A “Dionysian Drama on the ‘Fate of the Soul’”

An Introduction to Reading On the Genealogy of Morality*

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The genius of the heart, a heart of the kind belonging to that secretive one, the tempter god and born Pied Piper of the conscience whose voice knows how to descend into the underworld of every soul, who does not utter a word or send a glance without its having a crease and aspect that entices, whose mastery consists in part in knowing how to seem—and seem not what he is, but rather what those who follow him take as one more coercion to press ever closer to him, to follow him ever more inwardly and completely: the genius of the heart that silences everything loud and self-satisfied and teaches it how to listen . . . ; that smooths out rough souls and gives them a taste of a new longing . . . the genius of the heart, from whose touch everyone goes forth the richer, neither reprieved nor surprised, nor as if delighted or depressed by another’s goodness, but rather richer in themselves, newer than before, opened up, breathed upon and sounded out by a warm wind, more unsure, perhaps, more brooding, breakable, broken, full of hopes that still remain nameless, full of new willing and streaming, full of new not-willing and back-streaming . . . but my friends, what am I

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doing? Who is it that I am telling you about? Have I forgotten myself so much that I have not even told you his name? Unless, of course, you have already guessed who this questionable spirit and god may be, who demands this kind of praise.

_Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 295_

The day we can say, with conviction: “Forwards! Even our old morality would make a comedy!” we shall have discovered a new twist and possible outcome for the Dionysian drama of the “fate of the soul” (Schicksal der Seele).

_Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morality, Preface_

Fate [late Middle English] *Fate* is from Italian *fato* or (later) from its source, Latin *fatum* “that which has been spoken,” from *fari* to speak. The primary sense of the Latin *fatum* was “doom or sentence of the gods”; this changed to “one’s lot.”

_Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories_

INTRODUCTION

Although it is now prized as his most important and systematic work, Nietzsche conceived *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887) as a “small polemical pamphlet” that might help him sell more copies of his earlier writings.

Nietzsche himself was well aware of the character of the book. There are moments in the text where he reveals his own sense of alarm at what he is discovering about human origins and development, especially the perverse nature of the human animal, the being he calls “the sick animal” (*GM* III:14): “There is so much in man that is horrifying! . . . The world has been a madhouse for too long!” (*GM* II:22). In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche discloses that an “art of surprise” guides each of the essays that make up the book and admits that they merit being taken as among the “uncanniest” things ever scripted. He then stresses that his god, Dionysus, is also “the god of darkness” (EH “GM”). Indeed, *On the Genealogy of Morals* is one of the darkest books ever written. However, it is also, paradoxically, a book full of hope and expectation. Not only does Nietzsche provide us with a stunning story about humanity’s monstrous moral past (the deformation of the human animal through Christian moralization), he also wants us, his readers, to read the text of our past in such a way that it becomes possible to discover “a new twist and possible outcome for the Dionysian drama of the ‘fate of the soul’” (*GM* P:7).

In this essay I attempt to open this neglected aspect of Nietzsche’s text. I first provide some essential information about the book. I then begin my analysis by treating the significance of the concept of the “Dionysian,” followed by discussion
of the importance of the question of “fate” and Nietzsche’s characterization of the “soul” and its fate. Crucial to this analysis is Nietzsche’s treatment of the bad conscience in the Second Essay of On the Genealogy of Morals, which I discuss at length. Finally, I argue that the doctrine of the eternal return of the same works as a new, experimental way of living and knowing that seeks to replace an interpretation of existence as guilty with a recognition of error and the need for human beings to now attempt to incorporate truth and knowledge.

Nietzsche’s exercise in historical genealogy is informed by some basic but nonetheless crucial questions. How and why does one engage with the past? What are one’s hopes for the future? Is there a future? How does one come to live in time? How does one overcome the past and build on one’s inheritance—Does one seek to accuse and blame the past or does one recognize its formative character? Is there a debt to be paid off? Is the debt one we owe to ourselves and our right to a future? Do we transform the debt into a gift we give to ourselves and to new life? In short, how does one become what one is?

For Nietzsche the issue of how we human beings have become what we are is to be posed in terms of a “drama.” How are we to hear the significance of this word in his writing? In a note Nietzsche gives in The Case of Wagner (1888), he states that it has been a major misfortune for aesthetics that the word “drama” has always been translated as “action.” He then states: “Ancient drama aimed at scenes of great pathos—it precluded action (moving it before the beginning or behind the scene). The word drama is of Doric origin, and according to Doric usage it means ‘event,’ ‘story’—both words in the hieratic sense. The most ancient drama represented the legend of the place, the ‘holy story’ on which the foundation of the cult rested (not a doing but a happening: dran in Doric actually does not mean ‘do’)” (CW 9). In other words, drama concerns events that are undergone, suffered, and endured. In GM II Nietzsche attempts to show that the acquisition of the bad conscience was not an option for the human animal; rather, it became the chance and the possibility it is by an ineluctable leap, a catastrophe, and a fate. To relate the development of the bad conscience is thus to tell the fateful story of the human animal. From an attained exalted perspective, it becomes possible to see it is the form of conscience that has shaped man to date in terms of his greatest affliction—injurious psychic masochism—and yet contains within it the human’s great promise, that of overcoming himself. The question of “fate” pertains to the meaning of the past and the sense and direction of the future; fate is a determination to be interpreted or deciphered as both necessity and possibility.

NIETZSCHE’S POLEMIC: THE APPEARANCE OF NEW TRUTHS BETWEEN THICK CLOUDS

In Ecce Homo Nietzsche describes On the Genealogy of Morals as consisting of “three decisive preliminary studies by a psychologist for a re-evaluation of values.” The first
essay probes the “psychology of Christianity” and traces the birth of Christianity out of a particular kind of spirit, namely, of resentment; the second essay provides a “psychology of the conscience,” where it is conceived not as the voice of God in man but as the instinct of cruelty that has been internalized after it can no longer discharge itself externally; the third essay inquires into the meaning of ascetic ideals, examines the perversion of the human will, and explores the possibility of a counter ideal. Nietzsche says that he provides an answer to the question of whence comes the power of the ascetic ideal, “the harmful ideal par excellence”—to date it has been the only ideal; it has been without a competitor, no counter ideal has been made available “until the advent of Zarathustra.”

Nietzsche further tells us that each essay that makes up the book contains a beginning calculated to mislead, which intentionally “keeps in suspense”; this is followed by disquiet, “isolated flashes of lightning” with “very unpleasant truths” making themselves audible “as a dull rumbling in the distance”; then, at the conclusion of each essay, and “amid dreadful detonations,” “a new truth” becomes “visible between thick clouds.” Each essay begins coolly and scientifically, even ironically, but at the end of each a reckoning is called for, and this demand concerns the future. At the very end of GM I, for example, Nietzsche says that questions concerning the worth of morals and different tables of value can be asked from different angles, and he singles out the question “value for what?” as being of special significance. The task of these different sciences of knowledge is to “prepare the way for the future work of the philosopher”: solving the “problem of values” and deciding on their hierarchy. He advises that we need to transform the “suspicious relationship” that has hitherto been posited between philosophy, physiology, and medicine “into the most cordial and fruitful exchange” (GM I:17 note). At the end of GM II Nietzsche appeals to “the man of the future” who will redeem humanity from the curse of its reigning ideal and from all those things that arise from it, notably nihilism and the will to nothingness (GM II:24). In the penultimate section of GM III, Nietzsche hints at a new direction for the “will to truth,” arguing that as this will becomes “conscious of itself as a problem in us” there will follow the destruction of Christian morality, and this is a “drama” that will be “the most terrible and questionable” but also “the one most rich in hope” (GM III:27). Moreover, a new “will” is to be uncovered and posited in an effort to sublimate the principal ideal that has hitherto reigned on earth (GM III:28). All of this should indicate that Nietzsche’s “critique” of morality, as well as his inquiry into the human and his moral past, is developed from a specific but curious place: “a premature-born” and as yet “undemonstrated future” (GS 382; see also EH “Z” 2). Although Thus Spoke Zarathustra is a text that many of Nietzsche’s commentators find alien to their philosophical taste, it is clear that as far as Nietzsche himself is concerned the meaning of his critique of morality and attempted overcoming of man are to be found, largely, in that work.

In Beyond Good and Evil and On the Genealogy of Morals Nietzsche sets out to present his readers with a set of unpleasant and uncomfortable truths. Some of these are “truths” of culture that modern humans have forgotten and repressed, and one
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of the tasks of genealogy is to remind us of them. They include: what we call “high culture” is based on a deepening and spiritualization of cruelty—European humanity has not killed off the “wild beast” (BGE 229); what we take to be “spirit” or “mind,” distinguishing the human animal from the rest of nature, is the product of a long constraint, involving much violence, arbitrariness, and nonsense (BGE 188); and modern European morality is “herd animal morality,” which considers itself as defining morality and the only morality possible or desirable (BGE 202). Nietzsche argues that in their attempts to account for morality, philosophers have not developed the suspicion that morality might be “something problematic”; in effect what they have done is articulate “an erudite form of true belief in the prevailing morality” and, as a result, their inquiries remain “a part of the state of affairs within a particular morality” (BGE 186). Nietzsche seeks to develop a genuinely critical approach to morality, in which all kinds of novel, surprising, and daring questions are posed. He does not inquire into a “moral sense” or a moral faculty—a common intellectual practice in the work of modern moralists and humanists, such as Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant, for example—but rather sets out to uncover the different senses of morality, that is, the different “meanings” morality has acquired in the history of human development. His attempt at a critique involves developing a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances under which values emerged, giving us an appreciation of the different “senses” of morality: as symptom, as mask, as sickness, as stimulant, as poison, and so on.

In On the Genealogy of Morals Nietzsche is motivated to uncover “morality” and subject it to “critique”—it is to be viewed as the “danger of dangers” because its prejudices contribute to the situation in which the present is lived at the expense of the future (GM P:6). Nietzsche’s concern is that the human species may never attain its “highest potential and splendor.” In Nietzsche’s hands, history becomes the story of the deformation and perversion of culture, conceived as species activity aimed at the production of the sovereign individual. Culture both disappeared a long time ago and has still to begin: “Species activity disappears into the night of the past as its product disappears into the night of the future.” If the aim and meaning of culture is “to breed a tame and civilized animal, a household pet, out of the beast of prey ‘man’” (GM I:11), then today, Nietzsche says, we see the extent to which this process has resulted in a situation where man strives to become “better” all the time, “more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian” (GM I:12). This, then, is the great danger of culture as civilization: it will produce an animal that takes taming to be an end in itself, to the point where the freethinker will announce that the end of history has been attained (for Nietzsche’s criticism of the “freethinker” see GM I:9). Nietzsche argues that we moderns are in danger of being tempted by a new European type of Buddhism, united in our belief in the supreme value of a morality of communal pity, “as if it were Morality itself, the summit, the conquered summit of humankind, the only hope for the future, comfort in the present, the great redemption from all past guilt” (BGE 202).

Nietzsche opens the preface of On the Genealogy of Morals on a striking note,
claiming that we moderns are knowers who are, in fact, unknown to ourselves. Nietzsche contends that if we don’t search for ourselves then we will never “find” ourselves. To search for ourselves requires that we have the stern discipline of a “will to knowledge,” and for this we need preparation to step outside of the all-too timely frame of the present. Because they are too caught up in “merely ‘modern’ experience,” the moral genealogists—Nietzsche has in mind those he calls the “English psychologists” and the work of his former friend Paul Rée—are altogether lacking in knowledge; they have “no will to know the past, still less an instinct for history” (GM II:4). For Nietzsche, the moral past presents itself as a “long, hard-to-decipher hieroglyphic script” (GMP:7). He offers his own text, with its three inquiries, as a “script” (GM P:8): it is thus a work of interpretation that demands an art of interpretation be brought to bear on its own eventful reading of the past. In this way Nietzsche implicates the reader’s own fateful becoming in his Dionysian drama on the fate of the soul.

THE DIONYSIAN PHENOMENON
AND CHEERFULNESS

When Nietzsche first introduces the figure of Dionysus in his work in 1872, it is associated with states of intoxication and rapture, entailing the breakdown of our ordinary, empirical forms of cognition. Dionysus virtually disappears from Nietzsche’s writings after this point until he makes an important reappearance in BGE (especially 295), as well as GS 370, and then TI “Ancients” 4 and 5. In his later writings Nietzsche equates the Dionysian with an exuberant “Yes to life” that offers the highest and profoundest insight into reality, one which is to be “confirmed and maintained by truth and knowledge” (EH “BT” 3, my emphasis). In Twilight of the Idols Nietzsche stresses that the Hellenic instinct, its will to life, finds expression in the “Dionysian mysteries” and the “psychology of the Dionysian state.” What is guaranteed in these mysteries is “Eternal life, the eternal return of life,” in which the future is heralded and consecrated in the past and there is a “triumphant yes to life over and above death and change” (TI “Ancients” 4). In my view these insights, which are subject to a practice of truth and a passion of knowledge, inform Nietzsche’s project of inquiry in the genealogy of morality, and at the deepest level. In Ecce Homo Nietzsche tells us that he is a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus who has “the right” to understand himself as “the first tragic philosopher” (EH “BT” 3). In BGE 295 Nietzsche admits that it is something new and strange, something not without its dangers, to be told that Dionysus is a philosopher and that gods philosophize. He calls upon Dionysus as the voice of philosophy’s untimely bad conscience (see also CW preface). This, we might say, is the “greatest” conscience, as when Nietzsche says that the philosopher is the figure who has “the most wide-ranging responsibility, whose conscience encompasses mankind’s overall development” (BGE 61). Where we moderns feel sure of the universal validity and consum-
mate nature of our values and virtues, to the point of self-satisfaction, the philosopher, inspired by the god of darkness will plant seeds of doubt, anxiety, and contempt. Nietzsche’s philosopher is “necessarily a man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow” who exists “in conflict with his Today”; the “ideal” of “today” is his enemy (*BGE* 212). Indeed, he takes modern empiricism, with its “doltish mechanistic ideas,” to task because it displays only a “plebeian ambition” (*BGE* 213), and accuses the “English”—Hobbes, Hume, and Locke, for example—of devaluing the concept “philosopher” (*BGE* 252). The philosopher’s task, Nietzsche writes in another place, is to deprive stupidity of its good conscience (*GS* 328). For Nietzsche, the problem is that we believe we know what Socrates confessed he didn’t know, namely, what is good and what is evil, that is, *what morality is* (*BGE* 202); whilst Christianity can fairly be considered to be “the most disastrous form of human presumption yet” (*BGE* 62). This is why Nietzsche speaks, in the preface to *On the Genealogy of Morals*, of discovering the vast, distant, and concealed land of morality for the first time.

Although Nietzsche is making a novel contribution to the so-called “science of morality,” a science he considers to be at a clumsy and crude state of development (*BGE* 186), he holds that there is no European thinker who is prepared to entertain the idea that moral reflection can be carried out in a dangerous and seductive manner, “that it might involve one’s fate!” (*BGE* 228). He acknowledges the extent to which the immoralist is a duty-bound person, called upon to both fear and love the invisible and inaudible world of morals—of subtle commanding and obeying—occasionally dancing in his chains and yet impatient on account of “the secret hardness” of his fate (*BGE* 226). Nietzsche wants his readers to appreciate, above all, that our attempts at knowledge have the character of fate. It is in terms of fate that Nietzsche wishes us to engage with history; only in this way can we incorporate the past into ourselves and earn an exalted right to the future. In an aphorism on “the great health” Nietzsche posits the “the ideal of a spirit” that plays “naively,” from “overflowing power and abundance,” with everything that has been hitherto “called holy, good, untouchable, divine,” which he says is an ideal “of a human, superhuman well-being and benevolence” that will appear inhuman when it stages an encounter with “all earthly seriousness” to date (*GS* 382). Nietzsche wants us to overcome “man” and “morality” in a spirit of serenity; in this way we will “cheerfully” pay off our debts to the past and free ourselves for new modes of existence. This also involves the “tragic” because it entails our own undoing as we face the seriousness and responsibility of our task, that of creating a future for ourselves. The “free spirit” knows what kind of “you shall” he has obeyed and, in so doing, “he also knows what he now can, what only now he—may do” (*HH P*).

Nietzsche often draws attention to the halcyon tone of his writing: “It is the stillest words which bring the storm, thoughts that come on doves’ feet guide the world” (*EH P*:4). For Nietzsche we need to learn how to dance over our problems, including the problem of morality. Having “the most fearful insight into reality” and undergoing “the ‘most abysmal thought’” does not mean one finds an objection
to existence, not “even to the eternal recurrence of existence,” but rather one more reason to be “the eternal Yes to all things.” If we are able to declare that into every abyss we bear the blessing of our affirmations, then this is to repeat, once more, “the concept of Dionysos” (EH “Z” 6). To speak in terms of the “halcyon element” is, for Nietzsche, to approach the problems of existence in terms of a “sunny brightness, spaciousness, breadth, and certainty” (GM P:8). In the book’s preface, then, Nietzsche discloses that his script becomes comprehensible only in terms of the joyful science. The knowledge of the past he seeks will not blame the past or incite revenge against it; rather, it will construe it as both necessity and self-overcoming, and it will do so by opening up a sunny spaciousness amongst dark clouds, including the dark cloud that hovers over man himself.

Indeed, in section 7 of the preface Nietzsche refers to his conception of knowledge or science (Wissenschaft), “la gaya scienza.” This science consists in taking delight in the problem of life and entails a highly spiritualized thinking that has conquered fear and gloominess. Nietzsche’s cheerfulness stems from his experiences of knowledge, including the experience of disillusionment and despair that can result from the practice of the love of knowledge, which is a long pressure that needs to be resisted. Nietzsche speaks of gay or joyful science as a reward, for example, “a reward for a long, brave, diligent, subterranean seriousness.” He conceives knowledge in terms of a “world of dangers and victories in which heroic feelings . . . find places to dance and play.” He posits as a principle, “Life as a means to knowledge,” in which the pursuit of knowledge is not to be conducted in a spirit of duty or as a calamity or trickery (GS 324). He speaks of the human intellect as a “clumsy, gloomy, creaking machine” and of how the human being always seems to lose its good spirits when it thinks by becoming too serious (GS 327). He wants to teach the intellect how it does not have to be such a machine and to challenge the prejudice that would hold that where laughter and gaiety inform thinking it is good for nothing. Nietzsche continues to speak of his cheerfulness (Heiterkeit) in later works. In Ecce Homo, for example, he speaks of being “cheerful among nothing but hard truths” (EH “Books” 3). As Nietzsche reminds his readers in the “Self-Criticism” he penned in The Birth of Tragedy (1886), Zarathustra is a figure who proclaims laughter to be something holy (BT P2:7). We can best free ourselves for our own tragedy—the seriousness of our own down-goings and goings-over—by liberating ourselves from what most oppresses us, for example, the past and inherited nature, through the cultivation of a spirit of gaiety and securing a cheerful disposition.

The theme of cheerfulness runs throughout Nietzsche’s writing. In his “Untimely Meditation” of 1874 on Schopenhauer, he argues that there are different types of cheerful thinkers. The true thinker always cheers and refreshes, whether he is being serious or humorous; he expresses his insights not with trembling hands and eyes filled with tears, but with courage and strength, and as a victor. Such a cheerful thinker enables us to “behold the victorious god with all the monsters he has combated” (SE 2). By contrast, the cheerfulness of mediocre writers and quick thinkers makes us feel miserable; this is because they do not actually see the sufferings and
monsters they purport to combat. The cheerfulness of shallow thinkers needs to be exposed because it seeks to convince us that things are easier than is actually the case. For Nietzsche, there is little point in a thinker assuming the guise of a teacher of new truths unless he has courage, is able to communicate, and knows the costs of what has been conquered.

Nietzsche was highly conscious of what he calls, in a letter to his friend Paul Deussen, his "whole philosophical heterodoxy": he does not simply present his reader with problems concerning existence and knowledge but dramatizes them through parables, thought-experiments, imagined conversations, and the like. His aim is always to energize and enliven philosophical style through an admixture of aphoristic and, broadly speaking, "literary" forms. His stylistic ideal, as he puts it on the title page of The Case of Wagner (parodying Horace), is, paradoxically, "ridendo dicere severum" ("saying what is somber through what is laughable"), and these two modes, the somber and the sunny, are mischievously intertwined in his philosophy, without the reader necessarily being sure which one is uppermost at any one time. The tone of the texts from the late period, which include On the Genealogy of Morals, is that "of gay detachment fraught with a sense of destiny."

NIETZSCHE AND FATE

Nietzsche is persistently occupied with questions of fate from the very beginning of his writing. In "Fate and History" (Fatum und Geschichte, 1862), the young Nietzsche pondered the problem of how to best develop a critique of religion and Christianity that would be appropriate for the time. Influenced by the great American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), Nietzsche appeals to history and natural science as a possible secure foundation upon which to build the tower of new speculation: they are the wonderful legacy of our past and the harbingers of the future. For Nietzsche, fate is necessity. We are not "autonomous gods," Nietzsche insists, but rather fundamentally heteronomous in our being, that is, we are determined by all kinds of external influences and impressions; and, world history is more than "a dreamy self-deception." Without fate—necessity, including the passive contraction of fundamental habits—freedom of the will is an aimless spirit. Fate prescribes the principle: "Events are determined by events."

In another essay written at the same time entitled "Freedom of Will and Fate," Nietzsche argues that absolute freedom of the will would make man into a god, whilst the fatalistic principle, if that's all there was, would make him a mere automaton. The human being is a spiritual automaton (he converts and transforms energy but in ways that do not obey prescribed laws of nature; this is what Nietzsche considers "the dangerous health"). Although fate is nothing other than a chain of events, as soon as we act we create our own events and come to shape our own fate. Nietzsche also realizes once we appreciate the extent to which the "activity of the soul" (the tendency of our "will") can proceed intelligently without the need for
conscious control and direction, then the strict distinction between fate and freedom of the will proves untenable and both notions come to fuse with the idea of individuality. Nietzsche notes that fate appears to a person in the mirror of his or her own personality, so that people who believe in fate are “distinguished by force and strength of will,” whilst those who let things happen, “allow themselves, in a degrading manner, to be presided over by circumstances.”

What is it, though, supposing we are well-disposed towards it, that enables us to receive fate? Is there a voice in us that awakens us to our desire? Is this what we call, conveniently, “conscience”? All of the doctrines we associate with the later Nietzsche are responses to these questions: Dionysus, the eternal recurrence of the same, and the will to power. In short, they are different ways of thinking fate and freedom in terms of our dual nature as creatures and creators: “In the human being, creature and creator are united: the human being is matter, fragment, excess, filth, nonsense, chaos; but the human being is also creator, sculptor, hammer-hardness, observer-divinity, and the Seventh Day—do you understand this opposition?” (BGE 225).

This is the “opposition” Nietzsche is working through in the entirety of his writings, beginning in the early 1860s and culminating in the late works such as Beyond Good and Evil and On the Genealogy of Morals. We only have to think, for example, of the demonic voice that inspires the thought of eternal recurrence in GS 341: “do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?” in which we are not sure whether the “this” refers to what has happened and will happen again and again (fate), or whether it refers to what we will make happen, transforming fate into a task (freedom), willing it to return again and again as the object of our desire. Nietzsche wants us to see it as both fate and freedom. The task is to become well-disposed towards life and ourselves—towards their material, natural, and historical conditions.

In Beyond Good and Evil Nietzsche criticizes the way we think of free will in a superlative metaphysical sense. To posit the will as a miraculous causa sui is to abstract it from its material conditions, with the result that freedom becomes impossible to conceive since there is nothing to work on and sculpt (BGE 21). Such a positing reflects the desire of a “half-educated” spirit to bear “complete and ultimate responsibility for one’s own actions and to relieve God, the world, one’s ancestors, coincidence, society from it.” This is tantamount to the self dragging itself by its hair out of the “swamp of nothingness and into existence.” The idea of the “unfree will” is equally implausible, Nietzsche stresses, since it amounts to a misuse of cause and effect. Ultimately, it is “only a matter of strong and weak wills.” Such wills reveal themselves in how they respond to the problem of “constraint” (which is part of what makes our acceptance of fate a “power” of necessity). Nietzsche’s treatment of this issue closely echoes the remarks he makes in the essays of his youth. On the one hand, the strong type (vain and noble) holds that it has a “personal right” to take credit for its actions and will not readily relinquish responsibility (it is what gives him belief in himself and his power). On the other hand, there is a “fatalism of the
weak-willed” in which the assumption of responsibility for oneself is cast off and one can be “free” to be “guilty of nothing.”

Nietzsche wants the moral philosopher to arrive at an appreciation of the fecund economy of life that can only thrive through an abundance of different types of existence: “We do not readily deny; we seek our honour in being affirmative” (TI “Morality” 6). He wants us to reject the claim that an individual “should be such and such.” This is because it is necessary to appreciate that the individual itself is a piece of fate, “one more law, one more necessity for all that is to come and will be.” He argues that notions of free will, of a “moral world order,” of “guilt and punishment,” need to be eliminated and psychology, history, nature, social institutions, and sanctions purified of them (TI “Errors” 7). Nietzsche posits his fundamental teaching in the following terms:

What alone can our doctrine be?—That no one gives man his qualities, neither God, nor society, nor his parents and ancestors, nor man himself—the nonsense of the last idea rejected here was taught as “intelligible freedom” by Kant, perhaps already by Plato, too. No one is responsible for simply being there, for being made in such and such a way, for existing under such conditions. . . . The fatality (Fatalität) of one’s being cannot be derived from the fatality of all that was and will be. No one is the result of his own intention, his own will, his own purpose. . . . One is necessary, one is a piece of fate (Verhängniss), one belongs to the whole, one is in the whole. . . . That no one is made responsible any more, that a kind of Being cannot be traced back to a causa prima, that the world is not a unity . . . this alone is the great liberation—this alone re-establishes the innocence (Unschuld) of becoming. . . . We deny “God,” we deny responsibility in God: this alone is how we redeem the world. (TI “Errors” 8).

Nietzsche is arguing that we go wrong in our thinking about self and world when we try to identify an ultimate source of responsibility (a “first cause,” for example). He is not denying that there are conditions in the world for the assumption of meaningful responsibility to take place, which is why in the same text he states that freedom means “Having the will to be responsible to oneself” (TI “Untimely” 38). This freedom, however, consists in acts and tasks of overcoming, including overcoming one’s own self: “The free man is a warrior.” For Nietzsche, the idea of “intelligible freedom” provides us with the wrong idea of endowment (fate) since it means “freedom” is either simply prescribed ahead of our actual empirical existence and so cannot become a genuine task, as in the case of Schopenhauer, or it is a posited ideal requiring a practice of sublime cruelty towards our heteronomous natures, as in the case of Kant (for Nietzsche’s criticism of Kant see also GS 335 entitled “Long Live Physics”). Such a “freedom” operates behind our backs, as it were, and comes to us as a voice from beyond the world, one that either condemns us to become what we are or that makes such a task impossible to realize.

We might suppose that the fundamental question posed to us by the eternal return, a question posed of our will and desire (will to power), is one that is addressed to us from the mysterious depths of our being. However, these depths are,
in fact, those of our cultural formation and it is the buried and repressed labor of culture that Nietzsche sets out to uncover in *On the Genealogy of Morals*. The text can be read as nothing other than an attempt to address “conscience” as an issue of fate that is to be uncovered by means of a probing historical inquiry into the culture of the human.

### THE FATE OF BAD CONSCIENCE

In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche seeks to purify our notion of the “soul” and reinstates its rights in science. The idea that the soul denotes something eternal and indivisible, such as an atom or a monad, is to be rejected. However, we do not need to go as far as those Nietzsche calls “bungling naturalists” who would do without the notion altogether. Rather, the way is now clear, Nietzsche suggests, for reutilizing this venerable hypothesis and giving it a rightful place in our science as, for example, “the mortal soul,” or “soul as the multiplicity of the subject,” and “soul as the social construct of drives and affects” (*BGE* 12). The “soul” then denotes a system of valuations and value-affects. Indeed, Nietzsche says that “morality” is to be understood precisely in these terms: “every act of willing is a matter of commanding and obeying, based on a social structure of many ‘souls’; for this reason a philosopher should claim the right to comprehend willing from within the sphere of morality (*Moral*): morality, that is, understood as the theory of relations of domination (*Herrschafts-Verhältnissen*) under which the phenomenon of ‘life’ emerges” (*BGE* 19). Nietzsche’s contribution to the “genealogy of morals” can be fruitfully understood as an attempt to discover how the human “soul” has been culturally and historically formed, fatefully, in terms of different systems—active and reactive—of valuations and value-affects. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche poses questions of freedom and fate in the context of a historical understanding of how the human has become what he is, the sick animal. The principal concept Nietzsche puts to work in *Genealogy* is the “will to power,” which denotes the animal “instinct for freedom” and a will to growth that, in the case of human beings, is fated to become internalized. This is the “origin” of bad conscience (cruelty turned back on itself, *GM* III:20). It is in *GM* II that Nietzsche’s thinking on the “fate of the soul” is most dramatically put to work.

In the second essay Nietzsche develops an extraordinary story about the origins and emergence of feelings of responsibility and debt (personal obligation). He is concerned with nothing less than the evolution of the human mind and how its basic ways of thinking have come into being, such as inferring, calculating, weighing, and anticipating. Indeed, he points out that our word “man” (*manas*) denotes a being that values, measures, and weighs. Nietzsche is keen to draw the reader’s attention to what he regards as an important historical insight: the principal moral concept of “guilt” (*Schuld*) descends from the material concept of “debts” (*Schulden*). In this sphere of legal obligations, he stresses, we find the breeding ground of
the “moral conceptual world” of guilt, conscience, and duty (GM II:6). The feeling of obligation, the sense of “guilt,” is linked to suffering. Nietzsche is keen to combat the pessimistic view of life and of the human animal that might arise from these insights into suffering and cruelty. He notes that what is most perturbing about suffering is not the fact it appears to be an ineradicable feature of our being, but rather that human beings have a deep need to find a meaning in it, to the point where, in the words of one commentator, we “invent or accept the most ludicrous fantasies,” such as the doctrine of original sin, the theory of the transmigration of souls, and the ascription of demonic wills to imaginary gods. Ascetic ideals provide such meaning even as they involve the denial and mortification of the will. Nietzsche’s fundamental insight is that a Christian-moral culture has cultivated a type of bad conscience in which feelings of debt and guilt cannot be relieved. This is because the bad conscience becomes attached to a set of sublime metaphysical fictions, such as eternal punishment and original sin, in which release is inconceivable.

For Nietzsche the sense of “guilt” has evolved through several momentous and fateful events in history. In the earliest societies a person is answerable for his deeds and obliged to honor debts. In the course of history this material sense of obligation is increasingly subject to moralization, reaching its summit with guilt before the Christian God. Ultimately, a person is answerable for her very existence, regardless of any of its actual conditions or responsibilities: “‘Sin’—for that is the name for the priestly reinterpretation of the animal ‘bad conscience’ . . . —has been the greatest event in the history of the sick soul up till now: with sin we have the most dangerous and disastrous trick of religious interpretation” (GM III:20).

In GM II:16, Nietzsche advances, albeit in a preliminary fashion, his own theory on the “origin” of the bad conscience. He looks upon it “as a serious illness to which man was forced to succumb by the pressure of the most fundamental of all changes which he experienced.” This change takes place when one finds oneself “imprisoned within the confines of society and peace” (GM II:16). It brings with it a suspension and devaluation of the instincts. Human beings now walk as if a “terrible heaviness” bears down on them: they walk upright not only in a physical but a moral sense also. No longer can human animals simply trust their unconscious instincts in their modes of life; rather, they now have to rely “on thinking, inference, calculation, and the connecting of cause and effect,” in short, their “consciousness,” which Nietzsche calls the most “error-prone organ.” In this completely new scenario the old animal instincts, such as animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of changing and destroying, do not cease to make their demands, but have to find new and underground satisfactions. Through the internalization of humanity, in which instincts, no longer dischargeable, turn inward, comes the invention of what is popularly called the human “soul”: “The whole inner world, originally stretched thinly as though between two layers of skin, was expanded and extended itself and granted depth, breadth, and height in proportion to the degree that the external discharge of man’s instincts was obstructed.” Nietzsche insists that this “is the origin of ‘bad conscience.’” He uses striking imagery to provide us with a portrait of such a momentous development:
Lacking external enemies and obstacles, and forced into the oppressive narrowness and conformity of custom, man impatiently ripped himself apart, persecuted himself, gnawed at himself, gave himself no peace and abused himself, this animal who battered himself raw on the bars of his cage and who is supposed to be “tamed”; man, full of emptiness and torn apart with homesickness for the desert, has had to create from within an adventure, a torture-chamber, an unsafe and hazardous wilderness—this fool, this prisoner consumed with longing and despair, became the inventor of “bad conscience” (GM II:16).

On the one hand, Nietzsche approaches the bad conscience as “the worst and most insidious illness” that has come into being and as a sickness from which man has yet to recover, his sickness of himself. On the other hand, he maintains that the “prospect of an animal soul turning against itself” is a momentous event and a spectacle too interesting “to be played senselessly unobserved on some ridiculous planet.” Nietzsche states that the bad conscience is an illness only in the sense in which pregnancy is treated as an illness (GM II:18). Furthermore, as a development that was prior to all resentment, and that cannot be said to represent any organic assimilation into new circumstances, the bad conscience contributes to the appearance of an animal on earth that “arouses interest, tension, hope,” as if through it “something . . . were being prepared, as though man were not an end but just a path, an episode, a bridge, a great promise” (GM II:6). Nietzsche observes that although it represents a painful and ugly growth, the bad conscience is not simply to be looked upon in disparaging terms; indeed, he speaks of the “active bad conscience.” It can be regarded as the “true womb of ideal and imaginative events”; through it an abundance of “disconcerting beauty and affirmation” has been brought to light. Nietzsche makes it clear that the spectacle of the bad conscience needs to be appreciated for what it is and whose end is, by no means, in sight. It is quite clear that, for Nietzsche, bad conscience constitutes humanity as we know it: it was not chosen by us, its coming into being involved a leap and a compulsion. Nietzsche wishes us to view it as an “inescapable fate” (Verhängniss). This is fate conceived as “doom,” which is how Nietzsche almost always presents fate in his mature writings. Fate’s “voice” appears to us in the form of a curse, one that seems to impose on us “the greatest weight” (GS 341); this is, in fact, the weight of ourselves.

In the course of history the illness of bad conscience reached a terrible and sublime peak. In prehistory, argues Nietzsche, the basic creditor-debtor relationship that informs human social and economic activity also finds expression in religious rites and worship, for example, the way a tribal community expresses thanks to earlier generations. Over time the ancestor is turned into a god and associated with the feeling of fear (the birth of superstition). Christianity cultivates further the moral or religious sentiment of debt, and does so in terms of a truly monstrous level of sublime feeling: God is cast as the ultimate ancestor who cannot be repaid (GM II:20). At the end of this section Nietzsche asks whether, as a result of the decline of faith in the Christian God we are now witnessing and the atheism it gives rise to, we will
see a release of human beings from guilty indebtedness, thereby giving us the feeling of living a “second innocence.” The problem with this supposition is that it underestimates the extent to which the concepts of debt and duty have become deeply moralized, as in the feeling of guilt before God. Nietzsche argues that the facts speak against relief from debt when the fundamental premise—belief in the creditor God—no longer applies. This is because any thought of a final payment “is to be foreclosed,” and this reflects the fact that a terrifying pessimism has taken hold of the human psyche. The idea has been cultivated that the debtor (human beings) can never pay off the debt and so their liability or indebtedness will be eternal. Even the idea of God as creditor sacrificing himself for the guilt of man in the form of Christ does not produce human liberation but only serves to intensify the debtor’s feeling of guilt. The ultimate creditor has been conceived in various ways: as the “cause” of man and the beginning of the human race, or as nature, the womb from which humankind comes into being and is viewed as diabolical, or even existence in general, which has come to be viewed as “inherently worthless” and from which the will seeks escape into nothingness, giving expression to a “nihilistic turning-away from existence.” Atheistic philosophers such as Schopenhauer continue to think under the grip of a Christian metaphysics and hold existence itself to be reprehensible. We cling to guilt and want it to stick around, even after it comes unhinged from Christian theology. This is because of its efficacy in producing meaning, specifically with respect to the fact that we find living so hard on account of the suffering it causes us to undergo. Moreover, we keep it because of the sensation of power—over ourselves and others—that it affords. The essential development has taken place in terms of the human being of bad conscience seizing on religious precepts and carrying out its liking for self-torture and self-abasement with a “horror of a truth” immediately erupts, the moment he is prevented, if only gently, from being a beast in deed! (GM II:22). Although Nietzsche finds this development highly interesting, he also sees in it “a black, gloomy, unnerving sadness.” In the case of Christianity we have a “madness of the will showing itself in mental cruelty which is absolutely unparalleled.”

The Second Essay ends on a note of redemption. We should note: in contrast to the English word, which suggests the payment of a debt, the German word for redemption (Erlösung) means a setting free (cf. Z II “Of Redemption”). Nietzsche’s line of thought at this crucial point in the text is highly intricate and the “overhuman” future he appeals to does not suppose a simple-minded transcendence of the kind of creatures we have become. He notes that “we moderns” are the inheritors of centuries long “conscience-vivisection and animal-torture.” Indeed, we have become so refined at such cruelty that we can fairly consider ourselves to be “artists in the field.” Our natural inclinations are now thoroughly intertwined with the bad conscience. Nietzsche asks whether a “reverse experiment” might be possible, in which bad conscience would become intertwined with “perverse inclinations” and “all the ideals which up to now have been hostile to life and have defamed the
world.” Anyone who wishes to subscribe to such a hope will have to contend with “the good men.” Nietzsche has in mind both those who are satisfied with humanity as it is (the lazy and the complacent) and those who impatiently wish to transcend it (the zealous). The task of envisaging a surpassing of “the human” is a “severe” and “high-minded” one; it is not a question of simply letting ourselves go. Nietzsche thus looks towards a different kind of spirit, one prepared for and by “wars and victories . . . for which conquest, adventure, danger and even pain have actually become a necessity,” and in whom the practice of the “great health” has become personified. At this point Nietzsche looks ahead and outside the all-too timely frame of the present. He refers to “the redeeming man of great love and contempt” who will set man free from the ideal that has cursed his existence for so long, and from the nihilism and will to nothingness that arises from it. He speaks fatefully of the “decision” that will make “the will free again,” give a “purpose” to the earth, and give man back his “hope.”

The place from which Nietzsche issues his critique of morality may be that of a premature-born and as-yet undemonstrated future, but it is also one that both relies upon our inherited emotions or affects and places them under the rule of a new practical synthesis. We see this crystallized in Nietzsche’s riddle of “the Roman Caesar with the soul of Christ” (WP 983). Indeed, one wonders whether this might be the “spirit” that informs Nietzsche’s refashioning of the genealogy of morality in terms of a “script”—a script with a cast of characters and dramatis personae, designed to tempt the reader into reflecting on “the fate of the soul,” and that aims to teach its readers that fate is something to be loved (on amor fati see EH “Why I am so clever,” 10).

BEYOND GUILT? OR: THE ETERNAL RECURRENCE OF THE SAME?

The ending of the Second Essay presents genuine difficulties for the book’s readers. Is Nietzsche proposing that in the future human beings will live beyond guilt and, if he is, is this a credible and desirable thought? In proposing redemption from guilt Nietzsche is not suggesting we will no longer feel responsible for our actions or for the events of the world. His point is that a fixation on guilt serves to prohibit the search for knowledge, both of ourselves and the world, including the most difficult knowledge. This is a commitment to knowledge Nietzsche takes over from Spinoza, whom he discovered as his precursor in 1881. In a letter to his friend Franz Overbeck, Nietzsche enumerates the points of doctrine he shares with Spinoza, such as the denial of teleology, of free will, of a moral world order, and of evil, and also mentions the task of “making knowledge the most powerful passion.” The only redemption of noble worth is that which sets us free from ignorance, superstition, and fear. Nietzsche’s redemption doctrine does not mean that we would come to live without responsibility or that we cannot practice a good (healthy) “bad con-
science.” We have seen, for example, the extent to which Nietzsche’s untimely philosopher weds himself to such a conscience. The intellectual conscience he is fundamentally committed to is a type of bad conscience, but one that aims to release the forces and energies of life where they have become blocked and to set them free for future growth and evolution (see GS 2, 335; BGE 230). For Nietzsche the “guilt” we have become and internalized is to be understood as a personal, abject failing that we share as human beings and that cannot be corrected by our power or any other. We are an “error”; it doesn’t matter what one does one cannot be saved, one will only repeat, again and again, the error of one’s guilty existence (this is the unhealthy eternal return of the same we practice under conditions of nihilism and that expresses itself in our readiness to will nothingness rather than not will at all; we cry, “all is in vain!”).

The guilt Nietzsche wishes to see disappear from the world is guilt conceived as “sin,” since this supposes there is a debt that can never be paid off. It means that man’s bondage to an ascetic ideal would be eternal. Even in our so-called secular, postmodern world, in which we might suppose that the theological dualism of “good and evil,” as well as metaphysical notions such as sin, have been banished from our vocabulary, held to be childish, we remain firmly in the grip of a system of guilt and judgment. To see the contemporary relevance of what Nietzsche is getting at one has only to think of today’s (ascetic) ideal of a “war on terror,” which we are told may go on for some time, indeed, may last an “eternity.” This binds us to an infinite debt and is the most terrifying fate we can imagine for the bad conscience; it is this curse imposed on life that Nietzsche’s teachings aim to free us from. His “Zarathustra event,” as he calls it, amounts to a tremendous “purification and dedication of mankind” (EH “BT” 4).

The fundamental challenge of Nietzsche’s thinking on the “fate of the soul” is to invite us to discover new modes of feeling and thinking in which the burden of man and the curse of his fate can be lifted and transformed so that a new disposition towards ourselves and the world can come into being, taking on the force of a new habit. This is the habit of “great health,” which denotes a new cognitive and affective practice of life. For the human animal there can be no purely active force; this belongs to the imaginary blond beasts of prey, and in the text Nietzsche is evidently not advocating an ahistorical return to a prehuman state, or to a premoral mode of existence. The bad conscience is man’s active force. The question Nietzsche leaves us to chew is this: What is now our debt? This issue cannot be effectively digested without envisioning the over-human. This metaphor, I would contend, is Nietzsche’s most important, his most cheerful and strongest, concept and gift. But it is also the one that is the most difficult to measure, and for good reason: Nietzsche designed it so as to challenge and put to the test the measure of humankind. Is it possible to transform the greatest weight (ourselves) into something light and free? Is it possible for the earth to be something other than a “madhouse”?

To approach “morality”—a system of valuations and value judgments that takes itself to be eternal, universal, and unconditional—from a Dionysian perspective is
to open it up to a novel and far-reaching treatment, in which we are able to view it in terms of a semiology, a symptomatology, and a phenomenology of life (what are its various meanings and directions?). The moral valuation of life that we find in Christianity, Schopenhauer’s philosophy, Plato and the whole of idealism, derives from a “degenerated instinct which turns against life with subterranean vengefulness” (EH “BT” 2). In contrast to this valuation, there is the “supreme affirmation” that is born out of fullness and this is “an affirmation without reservation even of suffering, even of guilt, even of all that is strange and questionable in existence.” Nietzsche stresses that this “Yes to life” is both the highest and deepest insight that is “confirmed and maintained by truth and knowledge” (ibid.). It is not, then, a simple-minded, precognitive “Yes” to life that Nietzsche wishes us to practice, but one, as he stresses, secured by “truth and knowledge.” The task is not to take flight from reality in the name of the “ideal,” but rather to “re-cognize” it and affirm it on the basis of this recognition or knowledge (Erkenntnis).

For Nietzsche, “morality” represents a system of errors that we have incorporated; it is the great symbol of our profound ignorance of ourselves and the world. In GS 115 Nietzsche speaks of “the four errors,” noting how humankind has been educated by them: we see ourselves only incompletely; we endow ourselves with fictitious attributes; we place ourselves in a “false rank” in relation to animals and nature; and, finally, we invent ever new tables of what is good and then accept them as eternal and unconditional. However, Nietzsche does not propose we should make ourselves feel guilty about our incorporated errors (they have provided us with new drives) and neither does he want us to simply accuse or blame the past. We need to strive to be more just in our evaluations of life and the living (for example, thinking “beyond good and evil” in order to develop a more complex appreciation of the economy of life; for Nietzsche it is largely the prejudices of “morality” that stand in the way of this; “morality” assumes a knowledge of things it does not have). The critical and clinical charge to be made against “morality” at this point in our evolution is that it has become a menacing and dangerous system that makes the present live at the expense of the future. It knows only the present and sees the future as simply an extension of the present; ours is judged to be a time that has been given for all time.

In the very first sketch Nietzsche drafted in August 1881 of his “thought of thoughts,” the eternal recurrence of the same, he writes that the task is to wait and see to what extent truth and knowledge can stand incorporation (KSA 9:11[141]; see also GS 110). By this he means that our attempts at knowledge need to take the form of a testing, experimentation, and recognition. The task, Nietzsche says, is to demonstrate the “infinite importance of our knowing, erring, habits, ways of living for all that is to come.” The question is then asked: “What shall we do with the rest of our lives—we who have spent the majority of our lives in the most profound ignorance? We shall teach the teaching—it is the most powerful means of incorporating [einzuerleben] it in ourselves. Our kind of blessedness [Seligkeit], as teachers of the greatest teaching.” Nietzsche believes that modern humankind, which is in the
process of becoming postmetaphysical and postmoral, is being presented with what he calls “the weightiest knowledge [Erkenntnis].” This is a knowledge that prompts a “terrible reconsideration of all forms of life”:

[W]e have to put the past—our past and that of all humanity—on the scales and also outweigh it—not! this piece of human history will and must repeat [wiederholen] itself eternally; we can leave that out of account, we have no influence over it: even if it afflicts our fellow-feeling and biases us against life in general. If we are not to be overwhelmed by it, our compassion must not be great. Indifference needs to have worked away deep inside us, and enjoyment in contemplation, too. Even the misery of future humanity must not concern us. But the question is whether we still want to live: and how! (KSA 9:11[141])

Nietzsche has great hopes for the cultivating and incorporating thought of eternal recurrence. This “most powerful thought,” he writes, uses the energy that has hitherto been at the command of other goals (Zielen). It thus has a “transforming effect” not through the creation of any new energy but simply by creating “new laws of movement for energy.” It is in this sense that it holds “the possibility of determining and ordering individual human beings and their affects differently” (KSA 9:11[220]). To endure the thought of return one needs freedom from “morality” (der Moral) (its prejudices and presumptions), new means against the fact of pain, enjoyment of all kinds of uncertainty, and experimentalism. It is the “greatest elevation (Erhöhung) of the consciousness of strength (Kraft) of human beings” that comes into being as the over-human is created (KSA 11:26[283]; WP 1060). We need to “endure” eternal recurrence not as a fate simply given to us but as the exercise of a new freedom, one we grant ourselves a right to. This is Nietzsche’s unique “Spinozism,” in which an experimental practice of knowledge has become incorporated as a fundamental passion. The future ones will live without metaphysical or existential guilt but not beyond responsibility (the task, Nietzsche says in Thus Spoke Zarathustra, is to freely become the creator, judges, and avengers of our own laws); they will cultivate a science dedicated to the incorporation of truth and knowledge but that also loves error because, being alive, it loves life (BGE 24). And they will bear the blessings of an affirmation of existence into their every abyss, such is their will to life and to become more—once more, and again and again. As Nietzsche argues towards the end of his great text, “self-overcoming” is the—fateful and free—law of life (GM III:27).

NOTES


2. In this way one might say that the book stages a return of the repressed. This is recognized by Debra Bergoffen in her unduly neglected article, “Why A Genealogy of Morals?” Man and World 16 (1983): 129–38.


5. Letter to Franz Overbeck, 13 November 1888.


7. In an aphorism in *The Wanderer and His Shadow* entitled “Mohammedan fatalism” Nietzsche writes that this kind of fatalism “embodies the fundamental error of setting man and fate over against one another as two separate things,” with the result that man must either resist fate or frustrate it, even though in the end it always wins. His argument that every human being is “a piece of fate,” “the blessing or the curse and in any event the fetters in which the strongest lies captive,” and in which “the whole future of the world of man is predetermined,” is picked up and refined in the final section of “The Four Great Errors” in *TI*. It is interesting to note that in one of his earliest sketches of the eternal return of the same Nietzsche develops the thought as a response to the problem of pre-determination. If all is necessity, he asks, how can I attain a degree of power of my actions? He answers as follows: “Thought and belief are a weight pressing down on me as much as and even more than any other weight. You say that food, a location, air, society transform and condition you: well your opinions do so even more, since it is they that determine your choice of food, dwelling, air, society. If you incorporate this thought within you, amongst your other thoughts, it will transform you. The question in everything that you will: ‘am I certain I want to do to an infinite number of times?’ will become for you the heaviest weight” (*KSA* 9:11[143]).


10. In his classic study of Nietzsche, Karl Jaspers correctly noted that *amor fati* is not a “passive submission to a presumably recognized necessity,” but rather “the expression of free activity,” such as the enjoyment of all kinds of uncertainty and experimentalism. See K. Jaspers, *Nietzsche*, trans. Charles F. Wallraff and Frederick J. Schmitz (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), 369.