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Orders of Normativity: Nietzsche, Science and Agency

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Orders of Normativity: Nietzsche, Science and Agency

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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DEDICATION

To a friendship of goodwill between people, all the qualities...belong in virtue of the nature of the friends themselves; for in the case of this kind of friendship the other qualities also are alike in both friends[...] Love and friendship therefore are found most and in their best form between such people.

But it is natural that such friendships should be infrequent; for such people are rare.

Further, such friendship requires time and familiarity; as the proverb says, people can't know each other until they have "eaten salt together;" nor can they admit each other to friendship or be friends till each has been found lovable and been trusted by each. [...]

And such a friendship is, as might be expected, permanent, since there meet in it all the qualities that friends should have. (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VIII 4)

I dedicate this dissertation to my friend, Erik Kleiber (1985- 2017). I wish I could have shared this with you. I miss you always.

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I want to acknowledge everyone who put up with long periods of distance, space and time while I put this together. Mom, Dad, Kara and Jackie—thanks for your patience through the years. “I’m still working” is a refrain you’ll get from an over-busy and deadline-wrought grad student if you ask them, “How’s it coming?” or “How close are you?” Probably y’all have come to predict this uncomfortable response from me, and you in so hearing—we’ll have to find something more interesting to talk about moving forward.

Natasha, thank you for your patience and understanding that I’ll be out sitting in a chair in the one café in town puzzling over this, or sitting in my dark office three blocks from our house, in solitude, to get this done almost every night for hours on end. And in solidarity—I remember how time *chunked* itself when you’d go into the office on Sunset Drive and shut the door to bear down on the dissertation. Probably nobody else in our life understands the process as we’ve both experienced it, and it’s been empowering for me to often have a verbally uncommunicated but otherwise communicated understanding of circumstances as they evolve and change. I doubt any other relationship could have survived this. Love and gratitude.

But plenty do: thanks to the rallying of friends academic and not: my Tampa urban family Mandy and Rene; my newly-found Alamosa friends and colleagues—Heidi and Matt and Nick, who are unrelenting allies in all domains and are dear to my heart. Renee, my Title V curricular reform project director and friend who constantly reminded me that this will only get done if I do it; If conversation orbited outside work, which was normal, her gravity was always

towards *how is it coming?* She wasn't asking out of politeness—her questions were a continual source of making me reflect on the value of the dissertation from the point of view of *process*.

Lastly, thank you to my chair, Stephen Turner, and to my committee Brook Sadler, Alex Levine and Michael Morris. “Life happened,” as Alex paraphrased my answer to “what happened?” between fall of 2015 and spring of 2018, where a prospectus for the dissertation usually comes the semester after the defense of comps. Thank you for your patience, for staying committed to my project and helping me to see it through to completion.

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ABBREVIATIONS OF NIETZSCHE'S WORKS

- TL Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1973. "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense" in Kaufmann (1977).
- D Nietzsche, Friedrich. 2007 [1881]. *Daybreak* (Hollingdale trans.) (Cambridge University Press).
- GS Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1974 [1882]. *The Gay Science* [1882] 1974. Random House
- Z Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in Kaufmann (1977).
- HH Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1995 [1878]. *Human, All Too Human* (Hollingdale trans.) (Cambridge University Press).
- BGE Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil* [1886] in Kaufmann (2000).
- GM Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1998 [1887]. *On The Genealogy of Morality* (Clark trans.) (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company).
- TI Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Twilight of the Idols* [1887] in Kaufmann (1977).
- AC Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Antichristian* [1888] in Kaufmann (1977).
- EH Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Ecce Homo* [1888] in Kaufmann (1977)
- Kaufmann, Walter (trans.). 1976. *The Portable Nietzsche* (Canada: Modern Library).
- Kaufmann, Walter (trans.). 2000. *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Penguin Books).

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I set out to address the “scope problem” in Nietzsche scholarship. In the secondary literature, the scope problem is characterized as a problem for Nietzsche, who seems deeply skeptical about nearly every item of his inherited western metaphysical toolkit. If his skepticism about western metaphysics penetrates all dimensions of his thought, how can he motivate a reader to also reject western metaphysics without himself committing to some of it? I stipulate that answering the scope problem means explicating what Nietzsche views as the general source of normativity—it is there that we can understand the resources Nietzsche is committing himself to, and the ones he rejects. I examine Leiter’s solution to this problem, which assigns science as the general source of normativity. However, Leiter’s solution depends on textual pedigree that I argue is inconsistent with the texts themselves. I argue that the normativity of science, instead of being the source of general normativity, represents an *order* of normativity for Nietzsche—but it is not ordered generally. I look to GS 341 to analyze “eternal recurrence,” and argue that an expression of Nietzsche’s “higher morality” can be located in the passage. Higher morality, I argue, places the general source of normativity in the value the reader places on her life. This account of higher morality solves the scope problem by narrowing it to readers who already accept or embrace the challenge of placing a level of value on their life commensurate with eternal recurrence.

INTRODUCTION

In some remote corner of the universe, poured out and glittering in innumerable solar systems, there once was a star on which clever animals invented knowledge. That was the highest and most mendacious minute of "world history"—yet only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths the star grew cold, and the clever animals had to die. (TL 1)

In “Truth and Lies in the Extra Moral Sense,” Nietzsche characterizes humanity and human knowledge in a story, I take to circumscribe the kinds of claims, and their attendant problems, he tends to make throughout his active and productive intellectual life. On what I think is an uncontroversial gloss of the passage quoted above, Nietzsche can be read as making at least three claims. They are:

TLa. Earth occupies a “remote corner of the universe” amongst “innumerable solar systems” rather than at its center;

TLb. Knowledge is a human invention, opposed to a discovery or a revelation

TLc. The significance of knowledge and its inventors has been falsely inflated in discussions about the place of humanity in the context of history

TLd. Humans, despite claims to the contrary, are mortal.¹

¹ I will return to how these claims are vindicated in the orders of Nietzsche’s normativity in the conclusion.

Interpreted as a set of claims that contradict central (or former) dogmas of Christianity, there arises a problem. First, consider TL_a. If our miniscule place in the solar system is, on this reading, supposed to contradict the idea that it is our centrality in the universe that makes humanity and human knowledge *valuable*, what value remains for recommending to people that this is a story that is in their interest to read? In other words, if what makes humanity and human knowledge *important* relies on the necessary and false condition that humans live in a place intentionally designed to be the center of the universe, how can a story like this have any value?

Consider TL_b. If the *value* of knowledge relies on the necessary and false condition that it is essentially a discovery or a revelation and not a creation, how can this passage be imbued with value sufficient to motivate someone to read the passage and believe its claims to be true? In other words, if knowledge derives its normative authority from the necessary condition that its nature be one of discovery or revelation, and this condition turns out to be false, how can knowledge bear sufficient normative authority for a reader to believe this claim to be true?

Last, consider TL_c. If the significance of knowledge and its inventors have been falsely inflated in discussions about the place of humanity in the context of history is *necessary* for humanity and human knowledge to have value, how can there be any value important enough to motivate someone to read this passage and believe that TL_c is true? In other words, if it's false that human knowledge and its inventors have any significance in the context of the history of the universe, why should Nietzsche believe anyone has any reason to pick up his books and read them—to believe TL_a—d are true?

These problems touch on what contemporary Nietzsche scholars call the “scope problem.” The scope problem is the problem concerning Nietzsche’s ability to make any

normative recommendations to any actual or potential readers, despite casting off much the normative authority of traditional Western values and assumptions. This problem bears itself not in the local area of the notebook fragment from 1878's short and unpublished essay TL. The scope problem is a more global problem, and its solution (or lack thereof) spans all of Nietzsche's published, and in many cases his unpublished, works. Because scholars are divided about how to rank the importance of these texts in the pursuit of deciphering some semblance of unity throughout them, there have emerged camps whose interpretation of the scope problem depend in part on which groups of text they focus on.

There have been a number of ways commentators address the scope problem—Jessica Berry, for instance, reads Nietzsche on the model of Pyrrhonian skepticism, and doesn't see the need for him to solve it at all. Nietzsche's work, on her account, isn't about making cases at all, and so he doesn't need a solution to the scope problem. There are other commentators, like Nadeem Hussain (2013) and Bernard Reginster (2006), who do read Nietzsche as making a positive case for *something* to solve the scope problem—they try to locate the metaethical position of non-cognitivist view of moral discourse and that he subscribes to a version of fictionalism; Clark & Dudrick (2016) angle for non-cognitivism too, but land on attributing to Nietzsche a version of Gibbard's norm expressivism.

I am relatively unmoved by the extant solutions (or the lack thereof) to the scope problem. I am going to try to approach the scope problem from a slightly different position than the framework shared among the aforementioned accounts—I start from the perspective of *normativity*. Normativity, broadly speaking, concerns *correct-making* or *legitimacy-conferring* properties on actions, persons and practices. Taking a big-picture view, as I do in this dissertation and others who have written on Nietzsche with the phenomenon of normativity in view, can help

put the most general emphases of Nietzsche's thought into clear view without getting lost in the woods of squaring some bit of exegesis with another.²

For the purposes of this work, let **general normative authority** be defined as follows: Some entity *e* or process *p* has *general normative authority* iff *e* or *p* provides a good or adequate or legitimate justification for some value or some belief.³ General normative authority shapes the way commentators interpret possible answers to the scope problem, because a theory (or lack thereof) of general normative authority can be a source for characterizing the reason-giving activity Nietzsche appears to engage in in his published works.

Instead of taking various attempts at the scope problem and dealing with them in a piecemeal fashion, I'm going to look at a more-or-less standard view that presupposes a general normative authority in science. I focus primarily on Leiter's influential work on Nietzsche—he argues that Nietzsche has *partial* resources to make normative recommendations to *some* actual and potential readers. I will show that his account hinges on attributing to Nietzsche the view that science bears general normative authority. But in order to make this attribution, Leiter needs to rely on Clark's "developmental hypothesis," which maintains that Nietzsche's intellectual life *evolved* from his early to late works; specifically, in his earlier works, Nietzsche accepts metaphysical correspondence theory, which holds that in order for any statement to be true it needs to correspond to the way things really are in themselves. As his work evolves, the story

² I return to my reasoning in abandoning the framework of the discourse presupposed by mostly all these accounts in the conclusion of this dissertation. Suffice it to say for now that they all tend to make the case that Nietzsche is best read as an X, where "x" is some contemporary theory of meta or normative ethics in the Anglo-American tradition, and "x" entails the falsity of at least one other account. For instance, if Nietzsche refrains from advancing claims in the Pyrrhonian skeptical tradition, as Berry claims, then Leiter's claim that Nietzsche is *anti-realist* about moral claims is false. I am dubious about this kind of discourse.

³ The objects over which general normative authority range expand beyond the cognitive and conative. I address this in chapter 3.

goes, Nietzsche *abandons* cognitive commitments to the thing-in-itself and in so doing, his later works show a wholesale acceptance of ordinary empirical truths.

The developmental hypothesis is no good—the textual pedigree just isn't there. There is, as Anderson (1997) notes, just too much of the “falsification thesis”—the thesis that human minds falsify reality—in Nietzsche's later works to affirm the developmental hypothesis. In chapter two, I argue that the developmental hypothesis is a textually inadequate source for attributing to Nietzsche the view that science bears normative authority. I defend Acompora's (2006) interpretation of TI III against objections from Leiter, and I draw attention to passages in which Nietzsche makes reference to “Copernicus” in a unified and thematic way across his life as a thinker which undermines the claim that Nietzsche imbues science with general normative authority.

And yet, there is something unsettling about completely denying science any normative authority. There has to be recognition in Nietzsche's published works that the results of empirical inquiry are cognitively superior to those of an arm-chair metaphysician like Kant. Nietzsche constantly lauds the senses, complains about their mistreatment in the history of the west, and uses metaphor to constantly underscore their importance by, instead of advancing a belief as *false*, he talks about it being “seasoned with one too many grains of salt” (BGE 198).

I propose, therefore, that in re-thinking Nietzschean normativity that we posit *orders of normativity*; instead of *normativity* being a singular term referring to entities or processes that get justifying beliefs and values off the ground, there will be orders, or degrees, or normativity. In this dissertation I want to parse out two orders on the scale of importance⁴ with one having an

⁴ There are likely *many more*, given the number of contexts that emerge in which we find norms bearing force on our motivations, evaluative perceptions, values, etc. The moral psychological inventory is *broad*, for Nietzsche. Schacht refers instead to this broad context as *one's sensibility*. I explore this in chapter 3.

ordering of *generality*, which I've already indicated is what we're after here. But an order of normativity with less importance but still imbued with *some* normative authority emerges. I argue in introducing chapter three that science is afforded this latter degree of normative authority. I do so on the grounds to explain why Nietzsche contradicts himself on the possibility of causality in TI. This explanation makes my account cognitively superior than Acampora's or Leiter's take on that textual context because it fully engages with the fact that Nietzsche tells you one of the goals he has in teaching you anything in the section preceding TI VI is that understanding him there will "provoke contradiction" (TI III). I claim that Nietzsche intentionally undermines pieces of genuine theoretical knowledge by contradicting those pieces of genuine knowledge with an aim of showing the *normative limitations* that that knowledge can bring to agency. It must be the domain of the practical in which we find the source of general normative authority.

In chapter three, then, I first look at recovering a workable framework into which *naturalism* in normativity can fit, but figuring in the reductive way Leiter et. al would have it. I look at Schacht's (2013) naturalist conception of Nietzsche's normativity, which emphasizes *forms of life* and *sensibilities* (beliefs and values and perceptions and motivations and reasons and desires...) as the framework that normativity occupies. Schacht stresses mechanisms for internalizing norms we can regard as having authority over and within the context of our sensibilities for understanding much of contingent and *culturally scripted and structured* content our normative lives have built into them.

I argue that Schacht finally brings us on the *right* track, but he leaves discussions unfinished in which he would account for the *first personal* relation to norms. GS 341 is a

Accordingly, *general normative authority* will evolve as a concept to answer to the scope of contents that *sensibility* brings to agency.

passage I think is pivotal to understanding Nietzsche's *moral* thinking, and so I turn to the concept of *eternal recurrence* in Nietzsche's published works as the starting ground for a Nietzschean picture of general normative authority that can survive the moral reflection I think is nascent in the passage. Here, properly construed, *the reader's life itself* is the bearer of general normativity. Since Nietzsche imbues the concept of *the reader's life itself* as an entity and process which counts as a justifier against deficient, or nihilistic, conceptions of life, I think eternal recurrence is a natural starting place for thinking about this question on Nietzsche's own terms. I survey some of the more cited takes on the normative significance of eternal recurrence, specifically, Soll and Clark. Soll's take is important because his objections to the coherence of eternal recurrence threaten to undermine any of the purported higher moral significance I want to imbue it with.

Clark has a novel solution to Soll's worries, but I still think that Soll has missed the point of eternal recurrence in two ways. The first is that he treats the value of life from an *inter-cycle* perspective, where the content of value in someone's life exists specifically in the value it can bring in aggregate over the course of *infinite lives* with identical content. Soll thinks the value of an *inter-cycle* life hinges on the hedonic perspective I bring to evaluating it—a life that recurs eternally should matter to me just in case I can regard the person re-living it as me, and that I can bring that *me* as much pleasure and as little pain as possible. I think the inter-cycle hedonic position of evaluation misses the first-personal *intra-cycle* position of evaluation—the fact that this thought experiment is being brought to bear on the *reader's life in this moment*. I argue that an adequate account of 341 needs to make this first-personal encounter *normatively salient* for the reader, such that she can consider the value of her own life as a general source of normativity.

But our second problem looms large, and it is that seldom does any scholar take pains to notice that in 341 Nietzsche is addressing “*you*”, not “your drive to life,” or “your affects.” He is addressing a unified *you* reading the passage. I have found Anderson (2013) to be an important and persuasive account of what this Nietzschean *you* could be. Anderson (2013) gives an account of a Nietzschean *minimal self* that doesn’t amount to the metaphysical implausibility of a transcendental ego, but nor does it concede to the Williams (1995) program of deflating every item of moral psychology that we have inherited from the Kantian and post-Kantian tradition. Anderson focuses on the capacity to “stand back” from one’s cross-hatch drive/affect network and assess some given drive or affect’s content. These form two sides of a minimal self, which is constituted by the cross-hatch drive/affect network and couldn’t be what it is without that network, but which is also at the same time making itself positionally related to the contents of that network such that evaluation of any given element of it, when the whole minimal self is in an adequate *mood* to get a glimpse of the whole cross-hatch drive/affect network.

I then conclude chapter 3 with an articulation of what I think counts as a “higher” non-“Morality in the Pejorative Sense” (Leiter 2002) version of Nietzschean morality presented in the eternal recurrence thought experiment. If you can endorse your life on reflection with the whole self evoked by the mood of *loneliest loneliness* as well as a prompt to reflect on affect in that intentional context, then you satisfy the demands of a higher morality. In so doing, *your* life is revealed as the general source of naturalist normativity for Nietzsche.

I conclude the dissertation with some reflection on the state of argument in the secondary literature. I think there are some rare cases in which scholars approach the text with an eye to inhabiting the history out of which it was written, as well as the nuances and subtleties that usually overflowing in richness in the textual context to which they answer. But too often is it the

case, with Hussain (2013), that scholars adopt a hermeneutics of “hypercharity,” such that belief that p entails that Nietzsche believes p . I give some examples of shortcoming that I find puzzling, but emphasize that across the dissertation I have tried to stay anchored in the textual context in which these rich and subtle cues lie in abundance as *clues* for understanding what’s going on. Even though I disagree with Clark, both on the position she brings to “charity” in interpretation, as well as some of the results of adopting that position throughout the dissertation, I think she models the kind of engagement we Nietzsche scholars should aim at living up to. I finish by solving the scope problem that I laid out in this introduction, and show that the resources that lie nascent in TL itself are present and in full force by the end of Nietzsche’s active intellectual life—the value of your life as the general source of normativity is imbued in the spirit of Nietzsche’s published works from start to finish.

CHAPTER ONE:

LEITER, AGENCY AND THE GENERAL NORMATIVE AUTHORITY OF SCIENCE

1.1 Introduction

Leiter thinks he has an answer to the scope problem: Nietzsche himself has no resources, conceptual or otherwise, at hand to persuade or convince the reader of *anything*, and so does nothing other than present the reader with his idiosyncratic expressions of value. In other words, if Nietzsche thought that there was something his reader *ought* to believe or value, then he would have to account for the nature of this recommendation; but Nietzsche doesn't think accounts for this sort of recommendation ever succeed, because there are no objective facts about value. To see why Leiter thinks the view that there are no objective facts about value is attributable to Nietzsche, I will explicate Leiter's account of Nietzsche's critique of morality. In doing so, I will focus on Leiter's account of Nietzsche's charge that in the tradition of the western metaphysical interpretation of morality, morality carries with it false and in some cases harmful presuppositions in its conception of moral agency.

I will then turn my focus to what *Leiter* must presuppose in his account of Nietzsche's assessment of morality's false and sometimes harmful presuppositions. In other words: in virtue of *what* being the case does it follow that morality carries with it false and sometimes harmful presuppositions? According to Leiter,

Nietzsche thinks the “truths” he is pursuing about morality are, in fact, advantageous for life, since, of course, he equates “life” in this regard with the flourishing of the highest human beings. (Leiter 2002 280)

It’s here that we can start to appreciate the role that *scientific truth* plays in Leiter’s account of Nietzsche’s critique of the moral interpretation of agency. The truths Nietzsche is pursuing about morality, on Leiter’s account of Nietzsche, are grounded in empirically discernable facts (actual or speculative/possible) about agency and those facts are grounded in the presence or absence of flourishing for some human person.

For Leiter’s Nietzsche, science is the bearer of general normative authority. Recall my stipulated definition of **general normative authority**:

Some entity *e* or process *p* has *general normative authority* iff *e* or *p* provides a good or adequate or legitimate justification for some value or some belief.

In the introduction, I claimed that *e* or *p* (usually both) provide a general theory of the source of normative authority for the beliefs or values someone holds—they confer *correct-making properties* over the domain of belief and value. General normative authority is a *legitimate justifier* over the domain of belief or value, and this authority confers itself across all contexts of belief and value. We can consider cases of *e* or *p* that confer normative authority but lack generality. Take for example *e* “law enforcement,” and the *p* “arresting somebody for breaking the law.” Someone may explicitly recognize that doing something might subject themselves to being *p*, which they by and large recognize as having normative authority over how they act in the context of public behavior. However, law enforcement isn’t usually an entity that people regard as having *general* normative authority—we can see this in cases of disobedience.

What would count as an entity for someone which has completely general normative authority? Take Christianity. Some entity “God” has general normative authority because God supplies a general justification for belief about worldly phenomena, which of it to avoid, etc. This is why some have argued that human law reflect divine law, and when that divine law is violated, we can conclude that the attendant human law is unjust. This explains why in *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, Martin Luther King Jr. remarks on the distinction between *just* laws and *unjust* laws, appealing to “God” as having more general normative authority than certain edicts of law enforcement.

For Leiter however, and for his Nietzsche, the entity that has general normative authority for belief is scientific truth, and the process for forming true beliefs that has general normative authority are those that take place in natural science. Take the following as an example:

Scientists, atheists, and even Antichrists and immoralists like Nietzsche...are all able to tear down God, religions, and morality, as well as *plumb the depths of reality itself in pursuit of scientific knowledge*. (Leiter 2002 266 my emphasis)

It is scientific truth, on Leiter’s reading, that serves as the basis of justification for Nietzsche’s claims about what errors morality makes in its assessment of human agency. If, on Leiter’s account, Nietzsche can make any justified claims about the false and sometimes harmful presuppositions morality commits in its interpretation of agency, it then follows that Leiter’s reading of Nietzsche must be capable of supplying an account of what enables Nietzsche to say anything *true* about what makes the western tradition’s interpretation of agency “errant,” or to say anything *true* about what morality has falsely posited about motivation and other facets of agency. And his Nietzsche is able to do exactly this—but *only if* Nietzsche affords scientific truth general normative authority. Nietzsche does not. So, I will argue in chapter two that Leiter’s

account of Nietzsche on scientific truth is textually inconsistent with a variety of passages that express doubt about whether scientific truth can amount to what Leiter thinks it can for Nietzsche. Therefore, it follows that there is reason to believe Leiter's account of Nietzsche's critique of agency is either incomplete or unsound.

I will explicate in 1.2 what Leiter claims is Nietzsche's critique of morality as it is construed in the tradition of western metaphysics. I will explicate in part 1.3 what Leiter thinks the role of science is in executing this critique. Finally, carving out the appropriate domain of texts is a live controversy in Nietzsche scholarship. Leiter subscribes to Maudemarie Clark's "developmental hypothesis," which holds that Nietzsche's thinking about the concept of truth evolves over his life as a thinker. Clark argues that in attributing predicates to "Nietzsche," one must restrict the domain of associated texts with his later, and therefore more mature, thinking about truth.⁵

1.2 Leiter: Nietzsche Against Morality

Nietzsche frequently refers to himself as an immoralist in his published works, often offering up a self-description in somewhat dramatic terms:

I am by far the most terrible human being that has existed so far; this does not preclude the possibility that I shall be the most beneficial. I know the pleasure in destroying to a degree that accords with my powers to destroy—in both respects I obey my Dionysian nature which does not know how to separate doing No from saying Yes. I am the first immoralist: that makes me the annihilator *par excellence*. (EH D II)

⁵ Specifically, the aim is to talk about what an *evolved* Nietzsche thinks about truth in the later works. She replicates this desiderata in attempting to construct a developmental hypothesis about Nietzsche's development in thinking about *metaethics*. See Clark, Maudemarie & David Dudrick (2015).

With his “immoralism,” Nietzsche aims to “destroy,” or provide a critique of, in all essentials, “modernity” (EH BGE II). If Nietzsche is going to succeed at critiquing at least the moral component of modernity, one wonders with what resources Nietzsche could possibly appeal to or make use of in order to ground his critique. In other words, to what extent, if any, does Nietzsche’s immoralism make use of traditional modern cognitive resources, such as moral facts, to make his critique successful in the mind of his imagined reader.

Leiter considers Nietzsche’s immoralism to be an outgrowth of his attack specifically on morality. A natural question arises here—what does Nietzsche mean when he refers to morality? Because Nietzsche never gives an exhaustive definition of it or the values it and only it contains, instead choosing to attack various aspects or appearances of it, commentators are divided about whether or not Nietzsche has an adequate target in view in his various attacks on morality.⁶

There is a further complication. Nietzsche appears to conceptualize a form of morality that is *distinct* from the form of morality he has inherited—one that he appears to *endorse*! Consider a passage from the preface of *Daybreak*:

[this book] does in fact exhibit a contradiction and is not afraid of it: in this book faith in morality is withdrawn—but why? *Out of morality!* Or what else should we call that which informs it and *us*? ... there is no doubt that a 'thou shalt' still speaks to us too, that we too still obey a stern law set over us, and this is the last moral law which can make itself audible even to us...

Nietzsche here draws attention to the fact that it is with fundamentally *moral* resources that an attack on morality can be sustained. These resources have the same kind of intellectual force that

⁶ See for example Foot (1973).

‘thou shalt’ plays in Christian and Kantian versions of moral theory. The “moral law” that Nietzsche is referring to, however, remains cryptically unexplained in this textual context.

Adding a bit of clarity to his thinking on the differences between the morality he has in mind and the morality he attacks arrives in a passage years later after the publication of D in BGE. There, Nietzsche claims that “morality of today,” the character of morality as he encounters it is a *deficient* mode of morality:

Morality is in Europe today herd-animal morality—that is to say, as we understand the thing, only *one* kind of human morality beside which, before which, after which many other, above all, higher moralities are possible, or ought to be possible. (BGE 125)

From this passage we can discern that the morality Nietzsche criticizes, apart from having the property of being “herd animal,” is the morality of “today” “in Europe” “as we understand the thing” (ibid). So it appears that what Nietzsche is attacking is the system of moral values circumscribed by *his* encounter with them. That allows an interpretation of one set of values Nietzsche problematizes. But we know that Nietzsche thinks that either higher moralities *are* possible, or at any rate they *should* be. So we know Nietzsche believes at least one moral statement is true—that a different⁷ set of moral values from the lower values of the herd-animal morality should be possible.⁸

Nietzsche unsurprisingly never gives any systematic explication of what content those values would have. Nietzsche’s published works often avoid, at least in presentation, systematic

⁷ “different” here is left intentionally vague, since it will turn out that some of the “lower” values will land in the synthesis of some of Nietzsche’s own proposal for the creation of the highest values he thinks exist for humans.

⁸ There are several other passages (especially from the so-called “mature” work of Nietzsche) in which he emphasizes a distinction between properties deficient moralities contain, and properties the higher morality should have. My purpose here is to introduce the textual basis for the distinction between moralities, and since Leiter ultimately presents a deflationary account of what this higher morality amounts to, further discussion of the substance of the distinction will come in chapter three.

exhibition in the way other philosophers present their own views. This is by design—Nietzsche tends to utilize esoteric presentation of his views over exoteric on the grounds that he wants the meaning of his work to be intelligible to the few who work hard enough to find it.⁹ So, in what follows, I'll review Leiter's account of what he takes Nietzsche to mean when he distinguishes between the "lower" moral values and the "higher" moral values. I will focus on one case of value that Leiter characterizes as a problem for Nietzsche, which he dubs "similarity."

To start, Leiter—in agreement with my analysis thus far—calls for a distinction between the moral values Nietzsche endorses and those which frequently function as objects of his sustained attack on moral values. These latter values represent what Leiter calls morality in the pejorative sense (MPS).¹⁰ So the goal is to characterize what counts as an MPS. Leiter sums up the secondary literature as having had three plausible approaches to defining MPS: the "Catalogue Approach" gives a laundry list of the normative demands of MPS; the "Universality Approach" focuses on the relation between MPS and "the view that one moral code ought to apply to all"; the "Presuppositions Approach" focuses on the relation between MPS and its "distinctive empirical and metaphysical presuppositions" (Leiter 2002 74-5).¹¹

Leiter's own schematic for understanding MPS "combines insights" and "subsumes pertinent parts" of these three approaches (Leiter 2002 77). For any system of values and beliefs S1, on Leiter's read, S1 is an MPS when S1

⁹ See Clark (1990).

¹⁰ Leiter agrees with my remarks about regarding the "morality of today," claiming that Nietzsche neither needs to construct an "essential" definition of morality in order to criticize it as such. Instead, MPS is hence a "heuristic" category both for Nietzsche in the late 19th century, and for his reader.

¹¹ I omit the "Origins Approach," since Leiter presents reasons for rejecting this approach in a different textual context in the book. His reasons for rejecting it, and omitting it from his own characterization of MPS are therefore irrelevant to the context here, since his account of MPS is not informed by it.

1 presupposes three *particular* descriptive claims about the nature of human agents pertaining to free will, the transparency of the self, and the essential similarity of all people (“the Descriptive component”); and/or

2 embraces norms that harm the “highest” men while benefitting the “lowest” (“the Normative component”) (Leiter 2002 78)

The three theses that comprise the descriptive component—respectively, the theses of “Free Will, “Transparency of the Self” and “Similarity” (Leiter 2002 80)—are theories that make MPS intelligible. In other words, without them, the moral judgments that constitute the morally normative component of MPS are unintelligible.

For the purposes of brevity, I’ll set aside the other two and focus more closely on “similarity” so we can get to the heart of Leiter’s account. In BGE 198, Nietzsche claims that all these moralities [of today]...[are] unreasonable in form—because they address themselves to ‘all,’ because they generalize where generalization is impermissible. All of them speak unconditionally, take themselves for unconditional, all of them flavored with more than *one* grain of salt and tolerable only—at times even seductive—when they begin to smell over-spiced and dangerous, especially of “the other world.” All of it is, measured intellectually, worth very little and not by a long shot “science,” much less “wisdom,” but rather, to say it once more, three times more, prudence, prudence, prudence, mixed with stupidity, stupidity, stupidity. (BGE 198)

Leiter infers from this passage that, for Nietzsche,

the general applicability of MPS is predicated on an assumption about *similarity* among persons and their interests: people are essentially *similar*, and so the MPS that is good for one will be good for all. It is this assumption Nietzsche denies. (Leiter 2002 104)

I think Leiter's read here is fairly straightforward: because morality addresses itself indifferently to each person and in the exact same way and because it does so "unconditionally," and so forth, we can bundle these together can say in general that Nietzsche objects to the assumption in MPS that everyone is essentially similar.

There will be more here to talk about with respect to ironing out the argument for Nietzschean normativity in chapter three, but BGE 198 warrants a closer look before pressing on. There is, I think, some structure in the passage that Leiter's account ignores. Let's grant Leiter that Nietzsche's target in BGE 198 is MPS. I think it's fair to say that MPS and "unreasonable forms of morality" can be regarded as one and the same in this textual context. Since Nietzsche likes to blend cognitive and non-cognitive forms of persuasion, we have a glimpse of some straightforward argumentation, so it will be worthwhile to distill it. So let the following be our conclusion:

C. MPS is unreasonable in form.

Nietzsche starts the passage off with cognitive-enough-sounding language to be enumerating premises, but, in typical form, obfuscates by sliding into claiming that MPS is like over-seasoned food, and concludes with an *ad hominem* attack. Nevertheless, I think the properties of MPS in BGE 198 read like conjunctions which in turn look like reasons for advancing the conclusion that MPS is unreasonable in form.

all these moralities [of today]...[are] unreasonable in form—because *they address themselves to 'all,'* because *they generalize where generalization is impermissible*—

The italicized portion of our passage are two reasons for the conclusion, so we have:

P1. MPS addresses itself to all

P2. MPS generalizes where generalization is impermissible.

Now, add:

All of them speak unconditionally, take themselves for unconditional,

And we get

P3. MPS speaks unconditionally

P4. MPS takes itself as unconditional

We have left:

all of them flavored with more than *one* grain of salt and tolerable only—at times even seductive—when they begin to smell over-spiced and dangerous, especially of “the other world.” All of it is, measured intellectually, worth very little and not by a long shot “science,” much less “wisdom,” but rather, to say it once more, three times more, prudence, prudence, prudence, mixed with stupidity, stupidity, stupidity.

MPS here is “flavored” with “more than *one* grain of salt.” This smacks of a proto-observation consistent with Nietzsche’s so-called doctrine of perspectivism, published the following year in GM III. To try to do much more with an interpretation of Nietzsche’s perspectivism would take us too far off course, but we can say briefly that any account of morality as fundamentally *aperspectival*—that there be, for instance, moral facts whose grounding comes from “a view from nowhere”—can be a reason for thinking this version of morality is “bad form.”

P5. MPS is *aperspectival* in nature.

I consider being flavored with more than one grain of salt, or especially *over seasoned* to be a metaphor for a morality that accounts for the nature or content of *too many* perspectives. Specifically, *all* perspectives. A morality that purports to casually accomplish this would be Christianity—and unsurprisingly, in order that a morality account for the nature or content of all

perspectives involves an appeal to the “other world.” If God created humanity, and in turn, each individual person and each individual perspective of the individual person, then it follows that God had a hand in it; therefore, it’s in the person’s interest to shift their perspective so that belief in God, reverence for God, &c, are all components of that perspective. And Nietzsche never backs down from rejecting this line of reasoning. So we can add to MPS:

P6. MPS appeals to the “other world.”

In natural deduction, the rule of conjunction allows that any line in a proof (in this case, argument) may be conjoined with formulae on any other line, either a premise or a formula derived by rules of replacement or inference. Applying this rule to the present set of premises, we can then show a simplified P1, let’s call it here P1’:

P1’. MPS addresses itself to all and MPS generalizes where generalization is impermissible and MPS speaks unconditionally and MPS takes itself as unconditional and MPS is aperspectival in nature and MPS appeals to the “other world.”

Adding P2’ gives the argument validity, given C and P1’ above:

P2’ If MPS addresses itself to all and MPS generalizes where generalization is impermissible and MPS speaks unconditionally and MPS takes itself as unconditional and MPS is aperspectival in nature and MPS appeals to the “other world” then MPS is unreasonable in form.

Therefore,

C. MPS is unreasonable in form.

I think this is a reasonable interpretation of the argument at hand. It is clearer to see now that it is for these specific reasons taken as conjunctions that leads Nietzsche to conclude MPS is unreasonable in form. If it were to turn out, say, that an account of morality is both fundamentally perspectival in character *and* derived from the world of lived human experience

and not from a divine commander, say, then P1' would not include that moral system inside its scope. In other words, the reasons Nietzsche has here for concluding that MPS is unreasonable in form would *not* be reasons for thinking some other form of morality is unreasonable in form if one or more conjuncts fail to apply to the moral in question. I'll return to this important point in chapter three, but for now we can see that the reasons in the passage here hang together with more logical nuance than Leiter gives credit to.

Returning to Leiter's exegesis, we can see that MPS assumes that there is an "extra worldly" basis for the manner in which people arrive at the conclusion that everyone is essentially similar. For in fact they *must* be in order that the scope of MPS's demands apply to *everyone*, in the same way. Leiter notes that if agents were "different in some overlooked but relevant respect," then it isn't clearly the case that we should intelligibly prescribe it to all agents regardless of their individual differences (Leiter 2002 81).

The problem with applying this descriptive component of S1 to someone who *is* different in some overlooked but relevant respect is that such an application *harms the person*, on Leiter's view, provided the person in question is a nascent but unactualized "higher" type of person. Higher types of people, on Leiter's reading, are usually creative people who command respect through excellence in creative expression—sometimes, this is in the form of artistic works (Goethe, Beethoven), sometimes in the form of singularly impressive political and military authority (Caesear, Napoleon, Borgias).

Once again, as in the case of defining 'morality,' we lack a precise definition. But for Leiter (and for my present purposes) giving a general framework for the properties of higher types of people is sufficient. One such property in the framework of actualized higher types of

people is that they are “solitary” and (perhaps) as a result deal with other people “only instrumentally.” In BGE, Leiter points out, Nietzsche claims that

A human being who strives for something great considers everyone he meets on his way either as a means or as a delay and obstacle—or as a temporary resting place. (BGE 273)

If a higher type is going to accomplish her goals and achieve “something great,” the manner of treatment required by the essential similarity of all persons in MPS serves as an impediment to realizing the higher type’s ends. Higher types disregard the requirement, for instance, to treat others as an end-in-themselves because they regard themselves as exempt from that component of MPS on the grounds that it would require self-denial. And higher types have a “distinctive bearing towards others” and “especially towards” themselves—they are always self-revering (Leiter 2002 120). Thus, a higher type rejects the judgment from MPS that requires them to regard themselves as being universally bound to treat others equally on the grounds that they are fundamentally the same. The flourishing of higher types, on Leiter’s account, is practically incompatible with the normative component of MPS.

So the following question arises—why can’t higher types simply flourish, in this case, in virtue of their disposition to instantiate a distinctive bearing towards themselves? And on the other hand, why can’t those for whom a disposition *not* to instantiate the distinctive bearing towards themselves found in higher types simply instantiate that disposition? The answer to both questions, according to Leiter, is for Nietzsche found in the “causal mechanisms of harm.”

On Leiter’s reading, Nietzsche believes that in practice, MPS doesn’t function as a doctrine or a theory that one gives cognitive consideration to before accepting or rejecting it; rather, “when moral values come to predominate in a culture, their valuations will subtly affect the attitudes of all members of that culture” (Leiter 2002 133). No one *in fact* tends to be

immune from the effects MPS has on their self-interpretation of their agency—“MPS *in practice* simply does not make such fine grain distinctions—and importantly because of MPS’s commitment to the idea that one morality is appropriate for all—potentially higher [humans] will come to adopt [the values of MPS] as applicable to themselves as well” (ibid). People are subsumed into a genus of valuation that, in some cases, includes potentially higher types; and in those cases, the values that potentially higher types end up with is much like the transmission of a virus. The values that nascent higher types end up internalizing, preventing them from self-actualizing, amounts, on Leiter’s reading, to a decisive objection against MPS.

1.3 The Scientific Foundations of Nietzsche’s Opposition to Morality

At this point, I need to clarify the relation that Leiter’s account of Nietzsche’s critique of MPS bears to science. The clue for ironing out this relation is that general normative authority for Leiter’s Nietzsche is sourced in science. To appreciate this fact, start with the empirically derived categories of agency that Leiter’s Nietzsche holds to be generally true of all agents: this is another Leiter-specific heuristic for understanding Nietzsche’s thought about agency, and it is found in the notion of “type facts.” Type-facts may be generalized into what Leiter calls the “Doctrine of Types.” According to this doctrine, “Each person has a fixed psycho-physical constitution, which defines [them] as a particular *type* of person” (Leiter 2002 8). The facts that circumscribe your physical constitution explain and thereby define what type of person you are.

Take some person “S.” Let “P” be the set of general properties that constitute S. The type-fact constitution of S determines not just apparently mundane properties about S, like S’s eye and hair color, and so forth. We ordinarily think that in P, the properties most directly relevant to determining *who S is* has the *least* to do with the properties which she has no

cognitive or other control over. The fact that S's eyes are green and her hair is brown would on most obvious analyses bear very little relevance on who S is (or who she takes herself to be).

However, consider the following kind of remark that Nietzsche sometimes makes:

With the necessity with which a tree bears its fruit our thoughts grow out of us, our values, our yes's and no's and if's and whether's—the whole lot related and connected among themselves, witnesses to one will, one health, one earthly kingdom, one sun. (GM Pref. 2)

On this model, S is the *result* of P, which includes not just the accidental properties in P afforded by S's type-fact constitution, but all of the *essential* properties of S as well. The set of beliefs S regards as true are the result of S's "innermost drives of [S's] nature" (BGE 6) as well as the set of values (moral or otherwise) that S has.

For Leiter's Nietzsche, then, the reality of agency is populated in each case with entities called "type-facts" which determine what the person values and believes. We can put into view Leiter's interpretation of Nietzsche's gripe with morality in a slightly different way—moral values address themselves indifferently to any particular type-fact constitution. For any person, their type-fact constitution is supposed to be compatible with believing and valuing in some way appropriate to morality; but as we saw in the problematic case of similarity above, applying the same moral interpretation to all people has the potential to rob nascent higher types from self-actualizing as such.

At the heart of this account, then, is the general normative authority of science. Science *alone* is capable of unearthing the facts that explain or reveal the course of a causally determined path the kinds of people we are and will become. Leiter calls this "causal essentialism," and again, only science can reveal the structures that causally determine what people value, and

therefore, believe. After all, it is through “scientific knowledge” that Nietzsche believes that we may “*plumb the depths of reality itself*,” (Leiter 2002 266) where “the depths of reality itself” necessarily includes not just truths about the external world discerned in empirical inquiry, but about ourselves as physically, psychologically constituted causally determined parts of it.

It is worth mentioning that affording science this level of normative authority is conjoined to what Leiter argues is Nietzsche’s *naturalism*. If there is a problem with interpreting Nietzsche as committed to the general normative authority of science, then there will be a problem with what Leiter is calling “Nietzsche’s naturalism.” Leiter’s Nietzsche is a *methods* naturalist—what he calls “M-naturalism.”

M-naturalists construct philosophical theories that are continuous with the sciences either in virtue of their dependence upon the actual results of scientific method in different domains or in virtue of their employment and emulation of distinctively scientific ways of looking at and explaining things (Leiter 2002 5).

M-naturalism has two strictures for philosophy: the first is that philosophical theories should not contradict conclusions reached by our best empirical sciences—this is how philosophy remains “continuous” with the sciences. The second is that philosophical theories should essentially be constructed the way we construct hypotheses in the natural sciences. For Leiter, one of the features of scientific inquiry that makes it distinctive is that it empirically seeks causal determinants that explain various phenomena, which we have seen at work in the doctrine of types.

We are now in a position to see how Leiter’s Nietzsche deals with the scope problem. Take a case of S believing that P. According to the doctrine of types, S’s belief that P will usually be causally antecedent to S’s valuing associated with P; and S’s valuing associated with

P is causally antecedent to “psycho-physical facts” (Leiter 2002 9) about S. Therefore, S’s belief that P is a result of psycho-physical facts about S.

From this analysis, it follows that Nietzsche is what we would call an *anti-realist* about value: “Nietzsche must ultimately deny that there is any objective vindication for his evaluative position” (Leiter 2002 146). In order to communicate to someone that their values should change or be subject to revision, one could attempt to anchor this recommendation in a value whose character and existence is independent from human minds—e.g., traditionally, the importance of truth, selflessness, etc. But the value of truth will *only show up* as important to the degree that its importance is a function of your psycho-physical constitution. I can’t recommend to you that you revise the value you currently place on truth unless your psycho-physical constitution already allows that realignment. The value you currently assign to truth will be a member of subset value in your more general set of *prudential values*—the values you hold that are *good for* you, or the ones you don’t hold that are *bad for* you. But if the importance of truth is already in the set of values you hold prudentially, then it follows that revaluing your values might matter to you. This is one reason why Leiter believes Nietzsche bothered to write to begin with: if you are made of the “right stuff,” that is, if you have an adequately similar psycho-physical constitution, then reading Nietzsche’s works shakes you free from the grip of the MPS you inherited.

So, why should anyone accept anything Nietzsche says? Since his evaluative position on MPS is that it is harmful to higher types, is there any reason to accept that *you* should re-value your values accordingly? If you are a higher type, then reading Nietzsche will feel like you are in good company, because you share his “idiosyncratic value expressions” (Leiter 2002 150). But if your thoughts are in the order of: 1. I don’t believe this, 2. This is immoral; then Nietzsche has *nothing else to say*. There is *no reason* for *you* to identify with his idiosyncratic value expression.

Our scope problem is solved. Since value is the outgrowth of belief, and belief is the outgrowth of some aspect of your physiological constitution, this deflationary account of value has nothing more to do. If you happen to share in common with Nietzsche the same values, then you may believe MPS can be harmful to higher types. And if you believe this, then we explain by talking about this belief corresponding to some aspect of your physiological functioning. You are built of the “right stuff,” and there is no further analysis to do.

1.4 Leiter’s Reliance on Nietzsche’s “Development.”

I mentioned above that for Leiter, the mature Nietzsche—the *real* subject of any authentic predication in secondary literature—is represented in Nietzsche’s later period of publication. The textual context that constitutes the primary domain of the mature Nietzsche is the final six published works, the first of which is Nietzsche’s ’87 *Genealogy of Morality*. Before that, the claim is that Nietzsche was still in various discernible periods of intellectual development. Leiter’s account hinges on the truth of the developmental hypothesis, which is Clark’s (Clark 1990). I’ll briefly reconstruct her argument for the developmental hypothesis to bring the stakes of this discussion into clearer view: if the developmental hypothesis fails, then so does Leiter’s basis for attributing science as the source of general Nietzschean normative authority. If Leiter’s basis for attributing science as the placeholder of general Nietzschean normative authority fails, it follows that *something* is wrong about his assessment of Nietzsche’s gripe with morality.

For Clark, Nietzsche’s intellectual development on truth spans various iterations of the ‘falsification thesis’—the notion that “human knowledge falsifies reality” (Clark 1990 95). In the early works, BT and TL, Nietzsche denies “truths accessible through science and common

sense” and is concerned with “establishing the cognitive superiority of art” (ibid). In order to execute this denial of truth, Nietzsche accepts the concept of the thing in itself as the standard for truth: “The thing in itself (for that is what pure truth, without consequences, would be) is quite incomprehensible to the creators of language and not at all worth aiming for” (TL 1). The thing in itself is incomprehensible and unworthy of pursuit because some aspect of the human cognitive and sensory apparatus *necessarily* renders the data of observation to be intelligible *to itself*, in terms it can render that data intelligible. For Nietzsche, this is a process that makes any statement involving even the concept of a thing *false* due to the fact that the concept of the thing does not correspond to the way that thing is in itself.

Language, inasmuch as it purports to represent content about the world veridically, is in early Nietzsche therefore essentially *metaphor*. When I deploy a metaphor, I use one category of entities applied to another category non-literally. “Juliette is the sun” applies one set of entities [the properties of a person] to another [the properties of the sun]. When we speak about the natural world with categories and concepts that are supposed to be about the things they are applied to, the categories and concepts can nevertheless never be literally applied to objects in experience.

we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things— metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities....the mysterious X of the thing in itself first appears as a nerve stimulus, then as an image, and finally as a sound.

(TL 1)

Sensation and cognition fundamentally transform the data of observation from whatever properties it has in itself to properties that make the information intelligible to itself. That

transformation starts at the sensory level. As soon as the eye processes some data from the external world, that data is *transformed* from whatever properties it has in itself to properties that the “nerve stimulus” confers to it.

As the cognitive processes kick in and start “representing” the object as a mental image, conferring representational properties to it, it is further rendered as an object according to the properties that make representing it at all possible—situating the object in space and time, for instance, or classifying it and naming it accordingly. All these cognitive operations further render the set of properties attached to the object completely detached from whatever properties the thing has as it is in itself.

This analysis of language—that it is fundamentally incapable of expressing anything true about the world because it in principle can not refer to it without distorting it—is possible only on the assumption that there *is* a thing in itself. There must be a way the world is in itself apart from the way in which our cognitive abilities allow us to encounter it. Early Nietzsche, therefore, “explicitly makes the thing in itself into an unknowable essence, forever concealed from view by the thing’s appearances” (Clark 1990 100-101).

Around 1881-1882, as Nietzsche is writing GS, Clark surmises that he is beginning to recognize what he gives clearer expression to in 1886 with BGE—that conceptualizing the thing in itself involves a contradiction.

There are still harmless self-observers who believe that there are “immediate certainties;” for example, “I think” or as the superstition of Schopenhauer put it, “I will;” as though knowledge here got hold of its object purely and nakedly as “the thing in itself,” without any falsification on the part of either the subject or the object. But that “immediate certainty,” as “absolute knowledge” and the “thing in itself” involve a *contradiction in*

adjecto, I shall repeat a hundred times; we really ought to free ourselves from the seduction of words. (BGE 16)

Here is the beginning of a usual attack Nietzsche makes against mental causation—but in tandem with the apparent-but-false plausibility of the immediate certainty of the cogito is also “absolute knowledge” and “thing in itself.” In the textual context of this passage, however, Nietzsche continues to elaborate on the implausibility of the immediate certainty of the cogito and by and large leaves behind the contradiction introduced by attaching “absolute” to “knowledge,” or the “in itself” to “things.”

Clark’s proposal is to mine a fragment of the reasoning to this nascent conclusion from 1882’s GS:

What is appearance for me now? Certainly not the opposite of some essence: what could I say about any essence except to name the attributes of its appearance! Certainly not a mask that one could place on an unknown X or remove from it! (GS 54)

In early Nietzsche, we saw commitment to the claim that an object’s essence is “independent from all possible appearances” (Clark 190 101). But if this were the case, all we could know about the essence of the thing is all the properties we attach to it via appearance. So to talk about an “unknown X” whose properties in itself are intelligibly distinguishable from the properties of its appearance involves a logical contradiction: I can only know a thing according to the properties I afford it in appearance, but I also afford it the property of unintelligibility, which isn’t a property I can afford it in appearance. Since the object is both intelligible and unintelligible, we can see how thing *in itself* gains a contradiction with the addition of the adjective.

Although much of GS retains and deploys the falsification thesis, as do BGE and the 1887 addition to GS of book V, Clark claims that

In the six books that follow BGE, there is *no evidence* of Nietzsche's earlier denial of truth: *no* claim that the human world is a falsification, *no* claim that science, logic, or mathematics falsify reality. (Clark 1990 103 my emphasis)

No longer committing himself to the idea that things in themselves are different from all of their possible appearances, the argument goes, Nietzsche is no longer committed to denying truth. If he is no longer committed to denying truth, then he can accept that some beliefs are true. This explains why, having had this realization, Nietzsche's later works are sprinkled with more cognitive language when advancing or rejecting a claim. Take for instance the following passage from one of the "late" works:

What is *science* to the priest? He is above that! And until now the priest has ruled! He determined the concepts of "true" and "untrue!" (A 12)

It is in instances such as these that lend apparent support to Clark's developmental hypothesis. It explains why the radical denial of truth and its conjunction to maintaining the existence of an in-itself appears to fade away as Nietzsche develops an increasingly plausible body of critical thought.

1.5 Conclusion

I am not convinced that the developmental hypothesis tracks an abandonment of the falsification thesis in Nietzsche's so-called "mature" thinking, and in the next chapter I'll show why. Contrary to Clark, there *is* evidence of Nietzsche's earlier denial of truth in the mature works. There are, in addition to passages noted by Anderson (1996) and Acampora (2006),

passages that capture a recurring thought of Nietzsche's that has received no scholarly attention to date. These are passages in which Nietzsche expresses the significance of Copernicus' development of heliocentrism. There are two passages in the published works and one unpublished comment that I will argue, if read as anticipating a kind of Kuhnian incommensurability about theory change in science, contain a version of falsification that disrupts the normative authority afforded to science on Clark and Leiter's reading of Nietzsche. From this two claims follow. The first is that it is not the case that the developmental hypothesis tracks a coherent position on the normative authority of scientific truth that is textually consistent throughout the mature writings of Nietzsche. The second is that it is not the case that Nietzsche never doubts science's ability to provide mind-independent objective truth about the world.

CHAPTER 2:
**A DENIAL OF TRUTH IN NIETZSCHE’S LATE PUBLISHED WORKS: AGAINST
THE DEVELOPMENTAL HYPOTHESIS**

2.1 Introduction: The Copernicus Passages¹²

In what follows I argue that the Copernicus passages are plausibly read as anticipating a semantic view about the nature of theoretical terms.¹³ The view, a species of description theories of reference, holds that theoretical terms are “defined by their place in a theoretical-practical system or structure” (Rowlands 2003, 50), so that the terms get their meaning by standing in various “internal relations” to other theoretical terms in use. This semantic view implies incommensurability—a view made popular by Thomas Kuhn¹⁴ that holds successive scientific theories are semantically incompatible with one another.

I should note up front that while BGE is not placed in the “mature” period by Clark and others, I am only looking at a passage in which language Nietzsche uses to describe the significance of Copernicus’ discovery is echoed, usually verbatim, in the mature works.

¹² Much of the Copernicus content here is either from Callahan (2011) or adapted from it.

¹³ I do not claim that Nietzsche can subscribe to the description theory of reference *as such*; the semantic view I am using to model these passages wasn’t fully articulated until the 1960’s (e.g., in Kuhn), about eighty years after Nietzsche published the works I am investigating in this essay. However, because the Copernicus passages gesture toward or anticipate the theory by stressing the active role of scientists in shaping the meaning of theoretical terms, I claim that the Copernicus passages are best read on the *model* of the semantic view. Reading the Copernicus passages on the model the description theory of reference will enable us to gather together disparate elements of BGE 12 and GM III 25 and unify them, as I do below.

¹⁴ See: Kuhn (1970).

Therefore, the following analysis does not fall outside the scope of development Clark claims is at work in the published works.

2.1a The Copernicus Passages: BGE 12

The first mention of Copernicus in Nietzsche's published works is in BGE, and so we begin there:

As for materialistic atomism, it is one of the best refuted theories there are, and in Europe perhaps no one in the learned world is now so unscholarly as to attach any serious significance to it (as an abbreviation of the means of expression)—thanks chiefly to the Dalmatian Boscovich, he and the Pole Copernicus have been the greatest and most successful opponents of visual evidence so far. For while Copernicus has persuaded us to believe, contrary to all the senses, that the earth does *not* stand fast, Boscovich has taught us to abjure the belief in the last part of the earth that “stood fast”—the belief in “substance,” in “matter,” in the earth-residuum and particle-atom: it is the greatest triumph over the senses that has been gained on earth so far. (BGE 12)

First, I need to examine Copernicus' work, with “defeating visual evidence” and “triumphing over the senses”¹⁵ as the clues for interpreting it. Reading Copernicus' work through these two lenses is required because here Nietzsche introduces nascent ideas about their significance that are made more explicit in GM III 25. Nietzsche claims Copernicus managed to convince us, “contrary to all the senses, that the earth does *not* stand fast” (BGE 12). To understand what

¹⁵ I occasionally use the word “defeat” in place of “successfully oppose” or “triumph over.” Not only does “defeat” mean the same thing, but Nietzsche also uses this word to refer to the same relation between Copernicus' work and the previous schema of visual evidence in GM III 25, which I address below.

Nietzsche's quick reconstruction of Copernicus' discovery means, let's look at an explication of what took place in the discovery.

Copernicus is a fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century astronomer. In 1510, Copernicus writes an essay called "*Commentariolus*," in which he claims that the universe is helio- and not geocentric, cutting against the grain of his contemporary astronomy. Before Copernicus, astronomers had been making use of a theoretical framework for astronomy Kuhn calls an "epicycle and deferent system" (Kuhn 1970 60). In the epicycle and deferent system astronomers would use a basic homocentric circle, called a "deferent," to describe the motion of the planets as they orbited the earth (Kuhn 1970 59); but describing the motion of the planets only using the deferent had the strange consequence of seeing the planets move retrogressively and making irregular pauses. Astronomers would then use the concept "epicycle," then, which was a circle of motion used to describe the movement a planet made with respect to the deferent as it traversed around the deferent. That way, when a planet was seen to move retrogressively, that motion could be explained as a period in which the planet was completing the second half of an epicycle—the planet still continued its eastward orbit around the earth, but only appeared to move backwards because the planet was completing the circular motion with respect to the deferent.

According to Kuhn, the epicycle and deferent system are unable on their own to completely describe the motions of the planets as they traversed the earth. In 150 A.C.E., Ptolemy improved this system by introducing the term "equant" into the practice of astronomy (Weinert 7; Kuhn 70). The equant was "an imaginary point on the other side of the deferent as seen by observers on the earth" (Weinert 20) that astronomers used to chart apparent irregular motion of the planets in the epicycle and deferent system.

The equant became a particular source of cognitive frustration for Copernicus because he was expected to understand the motion of the planets at some times in terms of the center of a planet's epicycle (the motion around which was calculated using an equant) and, at other times, in relation to the deferent. Copernicus saw this situation as unreasonable because it rendered observation disjunctive: if one regarded motion relative to the center of a planet's epicycle and discovered inconsistencies with other calculations astronomers had completed, one would have had to attempt to square the observation with extant calculations by regarding the motion relative to the deferent instead. Of the additional calculative work required by the concept of the equant, Copernicus remarks:

[...] The planetary theories of Ptolemaic theory and most other astronomers, although consistent with the numerical data, seemed likewise to present no small difficulty. For these theories were not adequate unless certain equants were conceived; it then appeared that a planet moved with uniform velocity neither on its deferent nor about the center of its epicycle. Hence a system of this sort seemed neither sufficiently absolute nor sufficiently pleasing to the mind.

Having become aware of these defects, I often considered whether there could perhaps be found a more reasonable arrangement of circles, from which every apparent inequality would be derived and in which everything would move uniformly, as a system of motion requires. (Copernicus 1543 125)

Copernicus thereby redefines theoretical terms in a way that makes charting the motion of the planets *more reasonable*. The more reasonable definitions, for Copernicus, are definitions that lead to simpler research procedures and a simpler, more aesthetically pleasing representation of nature (Weinert, 49; Kuhn 1970, 76). Copernicus discovers these desiderata can be realized

simply by placing the sun at the center of our solar system. That way, when astronomers draw circles to describe the relative orbits and motions of the planets, they have to deal far less with the cumbersome ad hoc procedures ubiquitous in pre-Copernican astronomy.

We can now begin to see how Nietzsche's characterization of Copernicus as a "successful opponent" of "visual evidence" can map on to this astronomer's work. Copernicus challenges the meaning of the theoretical terms "equant," "epicycle" and "deferent," which amounts to challenging the entire structure of internally related theoretical terms that determine what counts as "visual evidence" for the Ptolemaic system. Nietzsche offers no clarification, however, on how Copernicus actually executed the defeat of visual evidence. The following remark from D provides a clue as to how he might think such an execution took place:

[...] there is nothing good, nothing beautiful, nothing sublime, nothing evil in-itself, but [there] are states of the mind in which we impose such words upon things external and within us. We have again *taken back* the predicates of things, or at least remembered that it was we who *lent* them to them [...]. (D 210)

In this passage, Nietzsche claims that the mind "imposes" words on things external to us, and that this imposition is presumably responsible for making the thing what it is. In other words, it is not the case that a given thing external to us—or the collection of all external things, the world—is filled up with objects that already have predicates; on the contrary, objects get their predicates because, *first*, human beings *assigned* (or "loaned") them to them. Therefore, what we see in the world with our eyes is too a function of some antecedent defining activity; its intelligibility depends on having been subjected to this activity.

Returning to BGE 12, to understand the defeat of visual evidence in the sense that the defeat can be considered "one of the greatest victories over the senses the world has ever seen,"

we should not understand Nietzsche as simply saying that Copernicus falsified geocentric astronomy. On the contrary, Nietzsche's remark in *Daybreak* invites a more radical conclusion: Copernicus showed that for some observation to count as visual evidence for a theory, the relevant objects in the observation have to have been made intelligible in observation through a prior act of definition. This prior activity consists in the *imposition* of predicates onto objects.

Before the publication of "*Commentariolus*," the Christian assumption about the objects in empirical inquiry was that their interpretation, and therefore, their significance, was established by the creative or defining work of God; what it meant to observe object "earth," for example, was to observe an object with the following predicate divinely attached: "a body placed at the center of the universe." Copernicus defeated visual evidence and gained a victory over the senses by showing that observing the world with our sense organs presupposes prior human cognitive activity. Attributing this view to Nietzsche helps explain the following remark from GM:

There is, strictly speaking, absolutely no science "without presuppositions," the thought of such a science is unthinkable, paralogical: a philosophy, a "belief" must always be there first so that science can derive a direction from it, a meaning, a boundary, a method, a *right* to existence. (Whoever understands it the other way around—for example, whoever sets out to place philosophy "on a strictly scientific foundation"—first needs to turn not only philosophy but also truth itself *on its head*...). (GM III 24)

A world investigated through science "without presuppositions," or without antecedent cognitive activity of "predicate loaning" would be "impossible." Allowing an interpretation of science as proceeding "without presuppositions" as a structure for investigating truth itself turns truth "*on its head*," which I take Nietzsche to at least be signaling to his reader that this is the wrong idea.

Nietzsche is thereby best read here on the model of the semantic view outlined in the introduction: Copernicus defeats visual evidence by imposing new definitions of internally related theoretical terms onto the objects contemporaneous astronomers were concerned with.

With the significance of Copernicus' discovery for Nietzsche with respect to the defeat of visual evidence in view, I turn now to the next Copernicus passage. There, the active relation between scientific practitioners and the world is expanded—a central feature of the semantic view of the meaning of theoretical terms under discussion.

2.1b The Copernicus Passages: GM III 25

Since Copernicus, [humanity] seems to have stumbled onto an inclined plane—he is now rolling faster and faster away from the center—whither? Into nothingness? Into the “penetrating feeling of his nothingness?” (GM III 25)

In this passage, Nietzsche has us imagine humanity, likened to a round object, rolling out of control into an indeterminate location. This is a strange image because the metaphor of humanity rolling down a plane does not strike any familiar chords. But Nietzsche is in fact referring to a discussion in the preface to the second edition of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. According to Kant, when Galileo “experimented with balls of a definite weight on the inclined plane,” determining in advance by calculation what the physical behavior of the ball would be, we learned that:

[...] reason has insight into what it itself produces according to its own design; that it must take the lead with principles for its judgments according to constant laws and compel nature to answer its questions, rather than letting nature guide its movements by keeping reason, as it were, in its leading strings. (CPR B/xiv)

Kant thinks it is not the case that there is a world intelligible independent of the theories we create to describe it. “Reason” is described here as a faculty that provides the blueprint into which nature must be made to fit, and Kant’s radical claim is that reason familiarizes itself with reality by *imposing*¹⁶ a rational structure onto it.

The figure of Copernicus, for Kant, is an exemplar of this new way of thinking because Copernicus stands in a proper metaphysical relation to nature. Kant claims that the major discoveries in natural philosophy, such as the “invisible force of Newtonian attraction” (CPR B/xxii), would “have remained forever undiscovered if Copernicus had not ventured, in a manner *contradictory to the senses*, yet true, to seek for the observed movements *not in the objects in the heavens but in their observer*” (CPR B/xxii, emphases mine). Put another way, Copernicus, according to Kant, did not just have to neglect the extant astronomical accounts of planetary orbit; rather, he had to abandon a system of theories altogether—along with what was literally seen supporting the theories, its “visual evidence”—to prevent himself from “keeping reason in [nature’s] leading strings” (CPR B/xxii). The Copernican revolution, for Kant, was the announcement of reason’s primacy in bringing objects into conformity with itself, and it does this by making use of a principle made available to itself only through itself.

We are now in a better position to understand Nietzsche’s target in GM III 25. Galileo’s foreknowledge about what the behavior of the ball would be as he rolled it down the inclined plane was, for Kant, instructive; this is the manner in which human minds relate to the reality of

¹⁶ There are two ways Kantians generally talk about the relation between the schematizing work of the categories and the world: there is the view that we *impose* the structure of the world onto it (e.g. when we define theoretical terms in terms of their internal relations) and this view is called, according to Rowlands, the *imposition thesis*. Although some other Kantians hold that our theoretical terms *filter* the world, so *what we know* about its structure (as opposed to *actually giving it structure*) is *restricted* to what meaning our theoretical terms allow for, I go with *imposition* for brevity and ease; it is more likely that it is the Kantian caricature that Nietzsche was working with when he refers to Kant.

the world: reason reveals *a priori* the principles by which we come to know it. When Nietzsche suggests that it is humanity that is actually on the plane, he seems simply to allude to the Kantian insight: reason—an innate human faculty—is responsible for the principles by which we come to experience the world.¹⁷

Even if human minds are responsible for the principles by which we come to experience the world, we still do not know what significance, if any, Nietzsche thinks this has for contemporary scientific practices. In the final Copernicus passage, then, I will show that a criticism of contemporary science can be ascertained.

2.1c The Copernicus Passages: GM III 25 (continued)

Does anyone really think that the defeat of theological astronomy meant the defeat of that *ideal*? Has [humanity] perhaps become less in need of a transcendent solution to its riddle of existence now that this existence looks more *arbitrary*, more *loiterer-like*, more *dispensable* in the *visible* order of things? Hasn't precisely the self-belittlement of [humanity], [humanity's] *will* to self-belittlement been marching relentlessly forward since Copernicus? (GM III 25, emphases mine)

This final passage comprises a series of rhetorical questions, in which Nietzsche wants to claim that, in light of Copernicus' work, a "riddle of existence" ought to have been solved, but because it hasn't, humanity's riddle of existence yields another disturbing truth about existence: that human existence now seems more "arbitrary," "loiterer-like," and "dispensable...in the visible order of things." This riddle of existence should be solved with the defeat of theological

¹⁷ I take Nietzsche to express agreement with Kant in only in the following very narrow sense: human minds, as opposed to the world itself, are responsible for the ways in which we experience the world.

astronomy, so I begin now with a survey of what Nietzsche likely means by “theological astronomy.”

Theological astronomy regarded all observations as evidence for theories derived from Biblical or otherwise religious sources. The scientist who found evidence against claims made by papal authority was under immense pressure to reconsider his or her findings. The results of inquiry in this science were thus determined in advance—science would always stand in a consistent and justificatory relation to the content of the canon. It deserves the name “theological astronomy” because scientists were expected to think in invariable accordance with biblically-derived doctrines. Because the bible is committed to the cosmological claim that the earth resides at the center of the universe, the most relevant doctrine for astronomers in their work was that *planets orbit the earth*.

We now need to understand what Nietzsche thinks the effects of defeating theological astronomy are. The human solution of its “riddle of existence”—which I take Nietzsche to mean something along the lines of “an answer to a question posed in philosophical inquiry”—is that it is as a whole is now more arbitrary, dispensable and loiterer-like. “They are more arbitrary, dispensable and loiterer-like with the defeat of theological astronomy” is the answer to the question “How important are humans?” Formerly, humans falsely sought a solution to philosophical problems in a transcendent source. By defeating theological astronomy, Copernicus defeated a worldview structured by the dogmas of Christianity—a worldview whose adherents valued humans as the most important creatures, created in the image of a perfect God, occupying the center of the universe. Indeed, Nietzsche says, with the advent of Copernican astronomy, humans became “*animal*, without simile, qualification, or reservation” (GM III 25). The divine significance of our existence was expunged: humans became a mere animal,

stumbling about aimlessly on the surface of a cold, harsh and indifferent planet, leading now by relation to the former paradigm ultimately purposeless lives.

However, as Nietzsche continues in this passage, he indicates that science too seeks a solution to philosophical problems, but scientists err by locating the solution in a transcendent source. Though Nietzsche does not state this directly about scientists, we can infer this statement from his description of self-denial in science:

All science today [...] aims to talk humanity out of its previous respect for itself, as if this were nothing but a bizarre self-conceit [...]; one could even say that science's own pride[...] consists in upholding this hard-won self-contempt of humanity as its last, most serious claim to respect from itself. (ibid)

Here, Nietzsche lambasts science on the grounds that it perpetuates a tradition of self-denial. Scientists' pride comes in this passage from their ability to see that a meaning-making model sourced in a human-transcendent entities or processes makes human existence look comparatively meaningless. But in tandem with the other Copernicus passages, scientists participate in self-denial from their ability to harness their passions and ultimately stamp out the distorting influence that their interests could have in the process of inquiry. The demands scientific practitioners place on themselves to discern truths about the world therefore requires that they eliminate to the greatest extent possible the role of the self—a goal which, if realized, would amount to “self-contempt” (ibid).

How is the work of Copernicus different from the scientists Nietzsche attacks? Consider first a kind of science that Nietzsche lauds in GM III 24. There, as in the case of Copernicus, Nietzsche lauds his contemporary French science *because* the practices maintain the *active* role of the practitioner in interpreting the world. According to Nietzsche, French scientists are more

disposed to “doing violence, pressing into orderly form, abridging, omitting, padding, fabricating and falsifying¹⁸” (GM III 24).

In the same passage, Nietzsche lambasts contemporaneous German science for “*wanting to halt before the factual, the *factum brutum**” (ibid). German science eliminated the role of the self, assuming instead a *passive* relation to the world by attempting to allow facts to arbitrate our understanding of it. The problem with German science can be generalized for most of Nietzsche’s contemporary science as follows: the eye of the interpreter “*looks outward* as an arctic traveler looks outward (perhaps in order not to look inward? In order not to look back?...Here there is snow, here life has become silent [...])” (GM III 26). Just as in Christian thought, scientists posit a transcendent beyond that arbitrates solutions to our deepest philosophical problems. Nietzsche is not saying here that scientists should not look at the world when they wish to understand it; what he is saying, however, is that thinking facts are *out there somewhere* and, as a result, structure inquiry in such a way as to diminish or eliminate the importance of the self, replicates the structure of Christian self-denial.

Since Nietzsche denigrates a science because it lets objects themselves articulate the standards for inquiry, modern science therefore too falls under a category of inquiry that utilizes a transcendent criterion of judgment. This criterion is to be further specified as anything *literally outside* human persons, which Andy Clark calls the “skin bag” (A. Clark 2003, 5). Thus, If human existence is now “arbitrary, more loiterer-like, more dispensable” because we mistakenly sought a transcendent solution to philosophical problems, then I propose we regard Nietzsche characterizing the results of modern scientific inquiry in the same way, as it too mistakenly seeks a transcendent solution to the following philosophical question: “What is truth?” The results of

¹⁸ This will be particularly relevant in 2.2a—Nietzsche is unambiguously praising practices that embrace falsification.

modern scientific inquiry¹⁹ therefore now seem “more *arbitrary*, more *loiterer-like*, and more *dispensable* in the *visible order* of things.” (GM III 25).

To understand how these properties apply to the results of scientific inquiry, let’s look at Nietzsche’s characterization of the results of scientific inquiry in GM III 12. There, Nietzsche says that scientists strive to be “pure, will-less and time-less subjects of knowledge.” The scientist thinks she will know better what the world is like if she adopts an attitude devoid of emotion and passion and of anything that could cloud her “objective” gaze on the world. Nietzsche suggests in GM III 25 that she also wants her truths to be non-arbitrary, non-dispensable and not at all loiterer-like; in other words, the scientist desires that her truths about the world be true even if there were nobody around to think them or be interested in them.

This relation of her truths to the world is for Nietzsche’s scientist non-arbitrary because the scientist thinks she does not capriciously test the veracity of any old statement; rather, the scientist tests sentences that she thinks—or has “good reason” to think—accurately correspond to the world. This relation between her truths or discoveries and the world they are intended to describe is also non-dispensable because, when sentences *do* accurately correspond to the world, the scientist certainly shouldn’t do away with them; she ought instead to keep them around because they represent the way the world is, and it is valuable to be able to say true things about the world.

Last, this relation is not at all loiterer-like. A loiterer invites us to think of something, usually a person, who lingers around a place, but does so only transiently. To be not at all loiterer-like suggests that something permanently inhabits a place. Thus, Nietzsche’s imagery

¹⁹ I realize that extending these qualities to the results of scientific inquiry is tenuous because the referent of “[humanity’s] riddle of existence” is just an existential one. However, my reading is neither inconsistent with the direct existential riddle implied by the grammar of the passage, nor does it deviate from the focus Nietzsche gives to self-denial throughout GM.

invites us to consider that scientists often imagine that their truths would permanently inhabit the world, even if we weren't there to think them, formulate them or have an interest in them. But Copernicus, Nietzsche suggests, has shown that in the "visible order of things," we now know the world is not the location in which the truths of scientists reside. However, we've proceeded, since Copernicus, completely oblivious to this truth, and Nietzsche calls our attention to it in this passage.

I have argued here that the strand of thought connecting the Copernicus passages contain a commitment to anticipating a view on the semantics of theoretical terms. We have seen that this view is the description theory of reference, in which the meaning of theoretical terms is to stand in internal relations with one another, defined and imposed by practitioners of science. Since this semantic view implies incommensurability, the falsification thesis is true for these passages in GM. The Copernicus passages together constitute a reason against thinking not only that the developmental hypothesis accurately charts the evolution of Nietzsche's thought, but they also constitute a reason against thinking that science has general normative authority for Nietzsche.

2.2 Introduction: Twilight of the Idols

Nietzsche writes TI in 1888 and publishes it in January 1889, shortly before the time Nietzsche suffers a mental collapse in Turin. It would be the prime of what Clark and Leiter characterize as "mature" Nietzsche—so it is here that we purportedly find Nietzsche finally coming to terms with a deflationary account of truth Clark characterizes as commonsense correspondence, having given up on metaphysical correspondence; we purportedly find him placing empirical inquiry at the helm of epistemic virtue; we thereby should expect to find him

attributing unequivocal general normative authority to science. There are two “hot spots” in the secondary literature: in TI IV, “How the “True World” Finally Became a Fable,” and in TI VI, “The Four Great Errors.” I will survey these areas in turn, first 2.2a and then 2.2b. I’ll argue that contrary to Leiter and Clark’s read, these passages contain another substantive commitment to the falsification thesis and therefore a denial of truth. And as I’ve argued above, if we have good reasons for thinking a denial of truth continues on into Nietzsche’s mature thinking and writing, then it follows that we have good reason for thinking that the developmental hypothesis is textually inconsistent with the published works and is therefore inadequate. If the developmental hypothesis is inadequate, then the developmental hypothesis fails to support attributing Nietzsche with accepting science’s general normative authority.

2.2a “How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable”

Subtitled “*The History of an Error*,” this section contains a conceptual evolution of an error. Presumably the error has to do with the “True World;” what’s unclear is whose history this error is. Clark persuasively argues that in part, the history Nietzsche details is his *own* intellectual history and development. It will be useful to walk through each stage to illuminate why she thinks this. In addition, Clark argues that in this section, Nietzsche eventually comes to distinguish his own current views from earlier, errant stages. I will explicate Lanier Anderson’s argument that the latest stage of Nietzsche’s development contains an expression of the falsification thesis, and defend it from an objection in Leiter (2002).

Stage one begins with the following:

1. The true world—attainable for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man; he lives in it, *he is it*.
(The oldest form of the idea, relatively sensible, simple, and persuasive. A circumlocution for the sentence, “I, Plato, *am* the truth.”)

Stage one is the basic starting point in the development of the concept of truth in the western tradition. Plato takes notes at Socrates’ trial, and later uses Socrates as a prop to espouse anti-democratic political theory and a view of truth such that it is philosophers, and nobody else who can grasp the highest form of truth by being capable of intuiting the form of the good.²⁰ So Plato essentially *is* truth by virtue of the fact that he is the one articulating the conditions of possibility for which one can claim to know the truth. So the “true world” is the world known, grasped and lived by the philosopher.

2. The true world—unattainable for now, but promised to the sage, the pious, the virtuous man (“for the sinner who repents”).
(Progress of the idea: it becomes more subtle, insidious, incomprehensible—it becomes *female*, it becomes Christian.) (ibid)

Here, Nietzsche describes the appropriation of this Platonic metaphysics of truth by Christianity. The “true world” is now the world promised in the form of “heaven” to those who abide the edicts of church authorities, and the “true world” is promised to those who don’t abide the same edicts is promised in the form of hell. In both cases, though, we have “unattainable for now,” but which becomes attainable in one way, the other after death.

3. The true world—unattainable, indemonstrable, unpromisable; but the very thought of it—
a consolation, an obligation, an imperative.

²⁰ I fully appreciate that this is likely a historically inaccurate account of what’s actually taking place in the dialogues, but it is the popular understanding of them which is shared by Nietzsche.

(At bottom, the old sun, but seen through mist and skepticism The idea has become elusive, pale, Nordic, Königsbergian.)

Clearly our pale Königsbergian is a reference to the Kantian thinking that led to Nietzsche's early appropriation of the metaphysical correspondence theory, which he then mustered in the service of a denial of the possibility of truth, the falsification thesis. I take the sense of "obligation" that Nietzsche associates with the true world to be one which proceeds in two steps. The first is that the true world constitutes the domain of truth, full stop. Since truth is valuable, we ought to seek it out; but, as we have seen, we cannot acquire access to this domain—it is "unattainable" and "indemonstrable." Second: the "very thought of it" is therefore a "consolation" because we may suppose that there is a domain in which truth can be said to exist, and we ought to seek it out because truth is important; but it is at the same time impossible due to the fact that human minds falsify reality.

As Clark observes, Nietzsche is leaving no doubt about the occupants of stages one through three. The next three, however, start looking like stages that Nietzsche himself moves through along the course with an apparent development.

4. The true world—unattainable? At any rate, unattained. And being unattained, also *unknown*. Consequently, not consoling, redeeming, or obligating: how could something unknown obligate us?

(Gray morning. The first yawn of reason. The cock-crow of positivism.)

Clark characterizes this as the stage in which "Nietzsche argues that the true or metaphysical world has no function to play, but does not deny its existence" (Clark 1990 112). This was a brief period of time in which Nietzsche entertained the plausibility in valuing positivism despite there being a thing in-itself that is cognitively inaccessible. Importantly, Clark points out here (*ibid*)

that Nietzsche's use of the phrase "true world" is in fact a use, and not a scare-quoted mention—the latter of which is on her reading Nietzsche's target in this progression.

5. The "true" world—an idea which is no longer good for anything, not even obligating—an idea which has become useless and superfluous—*consequently*, a refuted idea: let us abolish it!

(Bright day; breakfast; return of *bon sens* and cheerfulness; Plato's embarrassed blush; pandemonium of all free spirits.)

We have in stage five what Clark claims maps onto Nietzsche's development in GS and BGE. The so-called "true" world is now scare-quote *mentioned* as a *target*. Compare Nietzsche's talk about truth, and his conventions for doing so, here with stage four. In stage four, the true world is if not possibly unattainable, "at any rate unattained." Concerning the relation between the true world and attainability is a relation of logical possibility, since it is not the case that it could possibly turn out that the true world could be *as of yet* unattained *and* impossible to know. But the language in stage five says of the "true" world that as a concept it is "useless" "superfluous" and therefore "refuted," calling on us to "abolish" it.

It seems to be clear from this analysis of the progression from stage four into five what Nietzsche has in mind. The traces of the in-itself are brought to the fore and recognized as having no cognitive value in assessing truth. So we should expect stage six to further reiterate this finding, since as Clark claims "no one denies that Nietzsche places his thought in stage six" (Clark 1990 112).

6. The true world—we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one perhaps? But no! *With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one.*

(Noon; moment of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity;

INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.)

On Clark's interpretation, stage six is the culmination of his intellectual development. If we accept the existence of the in-itself, then necessarily every mental representation of an object is an appearance, since the way it shows up to me in my representation depends on the structure of the cognitive apparatuses that make representing it the way I do to myself possible. But if we deny the existence of the in-itself and at the same time, that the domain in which the in-itself resides can be the domain for truth, then I have at the same time demolished any purpose for calling my mental representation of a thing an *appearance* of the thing. The thing I represent just *is* the thing; therefore, "*with the true world we have also abolished the apparent one.*"

Anderson (1996) I think has a better read on this development, and claims that it is actually both stages five *and* six that encapsulate the culminating development. It will be useful to gloss his take on the falsification thesis—a take that benefits from being anchored more closely to the textual context of the published works. Drawing from GM itself as an example of the thoroughgoing falsification at work in the mature Nietzsche. There, along with an articulation of perspectivism,²¹ Nietzsche is arguing that interpretation and perspective are both indispensable for any claim to knowledge (Anderson 317):

Let us guard ourselves better from now on, gentlemen philosophers, against the dangerous old conceptual fabrication[...] in which the active and interpretive forces,

²¹Once again I am not trying to give a substantial reading of perspectivism or claim that my Anderson-shared Kantian gloss should be adopted over the hundreds of accounts provided over the years. I am only pointing to the textual context of the mature writings to show that there *are* reasons for thinking Nietzsche never abandoned the falsification thesis, despite the generalization provided by Leiter and Clark that nowhere in the mature writings does Nietzsche express skepticism about the possibility of truth itself.

through which seeing first becomes seeing-something are to be shut off, are to be absent...(GM III 12)

Here, Nietzsche makes a claim about the role interpretation has in a textual context stressing the indispensable role of perspective in knowledge claims: “There is *only* a perspectival seeing, *only* a perspectival “knowing” (ibid). In any perspective lies interpretation, which Nietzsche elaborates in GM III 24, which we saw in 2.1:

French science now seeks a kind of moral superiority over German science, that renunciation of all interpretation (of doing violence, pressing into orderly form, abridging, omitting, padding, fabricating, falsifying and whatever else belongs to the *essence* of all interpreting)... (GM III 24)

So if for any perspective, adopting a perspective necessarily requires interpretation in order for seeing to become seeing-something *at all*, then the adopted perspective falsifies reality. Along the lines of the same argument I made for reading the Copernicus passages on the description theory of reference, a version of which shares with Kant the model of imposing concepts on observed entities, Anderson reads Nietzsche as remaining broadly committed through his mature period to the thesis that:

our perspective brings a set of concepts to the data of sense, and we use those concepts to organize our and interpret our experience. This interpretive amounts to a falsification because the concepts we employ are not derived from the known objects, but are notions that we impose onto experience in a way that transforms it. Since truth traditionally requires that our beliefs conform themselves to theory-independent objects, this transformation of experience by our perspective prevents us from reaching the truth, and generates a thoroughgoing falsification of our beliefs. (Anderson 1996 318)

Since the concepts “unity” and “thinghood” and “identity” are all presupposed in any observation of an object, it follows that any observation supporting a statement presupposing these concepts necessarily falsifies. We can now see why discarding the apparent world in stage six is possible:

...in the absence of a workable concept of the “true world,” we are no longer entitled to the true/apparent distinction, and therefore cannot characterize the empirical world as “apparent.” (Anderson 1996 320)

The strategy is to first get rid of the “true world,” and once we do *that* we “also *and at the same time* [lose] any right to denigrate the empirical world as “merely apparent” (ibid). So stage five and six aren’t distinct stages of development, but are instead “two sides of the same coin” (ibid). In other words, because we always bring concepts that are imposed on the data of sense in order to make the world intelligible to ourselves, and that these concepts aren’t also derived from objects themselves, it follows that whatever we make of it will succumb to the falsification thesis.

Anderson introduces an additional reason for accepting this interpretation: since stages one and two represent the same concept in error, though the content of that concept is put into practice differently, it doesn’t fail to be germane to the spirit of development of an error through stages even if more than one stage shares the same concept and therefore the same error. In stage one, the Platonist resides in the true world because he *is* it—“I Plato, *am* the truth.” The Platonists specialization enables him to intuit the form of the good, but only the virtuous philosopher can live in and *be* the arbiter or truth, accordingly. The error in stage one “progresses” into stage two, but only inasmuch as it is “more subtle, insidious, incomprehensible—it becomes...Christian” (TI IV). By the same token, stage five and six are

moments of the same recognition: that once we ditch the “true world” in stage five, we can then in stage six also abolish the apparent world.

For both the reason that the Kantian model of knowledge persists through the mature works, and because it isn't textually incongruent to assign more than one stage to one development in the “History of an Error,” It follows then, on Anderson's read, that Nietzsche isn't best read as concluding that he rejects the falsification thesis when he concludes “*with the true world we have also abandoned the apparent one*” (ibid).

Once again we have an objection from Leiter, since he thinks Anderson's got it wrong. Leiter accuses Anderson of failing to understand the textual context of the passages he cites in Nietzsche's mature thinking that evince the falsification thesis. Leiter starts by addressing Anderson's concession to Clark that one gripe Nietzsche has is with the supposition that there could be a “non-natural faculty capable of knowledge of reality uncontaminated by the senses” (Clark 1990 137). Any faculty like “reason” that fits this bill is presumably at least in part being attacked by Nietzsche in the late works. The line that sparks the controversy, then, in TI III 2:

What we *make* of [the senses'] testimony that alone introduces lies; for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence. “Reason” is the cause of our falsification of the testimony of the senses. (TI III 2)

So this may look like a winning game for Clark—“reason” is scare quoted, and in the context of talk about the other categories of the understanding, it looks like Nietzsche is in fact targeting the Kantian picture of pure reason being able to generate a priori knowledge. If we could abandon this metaphysical baggage and practice science without thinking that the categories apply because of a priori knowledge of the way human minds work, then we would have a practice of science falling outside the scope of Nietzsche's attack here.

Anderson doesn't think that this picture of the text is adequate to at least one claim Nietzsche seems to be making in it:

If "reason" named a faculty that no one had, then this faculty could not have *succeeded* in falsifying the "testimony of the senses"...A non-faculty could not be the "*cause* of falsification." (Anderson 1996 320)

To paraphrase the argument: if Nietzsche *were* picturing reason in the Kantian sense, and he seems to believe that the faculty of pure reason doesn't exist, then it follows that a faculty that doesn't exist can't do any causal work in rendering this or that piece of knowledge falsified. Nietzsche can't be talking about a faculty he doesn't think exists if it has to exist in order to falsify reality, Nietzsche is attacking the faculty of reason that posits "unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence" (TI II 2). This is the faculty at work in empirical judgment, for any empirical judgment presupposes these categories. Therefore, Nietzsche is advancing the falsification thesis in TI II 2.

Leiter, however, doesn't think this is the right gloss. His counter-argument is that what Nietzsche is getting at in this passage is:

...of course, that philosophers have taken categories that they *believed* to be deliverances of "pure reason" and applied them to reality, and in doing so *falsified* the real world. So

Anderson's retort leaves Clark's interpretation of the text untouched. (Leiter 2002 19)

So Anderson has it wrong: what Nietzsche is talking about here are the philosophers who mistakenly craft a story about the existence of a non-natural faculty that we need to posit as having literal existence in order to explain the conditions necessary for the possibility of experience. This counterargument is attractive, especially if (1) it's the case that, as Leiter claims, "Nietzsche puts "reason" in scare-quotes throughout the section" (Leiter 2002 18) to call

attention to the distinction Leiter is flagging. It would be even *more* attractive if (2) Nietzsche contrasted the deliverances of reason, non-scared-quoted, to contrast between a kind of knowledge he wants to advocate for and the faulty picture of knowledge built around “reason.” Finally, it would be an open-and-shut case against Anderson’s read if (3) Nietzsche’s use of scare quotes were deployed consistently to this end.

Looking a little closer at (1), since Leiter is attacking Anderson’s argument on the basis of the textual context of TI III 2 and 5, let’s see if his claim checks out. Nietzsche uses “reason” once, scare-quoted, in TI III 2; in TI 5, he attacks it scare-quoted once in quotation marks, but *twice* non-scared-quoted.²² So Nietzsche’s use of scare-quotes is at least an incomplete guide to unpacking what his target is.

Looking a little closer at (2), things fare even worse for Leiter. Nietzsche doesn’t contrast the deliverances of reason, non-scared-quoted, to issue a contrast between kinds of knowledge he wants to advocate for and the kinds of knowledge in that epistemically faulty picture built on the Kantian conception of “reason.” He *does*, however, expand on the epistemically faulty picture of knowledge under attack in this textual context, and in doing so, shows that he’s not *just* picking on “reason,” scare-quoted or not. This invites even *worse* trouble for (3).

Immediately following the claim that “reason” “is the cause of our falsification of the testimony of the senses,” Nietzsche clarifies how “reason” is the culprit here: “Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, and change, they do not lie. But Heraclitus will remain eternally right with his assertion that being is an empty fiction” (TI III 2). This is an *ontological claim* that is grounding a general error of positing any reality of *being* against the reality of *becoming*. At stake is not just the domain of empirical claims that Clark and Leiter think

²² I return to this problem in 2.2b

Nietzsche is trying to nudge us in the direction of making in an intellectually honest way, free from Kantian metaphysical prejudices; it is the whole host of concepts we use to organize the data of sense, whether they participate in the Kantian metaphysical prejudices or not.

Anderson clarifies: “Although our “reason” might not need, say, the category of substance, we cannot do without *some* concepts to organize the data of sense” (Anderson 1996 318). Citing a fragment of the notebooks that explain why Nietzsche would be comfortable conflating “reason” and reason non-scare-quoted as culprits in falsification, Nietzsche claims that “Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off” (Anderson 1996 319). Any schematized judgment that seeks to impose order on the world by making it understood as a stable, unified, intelligible whole would presumably be doing something with the senses that would be making a falsehood out of their testimony insofar as, again, they are *not* showing “becoming, passing away, and change” (TI III 2).

Leiter’s counter-argument to Anderson is therefore unsound. There is no making-good on a non-scare-quoted-reason-generated knowledge claim in TI II 2 or 5, because at the heart of Nietzsche’s thinking, human minds falsify reality. Because the falsification thesis is alive and well in these passages—in one of Nietzsche’s most central “mature” works—it follows we have one reason for thinking that science cannot be a source of general normative authority.

2.2b TI VI 3, “The Error of a False Causality”

In TI VI, Nietzsche is surveying what he calls “The Four Great Errors,” one of which is “The Error of a False Causality.” I will provide a general exegesis of the section focusing on the error of a false causality and argue that what Nietzsche is expressing in this section is, once again, another iteration of the falsification thesis. Despite obvious appearances that giving

expression to the falsification thesis is what he's up to here, Clark (1993) gives one objection to this reading, while Leiter gives a different objection against a similar reading as it appears in Acompora (2006). I will take the objections in turn—Clark's argument that the textual context calls for a distinction between the world "in-itself" and "as it appears to us" lacks any plausible support. Leiter's objection to Acompora fares poorly.

In TI VI, Nietzsche enumerates over a number of aphorisms the four great errors of western thought. They are "the error of confusing cause and effect," (TI VI 1—2) "the error of a false causality," (TI VI 3) "the error of imaginary causes" (TI VI 4—6) and "the error of free will" (TI VI 7—8). The "error" that gets a lot of attention from commentators is the second in the list, the error of a false causality. The textual context concerns mental causation: Nietzsche generally characterizes mentality or consciousness (and other mental phenomena) as an epiphenomenon of psycho-physiological activity.²³

In TI VI, the case appears to be the same: "the "inner world" is full of phantoms and will-o'-the-wisps—the will is one of them. The will no longer moves anything, hence does not explain anything either—it merely accompanies events; it can also be absent" (TI VI 3). In other words, whenever I have a thought or formulate an intention, it's not the case that there is a substantive "I" as a subject contributing to the direction of my thought or intention. At best, Nietzsche claims, there may be something like an "I" watching a causally structured series of events unfold, mentality being a member of this set.

The difference, however, is that in this context Nietzsche's argument to the conclusion that mental causation is fictional is not the end of the story. From the fact that we falsely attribute

²³ See, e.g., GS 354 for an extended commentary on this claim; this claim is made in numerous places, however, across Nietzsche's so-called "intellectual development."

the causal efficacy of our own minds in generating intentions, thoughts or actions as effects of a causally efficacious will, Nietzsche thinks that we *project* this error onto the world of objects:

Humans even took the concept of being from the concept of the ego; they posited “things” as “being,” in their image, in accordance with their concept of the ego as cause. Small wonder that they always found in things only that *which they had put into them*. The thing itself, to say it once more, the concept of thing is a mere reflex of the faith in the ego as cause. (TI VI 3)

As we saw in the Copernicus passages, Nietzsche maintains his commitment to the semantic interpretation of theoretical terms such that their meaning is constructed out of the internal relations they inhabit to others, which is a function of a kind of linguistic projection on the part of scientists. However, in this passage Nietzsche is leveling a metaphysical charge against scientists: thinking that causation is the kind of event that belongs in nature is a mere “reflex of the faith in ego as cause,” and arises in the first place out of the prejudices in western metaphysics that posit the existence of a causally efficacious will. The concept of a “thing” occurs when we describe objects in nature as stable, unified subjects participating in causal networks because of the bad habit of interpreting ourselves as unified subjects; the concept of “cause” likewise occurs only because of the bad habit of thinking of our unified autonomous selves as having the capacity to causally efficaciously orient ourselves in thought, intention and action in the world.

If “thing” and “cause” are mere projections of bad interpretation of human mentality and action, then it follows that for any observation in scientific practice that the description of the observation will presuppose the *metaphysics* of bad interpretation of human mentality and action. If that observation presupposes the metaphysics of bad interpretation of human mentality and

action, then we have reason to think, once again, that human minds falsify reality. Since “thing” and “cause” are mere projections of bad interpretation of human mentality and action, then, it follows that Nietzsche is claiming in this passage that human minds falsify reality. And since the falsification has emerged once again in the “mature” works, we have reason to think the developmental hypothesis fails to capture a stable development in his thinking that would show he comes to accept truth as unproblematic.

However, Clark’s reading anticipates this interpretation. On her account, here and elsewhere, the developmental hypothesis remains fully intact and helps explain what Nietzsche is really driving at in TI VI. On Clark’s reading, as we saw above, Nietzsche here is fully abandoning any commitment to the thing in-itself, denying that it bears any significance on truth. To develop this claim in the context of TI VI 3, she critically examines the concluding aphorism of TI III, section 6:

First Proposition: The reasons for which “this” world has been characterized as “apparent” are the very reasons which indicate its reality; any other kind of reality is absolutely indemonstrable.

Second Proposition: The criteria which have been bestowed on the “true being” of things are the criteria of not-being, of *naught*; the “true world” has been constructed out of contradiction to the actual world: indeed an apparent world, insofar as it is merely a moral-optical illusion. (TI III 6)

Looking at the first proposition, “this” world might be characterized as such because its contrary, the “other” world, or the world as it is in-itself, requires that it merely shows itself as it appears to us. But if the reason why “this” world is characterized as such is that it can never show up as it really is in-itself, then we are appealing to another “kind of reality” that is “indemonstrable.”

The attack on the distinction between the world as it appears to us and how it is in-itself appears to continue on into the second proposition—except here Nietzsche asserts that criteria for an object to bear properties of its “true being” are “not-being,” or *not*. Because Nietzsche denigrates the distinction between appearance and reality as essentially being a “moral-optical illusion,” i.e., lacking reality, it seems that what Nietzsche clearly has in mind again in TI, as we saw above, is an attack on the distinction between appearance and reality. Specifically, any kind of metaphysical correspondence theory that could serve as the basis of falsification seems to be off the table in TI.

Returning to TI IV 3, we can see something plausibly similar taking place. When Nietzsche attacks positing “things” as “being,” and lambasts the concept of causality in nature as a projection of a bad interpretation of human mentality and action, he’s attacking the same caricature of Kantian metaphysics as he did in TI III 6. With that in mind, we might have a good reason for thinking that Nietzsche is talking about attributing these properties to objects as they are in themselves—that causality is a relational property *in-itself* between two objects *in themselves*. And as Clark would have it, it’s exactly this metaphysical claim mature Nietzsche has come to abandon in his mature writings. And so having resolutely given up on the thing in-itself as the standard for truth, we can simply accept the world as it appears to us with causal structure as one against which we have no other measure, and so have no reason for rejecting.

However, there is some relevant textual context absent from this reading. On the face of it, it would be strange to think that Nietzsche would ever exoterically *enumerate propositions* about what he thinks without abandoning the aphoristic style that defines how he chooses to present his work over the course of his life. Indeed, as Clark quotes “first proposition” and

“second proposition” from TI III, 6, she does so without addressing the puzzling characterization Nietzsche provides in introducing these “propositions:”

It will be appreciated if I condense so essential and so new an insight into four theses. In that way I facilitate comprehension; in that way I provoke contradiction. (TI II, 6)

It is noteworthy that in this aphorism Nietzsche starts by stating his intention to provoke contradiction by facilitating comprehension: in other words, if he facilitates the reader’s understanding the four propositions in this aphorism then it follows that he “provokes contradiction.” In “understanding” here, your state of understanding isn’t just one in which you understand that something is contradictory; Nietzsche may as well have said that he “communicates a contradiction” if that’s what he meant.

I think something more is going on in TI III 6: by *provoking* a contradiction, Nietzsche is calling attention to *performing* one in this textual context. Normally if I facilitate your comprehension of something, the result is that you *understand it*, and not watch somebody contradict themselves. Let’s suppose I’m teaching a student how to complete a proof in natural deduction. I might start with a basic proof using just a few rules of inference; modeling the application of the rules to the premises of the argument a few times, I (hopefully) succeed in facilitating the comprehension about completing some basic proofs in natural deduction. But if elements in a comprehension contain a *contradiction* in the mind of the student, by succeeding in helping that student understand how to complete some proofs in natural deduction, it clearly isn’t the case that I have facilitated any comprehension at all! Quite the opposite is the case: if I succeed in facilitating your comprehension of *p*, and as a result, you believe both *p* and *not p*, then you haven’t comprehended *p*—at least, not *as such*. Any use of this textual context to supply reasons for thinking that content in this context represents something a mature Nietzsche

thinks must address what appears to be probably an intentionally paradoxical framework Nietzsche situates his propositions in.²⁴ Otherwise, we aren't digging any deeper into the predicates that can be affixed to the so-called mature Nietzsche.

A second and potentially more damaging problem emerges for Clark's reading of TI VI. Her reading once again fails to account for the textual context of the immediately preceding aphorism. Consider Nietzsche's attack on reason in TI II 5:

Formerly, alteration, change, any becoming at all, were taken as proof of mere appearance, as an indication that there must be something which led us astray. (TI II 5)

I take it that an exemplar for this observation is Descartes' wax experiment in the second meditation. There, Descartes inspects a piece of wax using the senses: he observed its color, odor, texture, &c. Using the senses as the criterion, Descartes attempts to formulate an appropriate concept of the object. However, subjecting the wax to the flame yields a different color, odor, texture, &c. Since the identity of the wax remains the same, the senses present us with a concept of the object problematically susceptible to "alteration, change, any becoming at all." Thus, the senses can only provide a "mere appearance" of the object, and deeper cognitive inspection is required to formulate a concept of the object appropriate to it. This line of reasoning, however, Nietzsche rejects:

Today, conversely, precisely insofar as the prejudice of reason forces us to posit unity, identity, permanence, substance, cause, thinghood, being, we see ourselves somehow caught in error, compelled into error. So certain are we, on the basis of rigorous examination, that this is where the error lies. (TI II 5)

²⁴ I provide an explanation for why I think Nietzsche is doing this in the introduction to Chapter 3.

Note first that Nietzsche isn't referring to the prejudice of "reason" to posit "unity," "identity," "permanence," "substance," "cause," "thinghood" and "being." Recall that Clark couches her account of Nietzsche in these passages as really taking issue with the domain of these concepts as they are relegated to the in-itself of objects, and not the concepts themselves.

Recall too that her account depends on at least in part that Nietzsche consistently delineates the meaning of these words by appealing to a use/mention distinction—he will use the word *truth* when he refers to it in the metaphysically unproblematic sense of the term, but mentions "*truth*" by scare quoting it when he wants to flag that it is participating in the Kantian game of the in-itself. Nietzsche isn't doing that here, just as he wasn't in TI III 2—so it follows once again that either his use of the use/mention quoting conventions to indicate problematic concepts is inconsistent either because he isn't doing it here but should be, or it follows that Nietzsche isn't calling our attention to the problems that these concepts involve at all having to do with the in-itself.

Indeed, as Nietzsche continues in the passage, he exactly points to problems that these concepts are tangled up in that, at the same time, do not need to rely on having anything to do with the in-itself. He continues:

It is no different in this case than with the movement of the sun: there our eye is the constant advocate of error, here it is our language. In its origin language belongs in the age of the most rudimentary form of psychology. We enter a realm of crude fetishism when we summon before consciousness the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language, in plain talk, the presuppositions of reason. (TI II 5)

I take Nietzsche's accusation of the eye as the "constant advocate of error," especially here by calling our attention again back to the historical development of astronomy as evidence of

incommensurability, as an echo of the argument he makes in the Copernicus passages. We have seen enough about this, so a passing observation will suffice: just like the error revealed in the historical development of astronomy is an error revealed in the everyday use of *language itself*. Nietzsche seems to be suggesting here that built into language itself is a “realm of crude fetishism” that is committed to the presuppositions of *reason*. Nietzsche expands on what these presuppositions of language are:

Everywhere it sees a doer and a doing; it believes in will as *the* cause; it believes in the ego, in the ego as substance, and it projects this faith in the ego-substance upon all things—only thereby does it first *create* the concept of a “thing.” Everywhere “being” is projected by thought, pushed underneath, as the cause; the concept of being follows, and is derivative of, the concept of ego. In the beginning there is that great calamity of an error that the will is something which is effective, that will is a capacity. Today we know it is only a word. (TI II 5).

Here, Nietzsche emphasizes the same argument that we saw in TI VI 3. The first claim is that the mind is causally efficacious; second, we project the fiction of there being a causally efficacious relation between minds and action onto the world, and, as Nietzsche emphasizes, we literally *create* things, or objects, by projecting this model of causality onto them. In other words, as we move from the first into the second claim, we populate the world with entities whose causality functions as erroneously as the first claim.

The whole empirical world, then, structured on this errant projection, instantiates the falsification thesis. Surely reality necessarily *appears* in the way that it does: I don’t have the capacity to represent something other than an object when it is given to me in consciousness, but that doesn’t mean that I’m *justified* or *correctly adhering* to some criterion of making true claims

about those objects. Here in TI II 5, as well as in TI VI 3, we have a consistent iteration of reasons to think the falsification thesis obtains. If it is a cognitive error to believe in mental causality at all, and doing so is the basis for thinking causal relations really obtain in empirical observation, then human minds falsify reality.

There is an even stronger argument, however, that Clark passes over in this textual context. Nietzsche appears to make the claim that not *only* is it the case that human minds falsify reality, but that reality itself *is* such that any kind of causal predication to a stable subject is undermined due to the fact that *becoming fundamentally disrupts our ability to say anything true in general*. Everywhere, he stresses in TI II, “‘being’ is projected by thought pushed underneath, as the cause...” (TI II 5). Being itself is presupposed in any empirical observation, and not on the basis of simple attribution of this predicate to the thing as it is in-itself apart from all possible representations. The world, Nietzsche seems to suggest here, is *ontologically* becoming, and any true empirical observation indicating being is necessarily false on this independent basis.

However, Leiter (2016) has an objection to this account of TI VI 3, which is similar to my account which is his target in that essay (Acampora 2006). On her account, TI VI 3 should be read along the lines I’ve just spelled out—namely, that Nietzsche’s gripe is that in attributing causal relations to instantiate in and between objects, and, that in turn, inferring that the world is made up of objects inhabiting these relations, it follows that:

The empirical world of the scientist is populated by a host of ‘spirit-subjects’ in the form of ‘doers’ or agents. This is the framework in which the concept of causation operates.
(Acampora 2006, 320).

Leiter isn’t convinced that from the error of believing in causally efficacious minds that it follows we have license to the conclusion that Nietzsche thinks that causation itself is a projected

error mirroring the original one made in believing there are to be causally efficacious minds. And he has a good reason to try to block this conclusion: if it were true that mature Nietzsche rejects causal claims in the empirical world, it would seem that mature Nietzsche would have little interest in the version of m-naturalism that Leiter attributes to him.

The reason Leiter thinks it makes sense to insist that Nietzsche isn't claiming that we project this cognitive error onto our model of nature insofar as it purports objects there to abide causality lies curiously in the translation that he has prepared for the argument-relevant bit of TI VI 3. After conceding that the most important part of this passage is the conclusion and attempting to bolster his account on the grounds that he cites more of the passage than Acampora does, Leiter provides the following gloss of the final sentences of the concluding paragraph of TI VI 3:

Even the 'thing,' to say it again, the concept of a thing, is just a reflex of the belief in the I as cause...and even your atom, my dear Mr. Mechanist and Mr. Physicist, how many errors, how much rudimentary psychology is left in your atom! Not to mention the 'thing-in-itself'...! The error of thinking that mind caused reality! And to make it the measure of reality! And to call it *God!*

From *that* passage content, Leiter claims, "that we are mistaken in thinking the conscious will is *causal* in action...clearly entails no skepticism about the reality of causation, which is what is supposed to be at issue in Acampora's critique of my reading of Nietzsche's M-Naturalism" (Leiter 2016 16). And maybe he would be right, on the content of his passage translation: the errors of mechanists and physicists, presented alongside the metaphysician's thing-in-itself, could run afoul into "thinking that mind caused reality," and in their errors, think their metrics amount to "the measure of reality," and finally also call it "God." Meanwhile, clear-headed

empirical scientists practice their inquiry innocently and have the reality of causation woven into the claims they make, since they aren't in the business of thinking that "mind caused reality."

However, think about where we jumped off of from the top of the passage and where we landed. It's hard to see how landing on the interpretation that empirical science can peddle metaphysically uncontroversial claims because they don't think mind causes reality has *anything* to do with the relation of the error of projecting the structure of mental causation to the empirical world. Let's take a look at the original German of the Leiter-translated portion of the passage above:

Und selbst noch Ihr Atom, meine Herren Mechanisten und Physiker, wie viel Irrthum, wie viel rudimentäre Psychologie ist noch in Ihrem Atom rückständig! - Gar nicht zu reden vom "Ding an sich", vom horrendum pudendum der Metaphysiker! Der Irrthum vom Geist als Ursache mit der Realität verwechselt! Und zum Maass der Realität gemacht! Und Gott genannt! –

The source of that strange irrelevance can now be made clear. Focusing on the last two sentences, grammatically, Nietzsche just plainly *isn't saying* what Leiter translates him as saying. He *isn't* saying "The error of thinking [is] that mind caused reality!" when he says "Der Irrthum vom Geist als Ursache mit der Realität verwechselt!" He *is* saying: "the error of mind as cause mistaken for reality!" or "...confused for reality!" He is simply *not* concluding the passage about an error in thinking that mind causes reality. And Nietzsche concluding TI VI 3 with *that* remark would confuse any reader anyway because *that's not what the passage is about*. The passage is about "the thing itself, to say it once more, the concept of the thing is a mere reflex of the faith in the ego as cause" (ibid). And *because* the concept of a thing is a mere reflex of faith about the ego as cause, it follows that Nietzsche is *exactly* expressing skepticism about causation

in this passage as a result of it being modeled on the errant picture of a causally efficacious mind projected onto the structure of the world. So, when Leiter says:

Suppose it is true that our belief in “atoms” resulted from our false belief that our wills are causal. How does this lead to skepticism about *causation*? (Leiter, *ibid*)

One wonders in response if he has read an even somewhat accurate translation of TI at all. Let’s assume he has; one plausible option for explaining his confusion here is that in constructing his own translation, Leiter incompetently mistranslated the final sentences of the passage and his inability to understand the passage stems from this mistake.

If the issue is incompetent translation, though, we would expect the rest of Leiter’s translation of TI VI 3 to be thoroughly garbled; German readers know it isn’t, and the fact that it isn’t garbled explains why in broad strokes it looks more or less like Kaufmann’s. The case at hand seems decisively disanalogous to an “Ich bin ein Berliner” mistake. So: what gives? I have a somewhat more plausible and I guess slightly more charitable hypothesis. Since Leiter has had an agenda over the last twenty odd years in articulating and defending “Nietzsche’s M-Naturalism” (which he continues to do), it of course looks bad for your account if you both subscribe to the developmental hypothesis and your mature Nietzsche is very liberally assaulting robust conceptual elements of the m-naturalist framework—here, the concept of causation itself. It is in clear view of this very liberal assault that led Acampora to observe that Leiter’s account of Nietzsche is “simply mistaken” (Acampora 2006 *ibid*). To be fair: I think there is a kind of thinking that sometimes occurs in Nietzsche’s published works that matches up with Leiter’s m-naturalist reading. But this passage is a thorn in the side of anyone in Leiter’s philosophical position. The charitable explanation of the mistranslation, then, is that there is some obvious and

intentional mistranslation of the German to make sure that mature Nietzsche plays by the rules Leiter has set out for him.

At the end of his rope in a different discussion in the same 2016 essay, Leiter makes a conditional concession that the will to power may be a metaphysical claim that mature Nietzsche accepts; however, he states:

If it turns out that Nietzsche, the man, really is committed to what seems entailed by the most flat-footed literalism about a bare handful of published “will to power” passages, then so much worse for Nietzsche we might say. We do Nietzsche *the philosopher* a favor, however, if we reconstruct his project in terms that are both recognizably his in significant part, and yet at the same time far more plausible once the crackpot metaphysics of the will to power (that all organic matter “is will to power”) is expunged...Nietzsche was a mere mortal like the rest of us, and even being a genius cannot compensate for the dangers of being self-taught about so much. Perhaps Nietzsche really did believe he had some deep insight into the correct metaphysics of nature, one missed by the empirical sciences. If he had that thought—one wholly inconsistent with the rest of his naturalism—so much the worse for him. (Leiter 2016 19)

To paraphrase: if Nietzsche is really inarguably committed to this claim or the claim that becoming disrupts any and all epistemic credibility to empirical claims, due to textual evidence for it in the mature writings, then accepting these “so much the worse for Nietzsche!” qualifiers as the case somehow saves Nietzsche’s philosophical significance from himself. Leiter’s gambit is to therefore jettison as “crackpot” what appears incongruent with his own account of mature Nietzsche, and to steadfastly insist he’s got a handle on how the mature Nietzsche ought to be representing his thoughts.

To respond to this strategy: first, I would stake a high credence on the fact obtaining that Nietzsche *the person* would reject the paternalism of someone claiming to better understand his thinking than he himself does. Nietzsche *the philosopher* would reject ever needing a favor done in order to get his project off the ground in the “right way.” The bottom line here, I think, is that there are only so many “dangers” you can help save Nietzsche from until you are no longer in a dialogue with *Nietzsche* at all.²⁵ “So much the worse for” is a phrase really not *about* Nietzsche at all; it’s about Leiter, who, when confronted with evidence that supplies a reason for thinking a major thesis of his research is false, dissembles. And here my spade is overturned—I don’t have anything else to say about an account of Nietzsche’s thinking that treats it not just with disregard but, quite plausibly, with intentional dishonesty.

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined three arguments against reading Nietzsche as affording science general normative authority. I argued that in the late work GM, Nietzsche expresses skepticism even about common sense correspondence—what Clark treats as a “disquotational” view of truth. If science proceeds successively in incommensurable paradigms, then it follows that what we’re talking about when we make empirical claims is really the referent of internal relations constituted in and by the socially imposed regimes of “normal science.” If the referent of empirical claims are the internal relations constituted in and by the socially imposed regimes of “normal science,” then it’s not the case that truth is *out there*, and can be located independently

²⁵ I return to this important problem in the conclusion of this dissertation. The problem of reading Nietzsche with a hermeneutics of charity, or with consistency in relation to some doctrine or other, is one that presents itself to other commentators as well (most of whom handle the challenge with more grace than Leiter does). Janaway (2007) correctly identifies, I think, some potentially insurmountable barriers of time, language, culture and history, all of which prevent us from likely succeeding in the task of finding out what the “Real Nietzsche” was up to.

of these practices. It follows, therefore, that science can't itself supply the source of general normative authority because there are socio-cultural-political interpretive activities that precede any empirical observation which are responsible for giving it its structure and content. Therefore, there is one textual context in which Nietzsche expresses incommensurability about theoretical terms which is logically incompatible with affording science general normative authority. It is, as Rorty rightly attributes to Nietzsche, merely one perspective on the world among many others, as Rorty likes to say. (Rorty 1989)

The second and third arguments are, as we saw, situated in a more thoroughgoing location of Nietzsche's intellectual maturity—in TI, a work in which Nietzsche is supposed to have finally gotten over the intellectual motivation to doubt truth. In 2.2a I reviewed two interpretations of TI III 2 and 5—Clark's, which is intended to support the view that there is a mature Nietzsche operating in the textual context. I introduced Anderson's account, which I used to explicate an objection to Clark's reading. He argues that if there is no causally efficacious "reason" to falsify reality, then there isn't a faculty accomplishing this goal; but there *is* a faculty falsifying reality, and it is reason. Therefore, Nietzsche subscribes to the falsification thesis. I introduced Leiter's objection to this argument, which hinges on an implausible interpretation of the textual context of TI III 2 and 5. I also reviewed a different textual context of TI in 2.2b to see if things cash out differently between Clark and Leiter's interpretation and my running interpretation. Not only is the conclusion of 2.2a supported, but I argue that Leiter intentionally mistranslates a relevant portion to distort the text to appear to run counter to any appearance of the falsification thesis in the mature works.

So from 2.1-2.2, it follows that the falsification thesis is true at least in part in Nietzsche's mature period; and if that's true, then both the developmental hypothesis is either incomplete or

false and that science does not have general normative authority in the later works. At this point, we are left to wonder: what entity or process *could* possess normative authority if it is neither religion nor science? Many commentators think it has to be science, and I've given reasons to think this is not the case. Is there anything left? I think so. Instead of looking at theoretical sources of general normativity, for Nietzsche I think the best answer comes from a practical source of normativity.

The practical source of normativity is the value of life itself, and the general normative authority of life it is encapsulated in, quite characteristically, a series of questions Nietzsche puts to the reader to try to illuminate that for them. In the following chapter, I will unpack the general normative authority of the value of life as it occurs in the published works. Since Nietzsche calls attention to it infrequently, the task will be somewhat apocryphal; however, I think in tandem with remarks Nietzsche makes about "higher moralities" that a general source of normativity in the value of life itself can function as the "higher morality" Nietzsche never explicitly articulates.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ORDERS OF NIETZSCHEAN NORMATIVITY

3.1 Introduction

I have shown that there are serious challenges to the developmental hypothesis, and these challenges are perhaps insurmountable; and if these challenges are insurmountable, then it follows that we have good reasons against accepting the view that scientific inquiry can be the source of general normative authority for Nietzsche. If science fails as a candidate, then we need to uncover the source of general normative authority that can be best understood as pervading Nietzsche's thought. In this chapter, I will claim that the value one places on their own life is the bearer of general normative authority for Nietzsche. This general normative authority outstrips other sources of normative authority, including science.

But first, a final word about science. It's clearly not the case that in the published works, Nietzsche thinks science is not a source of normativity full stop. We need to find a place for science that can measure up to our standards for textual consistency. In what follows, I will make the case for a conception of Nietzschean normativity such that it is *ordered* across different instances of valuational degree. There may be a domain appropriate to the normativity of science such that its pursuit and our acceptance of its results are *warranted*; but the domain of *general* normative authority extends farther, and contains values *more important* than those animating the normative domain of science. I will address this up front, and proceed to argue that GS 341 contains an argument for higher morality. Explicating it requires close attention to the way

naturalism is retained in the normativity in Nietzsche's higher morality. I look to Schacht (2013) for a good provisional model of this normativity, but argue his account sells the *space* of individuality short. To unpack what *that* could be, I turn to Anderson (2013) and examine his concept of the Nietzschean "minimal" self. The self being addressed, properly understood, is the subject of Nietzschean higher morality, and the manner of his non-MPS moral system is thus exhibited. Although this is a formal picture of what I think higher morality for Nietzsche looks like, I close by canvassing a few objections pertaining to the ability of the theory to generate content that is recognizably moral.

3.2 The Order of Scientific Normativity

Consider an argument that Leiter makes in objecting to Acampora's read of TI VI 3. In addition to the unsound argument Leiter makes against Acampora that I detailed in the prior chapter, Leiter adds the following sound argument:

Suppose it is true that our belief in "atoms" resulted from our (false) belief that our wills are causal. How does this lead to skepticism about *causation*? It might warrant skepticism about the atomistic metaphysics of physics, but causation seems intact. *Indeed, in the very next section of Twilight, Nietzsche quickly returns to his confident distinguishing of real from imaginary causes, consistent with the entire tenor of this chapter.* (Leiter 2013 591my emphasis).

Nietzsche *in fact* does this—and not only in TI. Another of Nietzsche's late works, AC, published after *TI*, contains an important shift in the way Nietzsche speaks about the senses and empirical investigation. In decisively *cognitive* language, packed to the brim with causal claims,

Nietzsche describes not only in AC 15 but throughout AC itself the failures of the Christian metaphysics:

In Christianity neither morality nor religion has even a single point of contact with reality. Nothing but imaginary *causes* (“God,” “soul,” “ego,” “spirit,” “free will”—for that matter, “unfree will”), nothing but imaginary *effects* (“sin,” “redemption,” “grace,” “punishment,” “forgiveness of sins”). (AC 15, emphasis unchanged)

So, although I think it is a mistake to think Nietzsche is doing anything *but* denying causality in TI VI 3, it is equally mistaken to think that Nietzsche in these later works has something against the concept of causality itself. After all, he’s here making the claim that God is an imaginary cause, along with the rest—and he’s rattling off a series of imaginary effects, to boot.

Even Acampora concedes the following later in her analysis of Nietzsche’s general commitments concerning causation:

This is not to say Nietzsche rejects causation altogether, only that our current way of conceiving it is hampered by these other conceptual presuppositions or ‘errors’ as [Nietzsche] calls them. (Acampora 2006: 330 n. 8)

Leiter makes of this remark that it is actually a concession by Acampora to his argument against her reading—and again, Leiter argues soundly: if Nietzsche is perfectly content to deny that the content of your mind as you understand it is the kind of entity that can bear any causal relation on your actions, or really anything else, then Nietzsche in this textual context is simply saying that some causal claims are false, but is not committing himself to the claim that all causal claims are. And if not all causal claims are false, it follows that some (or “at least one”) are true, then it turns out Nietzsche doesn’t have a gripe with causation *as such*, contrary to Acampora’s original claim.

If Nietzsche is sometimes committing himself to the falsification thesis in his later works, but sometimes wholesale abandoning it, as evinced in AC 15—what gives? How can Nietzsche sometimes claim, as I argued he does in chapter 2, that the concept of causation itself is a mere projection of human, western metaphysical, conceptual *prejudice* on a world that doesn't answer to being? “The world” rather answers to its true essence as a radical flux of becoming—but then Nietzsche turns around the next chapter, the next book, elsewhere, and starts making claims about real causes, distinguishing them from imaginary causes. Is this simply a case of incoherent thought?

I think a preliminary answer is that: yes, this is a case of incoherent thought. But I *highly doubt* that Nietzsche is accidentally incoherent here²⁶ about his general commitment to causality. If he isn't accidentally incoherent, then I suspect he has a purpose for including the contradiction in his published works. As our first clue as to why he might be committing himself to an incoherent position on causality on purpose, recall that in Chapter 2 I claimed that any good account of what's going on in the textual context of TI V and VI will have to answer to what's going on with the conclusion of TI V. There, Nietzsche says “It will be appreciated if I condense so essential and so new an insight into four theses. In that way I facilitate comprehension; in that way I provoke contradiction.” I claimed that any good account of TI needs to address *why* Nietzsche is situating the condensed conclusion of the section “Reason in Philosophy” in this paradoxical context—neither Leiter's, Clark's nor Acampora's do this.

When Leiter observes that Nietzsche “quickly returns to his confident distinguishing of *real* from *imaginary* causes, consistent with the entire tenor of this chapter,” I think he inadvertently shows that he's aware of what's *actually* going on in TI VI 3, despite intentionally

²⁶ And elsewhere, too, where apparent incoherence emerges, e.g. TL.

mistranslating²⁷ the passage to cover over textual consistency problems with his account. Why does Nietzsche “quickly return” to making causal claims unless he’s paused or began a substantial diversion from doing just that—and such a diversion, Leiter wants to claim, Nietzsche was never even on to in the first place.

Nietzsche is putting forth p in TI VI 3, GM III 25, TL et. al—and $\sim p$ in TI VI 4, in the passage from AC cited above. Facilitating comprehension of Nietzsche’s thinking in the style I have just formulated provokes contradiction: he’s arguing for a conclusion and its contradictory, and in TI, the same textual context. Recall the forceful conclusion of Nietzsche’ analysis of science’s commitment to the ascetic ideal:

No! Don’t give me science as an answer when I look for the natural antagonist of the ascetic ideal, when I ask: “where is the opposing will in which its opposing ideal expresses itself?” Science is far from standing enough on its own for this....(GM III 25)

The metaphysics of causation have their place in empirical observation, and science is capable of supplying truth—even under the model of Kuhnian incommensurability, science has its place in explaining the world. In other words, the practice of empirical observation in scientific practice is a source of normativity. There *is* normative authority in science, for Nietzsche; he makes empirical claims and compares their value to non-empirical religious or philosophical claims. To claim otherwise is to ignore passages such as I have detailed so far in this chapter. Science’s deployment of the senses to critically examine and interrogate the world is a cognitively superior way of accessing it to the way Christianity does, and the way philosophers often do.

Granting normative authority to science, I will offer, is a way of giving it a scalar degree of ordered, normative superiority over western metaphysics. It subscribes to the ascetic ideal, as

²⁷ Or so I abductively argued, from a position of charity, in the prior chapter.

Nietzsche concludes GM III 27—and we philosophers, having had the flame that Plato lit several thousand years ago passed on to us, do as well; it is inescapable to the way we operate. However, the fact that Nietzsche offers up TI VI 3 and then “quickly returns” to the business of slinging causal claims around is significant, as it is the case that the “mature” works are riddled with this kind of contradiction.

I propose that we understand Nietzsche communicating to the reader through these intentional, performative contradictions that there are *limitations in value* about what theory can supply to *you*, however conceived. Theoretical knowledge is important, and developing it empirically is cognitively superior to the power relations that priests and philosophers establish in the lies they tell to others about the nature of the world, of reality. But, by showcasing *contradictions on purpose* in his own argumentation and presentation of theoretical knowledge, I propose we understand Nietzsche as communicating that there are *orders of normativity*: there are values that surpass the value of the criticism he is able to supply that may motivate a reader to revise her beliefs about the way the world is. Suppose you accept Nietzsche’s claim that the reality of the purported causal ordering of the world by Christianity is *false*. Then, suppose you read TI VI 3 and Nietzsche says causality is an errant projection on the behavior of objects in the world based on a false picture of mental causation. Picture Nietzsche whispering, as you reflect on the tension: *There’s something more important, reader*. Theoretical, or in the case for Nietzsche, any worthwhile knowledge in that domain--empirical knowledge--is not the source of *general* normative authority because it fails on its own terms to address itself to *the person reading his work* the only way a completely general account of normative authority does—practically.

3.3 Normativity, Moral Theory and Reflection

In order to dive right into the general source of Nietzschean normative authority, we will need to get a clearer grip on the relation between moral theory and normativity. It will be useful to turn to Christine Korsgaard's picture of the relation. While there are substantial and not insignificant differences to approaching normativity between Korsgaard and Nietzsche, I will assume for now, but show after articulating Anderson's conception of a Nietzschean minimal self, that there is enough in common with her framework to justify modeling some elements of Nietzsche's own thinking on it.²⁸

Korsgaard situates normativity in the framework of reflective endorsement: if, on reflection, I can't endorse a belief or a value, it fails to bear any normatively relevant results:

It is always possible for us to call our beliefs and motives into question. This is why, after all, we seek a philosophical foundation for ethics in the first place: because we are afraid that the true explanation of why we have moral beliefs and motives might not be the one that sustains them. Morality might not survive reflection. (Korsgaard 1996 49)

Probably no other moral skeptic came on the scene before Nietzsche to demonstrate so forcefully a variety of moralities failing to survive his novel standards of reflection. The majority of his published work is demonstrated to executing exactly the kind of explanation Korsgaard is canvassing here that is geared at undermining the reasons we think we have for believing and behaving morally—not just specific instances of having the moral belief that “I ought to do X,” but believing that I myself and other selves are equipped with the moral psychological equipment that enables someone with the ability to carry out the functions of morality (e.g. freedom of the will, transparency of the mind to itself, etc).

²⁸ The capacity for *reflection* will be retained and repurposed for Nietzsche's higher morality.

Before pressing on, it's worth noting that in adopting this model of the relation between moral theory and normativity, I'm not giving undue epistemic privilege to a mental capacity Nietzsche spends so much time in the published works trying to undermine. All I'm doing is illustrating that for *Nietzsche*, if the moral system in question lines up with the adequacy conditions for being an MPS, Nietzsche rejects it and it is therefore not normative for *his* thinking about morality—that system does not survive Nietzschean reflection and it thereby “dies,” to put it slightly differently.

Recall that for Nietzsche, the argument that MPS is “unreasonable in form” emerges out of the following textual context:

all these moralities [of today]...[are] unreasonable in form—because they address themselves to ‘all,’ because they generalize where generalization is impermissible. All of them speak unconditionally, take themselves for unconditional, all of them flavored with more than *one* grain of salt and tolerable only—at times even seductive—when they begin to smell over-spiced and dangerous, especially of “the other world.” All of it is, measured intellectually, worth very little and not by a long shot “science,” much less “wisdom,” but rather, to say it once more, three times more, prudence, prudence, prudence, mixed with stupidity, stupidity, stupidity. (BGE 198)

In the textual context of the passage, Nietzsche is taking umbrage with the following representatives of various moralities, and moralities themselves, on the grounds that they all try to moderate, diminish or otherwise place limitations on the expression of affect: Spinoza; Aristotle; Christianity; and Hafiz & Goethe. Presumably all the players here are *also* subjects of Nietzsche's attack in BGE 198 on “these moralities of today.”

In chapter one, I formalized this argument as follows:

P1'. MPS addresses itself to all and MPS generalizes where generalization is impermissible and MPS speaks unconditionally and MPS takes itself as unconditional and MPS is aperspectival in nature and MPS appeals to the "other world."

P2' If MPS addresses itself to all and MPS generalizes where generalization is impermissible and MPS speaks unconditionally and MPS takes itself as unconditional and MPS is aperspectival in nature and MPS appeals to the "other world" then MPS is unreasonable in form.

Therefore,

C. MPS is unreasonable in form.

Suppose we take this to be a representation of Nietzsche's central argument against MPS; if some moral system S contains all six properties I derived from textual context in chapter one of this dissertation, it follows that S is an MPS and Nietzsche hence rejects S.

To give a brief analysis of the six properties together in a moral system we know Nietzsche rejects, consider a (brand new to this chapter) S1, Christianity.

S1 "addresses itself to all" in familiar ways—Christians recommend the bible to everyone as the general source of normative theoretical and practical knowledge. It "generalizes where generalization is impermissible" because it does not exempt anyone from the scope of its recommendation. It "speaks unconditionally" in that, as the general source of normative, theoretical and practical knowledge, there can be no *alternate* source; in so doing, it gives itself the authority to be the *bearer* of this authority, which I take Nietzsche to indicate as problematic as noting that it "takes itself as unconditional." It is aperspectival in nature: what the individual happens to believe, desire or value prior to encountering the normative demands of S1 is irrelevant to the way in which S1 purports to apply itself to the person. Last, S1 makes explicit use of the other world in advancing its demands; the use of the otherworlds of heaven and hell

serve jointly to motivate people to comply with the demands of morality, this latter too being derived from an other-worldly source (God). S1 ticks all the boxes, and so counts as an MPS; hence, S1 fails to survive Nietzschean standards of reflection.

Let's look at S2, the version of Utilitarian moral theory Nietzsche would likely have been acquainted with, that espoused by JS Mill. For Mill, an action is right to the extent that doing it causes an introduction of the greatest happiness for the greatest number into the world.²⁹ The ultimate end of morality, or the supreme principle towards which all human action ought to aim is happiness. The idea is that in sitting at this desk, I bring about the means capable of realizing an end—getting some progress in writing today. That end itself serves as the means to a more general end I may have—finishing the dissertation, which serves my more general desire to develop in life, which leads, Mill thinks, to my general end—the end of a *person*, as such—of personal happiness.

What's more, in attempting to supply a *proof* of the greatest happiness principle, Mill offers up the following:

No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except the fact that each person desires his own happiness, so far as he thinks it is attainable. But this *is* a fact; so we have not only all the proof there could be for such a proposition, and all the proof that could possibly be demanded, that happiness is good, that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and therefore that general happiness is a good to all the aggregate of all persons. (Mill 1863 24)

²⁹ This is an intentional simplification of Mill's view--the analysis of happiness as non-hedonic pleasure which is intended to avoid utility mongers isn't relevant to the pattern of assessment Nietzsche generally finds faulty with utilitarianism. There are certain contemporary non-maximizing versions that may evade other problematic aspects of MPS, such as "generalizing where generalization is impermissible." See Railton (1984). But the *form* of the recommendation of utilitarianism is one Nietzsche rejects.

In this argument for S2, from the fact that “each person desires his own happiness, so far as he thinks it is attainable,” Mill claims it follows that happiness is “good,” “good to that person,” and “that general happiness is a good” for *everyone*. It’s worth noting that this argument commits a version of the naturalistic fallacy—just because something is *desired*, does not make it *desirable*.³⁰ Nevertheless, I want to focus on how this line of reasoning places S2 into the mold of an MPS, and hence, a system which for Nietzsche does not survive reflection.

S2 addresses itself to all by presuming that a condition of the constitution of the way you value things is that deep down your valuing bottoms out in your own personal happiness. This is also aperspectival: it doesn’t matter what “optics” you happen to have on the value of your own personal happiness, or how *you* see and rank its importance to you. These two properties taken in tandem suggest that Mill’s moral theory is generalizing where generalization is impermissible.³¹ Indeed, consider the following remark for a more explicit framing of S2 as an MPS by Nietzsche himself:

Ultimately they all want *English* morality to be proved right—because this serves humanity best, or “the general utility,” or “the happiness of the greatest number”—no, the happiness of *England*. With all their powers they want to prove to themselves that the striving for *English* happiness—I mean for comfort and fashion³² (and at best a seat in

³⁰ See Leiter (2000)

³¹ Interestingly, Mill’s account of utilitarian moral theory doesn’t rely on otherworldly entities like “God” in order to support his case. It is within any system of morality that makes direct appeals to “otherworldly” support that Nietzsche, recall, denigrates metaphorically as “beginning to smell over-spiced and dangerous” (*BGE 198*). This is after listing the more odious and banal offenders in a moral system—invoking an otherworldly entity as justification for *anything* automatically places your argument, position or theory on the ban-list. The fact that Mill’s account evades just this one property doesn’t exempt his system as an MPS.

³² Given that Mill takes his utilitarianism to be non-hedonic, the jab of what English utilitarians *really* seek behind “happiness,” “fashion and comfort,” probably misses its mark somewhat, although the utilitarian desire for tranquility and sanitized pleasantness is lambasted elsewhere.

Parliament)—is at the same time also the right way to virtue; indeed that whatever virtue has existed in the world so far must have consisted in such striving.

None of these ponderous herd animals with their unquiet consciences (who undertake to advocate the cause of egoism as “the general welfare,” is no ideal, no goal, no remotely intelligible concept, but only an emetic—that what is fair for one *cannot* by any means for that reason alone be fair for others; that the demand of one morality for all is detrimental for the higher men. (BGE 228)

First, Nietzsche calls attention to “addressing itself to all”—Utilitarians want to make their theory of morality completely general for creatures with the ability to feel pleasure and pain, but Nietzsche points out that these theorists are really just generalizing their *own*, idiosyncratic English interests as the generalized content. Second, Nietzsche hits on “generalizing where generalization is impermissible”—that perhaps the “general welfare” advocated in English utilitarianism is good for *people from England*; there are “higher” types for whom these values are not valuable. Third, presuming that these values, once again, *are* good for everyone regardless of their perspective makes this a thoroughgoing aperspectival moral theory for Nietzsche. Hence, S2 does not survive reflection, and cannot be the general source of normativity for Nietzsche.

Finally consider S3, Kantian moral theory. Something akin to Kantian moral theory is the theory Nietzsche takes the most seriously—and likely sustains his attack on in more length and frequency than any other version of morality. This is somewhat of a significant apex for the series of systems I have been considering in this chapter. According to a kind of proto-genealogy of morality (prior to the eponymous GM) from 1886’s BGE, Nietzsche makes the following observation:

During the longest part of human history—so-called prehistorical times—the value or disvalue of an action was derived from its consequences. The action itself was considered as little as its origin. It was rather the way a distinction or disgrace still reaches back today from a child to its parents, in China: it was the retroactive force of success or failure that led men to think well or ill of an action. Let us call this period the *pre-moral* period of mankind: the imperative “know thyself!” was as yet unknown. (BGE 32)

Despite utilitarian attempts to motivate the plausibility of their normative ethical framework, Nietzsche nevertheless relegates the interpretation of the moral criterion of an action to its consequences in the “pre-moral” period of humankind. What is curious, and has his attention, is the shift—what I think it safe to say in his thinking is regarded as an *evolution*—into conceiving the morality of an action in the mind of the person doing the action.

In the last ten thousand years, however, one has reached the point, step by step, in a few large regions on the earth, where it is no longer the consequences but the origin of the action that one allows to decide its value. On the whole this is a great event which involves a considerable refinement of vision and standards; it is the unconscious aftereffect of the rule of aristocratic values and the faith in “descent”—the sign of a period one may call *moral* in the narrower sense. It involves the first attempt at self-knowledge. Instead of the consequences, the origin: indeed a reversal of perspective! Surely, a reversal achieved only after long struggles and vacillations. To be sure, a calamitous superstition, an odd narrowness of interpretation, thus became dominant: the origin of an action was interpreted in the most definite sense as origin in an *intention*: one came to agree that the value of an action lay in the value of the intention. The intention as

the whole origin and pre-history of an action—almost to the present day this prejudice dominated moral praise, blame, judgment and philosophy on earth. (BGE 32)

Nietzsche conceives S2 as an expression of a morality that is still on its way in evolution.

Utilitarianism doesn't really value *self-knowledge*, or, if it does, it's to the extent that having self-knowledge contributes to producing the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Kant's theory brings the self under the microscope. Therefore, morality, having evolved into the form it has "today" for Nietzsche is essentially Kantianism. So we have an even clearer picture into the "morality of today" that Nietzsche is picturing as the target of his frequent assaults. To appreciate the depth and breadth of Nietzsche's rejection of this "prejudice" in normative ethics, I'll give a general account of Kant's framework to give more substance to some of the puzzling insults to, and remedies Nietzsche offers for, that framework.

For Kant, one condition of possibility for experience is conceiving of nature as a law-governed whole. When objects in the natural world are subject to motion, they do so according to laws; take for example, in a vacuum this pen here will fall according to the gravitational constant 9.8m/s^2 . The pen doesn't have a choice, and it obeys the law of gravity; however, the mug, should I toss that too, will follow the same law, and so will all other objects in the Earth's atmosphere. Other natural laws apply in this general way too.

But for Kant, though people are animals and are hence objects too and subject to various physical laws, they are also *rational* and are moved according to a kind of law different than the ones that range over the movement and behavior of objects in the world. When someone makes a choice, they move themselves and do so on the basis of a principle they regard as *endorsable* or *choice-worthy* of all other creatures with the capacity for rationality. Should I regard the reasons as adequate to justify the action that I perform, I recommend the action as one that can be chosen

by all other rational agents as well by expressing an ought-statement. In Kantian ethics, the terms “ought” or “should” have two different meanings that inform the nature of the practical recommendation they separately supply for a person. However, in general, both senses express an *imperative* to rational beings:

An imperative is expressed by an “ought” and thereby indicates the relation of an objective law of reason to a will which is not in its subjective constitution necessarily determined by this law. (G Ak 4:413)

Ought-statements express imperatives, which indicate a particular kind of constraint on the will of a rational agent. For Kant, the will of a human agent ordinarily tends not to be constrained in the way that the imperative constraints it, when issued. Human agency in general is in need of imperatives, Kant thinks, because we have a tendency to fail to act rationally; because we aren’t always susceptible to the recommendations reason gives for action, we are therefore not perfectly rational. If an agent *were* perfectly rational, she would never act outside the scope of the constraints that any imperative would place on her; the agent would be in need of no such commands of reason (G Ak 4:414).

So, the two kinds of ought-statements, and, in turn, the two kinds of imperatives supplied to rational agency are: first, an ought-statement concerning some “good merely as a means to something else,” (ibid) that is, the good brought about by purpose- or goal-driven actions. An ought statement concerning good brought about by purpose-driven action expresses a *hypothetical imperative* (ibid). The sense of this ought statement is called *hypothetical*. If S has a goal she wants to accomplish (say, to become an electrical engineer), there is a hypothetical-ought statement that addresses a hypothetical imperative to the rational part of her nature: that

she do the kinds of things that bring about the end (e.g. applying to a school that has a relevant program, getting in, developing good study habits, &c.).

The other sense of ought expresses *one* imperative:

Without being grounded on any other aim to be achieved through a certain course of conduct as its condition, commands this conduct immediately...It has not to do with the matter of the action and what is to result from it, but with the form and principle from which it results; and what is essentially good about it consists in the disposition, whatever the result may be. This imperative may be called that of morality. (G Ak 4:416)

The imperative under discussion is of course the categorical imperative. This imperative is expressed by an ought statement that takes into consideration nothing having to do with the consequences of some action an agent would do. Instead, the agent's action must result from reason's "form and principle," which is self-same *in rationality itself* across all cases of agents possessing rationality. Take some person S. If S wants to know whether she has a reason to ϕ , S asks herself "do I have a reason to ϕ ?" If on the one hand, S finds such a reason for herself to ϕ on reflection, then S ought to ϕ . On the other hand, if S consults herself and asks "do I have a reason to ϕ ?" and the verdict is "no," then S shouldn't ϕ . If the maxims of an agent's action violate the objectively necessary constraints of reason, i.e., maxims that can be willed to be a universal law, S's action would be irrational, since she would acknowledge not having a reason to do it but does it anyway, and therefore immoral.

Suppose S must rob banks in her free time in order to bring about her becoming an electrical engineer. Her bank robbing fulfills the rational requirements of the hypothetical imperative to become an engineer because robbing causes (in part) the realization of the goal. While S can be said to abide the imperative expressed by a hypothetical-ought statement, in this

case she can not be said to abide the imperative expressed by a moral-ought statement. The first formulation of the categorical imperative says that one should only act on maxims that can be willed to be a universal law. The action involving the maxim “stealing” is an action whose maxim can never be universally willed because it generates a contradiction: I would be committed to willing both the existence and non-existence of private property. Since S can’t will the maxim of her action as universal law, she engages in practical irrationality by choosing to rob the bank. S, on Kant’s analysis, *has a reason* against acting immorally, and in disregarding the reason supplied to her by morality, acts irrationally and therefore immorally.

A word about Kant’s moral psychology is needed. Any action undertaken involving what he calls inclination—roughly, anything in the doing of an action that could be said to satisfy the desires or interests of the agent—automatically disqualifies the action in question from counting as satisfying the demands of morality. The “form and principle” of the agent’s motivation in acting has to be oriented to respect for the moral law, and nothing else, in order that the agent’s action count as satisfying the demands of morality. As a rational agent, my maxims have to be willable by all other rational agents in order to satisfy the Kantian categorical imperative.³³ If, say, I tell the truth because I recognize and respect truth-telling as the right thing to do *but* also because telling the truth makes me feel good, the content of the maxim will accord with my duty to do the right thing, but it won’t be directly *from* my recognition of my duty to do the right thing. The content of the maxim will re-direct to some material content of me feeling good about myself, and I can’t will me feeling good about myself as something *everyone* categorically ought to do.

³³ Securing the content of an agent’s will as *moral* just in case her will is oriented to the moral law out of respect for the moral law when she performs a morally good action allows Kant to claim he’s exhibited the ground of morality *a priori*, which is again a feature of Kant’s analysis of the morality of action that leads Nietzsche to call him an “idiot.”

My ability to be motivated out of respect for the law alone and not out of any semblance of inclination is made possible by the capacity in my Kantian moral psychological inventory called autonomy. For Kant, *morality* is “the relation of actions to the autonomy of the will, that is, to the possible universal legislation through its maxims” (Ak G 4:339). In other words, my ability to will a maxim in a way that could be genuinely considered *universal* depends on my ability to weed-out any trace of inclination that would relegate the scope of my willed-maxim to be merely subjective. For this reason, anchoring morality in any part in the material interests and desires of an agent—her inclination—is automatically off the table. S’s own personal happiness is thereby something she may will as an end in the structure of a hypothetical imperative. If she wants to feel good about herself, then she wills the requisite means to cause that to happen. That’s the rational structure of any hypothetical imperative, though, and an agent’s inclinations are therefore morally neutral. You can only succeed or fail to perform a moral action by abiding the categorical imperative (in the right way) or not.

Nietzsche *hates* this as a theory of morality and a picture of attendant moral psychology, and as much as he can be said to decisively reject *any* thought or position or argument, it’s these two together:

One more word against Kant as a *moralist*. A virtue must be *our own* invention, *our* most necessary self-expression and self-defense: any other kind of virtue is merely a danger. Whatever is not a condition of our life *harms* it; a virtue that is prompted solely by a feeling of respect for the concept of “virtue,” as Kant would have it, is harmful. “Virtue,” “duty,” “the good in itself,” the good which is impersonal and universally valid—chimeras and expressions of line, of the final exhaustion of life, of the Chinese phase of Konigsberg. The fundamental laws of self-preservation and growth demand the

opposite—that everyone invent *their own* virtue, *their own* categorical imperative. A people perishes when it confuses *its* duty with duty in general. Nothing ruins us more profoundly, more intimately, than every “impersonal” duty, every sacrifice to the Moloch of abstraction. How could one fail to feel how Kant’s categorical imperative endangered life itself! The theologians’ instinct alone protect it![...]What could destroy us more quickly than working, thinking, and feeling without any inner necessity, without any deeply personal choice, without *pleasure*—as an automaton of “duty”? This is the very recipe for decadence, even for idiocy. Kant became an idiot. (AC 11)

Here Nietzsche uses “virtue” to refer to the general Kantian enterprise geared toward generating a morally desirable account of human action. The idea that morality *requires* “working, thinking and feeling” without any reference to what actually makes a person who works, *work*; for a person thinking, to *have thoughts*; for a person feeling, to *actually feel*. That morality could require personal choice without it being *deeply about* the person making the choice, is an *anti-practical* agency. Saddling people with a conception of obligation to the moral law that is adequately realized only if the person’s motivational state is such that respect for the law is the only attendant psychological constituent is *wrong*—the same goes for conceptions of “duty” and the value of “the good in itself” (ibid). These three can’t be “impersonally universally valid” ways of orienting any normative recommendation. While Kant started out on the right track by positioning self-knowledge as a plausible domain for morality, he “became an idiot.”

Looking back at our criteria, as I’ve argued, Kant’s system seems the decisive MPS Nietzsche has had in his crosshairs all along. S3 addresses itself to all: the categorical imperative ineluctably addresses itself to all rational natures as such. There is no “opting out”³⁴ of S3 if you

³⁴See Williams (1983) *Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy* on the problem of in the inescapability of the Kantian morality system. Specifically, “Morality, the Peculiar Institution.” N.b., the “peculiar

have the capacity for reason: you're autonomous and therefore morally responsible for the actions you do and the reasons you choose for doing them, and for the way in which you find yourself motivated when you so act. In this way, S3 likely generalizes where generalization is impermissible—on Kant's analysis, people do not seem to have a way of escaping the scope of moral demands, and escapability seems to be the only way to evade the charge of generalizing where generalization is impermissible.

S3 certainly takes itself unconditionally—not just *when* the demands of morality apply to you, but the way the *value* of its ends apply to you when you choose to adopt them. As Kant puts it, the will is “*absolutely good* which cannot be evil, hence whose maxim, if it is made into a universal law, can never conflict with itself” (G Ak 4:437). The *value* of your will, should you abide the following “principle,” which is the good will's supreme law, applies universally: “Act always in accordance with that maxim whose universality as law you can at the same time will” (ibid). Nietzsche rejects valuation that is as impersonal as this is, and he also rejects its aperspectival construction. The highest good you can achieve as a Kantian moral agent is in producing a “good will,” whose structure and content is *identical* across all cases of successfully having developed a good will. Nietzsche rejects value considerations built completely independently of any individual perspective.

Finally, and to be sure a source of ire for Nietzsche, Kant grounds our capacities as “rational beings and agents” in a “supernatural” freedom that exists not in the phenomenal world but in the noumenal world (Wood, 176). This “other world” rather than the practical world of experience is surely what Nietzsche thinks lacks any sort of plausibility and is often a central

institution” was the colloquial name given to the institution of slavery by southerners in the 19th century.

component of an MPS. In no uncertain terms, Nietzsche rejects S3, more vehemently and personally than he ever bothers to do with something like S1 or S2.

So, Kant became an idiot. But linger with the verb ‘to become’: Kant *became* an idiot, and he did so by sliding into prescribing an MPS that Nietzsche seems acutely disappointed in. There is curiously some prescribing in this passage, right along with the ridicule of Kant that feels ineluctably *Kantian*: here we have important evidence of some components of our long-sought-after source of general normativity for Nietzsche. In the textual context of the passage, Nietzsche’s own conception of normativity purports to contrast itself against that of Kant’s, and it does so by appealing to robust examples of what Nietzsche probably regards as *contradictories* of properties in Kant’s moral theorizing: the impersonal and universally valid:

The fundamental laws of self-preservation and growth demand the opposite—that everyone invent *their own* virtue, *their own* categorical imperative. A people perishes when it confuses *its* duty with duty in general. Nothing ruins us more profoundly, more intimately, than every “impersonal” duty, every sacrifice to the Moloch of abstraction.

(AC 11)

I want to draw attention to the fact that instead of the impersonal and universally valid, we have “fundamental laws of self-preservation and growth” demanding the opposite—the laws of self-preservation and growth *demand* that someone confront morality from the point of view of their own perspective. It is in addition up to each person to “invent” a conception of “virtue” or of “the good in itself” or of “duty” that is good for them, and even that they “invent” their *own* categorical imperative.

Let’s look at what that could mean for the CI. It’s crucial to note that Nietzsche isn’t demanding that people invent their own *subjective* imperatives *simply for themselves*—they are,

in other words, not simply constructing idiosyncratic normative demands for *themselves alone*. The imperative Nietzsche is calling us to construct is *categorical*. However, the imperative Nietzsche is calling for here is *also* one that we in fact *do* subjectively construct. But it can't be *both* the case that the categorical imperative be categorical *and* idiosyncratically constructed according to the "my own" of one person. We confront a puzzle. What could Nietzsche possibly be getting at here? For the moment, we will have to set this puzzle aside. In what follows, I need to first set the scene for what kind of plausible non m-naturalistic constrained account of Nietzschean naturalism could look like. That's because commentators are in near-unanimous agreement that Nietzsche is a *naturalist*, and some moral theories (like Kant's) sometimes struggle with being consistent with naturalism. The account will have to be naturalistic, since "anti-nature" results from what I called anti-practical agency—generalizing in impersonal and universally valid ways. Once we have a picture of non-reductive naturalism, and the constraints it places on agency, we will see a space that opens for a plausible source of general naturalized Nietzschean normative authority.

3.4 Schacht on Rethinking Nietzsche's Naturalist Normativity

I am no longer dealing with a conception of normativity that is deflated on the framework of m-naturalism. Science has its place, but it cannot be the source of general normative authority. And yet, Nietzsche frames his philosophical project as one in which humanity is "translated back into nature" (BGE 230). This thought is a familiar refrain for Nietzsche: the framework for his thinking, and therefore for his conception of normativity, must be *naturalistic*. But if the naturalism that forms the basis for his conception of the general source of normative authority is

not constrained by reductivistic, m-naturalist scientific normativity, what other resources could a naturalist muster to answer to the general demand of a naturalistic normativity?

To start, I think Schacht has put thinking about the question of the relation between Nietzsche, naturalism and normativity on a positive trajectory. Coming to the conclusion I have arrived at, in the previous section from different reasons, Schacht stresses that

Nietzsche's naturalism is one that allies itself with the *Wissenschaften* but does not simply take its cues from them...it by no means posits dogmatically—or even simply assumes—that there cannot be anything more to human reality and the world in which we find ourselves than the natural sciences can tell us about them. (Schacht 2013 237).

To further distinguish Nietzsche's naturalism from the kind I have discussed so far arguing against, Schacht invokes Janaway's (2007) take, which we share in agreement, is closer to what's actually going on with Nietzsche's naturalism than Leiter's treatment of it:

[Nietzsche] opposes transcendent metaphysics, whether that of Plato or Christianity or Schopenhauer. He rejects notions of the immaterial soul, the absolutely free controlling will, or the self-transparent pure intellect, instead emphasizing the body, talking of the animal nature of human beings, and attempting to explain numerous phenomena by invoking drives, instincts and affects which he locates in our physical bodily existence. Human beings are to be “translated back into nature” since otherwise we falsify their history, their psychology, and the nature of their value. (Janaway 2007 34)

This is basically right, but we need some more general table-setting before seeing what kinds of conceptions of normativity can hang with Nietzsche's thinking or not. Part and parcel of Nietzsche's rejection of the traditional items of paradigmatically western moral psychology is found in his remarks about the “death of God.” Nietzsche has us picture those words coming out

of the mouth of a “madman,” wandering a marketplace seeking God as Diogenes sought the wise:

Many of those in the marketplace [who] did not believe in God were standing around just then, and [the madman] provoked much laughter. Has he got lost? asked one. Did he lose his way like a child? asked another. Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? emigrated?—Thus they laughed and yelled.

The “madman” thus has an audience of atheists. His reply:

The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. “Whither is God?” he cried; “I will tell you. *We have killed him*—you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained the earth from its sun? Whether is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? Do we hear nothing as yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are busying God? Do we smell nothing as yet of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. (GS 125)

This is a paradigmatically Nietzschean way of rejecting a concept. Note that Nietzsche isn’t saying that “God does not exist,” or “here’s an argument that gives you a good reason for thinking God does not exist;”³⁵ God becomes a mortal, finite creature here capable of being

³⁵ I return to the significance of Nietzsche’s reluctance to rely too heavily on the cognitive value of argumentation below.

killed—murdered, even. Center stage in the madman’s monologue is *disorientation*. With the death of “God,” we lose all framework for orienting ourselves toward a conception of a world ordered by the principles of western thought and value. The concept of a human-transcendent source of ordering normativity is “dead,” in the sense that for the normative framework Nietzsche advances, human-transcendent sources of ordering normativity have ceased to do any legitimate justificatory work. As such, human-transcendent sources of ordering meaning and value are *no* part of the general source of normativity that Nietzsche accepts.

With the death of God, what’s left of naturalism? Schacht reflects on Korsgaard’s framing of the normative question, which she thinks is the most plausible candidate for doing the job:

[The first] locates the source of normativity of ‘morality’ in something about our very nature as human beings that the proper sort of ‘reflection’ reveals to make it ‘good for us.’ [The second] locates its force in the autonomy of the will of rational agents as such; that is, in the very nature of rational autonomous agency. (Schacht 2013 246)

I have already suggested “reflection” is a tool that can help explain how certain moral systems deserve to “die out,” or fail to “survive,” for Nietzsche. The reasons across S1 throughout S3 stayed the same and explain why those systems fail to meet the standards for passing muster for Nietzsche’s thinking about normative authority—all I have on the table with modeling Nietzsche’s reflecting on normative ethics is that the conclusions he draws about S1-S3 are that they are no good for his cognitive standards and/or his tastes. In other words, subjectively, *Nietzsche* has explained his reasons for these systems being cognitively “dead” for him, as is God for his “madman.”

I think, though, that Nietzsche does *not* accept the “force” of something he passionately rejects as having normative authority in an agent’s life—the “very nature of rational autonomous agency.” We have seen that rejection clearly enough when it was singled out in AC 11 as fundamentally mistaken, and part of the general explanation of how Kant “became an idiot.” So we will not expect to see full agreement with Korsgaard’s framing of the normative question in Nietzsche’s thinking, but I’ll show below that because of their agreement on the special normative function reflection can perform in certain special moments, however restrictive that may make us consider the scope of function of reflection in Nietzsche, I’ll argue they both stand in agreement that it can be used to frame the normative question.

Schacht, though, believes that in the case of conjoining both versions of framing the general source of normative authority, Nietzsche contends that “this whole way of thinking—about normativity, but also about morality—must change” (Schacht 2013 247). The reason is that “for Nietzsche, *there is no such thing as ‘morality,’ simpliciter;*” instead, “for Nietzsche there have long been and can be and in all likelihood will continue to be *many* moralities, none of which has been or is or will be *the thing itself*, the single true or real one, among the many pretenders” (ibid). And all this is fine—if it weren’t the case, we’d have no way to account for the following passage:

There are moralities which are meant to justify their creator before others. Other moralities are meant to calm him and lead him to be satisfied with himself. With yet others he wants to crucify and humiliate himself. With others he wants to wreak revenge, with others conceal himself, with others transfigure himself and place himself way up, at a distance. (BGE 187)

There are clearly very many more moral systems and subsystems of the ones we saw above in S1-S3, and different reasons someone may personally find attractive for signing up to a given moral system. However, there is one passage which gets scant treatment in the literature on naturalism and normativity.

Recall from chapter one, Nietzsche advocates for a *superior* morality in the following way:

Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality –in other words, as we understand it, merely *one* type of human morality beside which, before which, and after which many other types, above all *higher* moralities, are, or ought to be, possible. (BGE 202)

If higher moralities have not been developed, they ought to be; or at least, they should be possible. For Schacht, this means *not* that “there is no such thing as normativity in or with respect to morality;” instead, “there is a great deal of it, precisely because moralities of one sort or another have long been and continue to be ubiquitous in human life, and because normativity is one of their fundamental features” (Schacht 2013 247).

To get a handle on the context in which morally salient claims can have normative force for individual people, Schacht introduces a “historical-developmental naturalism.” This naturalism’s main focus starts with phenomena that emerge as distinct from simple biological or physiological processes, as what we call *human reality*: “its main focus is upon the emergence and development of human phenomena that have human-biological and physiological presuppositions and psychological dimensions, but also have a *historical* character in which social, cultural and circumstantially contingent events” figure centrally (Schacht 2013 241). This naturalism is “emergentist,” rather than physiologically and psychologically reductivistic, as

Leiter's is; and what *emerges* out of the cross-dimensions of these physically and culturally interlocking parts is what Schacht calls a "form of life."

A form of life, or "FOL"³⁶, Schacht describes, is "a very elastic one" owing to the diversity and multiplicity of instances, but can be defined as "semi-autonomous socio-cultural units with their own developed and developing identities and structures, which include distinctive and evolving sets of values and norms" demarcated by an emergence³⁷ of new norms and values (Schacht 2013 249). But it's not the case that even in a given society that everybody inhabits one and only one form of life—each individual's life is comprised of a "multiplicity" of various strands of the forms of life that my culture or society offers me. It might be that my church-going neighbor and I both participate in some common form of life when we both value watching the Top Chef, but the concatenation of forms of life that comprise the horizon of the world she experiences is different from mine, as church-going isn't one of any of the strands that comprise mine.

So there is a relatively large apparatus into which I'm born that is responsible for providing various avenues for developing myself in my culture to potentially individuate myself by³⁸ distinguishing the forms of life that I inhabit from others. But what about the contributions individuals bring to the scene of normativity? Preliminarily, Schacht has a blend of cognitive and psychological apparatuses that comprise the individual in what he calls *sensibility*. This probably Nietzsche-consistent notion of a substantive component of actual people is defined by Schacht as

³⁶ I sometimes refer to the plural "forms of life" as "FOLs."

³⁷ Or at least variance indicated by a partial emergence of new norms and values.

³⁸ There could be two numerically distinct people who could be more-or-less qualitatively identical, seen from the vantage point of the FOLs those two inhabit. Given FOLs are culturally scripted, and, we'll see, so are sensibilities, to the extent that one's sensibility is scripted by the "socio-cultural semi-autonomous unit" an FOL represents, it's at least in principle possible for this situation to obtain, between and among and between very many numerically distinct people.

“complex configurations of dispositions, attitudes, beliefs, valuations and interpretive tendencies...powered by one’s affective resources, and may be channeled at least to some extent by inherited but humanly variable traits” (Schacht 2013 244). Instead of the transcendental ego unifying me as subject by being *unifier* of my beliefs, desires, perceptions, and etc. I simply am the cognitive and non-cognitive amalgam of beliefs affects, valuations and so forth. But sensibilities are “also strongly scripted culturally, reflecting elements of cultural formations to which one has been exposed and internalized” (ibid). So my sensibility is always in dialogue with the forms of life to which I have also been exposed.

To take stock, the relation between normativity, forms of life and sensibility are that “Values are FOL-relational, norms are FOL-contextual and normativity is FOL-structural” (Schacht 251). When it makes sense for someone to ask themselves whether they ought to do something, answering the question will involve interrogating the way these three elements hang together for the person. If someone has for instance been exposed to a new value related to some new form of life they hadn’t been exposed to, whether it makes sense for the person to adopt that value will depend on the other values they already hold, and to what forms of life the person already inhabits.

How can normativity developed thus far stand as a source of *prescription* and therefore a source of potential transformation of an agent’s sensibility? Recall that for Korsgaard, one of the reasons we seek the foundations of morality in a philosophical framework is that we are worried, on reflection, that “morality might not survive reflection” (SN 102). But if the system in question does survive reflection? I will stick once again with Schacht’s phrasing—if it does, then that system has *agent normativity* for the person in question: “for the norms to be taken as sufficiently compelling (or as Korsgaard puts it, “authoritative”),” they must be adequately

authoritative to “get actual human beings to take them seriously in their own lives and actions” (Schacht 248). There are, as Schacht points out, *norms* which prescribe rules or correct-making properties within the context of some set of FOLs. And whether or not those norms are *normative* for me depend on which of those norms speak to me with *force* such that I’m finding myself compelled to regard those norms as justified reasons for shaping my sensibility.

To put the concept of agential *force-finding* with norms, Schacht clarifies that there needs to be a *way in* for the force of norms; otherwise, they’ll be inert to your mental life:

what *activates* that force, making it relevant and real for a human agent, is that agent’s *opting into* the form of life in question. And what elevates it to the level of full *agent normativity*, is that agent’s coming to know it well and intimately, from the inside, and *buying into it*, internalizing it, and identifying with it to the extent of coming to embrace and experience its norm-and-value structures as reasons of one’s own for acting in accordance with the norms in question” (Schacht 2013 253).

It follows from the necessary condition of undergoing *internalization* that normativity can have prescriptive and therefore transformative effect on an agent’s sensibility. To provide some contrast: what would an internalization-free conception of normativity amount to? Thinkers we have already canvassed are prepared to offer this up: Korsgaard and Kant. Simply in virtue of the fact that you have the capacity for reason, and therefore, autonomous choice, you are under the normative constraints of the authority of rational autonomous nature itself.

Suppose there are no conflicting duties. Suppose I’m starving and I find myself motivated to steal food in order that I survive. Kantian moral theory says I *currently possess a reason* stronger than the one that I have to survive, which is to *not* to break the moral law. For Bernard

Williams, this is to look at an agent's fully deliberated (under ideal deliberative circumstances)³⁹ "subjective motivational set" (Williams 102), to find no such reason internal to that set, and then to simply *tack on* a reason external to the set and then *attribute it* to the agent. In so doing, to use Williams' vernacular, you simply "bluff" (Williams 111) the agent. In poker, if I bluff you, I lie to you about what's in my hand by betting higher than I would bet if you knew what was in my hand; in Kantian ethics, agents are "bluffed" when a Kantian pretends they you know what's in "your hand" even though that item isn't there.

Schacht's account of naturalized Nietzschean normativity evades "bluffing" anybody of anything. You have to *internalize* the values offered up to you relative to the form of life you're exposed to before you *answer to them*. To sum his picture of a naturalized Nietzschean normativity: in order for something like a *reason* to have any normative force for an agent, such that "one would not feel right about acting otherwise, even when one may be differently inclined," one undergoes the acquisition of "*sensibilities attuned to forms of life*"...that makes "this sort of buy-in and identification possible" (Schacht 2012 253).

This feels much closer in spirit to a naturalized Nietzschean normativity, and much of it is right. Consider Nietzsche's remark in TI VII 1:

My demand upon the philosopher is known, that he takes his stand *beyond* good and evil and leaves the illusion of moral judgment *beneath* himself. This demand follows from an insight which I was the first to formulate: that *there are altogether no moral facts*. Moral

³⁹ The condition of being a motivation that arises under ideal deliberative circumstances is needed due to cases like the following: you're in a desert and you're thirsty, and you grab a container of water and drink it down. Surely you did so because you were motivated by a desire to ameliorate your thirst; but in this case, the water is poisoned. Had you known that, under ideal deliberative circumstances, you wouldn't have drunk the water. So analyzing what is in a person's interest to do, or what they have reason to do, involves an inclusion of the counterfactual that *whatever* you're motivated to do, what's in your interest to do *could* be made adequately clear.

judgments agree with religious ones in believing in realities which are no realities. (TI VIII 1)

Schacht's account of the Nietzschean source of general, naturalized normativity explains why Nietzsche could advance this claim. But to appreciate why, Nietzsche in expressing thoughts in language that we use today in metaethical discourse *hasn't* done that explicitly in language we use to analyze normativity or other moral concepts; so there is a rare opportunity to at least not *contort* Nietzsche into the lexicon he doesn't make use of himself.⁴⁰ Of course that doesn't entail that Nietzsche *means* the same thing by the terms he uses as contemporary metaethicists—but it is convenient for our purposes that in this context he is using a shared lexicon in TI VIII 1.

If you're expressing⁴¹ a *cognitivist* view about moral discourse, you express that what people are doing when they make moral judgments is advancing a belief that can be true or false. Since beliefs are "truth apt," i.e., they're the sorts of things that can be true or false, moral judgments themselves are the sorts of entities that can be true or false (Miller 2011 3). As Miller puts it, if a moral judgment is true, cognitivists believe we "cognitively access" the moral fact that makes it so; but error theorists think there aren't any such things as moral facts. This is because "there simply are no properties in the world of the sort required to render our moral judgments true" (Miller, *ibid.*). TI VIII 1 is a pretty clear expression of just this error theory. If I, say, attribute to you a Kantian autonomous will, regard you as freely choosing to act when you

⁴⁰ With Hussain, I think restraint should be used in trying to attribute a full-scale commitment to some particular metaethical claim, since the valences and relations that some terms have and bear on one another are not the same for Nietzsche's thinking as it is for the current debates. I circle back to this in the conclusion.

⁴¹ It's important that in the context I'm analyzing is a view that Nietzsche expresses in TI VIII 1. I'm not attributing to Nietzsche the position of *cognitivism* about the semantics of moral discourse in general or in contexts outside this passage.

do so, and hold you morally responsible for what you do, I “believe in a reality” which “is no reality” (ibid). The reality of agency does not contain those faculties, and that’s not how Nietzsche believes we should think about the way people’s actual minds work, descriptively and prescriptively.

But there is a missing piece in Schacht’s account: *what* exactly in a Nietzschean-FOL is Nietzsche’s reader supposed to internalize? Schacht concedes that his account “does no more than set the stage for the further consideration of what can be done with these ‘mechanisms’ (as it were), as they are employed in the profusion of forms of life they make possible (Schacht 2013 255). I’m arguing now that this is too modest a concession—on Schacht’s analysis of Nietzsche’s naturalist normativity the story has been told and the show is over. There doesn’t seem to be any space for the *individual* person reading Nietzsche to meaningfully interact with any bit of the normative structure that shapes the interactivity of various FOLs and culturally scripted sensibilities. Schacht’s account paints a picture of passive agency, one in which one is subjected to the system of FOLs whose values get transmitted into the mind of the person inasmuch as their current values already permit internalization, or they are transmitted into the mind when some facet of a person’s culturally scripted sensibility allows for a revision or override.

Take for instance Schacht’s discussion of the difference between *first-personal* accounts of experience with the normative and *third-personal*. Contrasting again with Korsgaard, who offers: “The normative question is a first-person question that arises for the moral agent who must actually do what morality says” (Schacht 252). Nietzsche, on Schacht’s analysis would offer instead: “The normative question, on one level of consideration, is a first-personal question that arises for a norm-sensitive agent in a norm-covered situation (who may be inclined to do

otherwise)” (ibid). The level of consideration that the first-personal contribution to internalizing this or that new norm is further specified as “secondary and derivative” in relation to the third-personal view of that person, defined as “circumstances *external* to ‘first-person’ reflection and deliberation” (ibid):

When one enters into a norm-governed situation within some norm-structured context, and meets standard criteria of being able to understand the situation, one is third-personally subject to the norms in question by the very nature of the case. The first-personal ‘I ought’ is a derivative internalization of a third-personal ‘One ought.’ (ibid)

On Schacht’s analysis, the *force* that the norms some normatively structured value-salient FOL unleash when internalized by a person happen *first* in the third-personal, first-personal-external socio-cultural fabric that is host to the FOL in question. If it sounds like I’m speaking now like the whole normative enterprise belongs in the first place to something like self-amalgamating-revising-determining whole—like an autonomous person fully exercising their cognitive capacities—that’s because this is exactly how Schacht pictures their functioning. We already saw Schacht call FOLs “semi-autonomous socio-cultural units” (Schacht 2012 248).

FOLs sound like an indispensable element to wherever we land on what the general source of normativity is for Nietzsche. Indeed--as we saw in the Copernicus passages, Nietzsche conceives of science itself as a socially configured and structured enterprise. But the most consistent refrain from Nietzsche from the beginning of his published works to the end is that human beings are constantly trying to talk themselves out of respecting themselves—whether that be by talking about the absolute source of value residing in something other than my *self*—some value-establishing normative structure in a triune here, scientific inquiry there, and in Schacht’s case, it’s the inherited filled-to-the-brim with normative salience FOL that comprises

who and what I am. This smacks too much of “God,” which Nietzsche’s madman has declared is already dead. Is there really nothing left of “me,” after all the subjection to the normative ordering of FOLs, to engage in some normatively recommended positive ideal of Nietzsche’s *own*—of *my* own? Is there no first-personal -ought that *I* can supply myself by reflectively engaging with some of Nietzsche’s most significant normatively laden thoughts? There must be. Schacht isn’t prepared to make the move, however; as is common with addressing what Nietzsche is up to in AC 11 and BGE with the call for the construction of some “higher morality” with its own categorical imperatives, Schacht punts:

There are normative constraints aplenty for Nietzsche, for constraining is the function of norms. But the only normative constraints he recognizes are constraints set by *norms*. In the absence of all norms, or beyond them or in abstraction from them, there can be no such constraints. The constraints upon the *embrace* of norms that he is prepared to recognize, beyond those of norm-system priority, are constraints of a practical nature and valuational considerations that for him require a different sort of analysis, a further topic that must be deferred to another occasion. (Schacht 2013 25)

I receive. The occasion to critically examine what constraints there might be on the *embrace* of norms that Nietzsche prescribes beyond whatever current norm-system priority the person reading Nietzsche subscribes to is now.

3.5 Eternal Recurrence: First Pass

The cryptic call for the possibility for a higher morality—or that there even *ought* to be a possible higher morality—in BGE 202 is usually left alone; however, it’s made all the more

demanding of our attention given what Nietzsche says about the kind of resources required for critiquing *any* form of morality:

If *this* book is pessimistic even into the realm of morality, even to the point of going beyond faith in morality—should it not for this very reason be a German book? For it does in fact exhibit contradiction and is not afraid of it: in this book faith in morality is withdrawn—but why? *Out of morality!* Or what else should we call that which informs it—and us? For our taste is for modest expressions. But there is no doubt that a ‘thou shalt’ still speaks to us too, that we too obey a stern law set over us—and this is the last moral law which can make itself audible even to us... (D P, 4).

The scope problem sets itself back before our attention. If faith in morality is somehow *required* to *withdraw* faith in some moral system, then it follows that some element of that moral system must be stable throughout morality and what remains of it in Nietzsche’s thinking. In what follows, I’m going to articulate what I think Nietzsche takes to be *higher morality* than the lower slave-morality of resentment. I stipulate up front that it is already from within the framework I’ve been assessing possible moral systems as candidates for Nietzsche’s acceptance that I will use to formally define one as “higher,” i.e., Nietzsche-accepted, and the other(s) as lower, i.e., MPSs.

I’m turning now to what scholars call Nietzsche’s “doctrine of eternal recurrence,” or “the eternal recurrence,” which shows up as the penultimate aphorism in the original publication of *GS*.⁴² Eternal recurrence is, as Nietzsche describes, both “the highest form of affirmation attainable” (EH Z 1) and “the fundamental conception” of Z (ibid). Nietzsche *also* claims, of Z, not surprisingly by transitivity, that

⁴² Nietzsche amends the publication of *GS* to include a book V in 1887 (also, a book of poems by “Prince Vogelfrie” [“Prince Freebird”] and a new preface).

With [*Zarathustra*] I have given mankind the greatest present that has ever been made to it so far. This book, with a voice bridging centuries, is not only the highest book there is, the book that is truly characterized by the air of the heights—the whole fact of man lies *beneath* it at a tremendous distance—it is also the *deepest*, born out of the innermost wealth of truth, an inexhaustible well to which no pail descends without coming up again filled with gold and goodness. (EH P 4)

Nietzsche thinks most highly of Z of all of his works, and I have not addressed Z in this dissertation. And I won't, regardless of this appearing to be an oversight. Unpacking Z is a task I simply leave for another time. I'm focusing on GS and not Z, because the former, along with all the rest of Nietzsche's published works, generally represent a sustained attempt at undermining or critiquing in some way or another some element of the western conceptual inventory.

Consider that GS 341 contains a pretty clear expression of eternal recurrence, and given the significance afforded to Z, which has as its fundamental conception of the story's *eternal recurrence*, that it is not unreasonable to prefer a clear expression of it as a "doctrine" in the penultimate aphorism to Z. Consider too that Z is a fictional story, that, while undoubtedly containing a plethora of important and potentially relevant considerations, Nietzsche, as *philosopher*, gives articulating eternal recurrence one stab before changing hats and articulating it in the mode of Nietzsche as *storyteller*. This does not preclude Z from informing an account of higher morality—quite the contrary: it likely does. So this account will have to be partial and incomplete, since I do not have the space to address it.

I think we have it in our sights now a clear justification for setting Z aside for the purposes of this work, as well as a clear justification for looking at GS 341 as an expression of

Nietzsche's *positive* content—norms Nietzsche is embracing “beyond those of norm-system priority,” higher morality:

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you in your loneliest loneliness and say to you: “This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!”

Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment where you would have answered him: “You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine.” If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you. The question in each and every thing, “Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?” would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight. Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to crave nothing more fervently* than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal? (*GS* 341)

The demon sneaks up to you (in your loneliest loneliness), and proposes that your life will start *de capo!* when it ends. Your life as you lived it and will live it starts over from the top, until you finish living it in death, and around again—with a level of granular similarity and identicalness such that *nothing* changes, including “this moonlight between the trees,” or you, reader, completing the reading of this sentence. Is this good news to you? If you *really* think

about it, and let the “thought gain possession” over you, you’ll either change as a person or be “crushed,” as you are. How much “better disposed” to yourself would you have to become to regard this as something worth “craving nothing more fervently”?

There is a wide range of places to start with analysis, but I’ll start with an obvious one. There has been enough ink spilled in the literature to establish collective agreement⁴³ that this is a *practically*-oriented thought experiment and not a theoretical one. Nietzsche himself took seriously the idea of eternal recurrence and tried to construct a cosmological proof of literal eternal recurrence in his unpublished notes, but decided the proof wasn’t up to snuff and it never made publication. Clark has persuasively argued⁴⁴ that none of GS 341 requires that you *literally* believe that everything will eternally recur exactly as it has before infinitely many times more. But even picturing eternal recurrence hypothetically, it’s not clear that eternal recurrence should matter to *you*.

Soll argues that the recurrence of one’s life “should actually be a matter of complete indifference” (Soll in Clark 1990 266). This is because recurrence “requires the qualitative identity of a life in each cycle of cosmic history,” and also because there is no psychological continuity between you, in this current cycle, and you in any other cycle. Soll concludes that this lack of inter-cycle psychological continuity between selves fails to give you any reason to care about eternal recurrence. Certainly if that’s the case then my search for an expression of *higher morality* in eternal recurrence is dead on arrival.

Put slightly differently, Clark sums a thought experiment that supports the same conclusion.

⁴³ One notable exception, arguing that 341 be read cosmologically, comes from Loeb (2013).

⁴⁴ See Clark (1990) Chapter 8.

Suppose the demon, instead of announcing the eternal recurrence, proclaims that there now exist an infinite number of duplicates of our solar system and therefore an infinite number of individuals qualitatively identical to myself. Although this might arouse much amazement and even interest, few people would perceive the existence of such duplicates as adding infinitely to the joy or suffering of their own lives. (Clark 1990 268)

The thought experiment leads to the same conclusion: why should *I* care about the well-being of my duplicates when their well-being isn't causally or psychologically or otherwise connected to my own? Clark suggests that this problem isn't really surmountable as it's been posed, and suggests what I think is probably a sound work-around: "I suggest that we[...]incorporate an unrealistic or uncritical model of recurrence into our formulation of Nietzsche's ideal of affirmation." (Clark 1990 269)

Compare Nietzsche's question—would you be willing to live this same life eternally?—with a question people do in fact ask each other: if you had to do it all over, would you marry me again? (ibid)

When people ask each other this, they're asking for an honest assessment of the thing *as a whole*—from the start, through now, would you make the choice again? And of course if one or more members of the couple is a *philosopher* they might raise some objection like "well, whether or not I'd make the choice to marry you depends on knowing what I did when I was motivated to marry you *in the first place*, and I know a lot more about you now than I did then, so it's an incoherent question." The person asking the question is looking for an honest answer that would disclose an authentic "underlying attitude;" Clark rightly points out that if someone put up an objection to a question like this, that they'd be showing "evasion," not "intellectual honesty"

(ibid). Approaching it through an ordinary, non-critical lens allows us to envision what the question is asking with more than enough clarity.

Clark proposes that with GS 341, Nietzsche's minimal goal, then, which relies neither on cosmology, nor invites an indifference resulting from an overly-critical evasion, nor metaphysics, but is instead simply offering up affirming recurrence as an *ideal*—and to satisfy the ideal, you have to be willing to “play the game:” you allow...

...the recurrences of one's life as continuous with and therefore as adding suffering and joy to one's present life, the extreme reactions Nietzsche describes—gnashing of teeth or calling the demon divine—makes sense and complete indifference would seem psychologically impossible. (Clark 270)

For Clark, this is the counter-ideal for Nietzsche against the one that has ruled over western life—the ascetic ideal, maintaining that the most valuable lives led are those in which the values of self-denial reign. Playing the game is a way to reveal to yourself that maybe the life you have lived and currently live isn't adequately valued, and Nietzsche constructs this metaphysically-neutral, cosmologically neutral ideal as an alternative that might motivate you to be better disposed to yourself and life, compared with what the ascetic ideal offers.

I find Clark's response to Soll successful and compelling, but I wonder how we got to the point that it was required. Soll asks a critical question about the *inter-cycle* relations between end-of-life and start-of-life *you*₁, and wonders how one could possibly aggregate enough pain or joy for it to be worth it to end-of-life and start-of-life *you*₂, since *you*₁ and *you*₂ inhabit psychologically discontinuous memory identifier links. This seems wrong to me. While I agree that “playing the game” doesn't require you to believe that the “threat” of literal recurrence motivates you to be either crushed or changed by the “news,” the point seems to be on *intra-*

cycle relations between you and yourself. If “this life, as you have lived it and now live it” is the *subject* of demon’s declaration, it seems that someone who understands the demon’s declaration would be concerned to *now* live a life that they could assent to being eternally recurred, and not so much on what kind of optimally good pain-free and joy-filled life they could live so as to benefit as a utilitarian from calculating their life choices such that they are geared towards getting the best life possible. This strikes me as a particularly utilitarian-oriented analysis of eternal recurrence.

Utilitarian analysis of eternal recurrence cannot be right, because Nietzsche himself would *reject* that the quality of a life lived could be objectively measured in terms of how much pleasure one gets and how much pain one avoids. The impulse seems to be that the upshot of the demon’s declaration is for you to cynically try to calibrate the direction of your life so that you have as much joy and as little sorrow possible so as to optimize eternal recurrence to generate the greatest happiness for you as you iteratively cycle through your life. This kind of analysis perverts the spirit of the question the demon puts to you in your loneliest loneliness.

Clark’s response does enough to indirectly defuse this interpretation by modifying the presupposed cognitive saturation of the *inter-cycle* priority of the eternal recurrence. But, in so doing, I don’t think Clark is entitled to the conclusion that a metaphysically deflated ideal-offering is *required* to de-fang the over-cognitivism of Soll’s inter-cycle prioritizing interpretation. Instead, I propose we leave Clark’s move in place against Soll: if you overthink the question you are evading. But from *that* Clark’s metaphysically neutral reading does *not* follow. All her response does is mollify the Soll’s over-cognitive-saturated inter-cycle objection. Therefore, we discharge Soll’s inconceivability argument on Clark’s grounds, and I don’t think her deflationary read can stand up to scrutiny. Before we can press forward consider the fact that

nowhere in GS 341 does Nietzsche refer to eternal recurrence as a mere “ideal” or “counter-ideal”—it’s a “thought.”

In fact, the *thought* of eternal recurrence is addressed to *you*: “What if [...] some demon were to steal after *you* and say to *you*: This life as *you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more*[...]Would *you not throw yourself down*[...]”

There is an oddity that seems to have flown under the radar in almost all of the commentary on GS 341. Here’s some a bit of standard analysis by Higgins & Solomon that the passage tends to receive:

It is the whole of *your life* that is in question. If *you* would gnash your teeth and curse the very suggestion, we would have to say that *your life* has been a waste, to that extent. If on the other hand, you claim to have no regrets, then that is what we would call a happy life.

(Higgins & Solomon 2867)

Who is this “you,” or maybe more the point: *what* is this “you”? We have seen over and again in this dissertation the claim that the content of your mind as it shows up to you for Nietzsche is utterly inadequate to how then, in turn, someone decides to desire, think, or act. That was a substantive *foundation* of denying the reality of causation in TI VI 3. And on the basis of passages like this, Leiter (2002), Leiter & Knobe (2007) and Matthias Risse (2007) argue for an eliminativist or at least seriously deflationary conception of the self, preferring instead to let the economy of sub-personal drives, affects and impulses (what Leiter just calls *type fact constitution*) account for the self.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ To their credit, Nietzsche invites this interpretation with myriad comments all of this sort of flavor throughout his active publishing life: “For *what purpose*, then, any consciousness at all when it is in the main *superfluous*?” (GS 354), though I’d quickly counter by stressing focus on the scope of statements like this (“in the main”).

And yet, we see Nietzsche here asking *not* “what impulse asserts itself most prominently in your response at the demon’s declaration,” or “what drive would need to assert itself most strongly over all the others in order for you to be better disposed to yourself and to life...”. There is language here that does not answer to the account of type-fact reductionism of agency. Nietzsche is addressing *you*. How do we make sense of this?

3.6 The Nietzschean Minimal Self

Anderson (2013) points out, with Janaway, that there are rare moments in which Nietzsche uses language of the sort I am pointing to in the prior paragraph--language in which Nietzsche either addresses the *reader* as a unified whole or suggests they are capable of instantiating action of that form. Consider GM III 12, in which Nietzsche characterizes objectivity...

Not as “contemplation without interest” (which is a nonsensical absurdity) but as the ability to *control* one’s Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge...the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our “concept” of the thing, our “objectivity” be (GM III 12, Anderson trans.).

In the context of the passage, Nietzsche is making reference to what Anderson calls “an independent cognitive self” (Anderson 2012 207) from the cross-hatch network of drives and affects. The ability to *control* one’s “Pro” and one’s “Con” and to “dispose of them” suggests the cognitive operations of an I that can’t just be, say, the appearance of an affect: “For if the self

were just the dominant affect, then *that* affect, at least, would not be “controlled” and “disposed of” by an independent cognitive self, and the wanted objectivity wouldn’t be achieved” (ibid).

This “I” that Anderson argues for isn’t a Kantian transcendental ego, but nor does it reduce to what the eliminativist wants. It is instead a “minimal self,” one in which “the self is not simply given as standard metaphysical equipment in every human, but is rather some kind of *task* or *achievement*” (Anderson 2012 208) that involves a substantive ability to “stand back” from our attitudes and either endorse them or reject them (Anderson 2012 210).

To bring this into view, Anderson grounds what follows in various avenues of general textual pedigree—Nietzsche’s actual thoughts about what kinds of explanation are adequate to the phenomena of moral developments in the west, &c. My aim is to get the machinery of Anderson’s take on a minimal Nietzschean self in place so we can understand how it can apply to and be put to use in my interpretation of GS 341, so I will be eliding most of the justification that this is adequately *Nietzschean* and germane to the texts.⁴⁶

Anderson starts with what he takes to be “two of the most central attitudes” in Nietzschean moral psychology—drives and affects. A drive is not simply a desire. Consider my desiring some object. My desire takes the object as what Anderson calls a “one-place complement.” But on Katsafanas’ analysis, drives have two-place complements—not just the particular object that is sought out in desire, but the general *aim* of the drive in question:

Drives are constant motivational forces that incline one to engage in certain activities or processes. Drives are not satisfied by the attainment of their objects, since their objects are just chance occasions for expression. In other words, the object serves as nothing

⁴⁶ They of course *are* germane to the texts that I am currently reviewing--GM III 12, as we just saw, but this machinery will be indispensable for making sense of the *you*, in your “loneliest loneliness,” in GS 341.

more than an opportunity for the drive to express itself, by inclining the agent to engage in some activity or other. What the drive seeks is just this expression: the drive is satisfied only when being expressed, when the process that it motivates is in progress. Accordingly, an activity that is motivated by a drive aims at the performance of the activity itself. (Katsafanas in Anderson 2012 218)

So, my drive to stay healthy takes as its object a chunk of time dedicated to exercise. But whether it's being expressed in that time I spent exercising, or if it's being expressed in the food I choose to cook, that drive is "satisfied only when being expressed" and *uses up* the object in the venting of itself, and so fulfills the *telos* of that drive: the expression of itself.

Anderson defines affect as "a class of attitudes that combine a passive, receptive responsiveness to the world with a reactive motivational output" (ibid). Like drives, affects have a two-place complement—affects are "completed" by "(a) some stimulus object that activates the affect, and (b) a default response upon which the affect primes us to act" (Anderson 2012 219). The affect itself "colors the salience and evaluation of the stimulus object and it governs both the pattern and manner of the agent's default response" (Anderson 218). To take an example, at a conference I see the only vegetarian entrée option is deep fried chile rellenos: I see the tray of food, which activates the affect of disgust; my default behavioral response is aversion, and my feeling of disgust *colors* both the way I see the food and feeling I get in my motivation to subsequently avert it.⁴⁷

Anderson notes a "niceness of fit" between the way structurally a drive finds "targets" or "pursuit objects" and the way "stimulus objects are taken by affects" (Anderson 2012 221). In

⁴⁷ Anderson includes several examples central to Nietzschean moral psychology—cases of resentment and joy, for instance, have strong textual pedigree for the structure and language Anderson uses to characterize them. For example, *ressentment's* "perception of the noble man, "but dyed in another color, interpreted in another fashion, seen in another way by the venomous eye of *ressentment*" (GM I 11).

tandem with an affect, “a drive acquires sensitivity to a stimulus and thereby “knows” when to activate; conversely, an affect can give better shape to its pattern of behavioral response by taking up a pursuit object from a drive” (ibid). Because of their capacity to be mutually-sensitive in this way, they become mutually “recruitable”—an affect can recruit a drive, and a drive can recruit affect, forming a

cross-hatched, mutually supporting structure of attitudes, whose integration rests on the way they are structurally tailored to recruit one another—e.g., with drives supplying a target object for affect-motivated action and affects supplying activation cues and also value-laden, nuanced specification to a drive’s object perception and manner of expression. (Anderson 2012 223)

So, my drive to stay healthy recruited the affect of disgust at the stimulus object, that tray of rellenos, taking it at the same time as a *target* object, in this case, not of consumption or appropriation but of aversion and discard. But a larger point looms here: my capacity for displaying the affect of disgust and being motivated by it is recruited by many other drives—my drive for bond, for instance, recruits disgust after having moved recently to a small town and, after the first year, learning the new university president wants to roll out a plan to cut all new tenure lines; the same context-sensitive affect of disgust here described could also be recruited by my drive to self-respect.

Because any affect or drive stands in a “one-many” relation to one another--one drive can recruit many affects, and any affect can recruit multiple drives—what emerges over time is, given the “relations between drives and affects,” the positing of a “thicker notion of the self, existing as a *repository* of recruitable drives [and/]or affects that are always available to complete any of its given drives or affects” (Anderson 2012 224). Much of the activity of

recruitment happens psychologically automatically most of the time, this cross-hatched network of extant sources of recruitment emerges as a mutually dependent functional multiplicity.

This process finally results in drives combining to “form more complex drives” and attitudes “coalescing” into “loosely identifiable structures” of reliable mutual-recruitment activity, which is just the minimal self, “a functional grouping of drives and affects that permits such mutual recruitability. Thus, the minimal self is “but one psychological structure among the others. It acquires the right to the name “self” simply in virtue of being the emergent structure that encompasses *all* of the sub-structures” (Anderson 2013 226). I am not possible without the network of activity that comprises the set of *my* drives and affects; but there emerges a “complex psychological object built out of the constituent attitudes,” which is what Anderson calls the minimal self. To illustrate one mode of the minimal self—a dimension in which exactly *no* reflective distance between the minimal self and its constituent attitudes, he considers heightened cases of *mood*

A mood is itself a particular attitude, which represents the world *and* the other affects within the self as being a certain way. Even though my mood may not be a sharply defined self-conscious attitude expressly owned by a unified “I”—after all, I can be strongly in the grip of a mood without even being consciously aware of it—still, the mood operates as a kind of collective condition within which my other attitudes have to operate and with which they have to contend—a kind of “weather system” influencing my other attitudes...a mood like depression or joy counts as an attitude inhabited by the *whole minimal self* and not just an outgrowth of some particular constituent drive or affect” (Anderson 2013 227—228).

When I am in a mood like *joy*, the whole minimal self is “on the scene” in consciousness so to speak because all of the phenomenologically relevant affects *have to* show up in the same color. Joy, taken as a 2nd order affect, shades all the first order affects--the world shows itself through a fixed lens and discloses every possibility to be to my sensibility on its own terms. Even something banal like a glass of water can be colored in heightened moods of the kind I’m describing. The “weather system” of this mood makes *me* understood to myself *as such*.

But the minimal self can also adopt attitudes *toward itself*—towards its constituent drives and affects, on reflection. So the minimal self has this one distinctive Kantian faculty in-tact—the “capacity to “stand back” from one’s own attitudes and assess them” (ibid). With this capacity, the minimal self retains the capacity for autonomy—for the cross-hatch network of mutually recruiting drives and affects to be one which, on reflection, you *endorse* or one which you *reject*.

I should note, here, that framing the normative question as one which retains the use of the Kantian ability to “stand back” and evaluate the structurally convergent drive-affect psychological objects we refer, looking at ourselves “top-down” so to speak, that make up *ourselves*. We can adopt attitudes towards the *whole thing*, in the capacity to stand back, and assess. Due to this ability, it figures ineliminably in what our concept of the self should be. And since this capacity enables endorsement or not, reflexive endorsement is an adequate measure of a theory of morality.

The ability to “stand back” may show up in cases where I have a first-order drive whose aims subordinate a second-order drive, and I have an attitude about that first-order drive such that I *don’t* endorse it. Take for example a compulsive eater: food is encountered as an object for which my drive to eat vents itself. But someone in the grip of compulsion may have a second-

order drive whose aim ranges over all the first-order drives that pertain to eating such that this person may not *endorse* the drive to eat; yet, that first-order drive could overpower the second-order drive, again, in the grip of compulsion. We would say, with Richardson (1996) that this person stands in a relation to the drive to eat such that it *tyrannizes* second order drives that may belong to the loosely assembled crystallized drive-affect amalgam that you are aware of as a *part of yourself*. Your self doesn't agree with itself, it doesn't endorse itself.

The aim of selfhood, from the vantage point of the minimal self, is to have one's drives and one's affects under one's control--much like one's "Pro" and "Con" in GM III 12. And it is not just control, but at one's complete disposal--to be *master* over one's drives and affects. In the case of being in the grip of compulsion, a Nietzschean *autonomous* self has the ability to drive out the deleterious affects and drives, and keep in the system the ones it chooses. Of course this implies that autonomy is an *achievement* and not the kind of agential control you can just capriciously wield over any drive or affect. Anyone who knows someone who has managed to move from an unhealthy weight to a healthy weight knows that this requires a pretty substantial revision in the ordering of one's drives and affects. Compared with someone losing weight, we have someone who has, on Nietzsche's imagining, gained *complete mastery* over their drives:

If...we place ourselves at the end of this enormous process, where the tree finally produces its fruit, where society and its morality of custom finally brings to light that *to which* it was only the means: then we find as the ripest fruit on its tree the *sovereign individual*, the individual resembling only himself, free again from the morality of custom, autonomous and supermoral...in short, the human being with his own independent long will, the human being who *is permitted to promise*, this lord of the *free will*...(GM II 2)

Anderson I think rightly posits that the achievement of true, general autonomy in the sense of *ruling over* your affects and drives, being able to perfectly command them at your disposal, is *rare* and reserved for truly *strong* and unique people—Anderson points to Nietzsche’s own example of Goethe, whose self-creation has him “emerge as a spirit who has become free” (TI IX 49). For Anderson, there are two conceptions of the self: the first is a descriptive concept that “includes the moral psychological capacity of the person to frame and carry out a plan of self creation,” and the normative concept of selfhood which includes “the normative conception of a “true self” which encapsulates the ideal being pursued” (Anderson 230). I think it’s fair to say that autonomy is *scarce*—maybe only a few individuals ever experience autonomy to the degree that Nietzsche considers necessary to inhabit the world of the sovereign individual. But certainly a re-ordering of one’s drives such that one moves from, say, letting the eating drive rule inordinately, to one in which the drive to health kills off that level of strength, accomplishes *something* on the scale of autonomy such that she can be said to have achieved *a part of it*.

But I think autonomy and the minimal self have a different relation than *just* the normative conception and the descriptive conception that Anderson offers up. There *is*, I’ll argue in the next section, a sense of autonomy that *can* apply thinly and be prescribed as a formal component of *any* normative conception of the self. That’s the function higher morality performs.

3.7 Eternal Recurrence: Second Pass

I think that accepting higher morality is a necessary condition for starting along the path toward the kind of integration that the weightier end of the spectrum has us glimpsing fully

autonomous sovereign individuals in the figures of Napoleons and Goethes. But I think we can see Nietzsche giving a more *thin* moral prescription in GS 341 than exhorting the reader to acquire the level of austere self-mastery seen in the rare cases.

I want to first bring into clarity how Nietzsche *invokes both* the reflective dimension *and* the higher-order attitudinal dimension of mood in 341--I am considering now that these are two different ways of consciously encountering yourself. Consider the first sentence: “What if, some day or night, a demon were to steal after you in your *loneliest loneliness...*” In inviting you to inhabit the perspective of the person after whom the demon is stealing, Nietzsche masterfully invokes an extreme *mood* to make sure that it is *you* he is addressing—as a higher-order attitude adequate in these exact kinds of situations to cultivate a “weather system” influencing *all* your phenomenologically relevant drives and affects, bringing the reader’s non-cognitive whole minimal self onto the scene. With the minimal self in view and on the scene, Nietzsche evokes both the non-cognitive affects *and* the cognitive capacity to “stand back” from the affects and assess them.

I can now spell out higher morality as it appears in GS 341. Now that we know the minimal self is capable of reflection and of evaluation of its own values, we know Nietzsche is in part addressing this faculty in GS 341. So let’s start with the cognitive dimension. Picking up the thread of AC 11 now: recall Nietzsche claims that “The fundamental laws of self-preservation and growth demand that everyone invent *their own* virtue, *their own* categorical imperative” (AC 11). I argued that there must be a way to explain Nietzsche’s use of the term *categorical* imperative and not just some *merely* subjective imperative.

df. Higher Morality (cognitive-reflective)

you have a (defeasible) reason to place value on *your self* and *your life* adequate to eternal recurrence

Let's call this the cognitive side of Nietzsche's Categorical Imperative "NCI." NCI prescribes that you be a law to yourself—and that law is served up to you in the form of you giving yourself a reason to place the level of value on your life to be commensurate with the level of demand that is expressed in the eternal recurrence thought experiment. Formally, this law is the same for *every reader*: but for the law to be taken up, or to address the reason that eternal recurrence gives you for the value you place on your life, it must be the case that a reader supply their own raw materials from the value they place on their own life. In this way, I "create *my own* categorical imperative" (AC 11). I only *create it* for myself, however, if I *accept* that I have a reason to do so. The NCCI ranges over all domains of assessment that are possible in a person's life; therefore, the value the reader places on her life must be *ordered* as the general source of normativity.

What would it look like to *violate* the cognitive NCI? In general, you could look at anyone who believes that the value of their self and life is essentially sourced in some minimal-self independent and external source. In Christianity, eternal recurrence would be an absolute *nightmare*: the value of your life *really* doesn't kick in until you've reached the afterlife, and the value of your human animal *self* is bad; the goal is to free the soul from the flesh and get to heaven. The value of the self depends on a minimal-self-independent external source: the eternal soul; the value of the life too depends on a minimal-self independent life—the afterlife.

In maximizing versions of utilitarianism, the value of your life and self is measured in terms of how much happiness you contributed to increasing in the world. In Kantianism the

animal self is a perverting source of motives that are “alien” to the processes appropriate to rational willing. None of these sources of value can be vindicated in eternal recurrence—chiefly because for Nietzsche these are all fabricated and false sources of value. Their chief function is to absolve people of having to create and cultivate their own values, their own selves, and their own lives. Jumping back to Schacht, since subjecting yourself to the reflection the demon demands of you requires that you cancel belief in these external value-imbuing entities and processes, the **first acceptance constraint** for opting-in and internalizing the norms of Nietzsche’s higher morality is that you cannot allow the third party external entities or processes imbue your agency with ultimate value.

Nietzsche can morally recommend taking up, cognitively, NCI. You have a defeasible reason to value yourself and your life, and to make the source of that value a law to yourself—this is because *there is no actual other source of value for your life and self*. If you have sought out creative endeavors that fulfill you as a person, the kinds of intimate relationships and friendships that fulfill you as a person, then you are treating yourself as an end in yourself along with your life. You’re not treating it as good for *something* else--for *rational agency, for the greater good, for God*—as *mere means only*.

The cognitive exhortation, I submit, is to be autonomous in the very thin sense of passing the eternal recurrence test. I’ve indicated that I think in broad strokes this thin prescription has more to do with alerting you to the fact that you might be erroneously attributing meaning and purpose in your life to a third party which might pop up as red flags as you, say, reflect on a life of resenting people for the actions they choose when they “could have done otherwise.” Looking down the long hard road of Anderson’s case for autonomy as self-mastery, there can’t be any mastery or control or ordering of the drives and affects if you regard the nature of operation of

those processes to be subordinate to a you-transcendent source. I'm arguing that for Nietzsche's higher morality, you cannot be a blip on the radar of autonomy if you aren't *selved* in the way I'm describing here—*being a self* is a constitutive and therefore necessary condition of autonomous human action;⁴⁸ if you are not a self, you cannot engage in *self-determined* action, let alone self-mastery over drives and affects to be a truly great individual.

Another way of framing NCI in GS 341 is on the model of Korsgaard's analysis of what she calls *practical identity*. Owing to the capacity of the minimal self's ability to "stand back" from one's drives and affects and either endorse or reject them, the minimal self is at least partially, under special circumstances, capable of understanding itself conceived practically. A person facing eternal recurrence may, on reflection, bring to awareness a concept of something like practical identity, which Korsgaard defines as...

a description under which you value yourself, a description under which you find your live to be worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking (Korsgaard 1996 101).

When taking stock of the content of one's practical identity, which is invited by GS 341, one is forced to subject the patterns of action they have chosen to pursue as a whole that could survive reflective scrutiny. After all, on eternal recurrence, they're *yours* to pursue all over again, and again, from here on out. NCCI in GS 341 can therefore be read on the model of Nietzsche exhorting the reader to *adopt a practical identity*. It's important to note that on the model of the reading I'm pursuing here, Nietzsche might not attribute very much *substance* to one's practical identity should they, say, identify the purpose of their life as performing a moral test that should they pass it, they'll gain entrance to a better life. What NCCI prescribes is not just that as a

⁴⁸ Korsgaard has a similar formulation for agency-constituting action, but instead prescribes as sufficient and necessary conditions for an action to actually *count* as such, that it issue from either a Kantian hypothetical or categorical imperative. See Korsgaard (2009) 92-3.

matter of fact such a thing can't serve as an actual goal of anyone's life, since the afterlife doesn't exist; it's also a prescription for you to interpret yourself as a thoroughgoing finite being. After all, if human animals could escape finitude, eternal recurrence would lose its bite. There's nothing at stake in the value you imbue the patterns of your choices over the course of a lifetime if that lifetime never really ultimately comes to a finite stopping point. Throwing it back to Schacht, the **second acceptance constraint** on the cognitive side of NCI is understanding human life as ultimately *finite*.

If on reflection, you can endorse eternal recurrence, then the value you place on your life is the general source of normativity. Of course this invites the possibility that you *don't* place *any actual value* on your life at all—it follows from this that for you, you won't endorse eternal recurrence. To that, Nietzsche simply puts it to you: “how much better disposed to yourself would you have to become” to affirm the declaration of the demon? You don't fail to satisfy the NCCI on pains of *practical irrationality*, but instead on pains of *practical self-hatred* or *practical un-selfing*.

It is at this point that I need to flag how crucial it is that we think of these two facets of the minimal self as being two sides of the same coin, and neither analysis is possible without the other. The fact that Nietzsche takes pains to evoke *both* in GS 341 *alone* is a testament to the apparently strange details he decides to include in the passage. Not only is he asking you to assess, on reflection, whether you could will eternal recurrence, Nietzsche has the reader situate themselves in a mood of their “loneliest loneliness” against which their affective reaction to the news of recurrence is measured.

Df. Higher Morality (non-cognitive)⁴⁹

you express joy (or an otherwise appropriate sense of approval) adequate to eternal recurrence

Having the reader picture herself in her “loneliest loneliness” also hearkens back to the way Kant sometimes has his reader picture the conditions under which the force of reason ought to have more authority on one’s motivations than the force offered up by inclination. For instance, Kant talks about someone who “has suicide in mind” asking himself “whether his action could subsist together with the idea of humanity *as an end in itself*” (Ak G 4:429). This man apparently wants to “destroy himself in order to flee from a burdensome condition” (ibid); however, Kant points out that to act on *that* basis, the man would “make use of a person merely *as a means*, for the preservation of a bearable condition up to the end of life” (ibid) and thereby concludes it would be immoral for the man to act on a non-universalizable maxim. The difference in approach to these scenarios, however, is that the *person reading Nietzsche’s passage is actually present*, whereas in Kant’s, the person is only present inasmuch as they think all rational natures are endowed with the same structure and obligation. With Schacht, if someone is going to *internalize* the norms of higher morality, then they’re certainly affectively “on the scene” to do so.

There is less to say about the non-cognitive element—being well-disposed to yourself and life ought to solicit joy or some appropriate affect in the context of the demon’s declaration.

⁴⁹The feeling that you have willing value to yourself should be joy or some functional equivalent, if you are passing the cognitive phase. I recognize that this puts Nietzsche’s position in contemporary metaethical debate in a diminished position; that he doesn’t regard cognitivist interpretations of moral discourse as necessarily truth-apt, such that his analysis of moral discourse could withstand intuitive objections that your theory is flawed unless its semantic interpretation of its discrete elements could answer to the Frege-Geach problem (See Miller on Blackburn’s Quasi-Realism (Miller 2011). Not only is that an anachronistic problem for Nietzsche’s own thinking, as I model it here, but I would stagger to guess he would be a willing participant in disrupting “intuitive” standards applying there that regulate better or worse answers to philosophical questions.

But it is no less important than the cognitive component, for your response conveys (or betrays) the value you place on yourself. The response should be joy in order to satisfy both sides of the NCI.

In both cases of the cognitive dimension and non-cognitive dimensions of NCI you are starting with the raw matter of your assessment of and the value you place on your life. Can this moral system I am developing here get by without doing what S1—S3 did to fail to survive Nietzschean reflection—Nietzsche’s own criteria for rejecting some moral system?

Does it address itself to all, in the way the others do which I argued earlier in this chapter, with Williams, constitute bluffing people who may not have already internalized the norms in question in the context of their FOLs? *No*, it doesn’t. In fact, it only addresses itself to people who are literate and capable of comprehending the meaning of the passage. It also only addresses itself to people willing to “play the game,” people who inhabit the mood of *loneliest loneliness* at the outset in order to orient their affects in the way requisite to conjure the whole person to the reflective context. Finally, it only addresses itself to people who have had occasion to *read the passage*. It doesn’t “bluff” anybody, even if the FOLs they inhabit require as a condition of habitation having internalized norms that require fairly high degrees of self-denial. In other words, people who *haven’t* read GS 341 or understood its textual context might hate themselves, but Nietzsche’s thought can’t “gain possession over” anyone who hasn’t encountered it, however better off they might end up as a result of interrogating it along with the value they place on their lives.

Does it either “speak unconditionally” or “take itself as unconditional”? No on this front, too. It does prescribe a life that’s better for people for whom slave morality and the psychology of resentment is no good, but whether or not the norms it offers up to the reader for

internalization, as Schacht already noted, will depend on *normative* factors outside the control of the person reading the passage—norms they’ve *already* internalized in the forms of life they inhabit may well force a rejection of the parameters of the thought experiment.

I don’t think Nietzsche is trying to accomplish the impossible task of taking *any* form of life that the reader might bring to the text and *override* it with the force of his categorical imperative. Norms of self-denial may be so thoroughly ingrained in a person’s cross-hatch of drive and affect recruiting constitution that *nervous laughter* at the suicidal nihilism that would follow the demon’s declaration, should that ever turn out to be the case, could ensue. I think on this model of 341, here and elsewhere in the case of dissenters, Nietzsche doesn’t have any other cognitive or non-cognitive resources to “shake the marbles loose” for someone genuinely in the grip of the value of slave morality—those values may well have been internalized and culturally scripted to the point that a person can’t see possible alternatives. A life of self-denial may be best for that person.

Does it generalize where generalization is impermissible? I’ll collapse this question into the question about whether it’s aperspectival. It generalizes where generalization is *possible* in the case of people who “change as they are” from the reflective-affective encounter. I’ve already alluded to the crucial scope modifying mechanism of *internalization*, but it explains endorsement and rejection conditions present in a person’s sensibility as they approach GS 341. Someone might inhabit a sensibility with values that make belief in God somewhat *concrete*, and not at all revisable; hence, the force of the norms that the theory has to offer your agency, should you inhabit this perspective, won’t resonate with extant values you have at *all*. The opportunity to revise or expand on the basis of consistency, for instance, won’t even show up to *you*. The phenomenologically ordinary operation of the affects will see the possibility of a genuinely *finite*

existence, for instance—or the phenomenologically ordinary operation of the affects will take as its object an *after-lifeless reality* as a given--will produce a default response of *nonplussedness*; *nonplussedness* in the face of the object here can recruit the drive to maintain the plausibility of an orientation-anchored belief system.⁵⁰ In other words, neither can there be nor should there be change.

Finally, as I have taken pains to indicate, Nietzsche designs and carefully caters the presentation of *his* version of the categorical imperative to be as *this worldly* and as *literal of an encounter with an actual human animal reading GS 341 as he could*. To bring not some abstract capacity into contact with his thought and instead the *whole minimal self* of the reader is a *worldly* move, doing his best at bringing into dialogue with his thinking who and what he thinks you are or could be. The completely generally ordered source of naturalized Nietzschean normative authority, then, starts and ends with the value the reader places on their own life—or, the value they find themselves revising in so placing.

3.8 Conclusion: Is This A Good Moral Theory?

Nietzsche's moral system isn't an MPS, since it rejects versions of the properties that made the others repugnant to a degree that motivated him to denounce their reality. His is a system that still *does* generalize—the man *published books*. He certainly had hope that the morality of GS 341 would appeal to people, and for good reason, that appeal would generally be transformative. His “thoughts out of season” and “untimely meditations” I think were published out of the hope that they would reach many eyes, that they would persuade people to be *selves* and to give up on or revise the nihilistic values of the west of which Socrates was a first co-

⁵⁰ A cognitive aim of some Christians interested in theodicy.

progenitor along with Christianity and Judaism—values that hold that *life is no good* and *the self is no good*.

His concern for the integrity and possibility of people *self-actualizing*—especially, to throw back to Leiter, when some real *greatness* in a person just serves to be grist for the mill of a culturally scripted slave moral sensibility—was real, and motivated him to carefully and meticulous publishing process. It is clear now how Nietzsche’s attack on *moral values* presupposes *some* moral values—that our immoralism comes from moralism itself. Is it any surprise Zarathustra explains why he “goes down” off the mountain ala Socrates with the simple answer: “I love humankind” (Z P 2).

I want to close this chapter with a couple of thoughts about how well this alternate version of “higher” morality fares when it is subject to standards I think Nietzsche must have thought it could withstand. I cannot be comprehensive here—my goal has to present NCI as a formal indicator of someone meeting a very thinly prescribed condition for autonomous action. I have not been angling to generate much content⁵¹ for what someone’s life will look like should they pass both cognitive and non-cognitive sides of the CI token. Nevertheless, a couple of remarks are in order.

First, suppose someone has had a genuinely awful life owing nothing at all to being trained to hate themselves in the tradition of Christianity and Kantianism, or to be alienated from their own interests in Utilitarianism and science. That person might subscribe to the acceptance constraints I detailed above in the form of full acceptance of the finitude of their existence as well as rejecting God (accepting the “death of God”). Still, people who suffer traumatic

⁵¹ I think Reginster (2006) has a promising account of the shape that action takes in that people will resistances to goals *and* to overcome those resistances, but it still in the context of my argument points to a mainly formal condition for a Nietzschean prescription in eternal recurrence.

experiences who are for the rest of their lives triggered into reliving those experiences and who may suffer general depression or anxiety as a result may *very plausibly* “fail.” Instead of biting the bullet on calling this an opt-out on pains of self-hatred or self-denial, the analysis would warrant a different direction. It might be a Leibnizian fantasy to expect that *everyone* for whom the acceptance constraints pass muster both on reflection say “yes” to a practical identity they could will into the future for all eternity as well as experience the feeling of joy or some appropriate alternative. I think we regard these cases as cultural failures, or tragedies, but such as to be motivated to publicly ameliorate some pressures some forms of life present to a person that may make some of these lives irredeemably bad. Surely institutional racism and sexism can contribute to this; so do forms of life in which one is a *soldier* and is *a man* and has their sensibilities scripted and internalized such that they can’t escape being both *masculine* and *needing mental help*. So I think taking care to make sure people have equal access to the assessing the value of life, at least as an abstract socio-political starting-point, is an important metric for any higher moral Nietzschean to adopt.

How well does Nietzsche’s system fare when it tackles more ordinary moral questions? Consider the comment in *D* Nietzsche makes about his immoralism:

"It goes without saying that I do not deny—unless I am a fool—that many actions called immoral *ought to be avoided and resisted* or that many actions called moral *ought to be done and encouraged*—but I think the one should be encouraged and the other avoided *for other reasons than hitherto*. We have to learn to *think differently*—in order, at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more—to *feel differently*" (D 103 emphasis unchanged).

My account should be able to at least serve as a source of moral theorizing that, if on the success of reflection, serves as the general naturalized source of normativity. If someone can pass both cognitive and non-cognitive tests but live their life as a moral monster, higher morality isn't a really great way to be a source for grounding *anything* normative except the kind of thing morality itself is there to address in the first place.

While I think this kind of moral thinking is adequate to supporting the “many” intuitive actions we would prescribe as worthy of avoidance and worthy of pursuit (without which we concede on pains of being fools), I think I can demonstrate the kind of thinking in one case that would generalize to the many. Let's close our current analysis by focusing on the pattern of action *habitual lying*. When you habitually lie, you intentionally misrepresent a state of affairs, not simply out of concern to persuade a person of the content of the lie—it is out of concern for *truth* that liars lie, inasmuch as they want you *not to know it*.⁵² Ask a liar if he or she can will their life's eternal recurrence, and I think the answer must be *no*. The reason why this must be the case is that the habitual liar doesn't have a coherent practical conception of a *life* that they could regard as *theirs having lived* looking back. When you think of giving half-truths, or omissions, or embellishments, or full-on fabrications, as a property of the pattern of actions that make up each action, can that really count as something imbued with any weight at all? I think conceptually the habitual liar's behavior doesn't count as an action, so they can't will its eternal recurrence.

⁵² Someone who is a *bullshitter* is concerned only with persuasion, as contrasted with the liar, who has an active interest in truth. See Frankfurt (2005).

CONCLUSION

I have been influenced by the spirit of analysis Williams brings to Anglo-speaking philosophical ethics, but probably because like him I was first influenced by the thought that made me pursue an academic study of philosophy in the first place—reading Nietzsche. I first read *The Genealogy of Morality* as an undergraduate sophomore, which completely upended my world. Nietzsche's thought that the world of knowledge and morality is *human, all too human* (which, if communicated as such in a formal piece of writing or informally or in conversation is kind of an occasion for eye-rolling among readers of Nietzsche) was the first thought that made sense to me *philosophically*. I confess however that after more than a decade of critically engaging these texts, at the time of writing this conclusion to the dissertation, the following assessment of *reading and understanding Nietzsche* is likely one of the very few, if any, sound ones I have found that exists in print today:

With Nietzsche...the resistance to the continuation of philosophy by ordinary means is built into the text, which is booby-trapped not only against recovering theory from it, but, in many cases, against any systematic exegesis that assimilates to theory (Williams 1995 66).

As soon as one thinks they have a grasp on what Nietzsche is up to, and formulate a contemporary model of a philosophical theory, you step in a “booby-trap.” As soon as you think you have a paradigm into which Nietzsche's thought could be assimilated and made clear and

better intelligible, you're stumbling on aphorisms in which you find Nietzsche saying that the "will to a system is a lack of integrity" and that he also "mistrusts all systemizers" (TI I 26).

But at the same time, there *are* strands of consistency over time that motivate me to argue what I have in this dissertation: that science can't be the ordered as the general source of normative authority because the truth required to structure agency m-naturalistically is denied in substantive ways throughout his intellectual life, up to and included in the so-called "mature" works. Nietzsche *does* have resources for motivating his critique of "morality of today" that aren't purely destructive. The order of completely general normative authority is sourced in the value *you place on life*-- that there's reason for finding joy in living a finite life whose purposes are *up to you* to define and pursue. Or so I argued in Chapter 3. Those strands of consistency emerge into something novel and interesting if we prick up our ears to *how* Nietzsche intentionally addresses his reader with N/CCI. Nietzsche scholarship isn't just tires spinning in the mud, or to throw back to Williams' picture, a bunch of us setting out on our own paths only to inevitably be caught up on traps that are simply parts of the paths we all agreed we were setting out upon when we first did.

Mud spinning happens too often, however, in the secondary lit. Too often is it the case that Nietzsche scholars find a collection of passages that they take to support the model of reading Nietzsche that aligns with a contemporary articulation of a meta- or normative-ethical position or epistemological or metaphysical position. It doesn't make sense to single anyone out for doing this, since nearly everyone does (I have tried to avoid doing this in my research project to stay as anchored to the textual context as I can)—but the kind of treatment Nietzsche gets follows this playbook: (a) have a model built out of resources from contemporary metaethics—say, non-cognitivism, and pick your favorite species from the literature; (b) you think Nietzsche

can be read on this model; (c) to argue this is the case, you might try to show some other attributed view is limited in scope:

However, the explicitly error-theoretic claims in Nietzsche's texts do tend to occur only where morality in some narrow sense seems to be the topic. For non-moral evaluations, we often get passages of the following form: "Whatever has *value* in our world does not have value in itself, according to its nature—nature is always value-less, but has been *given* value at some time, as a present—and it was *we* who gave and bestowed it" (GS 301).^x

The footnote^x that Hussain uses illustrates "quantitative support," I'm calling it, by putting what follows in the footnote on the passage citation in question: "See also HH 4; D 3; GS 115; BGE P 107; Z: 1 "On the Thousand and One Goals," 1 "On the afterworldly"; WP 428. Cf. Z P 9, 1 "On the flies of the Market Place"; WP 972." *None* of the textual context is explicated, unpacked or has its significance directly connected at what's happening in his argument for reading Nietzsche as a non-cognitivist; none of the thoroughgoing nuance that Nietzsche brings to the communication of this thoughts is included. We are supposed to come on board with seeing Nietzsche as a thoroughgoing metaethical non-cognitivist because of evidence like *this*.

I'm going to shift to a different example—a Nietzsche scholar assessing another Nietzsche scholar's work—to bring into the fore what's wrong here. In Jessica Berry's review (2015) of Paul Katsafanas (2013), quantitative support is deployed with a bit more nuance, but it's used again as a tacit condition of adequacy for drawing conclusions about what Nietzsche thinks, or is doing or is committed to, et al. I already referred to what I think at this point is a substantively quixotic quest, in chapter 2 as trying to *affix* to Nietzsche *genuine predicates of thought, intent*, and so forth. Here it's against Katsafanas' already scope-restricted argument

about articulating a new form of constitutivism based on the will to power in Nietzsche's unpublished notebooks. Berry starts by reviewing Katsafanas' aims of developing a Nietzschean version of contemporary moral theory—it's a theory that

...promises to meet all the stubborn challenges: to establish the epistemic respectability of our moral beliefs; to naturalize them, making them harmonize better with our best picture of the world; and to vindicate the source of their practical authority. (Berry 2014 648)

Despite the Nietzsche-independent exegetical virtues that Katsafanas already concedes⁵³ must account for any value his account must offer to normative ethical theory, Berry conjectures: "Nietzsche's willing complicity in this whole endeavor is doubtful" (ibid). Why? "Not *infrequently*, Nietzsche sets psychology to work *against* philosophy itself. *Some of his central* psychological insights trouble the philosophical concept of agency at its very core, raising crucial questions about whether there are any "bare facts" from which the authority of normative claims could arise" (ibid, my emphasis). Notice the tacit quantitative support argument: we can demonstrate an instance of the vague concept of "frequency" to support the position that Nietzsche *is a moral skeptic*.

A second argument emerges using quantitative support for the conclusion that Nietzsche is a moral skeptic. On the self-knowledge required in "most accounts" of moral agency (Berry 649), Berry argues that agency must "require at least a modicum of self-knowledge" because without self-knowledge, holding someone or something responsible to even a modicum of the self-knowledge requirements of a moral system would be "wantonly cruel" (ibid). And evidence

⁵³ In the introduction, he squarely addresses this issue and comes down hard on the side of presenting his work not as one which tries to untangle Nietzsche, but one inspired by Nietzsche.

of Nietzsche's skepticism about whether people even have this modicum of self-knowledge accrues thusly:

Everyone is farthest from himself," he observes in *The Gay Science*, "every person who is expert at scrutinizing the inner life of others knows this to his own chagrin; and the saying "know thyself," addressed to human beings by a god, is near to malicious" (see also Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998, Preface 1; and *Daybreak* trans. R. J.

Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 115) (Berry 2015 650).

As long as we constrain our citation index to *just* those passages in which Nietzsche has decided to attack some element of the western conceptual landscape in which he ruefully dwells—and provided we *index* them so as to make the case appear open-and-shut against our interlocutor, then Berry makes the case that Nietzsche's a moral skeptic. And if he's a moral skeptic, then he wouldn't have anything nice to say or interest to invest in *whatever* Katsafanas is up to.

"Nietzsche's work is unlike the diligent, focused work of the problem-solver," (ibid) she claims. After all, she ponders...

in Nietzsche's various images of himself at work I can find no evidence that he takes philosophy to be primarily a problem-solving enterprise...Nietzsche's work is instead the slow but savage work of the glacier, whose frightful energy is "mainly destructive"...In *Daybreak* he introduces himself as a curious and "solitary mole" who "tunnels and mines and undermines" (D P 1)...in *Ecce Homo* he declares, under the heading, "Why I Am A Destiny": "I am no human being...I am dynamite...I am the first *immoralist*: which makes me the *destroyer par excellence*." (ibid)

This counter-argument certainly makes it seem like Katsafanas hasn't even *read* Nietzsche. I am not going to sift through all of the textual contexts in which Berry really hammers it home that Katsafanas' "Nietzsche" is mistaken. But the evocative imagery of the "savage work of the glacier" is worth parsing on its own terms. What is the textual context of the remark? It is in a section of D called "Tokens of Higher and Lower Culture." Here's the full aphorism:

The Cyclops of culture.--When we behold those deeply-furrowed hollows in which glaciers have lain, we think it hardly possible that a time will come when a wooded, grassy valley, watered by streams, will spread itself upon the same spot. So it is, too, in the history of mankind: the most savage forces beat a path, and are mainly destructive: but their work was nonetheless necessary, in order that later a gentler civilization might raise its house. The frightful energies—those which are called evil—are the cyclopean architects and road-makers of humanity. (HH 246)

I find it curious in a yet-again textual context omission, that the "frightful energies" and "savage forces" Nietzsche is talking about as responsible for "beating a path" do so as necessary for a "gentler civilization to raise its house." The glacier beats a path and leaves behind a "deeply-furrowed hollow," but we miss in Berry's gloss that "a time will come when a wooded, grassy valley, watered by streams, will spread itself on the same spot." Is Nietzsche making some kind of utilitarian observation that historically monstrous actions and people "beat a path" toward an outcome that justifies the means? Probably not, especially with what we've seen from Nietzsche about utilitarian theory. But the evidence Berry pulls from HH 246 to support the conclusion that Nietzsche is a moral skeptic doesn't transparently answer to the textual context. Instead, it's folded into another deployment of quantitative evidence for a conclusion that isn't supported either by the text itself or by reasons from the context to think that's what he's doing.

Also note that Berry sets up a false dilemma: either Nietzsche's philosophy is "primarily problem solving" or it is anchored in "moral skepticism"—which is "largely destructive," "immoral" and "undermining." He certainly does both; not to be confused as an argument from quantity I've just argued usually unhelpfully eschews the complexity and nuance of the textual context in which they reside, but as I've shown in this dissertation Nietzsche both relentlessly attacks MPS ("*War to the death against vice: the vice is Christianity*" (AC, Law Against Christianity) *and* called for the possibility of a higher morality in which people will their *own* categorical imperative. Leiter, too has an affinity for false dilemmas: chapter one of Leiter (2002) is called "Nietzsche, Naturalist or Postmodernist?" The naturalists are, as I reviewed m-naturalists, and reject notions such as Schacht's "Form of Life" on the grounds that it would do too much to essentialize the concept of "human nature," which is not in the spirit of the methods of science to claim. I argued in this dissertation that Schacht's account of Nietzschean naturalism sits fully consistent with Nietzsche's attitude about the way culture shapes our sensibilities and the forms of life we internalize.

I confess I am somewhat puzzled at the animosity that Leiter and others have toward alternate readings of Nietzsche when the source material is rich and inviting of considered judgments about the significance of its content. In Chapter two, I concluded by cautioning against Leiter's negative charity—that if the textual and interpretive pedigree of some account saddles Nietzsche with some kind of anti-scientific "crackpot" metaphysics, then "so much the worse" for the man, Friedrich Nietzsche. The spirit of this interpretation comes from what I'd characterize as Clark's *positive* charity. Early in Clark (1990), she spells out her hermeneutics:

Reasonable interpretation clearly demands that we attribute to a text the best position compatible with the relevant evidence about its meaning. But only what the interpreter

takes to be true or reasonable can function as the standard for the best position. Appeal to the interpreter's own standards will be necessary not only when there are two equally plausible interpretations of a given text, but also for the purpose of selecting which texts to interpret or consider as evidence. (Clark 1990 29—30)

This is at least an honest approach to the text, and I think it is also as a result *interesting*—Clark seldom deploys quantitative evidence in her reading of Nietzsche, and instead prefers sustained engagement with and interrogation of discrete textual contexts. The result of this *kind* of engagement is the developmental hypothesis. I don't think the late works are organized in the same way Clark does, and I've argued there have good reasons for thinking that. Even though I don't think it ultimately tracks Nietzsche's development out of juvenilia into a period of maturity, it is *interesting* and *plausible* and is above all the result of careful and honest reading.

Of course, the “charity” that Clark has in mind here runs a very real risk of completely distorting the source material, or at least of paring it down so that the parts of it that remain are just the parts that are commensurate with beliefs the interpreter already holds.⁵⁴ In fact, as Hussain (2013) and Janaway (2018) have pointed out, this has led to what the former has described as a kind of proxy war in Nietzsche's texts between commentators who have differing intuitions about philosophical issues:

It is hard not to have the feeling that in the face of this lack of resistance by the texts, we are seeing regular deployments of what I would call the “principle of hypercharity”: if *p*,

⁵⁴ One unfortunate instance of this is Clark's finding “disquotational” views of truth intuitively plausible, and so she attributes the position to Nietzsche. Tarski's T convention governs his analysis of quotational sentences, such as “the cat is on the mat” if and only if the cat is on the mat. That sentence is true just in case, “disquoting” the left side of the biconditional doesn't change the truth value of the sentence. Convention T is simply a semantic interpretation of this sentence; isn't a theory that ranges over the empirical adequacy of any of the content for truth conventions governing quotational sentences, though. It follows that modeling your interpretation such that Nietzsche holds this view and not others is necessarily wrong.

then Nietzsche believes that p . There comes a point where one should simply argue for the philosophical positions themselves, rather than engage in proxy wars by using historical figures. (Hussain 2013 279)

Janaway (2018) has noticed a considerable proliferation of frames of hyper-charity over the recent years:

“If not- p , then Nietzsche does not believe that p ”; “If recent empirical evidence suggests that not- p , then Nietzsche does not believe that p ”; “If p is implausible (to us), then Nietzsche does not believe that p ”; “If p is more interesting (to us) than q , then Nietzsche believes that p ” (Janaway 2018 241).

These all resemble approaches to a metaethics of Nietzsche that I’ve been unconvinced by. Too often an omission is made, quantitative evidence is deployed, anachronistic contemporary models are projected back on the late 19th century, on another language, into another place with different sensibilities, forms of life. That doesn’t mean that we couldn’t ever *hope* to understand Nietzsche, but if your response is one like Leiter’s in which he’s prepared to say “so much the worse for Nietzsche,” Nietzsche seems to be “getting in his way” as Janaway (2018) puts it.

One might well wonder how I think I could then get away with talking about *general sources of normative authority*. It is true that the term “normativity” in philosophy has really come in vogue in the past thirty or so years, so am I guilty of anachronistic backward-projection? To some extent that’s inevitable, given the point just made about interpretation. But I don’t think I’m couching Nietzsche’s thinking in ways that are fundamentally foreign to him. “General normative authority,” as I’ve been using it, has over the course of this dissertation referred to some entity or process being capable of providing *legitimate* justification to some aspect of one’s sensibility. And the only legitimate justification one can provide for valuing one’s self and life is

looking to the person interrogating those values and to ask them what the verdict is. No one else can do that but you. I think Nietzsche is familiar with non-entities fraudulently endowed with justificatory power (e.g. God) and processes that try to take that role over for you; in so doing, for Nietzsche, those entities and processes will smack of herd morality and the leveling down of all people to being fundamentally similar (e.g. reason, democracy).

I also think, with Williams, that Nietzsche is absolutely committed to not continuing to doing philosophy as it had been done prior to his writing. I think *contradiction* in TI is strong evidence to posit orders of normativity—there is a domain that Nietzsche has the upper hand over Kantian armchair metaphysics, and that domain is empirical inquiry. And yet, I’ve argued that there are passages in which, in sequence, Nietzsche *intentionally* contradicts a theoretical claim he has just advanced in the literal prior passage with causation. Science can answer some questions, and it ought to and *legitimately* justifies those appropriate to its domain; but there are more fundamental questions Nietzsche wants you to think about, and it is from those deeper orders of normativity that we find the general source.

I want to turn back to where we started, with TL. I think, having argued that the right way to read Nietzsche is to regard his normative commitments as ordered—that instead of landing on “Nietzsche’s normativity,” we have instead landed on Nietzsche’s *normativities*—there is more than one source of normativity, but they don’t have the same order of importance. With the ordering of Nietzschean normativity, I think I am able to provide a solution to the scope problem.

TLa. Earth occupies a “remote corner of the universe” amongst “innumerable solar systems” rather than at its center;

TLb. Knowledge is a human invention, opposed to a discovery or a revelation

TLc. The significance of knowledge and its inventors has been falsely inflated in discussions about the place of humanity in the context of history

TLd. Humans, despite claims to the contrary, are mortal

We can now revise the scope problem to include developments in the dissertation that have changed our working conception of it. We saw that Nietzsche denies truth in TL, but attaches an order of general normative authority to it in his later works, with the caveat that the most important questions we put to ourselves to answer aren't empirical questions that lead to theoretical knowledge but instead are questions we put to ourselves in an honest interrogation of the value we place on our selves and life. So Nietzsche can accept TLa and TLd as uncontroversial empirical claims. That is a resource at his disposal.

Nietzsche can also accept TLa and TLd on the grounds required by the acceptance constraints to eternal recurrence that I laid out at the end of chapter 3. God has ceased to be believable—that makes the human condition one in which we *don't* reside in a special domain created for out of love by an omnibenevolent and omnipotent creator. Atheist argumentation should have put the issue to rest long ago, or atheist objections to Christian argument should have done the trick as well—but as Nietzsche says, offering up arguments to that conclusion just invites scrutiny that maybe better arguments for the Christian just haven't been devised yet:

In former times, one sought to prove that there is no God—today one indicates how the belief that there is a God could *arise* and how this belief acquired its weight and importance: a counter-proof that there is no God thereby becomes superfluous.—When in former times one had refuted the “proofs of the existence of God” put forward, there always remained the doubt whether better proofs might not be adduced than those just refuted: in those days atheists did not know how to make a clean sweep. (D 95)

A genealogy, an assertion of the lack of believability the concept it has these days given our ability to understand the phenomenon of Christianity using the modern tools of interpretation of archaeology, cross-cultural anthropology history, or a declaration of a “madaman” may better accomplish those ends. So TLa, the refutation of theological astronomy Copernicus failed to put to rest, is covered by our new resource-enhanced perspective. Without an immortal soul, we’re condemned to mortality on this floating rock.

TLb we can accept because it falls under a conception of scientific knowledge as socially constructed in the processes outlined in my reading of the Copernicus passages—theoretical terms are defined by the internal relations they stand in to other theoretical terms. Those terms are themselves created and then imposed on the empirical world. Along with this insight, the fact of knowledge being *socially constructed* might surprise people who place value on *science* instead of religion to instead lead the charge in answering fundamental questions about the meaning of life; but the most central one is the one you figure by reflecting on the value you place on your life.

Just like this early work, I see the source of general normative authority in the value you place on your life. TLb and TLc are fire-escapes for someone searching for a footing in the value-supplying externality. He’s focusing you to look inward. I just explicated how TLa and TLd are acceptance conditions for buy-in to the values laden in the FOL Nietzsche hopes to inspire you to take on. And the “late” works I still see as engaged in a project not only to *mine*, *undermine* and to *destroy* confidence in some of the descriptive elements in an MPS that permit you access to that fire-escape to a firmer footing in a value-supplying externality; There I see sustained effort at articulating a higher morality that differs from the other MPSs but still participates in the spirit *out from morality!* to invite, to recommend, value to your self and life,

and if you can't live up to the invitation, you'll simply admit you can't on some form of self-hatred; There I see Nietzsche imbuing your ability to assess all of your drives and affects *sub specie* your *loneliest loneliness* weather system as the place from which the most important moral question gets its first answer, where autonomy begins; I see Nietzsche imbuing the process of the interplay of your capacity to reflect on the value of your life and the reception of your affects in eternal recurrence, with your answer to the question supplying you with the general source of normativity.

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