishment from the debtor's perspective, which is how post-primitives approach the question, ignores the crucial component of cruelty and how this was the great source of pleasure for primitive mankind. In Nietzsche's view, to cause suffering is a seduction to life and only a sufferer, a debtor, could present the senselessness of suffering as an argument against existence.[24]

The creditor participates in the right of the masters as creditor only, which implies that the debtor-creditor relation applies to the common man and not necessarily to the masters. It was in the sphere of the common man that promises were made and, therefore, a memory was made. However, the logic of the

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23. Nietzsche suggests that the ever-increasing spiritualization and "deification" of cruelty permeates the entire history of higher culture. GM, Essay two, section 6; Also, BGE, section 229 wherein Nietzsche advocates a reconsideration of cruelty.
24. GM, Essay two, section 7.

debtor-creditor relation is based upon the prior fact that the masters have a right to despise and mistreat those who are inferior to them. The right of the masters becomes institutionalized among the common men, bound up with the complex psychological phenomena of promising and remembering, of willing the future through retention of the past.

Nietzsche contends that human pride and the feeling of superiority had its beginnings in the elementary form of thinking involved in setting prices and determining values. Here one person first measured himself against another so that man eventually came to think of himself as the creature that measures values, as the "evaluating animal". Out of this primitive relationship also developed the rudimentary legal rights, contract, obligation and guilt. These in turn were transferred to the elementary forms of social organization together with the custom of comparing and calculating power against power.

The primary human relationship of creditor and debtor applies also to the way in which the community stands to its members.[25] Continuing with his contractual analysis, Nietzsche argues that men pledge themselves to the community, promising to maintain peace. Certain rights flow from this promise including the right to be protected. If the contract with the whole is breached, the community as a whole will exact repayment. In meting out punishment, the community in effect throws the

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25. GM, Essay two, section 9.

delinquent debtor back into the savage state against which the community protected him.

Nietzsche suggests that the logic of this relationship means that as the power of the community increases, the community ceases to take transgressions so seriously. The creditor-community becomes more humane so that justice, which was originally requital for breach of promise, ends by overcoming itself. This self-overcoming of justice is mercy, which is the privilege not of the sovereign state but of the most powerful man, the sovereign individual.

The understanding of justice as originally requital for breach of promise means that ressentiment is not the origin of justice properly understood. The sphere of reactive feelings is not the source of justice but the last sphere to be conquered by the authentic spirit of justice.[26] For Nietzsche the active and aggressive man alone is just, for only he can take an unprejudiced view of the object before him. So also the need for law has been in the sphere of the strong and active and not of the reactive. Law properly understood represents the struggle of the strong against the reactive feelings of the weak. With the institution of law what is permitted (just) and what is forbidden (unjust) is declared and this constitutes the most decisive act of the strong against ressentiment. Agreeing with Hobbes on this point[27], Nietzsche asserts that "To speak of just

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26. GM, Essay two, section 11.
27. cf. Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 101.

and unjust in itself is quite senseless".[28] Injury, assault, exploitation cannot be unjust since life itself operates through assault and destruction. What is just and unjust is not supernatural, natural or contractual but is the creation of the strong to keep rancor at bay. The establishment of law creates a partial restriction of the will of life but this restriction serves the greater goal of creating greater units of power.[29] These greater units of power are the sovereign individuals who emerge on the other side of society and law. Nietzsche rejects the idea of a legal order thought of as sovereign since the prevention of struggle which would result would be hostile to the will of life.

Nietzsche argues that the enduring aspect of punishment, the procedures, and the changing aspect, the meaning,must be distinguished. This distinction is based on his "major point of historical method" which follows from his view that whatever exists is repeatedly reinterpreted to new ends by some power superior to it.[30] Because the world manifests the will-to-power which constantly throws up new interpretations erasing previous ones, the history of a thing must be understood as a continuous sign chain of new interpretations whose causes may not be related to one another. Nietzsche rejects the Hegelian notion that history or the history of a thing is a rational unfolding toward a preordained goal.[31] The evolution or history of a

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28. GM, Essay two, section 11.
29. IBID.
30. GM, Essay two, section 13.
31. GM, Essay two, section 12. cf. G. W. F. Hegel, Reason in History, translated by Robert S. Hartman, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), p. 11 ff.

thing is a succession of processes of subduing, attempts at transformation for the purposes of defence and reaction.[32] Yet there is a kind of "logic" in things, the "logic" of will-to-power which allows for a diminution of utility or atrophy of meaning as a condition for an actual progress. Nietzsche defines an actual progress as a will and way to greater power.[33]

With regard to punishment Nietzsche denies that the procedures were invented for the purpose of punishing. The procedures are older than their employment in punishment, punishment being projected into the procedures. To illustrate this Nietzsche lists eleven different purposes of punishment and suggests there are others.[34] Some of the purposes mentioned are a means of recording recompense to the injured party, the making of a memory, a festival. The one understanding of punishment which Nietzsche rejects is the one which he claims prevails today: punishment as a means of awakening the feeling of guilt in the guilty person, the means by which "bad conscience" is brought into being. This misunderstanding of punishment is based on a misunderstanding of psychology: punishment actually strengthens the power of resistance in the person punished. In prehistory it was through punishment that the development of the feeling of guilt was most powerfully hindered. The use of the criminal practices of spying and deception by the judicial system convinces the criminal that these practices are not

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32. GM, Essay two, section 12.
33. IBID.
34. IBID.

condemnable per se.

In prehistory, prior to the invention of the bad conscience, the world was in a state of innocence. In this state "mischief-makers" felt toward their transgressions that "here something has unexpectedly gone wrong", not "I ought not to have done that." The "mischief-maker" submitted to punishment as one submits to an illness or misfortune. Criticism of the transgressors' deeds was based on prudence and not on moral considerations, so that the purpose of punishment was not to effect "moral improvement" in the transgressor but to remind him that he is too weak for what he attempted. Punishment in this context increased fear, heightened prudence and tamed man, but it did not make him better.

III

Having disposed of the idea that in prehistory punishment was a means of awakening the feeling of guilt in the trangressor, as a means by which "bad conscience" came into existence, Nietzsche provides a provisional statement of his hypothesis concerning the origin of "bad conscience".[35] In returning to the origins in essay two Nietzshce goes into greater detail than in essay one, showing with greater clarity where he agrees with the constructions of modern moral and political theory and where he goes beyond the modern constructions because of perceived misconceptions.

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35. GM; Essay two, section 16.

Nietzsche states that the bad conscience is the serious illness that man was bound to contract when undergoing the most fundamental change he ever experienced: the change which occurred when he found himself enclosed within the walls of society and peace. The condition of man outside the walls of society is not described by Nietzsche as the state of nature but as "prehistory" because man in the original situation is not natural man. The natural man is the sovereign individual who acquires his nature in history.[36]

In describing the movement into civil society as the most fundamental change ever experienced by man Nietzsche is explicitly rejecting the Genesis account of the Fall which is the Judaeo-Christian account of the most fundamental change ever experienced by man. The most fundamental change is not the movement from a condition of felicity born of God's providence and man's obedience to God to one of being expelled from the garden and God's sight. Rather, it is more like the movement of sea animals compelled to become land animals, animals adapted to the motion and change of the sea forced to adapt to the permanence of land.[37] "Semi-animals" adapted to war, prowling and adventure suddenly found their instincts devalued. Forced from the water where they enjoyed a certain continuity with nature, these semi-animals had to learn to adjust to the land. Stripped of their regulating, unconscious drives, they were reduced to "consciousness", to

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36. See above, p. 62 ff.
37. GM, Essay two, section 16.

thinking, co-ordinating cause and effect. Whereas their former guides, the instincts, were oriented to change, the newly developed organ, consciousness, corresponded to permanence. The disvalued instincts, however, continued to make their demands. Unable to be discharged outwardly the instincts turned inward, a process Nietzsche calls the "internalization" of man.[38] This internalization process gave rise to the soul which acquired depth and breadth in the same measure as outward discharge was inhibited. The origin of the "bad conscience" according to Nietzsche is the social organization protecting itself against instinctual hostility, cruelty, joy in destruction, by forcing these instincts backward against man himself.

Whereas in essay one the mechanism of internalization was used by Nietzsche to explain the psychology of the priest and the creativity of the slave, in essay two it is expanded to explain what occurred in prehistory when man entered into civil society. This entry was not a matter of contract[39] since contractarian theory presupposes that men were originally independent, calculating units. Nietzsche maintains that men were not that originally, but were sub-human, herds of warring, prowling "semi-animals". Nietzsche is in agreement with Rousseau that men were not originally social, rational or even "conscious".[40] Man's humanity is acquired, the product of a long historical process. Whereas Rousseau argued that man is

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38. See above, p.45 ff.
39. Nietzsche rejects social contract theory, calling it "sentimentalism". GM, Essay two, section 17.
40. Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men, p. 115.

characterized by a certain 'malleability" or freedom which together with reason causes him to leave the state of nature and enter into civil society[41], Nietzsche speaks of man as being guided by his regulating, unconscious instincts. Men enter into civil society not due to their fear of violent death[42] nor the desire to preserve their felicity and freedom[43] but because they are compelled by the instinctive, creative activity of the strong.

Forcibly confined to society and custom man had to turn himself into a dangerous wilderness. Warring and prowling became internal, as man proceeded to lacerate and maltreat himself. Nietzsche states that the turning of the animal soul against itself precipitated the gravest and uncanniest illness from which humanity has not yet recovered, man's suffering of man. The emergence of the bad conscience was a chance occurrence, but gave rise to a tension and a hope, as if something were preparing itself, as if man were not a goal but only a great promise.[44]

A basic presupposition of Nietzsche's hypothesis is that the change which these semi-animals underwent was not gradual or voluntary but was a sudden break which precluded all struggle and ressentiment. He envisages a pack of blond beasts of prey, a conqueror and master race, organizing a formless and nomadic mass into a state by acts of violence. These natural commanders

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41. IBID. p. 114 ff.
42. Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 102.
43. Rousseau, Discourse of the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men, p. 159 ff.
44. GM, Essay two, section 16.

had no need of contracts as their work was an instinctive and natural creation and imposition of forms. Understanding these individuals as involuntary, unconscious artists who know nothing of guilt or responsibility, Nietzsche claims that the bad conscience was a necessary by-product of their creative activities.[45] In reaction to this creativity, the instinct for freedom, an important aspect of which is cruelty, was repressed and sublimated in the weak, finally able to vent itself only on itself. The same active force that was at work in the strong in organizing states creates a bad conscience in the weak and erects negative ideals. In the case of the inventors of the bad conscience this "instinct for freedom" or will to power vents itself on man himself, on his ancient animal self, and not on other men. The man of bad conscience delights in the cruelty of imposing a form on himself. This delight in cruelty directed at oneself or bad conscience is described by Nietzsche as the womb of all ideal phenomena. Eventually this womb gave birth to a wholly new beauty and affirmation, the sovereign individual. The existence of the sovereign individual presupposes the forcible entry into society, the burning of a will into man ("self-denial" and "self-sacrifice"), the creation of the gods and negative ideals, and the elevation of the unegoistic.[46]

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45. GM, Essay two, section 17.
46. GM, Essay two, section 19 ff.

IV

After establishing the origin of the "greatest illness" Nietzsche turns to seeking the conditions under which the illness reached its greatest height. In order to understand the greatest manifestation of this illness Nietzsche returns to the debtor-creditor relation.[47] He argues that this relation is applicable to the relation between the present generation and its ancestors. The original tribal community understood themselves as debtors of earlier generations as it was thought that the tribe exists only through the sacrifices and achievements of the ancestors. This debt grows as the tribe grows more victorious and feared, these developments being attributed to the benevolence of the ancestors. As the consciousness of indebtedness grows, the stature of the ancestors increases. The ancestors of the most powerful tribes eventually grow to awesome proportions through fear and imagination until they are finally transfigured into gods.

The origin of the gods during prehistory was rooted in fear. Nietzsche claims that during the "intermediate age" when the noble tribes developed the gods did not originate out of fear but out of piety. The nobles paid back their ancestors, the gods and heroes, with their own qualities, the noble qualities.

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47. GM, Essay two, section 19 ff.

By investing the primal ancestors with precisely those noble qualities which the noble tribes embodied, the debt perceived by the noble tribes was effectively repaid. The ennoblement of the gods in the intermediate age preceded the third stage in the development of man's perception of the gods, the stage during which the gods became 'holy'.[48]

The transformation of the gods from "noble" gods to "holy" gods is the most critical development in the history of man's understanding of divinity. Nietzsche argues that history shows that the consciousness of indebtedness to the deity was inherited by the common man from the tribal nobility. Through compulsion or mimicry slave populations adopted their masters' cult of the gods. The guilty feeling of indebtedness to the deity continued to grow for several millennia, always in the same measure as the concept god and the feeling for divinity increased. The advent of the Christian God, the universal and therefore maximum God, was accompanied accordingly by the maximum feeling of guilty indebtedness.

Nietzsche considers the possibility that with the decline of faith in the Christian God there will be a decline in mankind's feeling of guilt. The definitive victory of atheism would then free man of the feeling of guilty indebtedness toward his origin, thereby engendering a second innocence. Nietzsche rejects this possibility arguing that the guilty feeling of indebtedness continued to grow among the common men even though their power presumably

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48. GM, Essay two, section 19.

did not grow and that decline of faith in the Christian God will not yield a state of second innocence. The crucial development which explains the above is the connection of the concepts "guilt" and "duty" with religious presuppositions. "Guilt" and "duty" are not necessarily moral concepts, as Nietzsche argues in essay two. "Guilt" is related to debts. The moralization of the concepts "guilt" and "duty" occurs when these concepts are pushed back into the bad conscience, which is the sickness contracted by man when he was forced into civil society. Nietzsche understands the moralization of these concepts as an attempt to preclude forever the prospect of a final discharge of the greatest debt. The objective was to turn the concepts "guilt" and "duty" back against the debtor in whom the bad conscience resides until the irredeemable debt gives rise to the idea of irredeemable punishment, the idea that the debt cannot be discharged. The impossibility of outward action, initially because of the prohibitions of the maximum God and then because man is incapable of such, leads to further internalization, a gnawing away at the interior of man, eternally. This eternal punishment, for centuries thought to be administered by God, is, in Nietzsche's view, when administered by man himself, the ultimate cruelty.

The concepts "guilt" and "duty" were turned back against the creditor as well as the debtor. The beginning of the human race, the primal ancestors, are understood to be burdened with a curse. In the Biblical account of the Fall of Man, Adam and Eve

are banished from the garden as punishment for their original sin of prideful disobedience. Man feels shame at his nakedness, guilt for his transgression and endures the punishment of toil and suffering as a consequence. At its origin life as it is is understood by Judaism and Christianity as a punishment. Nietzsche claims that this understanding of life developed into the view of nature as being inherently evil and finally into the perception of existence in general as worthless. It is this inexorable development which gave rise to what Nietzsche calls "the horrifying and paradoxical expedient", the "stroke of genius" of Christianity which afforded mankind temporary relief. God himself sacrifices himself for the guilt of mankind, God redeems man from what has become unredeemable for man himself, the creditor sacrifices himself for his debtor, out of love for his debtor.[49]

The cruelty turned inward of the creature imprisoned in the "state", the creature who invented the bad conscience in order to hurt himself after the more natural outlet for his desire to inflict pain had been blocked, seized upon the presupposition of religion so as to drive his self-torture to the limit. The inventor of the bad conscience understands "God" as the complete antithesis of his animal instincts. These primal instincts are then reinterpreted as a form of guilt before God. The inventor of the bad conscience ejects from himself all his denial of his instincts in the form of an affirmation, as the holy God, the

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49. GM, Essay two, section 21.

beyond, eternity, as the immeasurability of guilt, and punishment without end.

For Nietzsche, man wills to find himself guilty and reprehensible to a degree that never can be atoned for; he wills to situate punishment and guilt in the very ground of things so as to drive his self-torture and delight in self-torture to the limit.[50] The will to self-tormenting which began innocently in response to the forced entry into civil society joins with the religious presupposition to erect an ideal, the "holy" God, in the face of which man feels absolutely unworthy. Although man could not redeem himself within Christianity at least Christianity provided man with relief from his burden of guilt: God himself became man in order to redeem man. But the eclipse of the Christian God shows definitively the dynamic underlying the conjunction of the bad conscience and the religious presupposition. For Nietzsche the most terrible sickness ever to befall man is his present will to abase himself irredeemably.

Nietzsche understands the "holy" God to be a special understanding of God, an understanding which is peculiar to the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Christianity has used its God for the self-crucifixion of man. Nietzsche suggests that there are nobler uses for the gods and points to the Greek gods who were reflections

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50. cf. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, part two, Of the Virtuous: "This is my Sorrow: reward and punishment have been lyingly introduced into the foundation of things--and now even into the foundation of your souls."

of noble and aristocratic men, deifications of the animal instincts.[51] The Greeks used their gods to defuse the bad conscience and as a means of celebrating their freedom of soul. In Nietzsche's view this is the very opposite of the use to which Christianity put its God. The Homeric Zeus thinks of the misdeeds of man as foolishness and not as sinful. Atrocities are explained by the noble Greeks as a matter of being deluded by a god. Unlike the Christian God who in Christ took upon himself the punishment, the Greek gods took upon themselves what is nobler according to Nietzsche, the guilt.

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51. GM, Essay two, section 23.

Chapter Three

The Ascetic Ideal

> All good things were formerly bad things; every original sin has turned into an original virtue.[1]

Underlying Nietzsche's explanation of the distinction between master morality and slave morality and the discussion of punishment and the bad conscience is his concern to "translate man back into nature."[2] His intention is to show that modern men are the heirs of a process which he calls the "conscience-vivisection and self-torture of millennia"[3], so that now man's natural drives and passions are inseparable from the bad conscience. What Nietzsche hopes to effect is a joining of the bad conscience to all the unnatural inclinations, all desire for the "beyond", the desire for anything which negates the senses and instincts, so that men will feel guilty for having these inclinations. Implied in the achievement of this conjunction is the destruction of all previous ideals which misunderstand and slander reality.[4]

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1. GM, Essay three, section 9.
2. See above, Introduction, p.22.
3. GM, Essay two, section 24.
4. IBID.

In essay one Nietzsche argues that master morality is more natural than slave morality. In essay two he argues that the absence of the bad conscience joined with the religious presupposition is a more natural condition than that of the bad conscience joined with the religious presupposition. As outlined above, Nietzsche understands "nature" in terms of will to power, a process of subduing and becoming master.[5] Will to power is not to be thought of as synonymous with "nature" since both the natural and the anti-natural exist within the will to power. Will to power is manifest in nature as in all life phenomena which means that it is effective in all moralities. In essay three Nietzsche continues his examination of the way in which will to power is effective in morality with particular reference to the ascetic ideal. The attempt to delineate what is "natural" means discussing necessarily what is "anti-natural" and for Nietzsche the ascetic ideal is the anti-natural ideal par excellence. He speaks of this ideal as a "monstrous mode of valuation"[6], as the supreme ideal hitherto which has laid a curse upon reality. Describing it as the "true calamity in the history of European health", Nietzsche states that out of the ascetic ideal was bound to grow the contemporary will to nothingness, nihilism.[7]

The ascetic ideal is the priest's ideal so that Nietzsche's analysis of this ideal in essay three marks a further deepening

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5. See above, Introduction, p. 20.
6. GM, Essay three, section 11.
7. GM, Essay two, section 24.

of his confrontation with the priest. He focuses on the ways in which he claims the priest uses the concepts "sin", "punishment", and especially "guilt". The stirring of guilt feelings is fundamental to the priest's ideal and for Nietzsche Western man's heritage of guilt feelings is incompatible with authentic freedom of the will. Nietzsche looks forward to a freedom without guilt feelings but understands that a simple return to the situation before the creation of the bad conscience is impossible. The soul of man has been changed irrevocably by the priest and his ideal, which means that an overcoming of the entire history of the bad conscience is required. This overcoming is a self-overcoming[8] which is accomplished by the sovereign individual who comes to his nature by surmounting the genealogy of the bad conscience in his own soul.

With the priest as its primary advocate, the ascetic ideal proves to be the animating ideal of Christianity. Nietzsche describes the Christian ideal as a closed system of will at the core of which is the will to truth.[9] In Nietzsche's view the primary concern of Christianity is not merely with the truth but with the will to truth. He does not find in the tradition any distinction between concern with the truth and love of

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8. In GM, Essay two, section 10, footnote 1, Kaufmann points out that the German phrase is "sich selbst aufhebend". Aufhebend means literally "to pick up" but also means "cancel" and "preserve" In being "picked up" something may be cancelled but also thereby preserved.
9. GM, Essay three, section 24.

the Good. For Nietzsche Christianity identified the truth with God, the Good, the eternal, the God-man and all of these must be understood as creations of the will.

In the preface to the Genealogy Nietzsche informs the reader that the third essay is presented as an example of the art of exegesis as applied to an aphorism.[10] The essay is a commentary on the following aphorism from Thus Spoke Zarathustra:

> Unconcerned, mocking, violent----
> thus wisdom wants us: she is a
> woman and always loves only a
> warrior.[11]

The ascetic ideal has reigned unopposed for two millennia which is the main reason for its power claims Nietzsche. The end of the hegemony of this ideal is effected by and coincides with the creation of an alternative system of will which depends on the existence of individuals of the mien described in the above quotation. The will to truth, and therewith the ascetic ideal, will fall before warriors who are not lovers of wisdom but who are loved by the woman wisdom. The implication is that the warrior alone knows how to respond properly to this woman. He controls wisdom or, like a god, is wise and the attainment of this wisdom depends not on moderation, courage and justice but on indifference, mockery, and violence.

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10. GM, Preface, section 8.
11. TSZ, "Of Reading and Writing", quoted in GM, opening of essay three. The tenor of this aphorism is reminiscent of Machiavelli's comment in The Prince that many have held the opinion that things are so ordered by fortune and God that the prudence of mankind may effect little change in them. Machiavelli continues: "...in my opinion it is better to be bold than cautious, for fortune is a woman and whoever wishes to win her must importune and beat her, and we may observe that she is more frequently won by this sort than by those who proceed more deliberately."
Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, translated and edited by Thomas G Bergin (New York: Meredith Publishing Co.,1947) Chapter XXV, p. 75.

I

Nietzsche opens the essay by posing the question of the meaning of ascetic ideals and then proceeds to list various human types including artists, philosophers, scholars, women, priests, and saints. That asceticism has meant something different to each of these types confirms for Nietzsche what he understands to be a basic fact of the human will: it needs a goal and it will rather will nothingness than not will.[12] He proceeds to analyze just three of the above listed human ~~types~~ artists, philosophers and priests—in order to make this explicit. Of these three types, Nietzsche's analysis of the priests is the most extensive and the most important for the purpose of this thesis. His discussion of the ascetic ideal in relation to artists and philosophers leads necessarily to a discussion of the priest, the primary exponent of this ideal, and so a cursory examination of the former two types should suffice.

Nietzsche begins by examining the ascetic ideal in relation to artists since in the case of artists the ascetic ideal means "nothing or too many things"[13], which is to say that the artist's life is least revealing of the meaning of this ideal. Using Wagner as an example, Nietzsche concludes from Wagner's dependence on Schopenhauer that artists are always valets of some

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12. GM, Essay three, section 1.
13. IBID.

morality or philosophy.[14] Wagner subscribed to Schopenhauer's theory of the sovereignty of music, whereby music was understood as a direct revelation of the will or the "in itself". In so doing Wagner subordinated himself and his art to the metaphysician, with his concern for the world "beyond" and deprecation of the sensed world. For this reason the much deeper question for Nietzsche is what it means when a genuine philosopher, such as Schopenhauer, pays homage to the ascetic ideal.

Nietzsche analyzes the way in which Schopenhauer borrowed from Kant the latter's perception of the aesthetic problem, the definition of beauty, from the point of view of the spectator and not from that of the artist-creator.[15] Among the predicates of beauty Kant included objectivity and disinterestedness. Schopenhauer attempted to establish disinterestedness as a predicate of beauty by arguing that aesthetic contemplation counteracts sexual interestedness specifically. The utility of aesthetic contemplation according to Schopenhauer is that it liberates from the will. But Nietzsche suggests that Schopenhauer was pleased by the beautiful from an "interested" viewpoint after all: he was a tortured man who sought release from the torture of his instincts.

Nietzsche's view is that disinterestedness is not a predicate of beauty, since the beautiful always arouses the will. Generalizing from the case of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche claims that philosophers

14. Nietzsche speaks of the "typical velleity" of the artist and this applies to the ancient Homer as well as the modern Goethe. GM, Essay three, section 4. However, in section 25 of essay three, Nietzsche argues that questioning the supremacy of truth leads necessarily to the elevation of art understood as the will to deception. In this context Homer is referred to as "the instinctive deifier, the golden nature" who is the deepest opponent of "the sincerest advocate of the 'beyond'", Plato.

15. GM, Essay three, section 6.

always have and always will exhibit irritation at sensuality but understands this as a consequence of the philosopher's instinctive striving for the optimum conditions under which he can achieve his maximum feeling of power. This optimum includes independence, and freedom from sensuality is part of this independence. In Nietzsche's view the adoption of the ascetic ideal by the philosopher is not a denial of existence but an affirmation of existence, and specifically the philosopher's own existence. Unlike the common man who is moderate for reasons of morality, the philosopher adheres to the ascetic ideal because it is conducive to the realization of his natural end, which for Nietzsche is creativity.

Philosophy took its first tentative steps under the protection of the ascetic ideal, since the philosopher's propensities as understood by Nietzsche[16] contravened the basic demands of morality and conscience. The philosopher had to use as a mask the accepted type of the contemplative man, the priest, and in order to use it effectively, claims Nietzsche, the philosopher had to believe in it.[17] The withdrawn attitude, hostility to life and the senses came to be thought of as essential to philosophy because the philosopher

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16. Among these are freedom from duties; the dance and flight of ideas; absence of hostility and rancor; "the heart remote, beyond, heavy with future, posthumous." GM, Essay three, section 8.
17. The implication is that philosophers were not aware of their obedience to the ascetic ideal nor aware of the philosophy-city ("community norms") conflict.

had to believe this in order to survive.

For Nietzsche the philosopher is not intrinsically ascetic but a certain asceticism is a condition and consequence of philosophizing. It was the ascetic priest who provided the "repulsive caterpillar form" in which alone the philosopher could thrive. Nietzsche contends that it is only with the ascetic priest that we seriously come to grips with the problem of the meaning of the ascetic ideal.[18] In this ideal the ascetic priest possesses his faith, his will and his power so that his very right to exist stands or falls with this ideal.

In questioning the ascetic ideal Nietzsche emphasizes that he is questioning the valuation the ascetic priest places on life. The priest juxtaposes "life", "nature", the whole sphere of becoming with a very different mode of existence which it opposes and excludes unless it denies itself. Propounding a dualistic understanding of the whole, the priest situates all meaning in the world beyond "life" or "nature" so that life is understood as merely a bridge to this world "beyond". An absolute meaning or value is not ascribed to life since life is merely a means, and potentially a barrier, to a higher mode of existence.

Acknowledging this as one of the most widespread phenomena in the history of mankind, Nietzsche surmises that it must be a necessity and in the interest of life itself that advocates of this mode of valuation recur. In the ascetic priest rules

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18. GM, Essay three, section 11.

a ressentiment without equal, an insatiable will to power that wants to become master over the most powerful and basic conditions of life.[19] Force is used to stifle force, pleasure is felt in physiological debility, pain and self-mortification. Originating in a fundamental need of the very life which it denies, the ascetic life is a self-contradiction in that it grows more triumphant the more its presupposition, its physiological capacity for life, decreases. Nietzsche argues, however, that physiologically considered this self-contradiction is apparent only, for the ascetic ideal springs from the protective instinct of a degenerating life which tries by all means to fight for its existence. The ascetic ideal is an expedient by which the deepest instincts of life struggle against physiological degeneration. Such a physiological degeneration was initiated, for example, when men were forced into civil society and were separated from their deepest instincts.[20] Contrary to what appears to be the case, life wrestles in the ascetic ideal against death and not against life.

That the ascetic ideal has ruled over man throughout history, and especially wherever the civilizing of man has occurred, is an indication, argues Nietzsche, of the sickliness of the type of man that has existed so far. Sickliness is the normal condition of man, which leads Nietzsche to advocate protection of the rare cases of great health of body and soul from the sick. The

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19. GM, Essay three, section 11.
20. See above, p. 76 ff.

conspiracy of the sick against the healthy is the most malicious conspiracy according to Nietzsche, a hatred that presents itself as justice, love, wisdom, and superiority. By denouncing pride and power as vicious things the sick succeed finally in poisoning the conscience of the healthy so that they begin to be ashamed of their health.

Nietzsche calls it an "inverted world" when the healthy begin to doubt their right to happiness.[21] Man's supreme concern should be that the sick not make the healthy sick. Nietzsche demands that the healthy be segregated from the sick since the healthy have a greater right to exist and therefore are liable for the future of man.[22] For this reason the healthy cannot be physicians to the sick or be concerned with the sick as the morality of compassion demands. The sick require physicians who are themselves sick and it is the ascetic priest who has filled and should continue to fill this need. The priest is sick himself but is also strong with his will to power intact so that he is trusted and feared by the sick. As the defender of the sick the priest engages the healthy in a war, using cunning rather than force. The more important function of the priest, however, is to defend the sick herd against disintegration within the herd due to the accumulation of ressentiment. In Nietzsche's view the essential art of the priest and the value of his mode of existence lies in the ability to alter the direction of ressentiment.

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21. GM, Essay three, section 14.
22. IBID.

Every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering. Common to all the sick is the belief that someone is to blame and, Nietzsche maintains, this belief is held more firmly the more the real cause, the physiological cause, remains hidden. It has been the function of the ascetic priest to tell the sufferer that he himself is to blame for his suffering. The priest tells the sufferer that his suffering is a punishment inflicted by God for his sins. For Nietzsche this explanation is obviously false.[23] but it did succeed in altering the direction of ressentiment. Instead of pent-up anger being discharged on others, the ressentiment of the afflicted was turned back upon themselves. This internalization of anger gave rise to more violent emotions which effectively deadened the pain of the afflicted. Through the ascetic priest and his use of concepts such as "guilt", "sin", "damnation", and "punishment" the creative instinct of life attempted to render the sick harmless. A kind of Hegelianism emerges once again[24] as Nietzsche speaks of the "creative instinct of life" achieving its end of the preservation and production of the strong through the creation of the bad conscience, the linking of the bad conscience and religious presuppositions, and the moral world of "responsibility", "sin", and "guilt".

The presupposition underlying Nietzsche's explanation of the priest's function is that "sinfulness" is not a fact but merely

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23. GM, Essay three, section 15.
24. cf. GM, Essay one, section 16; Essay two, section 12.

an interpretation of the fact of physiological debility.[25] The inability to understand the primacy of physiology led those who were held by the religious-moral perspective to explain weakness in terms of "sinfulness". While stating that this perspective is "no longer binding"[26], Nietzsche goes further and states that all "physiological pain" is not a fact but only an interpretation of facts of physiology.[27]

Nietzsche's fundamental objection to the priest's medication, therefore, is that he treated the suffering of the sufferer and not the real underlying physiological cause.[28] Nevertheless he does express a certain admiration for the priest for his extraordinary inventiveness in devising the means to alleviate suffering. Nietzsche refers to Christianity as a great treasure house of ingenious means of consolation[29] and claims that the main concern of all religions, unbeknown to those religions, has been to fight a spreading weariness through the application of stimulants. A feeling of physiological weakness seizes a large mass of people; the problem is not diagnosed as physiologically based and the cause and remedy are sought only in the physiological-moral domain. Nietzsche suggests that such a feeling may have its origins in events such as the crossing of races or classes, incorrect diet, and disease epidemics.[30]

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25. A long parenthetical comment explaining this appears in GM, Essay three, section 16.
26. IBID.
27. IBID.
28. GM, Essay three, section 17.
29. IBID.
30. See GM, Essay three, section 17.

II

Nietzsche turns to a detailed consideration of the principal methods employed by the priest to alleviate widespread feelings of displeasure.[31] These fall into two groups: the "innocent" methods and the "guilty" methods. Beginning with the former, Nietzsche describes the first innocent means as the reduction of feeling in general to its lowest point. This is accomplished through the abolition of will and desire and the proscription of hate, revenge, sexual love and so on. The result expressed in moral-religious terms is "selflessness" and "sanctification" but from within Nietzsche's perspective this is merely hypnotization, the attempt to effect the minimum metabolism at which life will subsist so as to deaden pain.

While admitting that this method does effect a release from physiological depression, he charges that it opens the door to a multitude of spiritual disturbances. Among these he lists auditory and visual hallucinations, private ecstacies expressed in sensual terms, and mysterious "inner lights". Those who experience such states describe them as entry into the ground of things, as liberation from illusion, as "knowledge" and "truth", as finally the inexpressible mystery. Nietzsche claims that these interpretations of these states by those subject to them are simply false. The supreme state, perfect restful attention to the One or mystical union with God, Nietzsche understands not

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31. GM, Essay three, sections 17 to 21.

as total wakefulness achieved through the elimination of obstructing selfish desires but as total hypnotization or deep sleep.

To support his position that the "mystery" may be explained fully in terms of the physiology of sleep Nietzsche quotes from the "oldest and most venerable scripture":[32]

> When he is completely asleep and perfectly at rest, so that he no longer dreams, then, dearly beloved, he is united with What Is, he has entered into himself---embraced by the cognitive self, he is no longer conscious of what is without or within, over this bridge neither day nor night, nor death, nor suffering, nor good works, nor evil works.[33]

For Nietzsche only those who have a deep need to be released from suffering will count the hypnotic sense of nothingness and the rest of deepest sleep which this expresses as the summum bonum. Although he rejects the high valuation placed on deep sleep, Nietzsche argues that the major religious traditions teach that "redemption" is not attainable through the practice of virtue or moral improvement and therefore redemption as it appears in

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32. Nietzsche does not footnote this quotation but it is taken presumably from the Vedas, since he quotes in the same section from Paul Deussen's work on the commentary of Sankara.
33. Quoted in GM, Essay three, section 17.

the great religions is worthy of honour.[34]

The hypnotic dulling of sensitivity presupposes rare energy and courage as well as contempt for opinion and therefore is for the few only. A second and more common "innocent" means of combatting the feeling of displeasure is a more easily exercised means: this is mechanical activity, or as it is referred to in the religious-moral perspective, "the blessing of work".[35] Mechanical activity includes absolute regularity, unthinking obedience, and fully occupied time: the worker's consciousness is crowded with activity, so that his attention is directed away from his suffering.

A third means of relieving physiological depression is the prescribing of a petty pleasure that is easily attainable and can be made a regular event. The most common form is the pleasure of giving pleasure as in being charitable, generous and helpful. By prescribing "love of thy neighbour", the priest really prescribes an excitement of the strongest, most life-affirming drive, the will to power. All doing good and helping involves the feeling of slight superiority and therefore is in Nietzsche's view the most effective means of consolation for the physiologically deprived.

Nietzsche points out that from its beginnings in the Roman world Christianity has organised itself into communities or

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34. IBID. Nietzsche expresses this succinctly: "For the man of knowledge there are no duties".
35. GM, Essay three, section 18.

churches. While calling these "associations for mutual aid for the poor and sick"[36], Nietzsche understands these as a victory in the struggle against depression in that the individual is lifted above aversion to himself. The awakening of a feeling of strength and power in the individual sufferer through participation in the power of the community is a fourth means by which the priest combats the feelings of displeasure.

The general muting of the feeling of life, mechanical activity, herd organization, petty pleasure, especially "love of one's neighbour", are the harmless or "innocent" devices of the priest for alleviating physiological depression. In section nineteen of the third essay Nietzsche turns to a consideration of those devices employed by the priest which are not innocent or harmless. These "guilty" devices all involve an orgy of feeling which is, argues Nietzsche, the most effective means of deadening pain. Nietzsche explains that orgies of feeling plunge the soul into terrors and raptures which lift the soul out of displeasure and depression. Anger, fear, revenge, hope, cruelty all have this power provided they explode suddenly. The priest uses all of these to rid men of their pain but always under the cover of a religious interpretation and justification. This is not to say that the priest does not employ these with a good conscience or without faith in their utility but he applies the

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36. IBID.

medication with the aim of relieving displeasure only and not with the aim of curing the sickness. Nietzsche calls this kind of "cure" for pain "guilty" because, applying physiological standards, every orgy of feeling only makes the sick more sick.

The principal means of all the "guilty" means used by the priest was the exploitation of the sense of guilt itself.[37] Nietzsche explains his understanding of the origin of guilt in the second essay, there finding that the sense of guilt is tied to debts. This description focuses on guilt in its "raw state".[38] It was only in the priests' hands that guilt achieved form.[39] Man, suffering from himself, desperate for reasons and remedies, receives from the priest the explanation of the "cause" of his suffering: the cause is in man himself, in his guilt, and his suffering must be understood as a punishment. The great accomplishment of the ascetic priest is that he made life meaningful for the sufferers by making their suffering meaningful.[40] By telling the weak that they suffer because they have sinned and that God is justly punishing them, the priest convinces them that there is a God who watches over them and cares for them. From Nietzsche's point of view this is absurd. But the transformation of the physiological invalid into a "sinner" has stood for two millennia so that now it is inscribed in an unforgettable way in the history and soul of man.

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37. GM, Essay three, section 20.
38. IBID.
39. IBID.
40. cf. GM, Essay two, section 7 where Nietzsche traces the problems of the modern world to the senselessness of suffering. Neither for the Christian who understood suffering in terms of salvation nor for the "naive man of ancient times" was there such a thing as senseless suffering. Ancient man invented gods as witnesses to cruel spectacles so that suffering would have a meaning.

The use of these "guilty" means by the ascetic priest has ruined the psychological health of man and consequently also taste in the arts and letters.[41] This ruination began with the basic book of Christian literature, the Bible. Nietzsche honours the Old Testament with its great human beings and heroic landscape but dismisses the New Testament for its "rococo of the soul", garrulousness of feeling, and absence of good breeding. He finds in the New Testament the apogee of presumption: petty characters regurgitating their most private affairs while displaying an easy familiarity with God, "pawing and nuzzling God".[42]

III

Nietzsche's main concern is not with what the ascetic ideal has done but what it means. His examination of the calamitous effects of this ideal is merely preparatory to the most difficult aspect of the question of the meaning of the ascetic ideal. This is the question of the power of this harmful ideal and why it has not been opposed.

The ascetic ideal expresses a will and a goal which renders all other concerns of human existence petty and narrow. This ideal interprets epochs in the light of this universal goal and permits no other interpretations or goals. It denies and affirms from the point of view of its interpretation and believes

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41. GM, Essay three, section 22.
42. IBID.

that no power exists that does not first have to receive a meaning and value from the ascetic ideal. Nietzsche claims that there has never been a match for this closed system of will because there has never been a system of interpretation so thoroughly thought through nor so deeply rooted.

Nietzsche turns in the final pages of the third essay to a consideration of various candidates that have been put forward as the ideal which opposes the ascetic ideal.[43] This examination is intended to show that all of these candidates are, in the most important respect, manifestations of the ascetic ideal and therefore are not serious challenges to this ideal. The first and most imposing candidate is modern science, the proponents of which point out that modern science believes in itself and has up to the present flourished without God or any "beyond". Nietzsche rejects these arguments maintaining that where modern science still inspires passion it is not the opposite of the ascetic ideal but the latest and noblest form of it. The rise of modern science did not come about through a definitive break with Christianity but marks a transformation and continuation of some of the deepest tendencies of Christianity. Scientists are believers still in that they believe in science and in the goodness of the pursuit of science. The ways in which scientists sacrifice themselves for the truth show that they believe as deeply and are as ascetic as devout Christians.

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43. GM, Essay three, section 23 ff.

Where science and modern scholarship are not the latest expression of the ascetic ideal they are the hiding place for disbelief and the unrest of the lack of ideals. Nietzsche suggests that these nihilistic scientists and scholars may be understood as occupying the last rung on the ladder of religious cruelty.[44] On the first rung is the sacrifice of human beings, which occurred during the primitive epoch of mankind. The sacrifice of man's strongest instincts occurred during the moral-ascetic epoch and occupies the second rung of the ladder of religious cruelty. On the third rung mahkind sacrifices all hope, all faith in future bliss and justice, to worship gravity, fate or nothingness. The nihilistic scientists and scholars of the contemporary era carry out the ultimate act of cruelty, the sacrifice of God for nothingness.

These "unbelieving" scientists and scholars are believers after all, asserts Nietzsche, since they <u>believe</u> that they are the opponents of the ascetic ideal.[45] Atheists, immoralists and anti-Christians believe they are liberated from the ascetic ideal but they are merely its most spiritualized products. Far from being "free spirits" these skeptics and atheists still have faith in truth, as manifested in their insistence on intellectual purity. This faith takes the form of refusing to affirm or to deny and insisting on halting before the "factual".

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44. <u>BGE</u>, section 55.
45. <u>GM</u>, Essay three, section 24.

All of this, Nietzsche argues, expresses as much ascetic virtue as the Christian's denial of sensuality.

Wherever the need to be uncompromisingly honest and truthful appears, the ascetic ideal rules. Nietzsche quotes at length from The Gay Science to show that modern science, whether in its nihilistic or non-nihilistic form, acquires its meaning and method from this deeper faith:

> The truthful man...thereby affirms another world than that of life, nature, and history; and insofar as he affirms this "other world", does this not mean that he has to deny its antithesis, this world, our world?.. ...It is still a metaphysical faith that underlies our faith in science---and we men of knowledge today, we godless men and anti-metaphysicians, we, too, still derive our flame from the fire ignited by a faith millennia old, the Christian faith, which was also Plato's, that God is truth, that truth is divine---but what if this belief is becoming more and more unbelievable, if nothing turns out to be divine any longer unless it be error, blindness, lies---if God himself turns out to be our longest lie?[46]

For Nietzsche modern science must be understood as Christianity in its most attenuated form since both rest on the same metaphysical faith, the belief in the divinity or absolute importance of truth. The Christian conscience was sublimated into the scientific conscience, into an uncompromising insistence on

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46. GS, section 344, quoted in GM, Essay three, section 24.

intellectual probity. The elimination of the Christian God by modern science must be understood, then, as the work of Christian morality, the concept of truthfulness taken more and more strictly.

In Nietzsche's view Christianity and Plato identified God or the Good with truth. He does not consider the possibility that in Plato's thought the Good precedes the truth[47] and, if this is what Plato taught, the way in which this was taken into the Christian tradition. For Nietzsche not only the concern with truth but the will to truth is at the centre of Christianity, and the logical extension of this will, in the form of modern science, has destroyed Christianity as dogma.[48] The law of the necessity of "self-overcoming"[49] means that in the same way Christianity as morality, the heart of which is the will to truth, must now perish of necessity. After Christian truthfulness, the core of morality and the ascetic ideal, has drawn one inference after another, it must end by drawing its most striking inference, its inference against itself. The will to truth turned back upon itself will not be refuted but will gradually perish. In an earlier work Nietzsche refers to this perishing as the "autosuppression of morals", to be effected by the last men of conscience heeding the final "Thou shalt."[50]

47. Plato, Republic, translated by Allan Bloom, (New York: Basic Book 1968), Book VI, 508 d.
48. Nietzsche points out in GM, Essay three, section 27, quoting from GS, section 357 that to view nature as if it were a proof of the goodness and providence of God, to interpret history as a perpetual witness to a moral world order, and one's experiences as if they were preordained, now belongs to the past and strikes the more sensitive conscience as dishonest and cowardly.
49. GM, Essay three, section 27.
50. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Dawn of Day, translated by J.M.Kennedy, in The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, edited by Dr. Oscar Levy, (Edinburgh and London: T. N. Foulis, 1909), 1886 Preface.

The ascetic ideal alone has conferred meaning on man's existence according to Nietzsche.[51] Prior to the emergence of this ideal man's existence on earth was without a goal. For Nietzsche the meaning of the power of this ideal lies in the fact that in the "beginning" man was surrounded by a fearful void, that the "sentiment" of existence was and is terror. Man suffered and demanded a meaning for his suffering. The meaninglessness of suffering and not suffering itself was man's burden until the ascetic ideal offered man meaning. This interpretation of suffering brought deeper, more inward, more life destructive suffering with it, as it placed all suffering under the perspective of guilt. The ascetic ideal saved the will by offering a new possibility of willing, but the inner consequences of this ideal now manifest themselves in their terrible reality. Hatred of the body and of reason, the longing to escape becoming and death, are no longer justifiable in terms of a "higher" purpose but must be understood as manifestations of the will to nothingness, as a turning away from the most fundamental presuppositions of life.

Conclusion

Nietzsche writes in The Anti-Christ that the beginning of

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51. GM, Essay three, section 28.

the Bible contains the entire psychology of the priest.[52] The priest's psychology and the priest's ideal are based on the ancient prohibition which Nietzsche claims constitutes morality alone: "Thou shalt not know."[53] The concepts of guilt and punishment, including the doctrine of "sin" and "forgiveness", of "grace" and "redemption" were invented by the priest in opposition to knowledge. This knowledge is the insight which is definitive for Nietzsche, the insight which vitiates Christian (and Platonic) teaching. This is the insight that the essence of life is will to power, that all events are a subduing, a becoming master. The attainment of this insight empowers Nietzsche to dismiss the traditional Christian claim that it is a revealed account of the whole which is valid for all time. The primacy of will to power or creativity means that Christianity is a time-bound "world-view" or ideal, a compensatory creation rooted in instinctual energy frustrated in its outward discharge. Nietzsche's succinct manner of expressing this is that "faith" has been a shrewd blindness to the dominance of certain instincts.[54]

The foregoing exposition has shown that for Nietzsche the extant remnant of Christianity is morality, which he understands to be a morality of compassion or an "unegoistic" morality. This morality is a matter of "value" judgments devised by the creative self at a moment in the ongoing process of man's measuring and defining. Traditional Christianity does not understand its moral

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52. AC, section 49.
53. IBID.
54. AC, section 39.

teaching in these terms. The traditional Christian teaching of the unchangeableness of morality is based on the belief in the transcendence of God or the eternal which is loveable. Man is thought to be part of an unchanging order which he did not create and which prescribes to him the proper purposes of his existence. The unceasing change of the world, what Nietzsche refers to as the "fearful void", is bridged eternally by love in the Passion of Christ.

Nietzsche rejects this as an unfounded dualism, as a separation of the sensed world and the "beyond", as an "ideal" created by the suffering will. This ideal has been the supreme authority commanding man's obedience for two millennia. Although Nietzsche admits that obedience over a long period of time and in a single direction seems to be essential for the development of something for the sake of which it is worthwhile to live on earth[55], he perceives that the continuation of the ascetic ideal as the supreme authority is now detrimental to the advancement of man. The stifling and crushing of the spirit that obedience to this ideal has produced is no longer justifiable. For this reason Nietzsche seeks to reconstitute authority in the sovereign individual who has overcome the habit of obedience and thereby freed himself to command and force the will of millennia upon new tracks.[56]

The conviction that he has achieved the definitive insight is the reason Nietzsche claims that his ideas are deeply rooted,

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55. BGE, section 188.
56. BGE, section 203.

more deeply rooted than the tree of asceticism or vengefulness. These deeper roots enable Nietzsche to understand this tree in a way that it has not been understood hitherto. His analysis of the human soul brings to light not something within that never moves, the eternal onto which the "human reality" opens, but a movement which has dictated a moral-ascetic response to the world. This response is not a necessary response, however, for a greater motion occurs in the soul of the sovereign individual, and this individual is autonomous and supramoral. Christianity teaches that man's will is bound necessarily by a moral order which he did not make and cannot transcend. In Nietzsche's view the sovereign individual wills beyond morality. This exposition is an initial step toward clarifying Nietzsche's extraordinary claim that the roots of the tree of the sovereign individual's soul are deeper than those of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of the cross.

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