



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University
DigitalCommons@SHU

Government, Politics & Global Studies Faculty
Publications

Government, Politics & Global Studies

10-2004

Nietzsche, Nihilism, and the Virtue of Nature

Steven Michels

Sacred Heart University, michelss@sacredheart.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/gov_fac

 Part of the [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Michels, Steven. "Nietzsche, Nihilism, and the Virtue of Nature." *Dogma: Revue de Philosophie et de Sciences Humaines* (2004). Web

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Government, Politics & Global Studies at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Government, Politics & Global Studies Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact ferriby@SacredHeart.edu.

Steven Michels

Asst. Professor of Political Science

Dept. of History and Political Science Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT
USA

Nietzsche, Nihilism, and the Virtue of Nature

To impose upon becoming the character of being
—that is the supreme will to power. (*WP* 567)^[1]

Nietzsche's view of nature and his attack on the platonic tradition has given him a reputation as a nihilist, a label he himself acknowledged. Yet what does Nietzsche mean by nihilism? and to what extent is he a nihilist? This article explores Nietzsche's use of the term as it relates to modernity, his own postmodern project, and how it is connected with what Nietzsche calls "virtue."

The problem of nature

Nietzsche has been called a nihilist for his rejection of universal standards for justice and virtue. Generally speaking, interpretations of Nietzsche and his view of nature vary according to whether his break with metaphysics is seen as complete, and whether his break is considered desirable. Heidegger, Nietzsche's most important interpreter, emphasizes Nietzsche's understanding of nature as an ordering principle. Modernity, according to Heidegger, is nothing more than the sustained and growing ignorance of Being. Since Plato, Heidegger argues, each generation of philosophers has become less and less able to comprehend the question of Being, much less speak to its nature. Hence Nietzsche was correct to attack Plato and the tradition of metaphysics he inspired. "As the fulfillment of modern metaphysics," writes Heidegger, "Nietzsche's metaphysics is at the same

time the fulfillment of Western metaphysics in general and is thus — in a correctly understood sense — the end of metaphysics as such.”^[2] Heidegger presents Nietzsche as the final nail in the coffin of modernity’s vulgar and tyrannical metaphysics. Heidegger takes issue, however, with Nietzsche’s overzealousness. Heidegger claims that Nietzsche was so bent on the destruction of metaphysics that his philosophy adopted a metaphysical pose. For Heidegger, Nietzsche’s metaphysics too closely resemble those of Aristotle.^[3] Heidegger considers the highest element of Nietzsche’s thought, the eternal return, not the first breath of postmodernity, but the “final thought of Western metaphysics.”^[4] Heidegger argues that the eternal return is either non-philosophic mysticism or a philosophy borrowed from Heraclitus.^[5] In either event, Nietzsche failed in his attempted break with metaphysics, and was merely another in the long line of philosophers who misunderstood the importance of Being. Rorty follows Heidegger in celebrating the end of Western metaphysics. For Rorty, postmodernism is, at its root, the rejection of an objective view of nature. The belief in absolute value, Rorty claims, originates in Greek philosophy and continues on into the Enlightenment and includes even Heidegger.^[6] The “realists,” as Rorty refers to them, wish to ground the “solidarity” of political communities in Nature and Truth. As this assumes that their perceptions somehow correspond to reality, realists are required to construct a metaphysical support for their beliefs. It is far better, Rorty asserts, for the values of a community to be founded on its own conception of good, rather than on a belief in Nature, or as he would say it, for objectivity to be replaced by the demands of solidarity. In Rorty’s formulation, reliance on opinion supplants the need for Truth. The difference between knowledge and opinion is not a quality but quantity: wisdom and Truth are replaced by opinion and consensus.^[7] Rorty invokes fellow pragmatist William James, who defines truth as “what is good for *us* to believe.”^[8] In comparison, a realist “presupposes that knowledge, man, and nature *have* real essences which are relevant to the problem at hand.”^[9] In effect, Rorty replaces Nature and Truth with a series of dynamic socio-historical agreements, making philosophy in the platonic sense neither

possible nor desirable. Rorty, like many others, sees Nietzsche as the first to assess accurately the nature of truth, and he emphasizes the part of Nietzsche's thought that portrays nature as an unknowable chaos. Rorty quotes Nietzsche's claim that truth is "a mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms—in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are" (TL).^[10] For Rorty, Nietzsche summarizes perfectly the major precept of postmodernism. So dependent on Nietzsche is Rorty that if Nietzsche did not exist, Rorty would have to invent him.

These accounts of Nietzsche only agitate those concerned with the effects of Nietzsche's philosophy. Many blame Nietzsche for the nihilistic sensibilities of the present age. Stanley Rosen presents such a case. Rosen disagrees with Heidegger on Nietzsche's failure and with Rorty on Nietzsche's value as a philosopher. Rosen believes that Nietzsche succeeded in his break with Western metaphysics, a feat that should be anything but celebrated. "In my opinion," writes Rosen, "Nietzsche has no ultimate teaching of a theoretical, constructive nature. The riddle to Nietzsche's consistency cannot be unlocked because it does not exist."^[11] For Rosen, Nietzsche's teaching has the same outcome for which Nietzsche blames Platonism and Christianity: "it empties human existence of intrinsic value."^[12] Nietzsche's teaching is not only contradictory; it is disquieting and dangerous. Rosen believes that even Nietzsche's Yes-saying magnum opus, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "implodes into chaos."^[13]

Rosen's analysis derives in part from his recognition of the problem of nature in Nietzsche's writing. "The term *nature* thus plays an ambiguous role in Nietzsche's thinking," writes Rosen.^[14] "Nietzsche advocates a return to the natural order in a sense, but not in a Platonic or Aristotelian sense." For Nietzsche, "nature is power and, still more fundamentally, chaos."^[15] Rosen, unlike Heidegger, does not see Nietzsche as having an affinity with Aristotle and dismisses such nonsense. For Rosen, the result of the two views of nature in Nietzsche's works is nihilism. Yes, nature is the standard for

values, but if nature is chaos, as it is in Nietzsche, then all values are relative to man's will to power. Leo Strauss is another key Nietzsche interpreter. In an often-neglected piece entitled "Relativism," Strauss writes of Nietzsche's "revaluation of all values":

Nietzsche *may be said* to have transformed the deadly truth of relativism into the most life-giving truth... We *limit ourselves here* to saying that the movement of Nietzsche's thought *can be understood* as a movement from the supremacy of history towards the supremacy of nature, a movement that bypasses the supremacy of reason throughout or *tries* to replace the opposition between the subjective and the objective (or between the conventional and the natural) by the opposition between the superficial and the profound. Existentialism is *the attempt* to free Nietzsche's *alleged* overcoming of relativism from the consequences of his relapse into metaphysics or of his recourse to nature.^[16]

Strauss is not dissembling when he warns that he is "[stating] the case with all necessary vagueness."^[17] Strauss is unable to be more specific, he claims, because he is unsure about Nietzsche's final judgment concerning the will to power. Strauss ponders Nietzsche's "hesitation as to whether the doctrine of the will to power is [a] subjective project to be superseded by other such projects in the future or whether it is the final truth."^[18] However much Strauss's interpretation is wanting, his ambivalence illustrates perfectly the difficulty in coming to terms with Nietzsche and the role that nature plays in his teaching. These views also mirror the seemingly contradictory manner in which nature is presented in Nietzsche's thought. On one hand, Nietzsche states that his goal is "to translate man back into nature" (*BGE* 230).^[19] He argues that man has drifted too far from his natural self, sacrificing his instincts and power for the comfort and convenience of modern society. Nietzsche writes: "I use the word 'vice' in my fight against every kind of *antinature* or, if you prefer pretty words, idealism" (*EH* Books 5; emphasis added).^[20] In this formulation, Nietzsche recommends a form of naturalism or metaphysics that seeks to ground science, morality, and politics in the innocence and integrity of nature.

Yet nature also appears in Nietzsche's writings as chaotic. Nature is described as "wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purposes and consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time; imagine indifference itself as a power" (BGE 9).^[21] Nietzsche warns—"Let us beware"—against deifying nature. "The total character of the world...is in all eternity chaos," Nietzsche teaches. "In the sense not of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever other names there are for our aesthetic anthropomorphisms" (GS 109).^[22] Nietzsche denies that there are any "laws in nature"; rather, "there are only necessities." Nietzsche breaks with those, including Plato, who view nature as the source of divinity and order in the universe and denies any teleological understanding of nature or man. And if there is no true end, there can be no "accidents" either. These somewhat paradoxical statements raise many questions. First, how can nature's chaos ground political and moral life? If nature is indifferent, or even hostile, to man, how can it serve as a source of order and stability? Moreover, if nature is as adverse and unpleasant as Nietzsche claims it is, why should we be willing to accept it as a guide? This view demands that nature be overcome, not heralded. Also, why is it so difficult to live according to nature and instinct? Put differently, how was man ever able to break with nature in the manner that Nietzsche details?

Nihilism and being

Before concerning ourselves with the question of whether Nietzsche's view of nature makes him a nihilist, we should first establish what is meant by the term *nihilism*. One interpreter usefully defines etymologically, as a "denial or negation, of the established and esteemed beliefs and values in morality and religion."^[23] Certainly this definition would include Nietzsche. But this is not Nietzsche's sense of the term. Nihilism is used most often by Nietzsche when referring to the consequences of modernity and its reliance on reason.^[24] On this he writes: "Faith in the categories of reason is the

cause of nihilism. We have measured the value of the world according to categories *that refer to a purely fictitious world*" (WP 12b). This explains, Nietzsche notes, how it is that the greatest values have come to devalue themselves. In this respect, Nietzsche's philosophy is nihilistic insofar as nihilism is the starting point for his positive philosophy.^[25] Yet not all non-metaphysical philosophies are nihilistic.^[26] Consider Alexander Bain, for whom belief is "that upon which a man is prepared to act."^[27] Similarly, William James notes, "beliefs...are really rules for action."^[28] Here, nihilism is not so much an *-ism*, as the inability of belief to supply a basis for action. Hence the problem is not that "everything is permitted," as Ivan Karamazov says,^[29] but that *nothing is done*. This is the nihilism at odds with life, the nihilism that Nietzsche envisions spreading across nineteenth century Europe (WP Pr. 2), and the nihilism that his philosophy aims to counter. The nihilism that Nietzsche fears is tied to inaction. "Life itself," he writes, "is to my mind the instinct for growth, for durability, for an accumulation of forces, for *power*: where the will to power is lacking there is decline. It is my contention that all the supreme values of mankind *lack* this will—that the values which are symptomatic of decline, *nihilistic* values, are lording it under the holiest names" (A 6).^[30] Nietzsche deplores this nihilism—"the sign of a despairing, morally weary soul" (BGE 10). Elsewhere, Nietzsche writes that suicide is "the *deed of nihilism*" (WP 247), and he recognizes "pessimism as a preliminary form of nihilism" (WP 9; Cf. 37, 38). In the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche describes nihilism as nothing more than nausea mixed with pity (GM 3.14; Cf. A 7).^[31] If nihilism is a sort of inaction, then Nietzsche's philosophy points away from nihilism, not to it. The will to power is nothing if not a doctrine of action.^[32] For Nietzsche, a turn from nihilism requires not only that values serve life, but also that we actually believe them. Nietzsche writes: "That a great deal of *belief* must be present; that judgments may be ventured; that doubt concerning all essential values is *lacking*—that is the precondition of every living thing and its life. Therefore, what is needed is something that must be held to be true—*not* that something is true" (WP 507). Faith and belief are more valuable and indeed more crucial to life than is truth.

The good or bad of nihilism is assessed according to its ability to inspire action. Consequently, Nietzsche speaks of many different forms of nihilism.^[33] Of the many he names, four are the most important, and they appear in two pairs. Nihilism has four dimensions, depending on whether it is practical or theoretical (*WP* 4), active or passive (*WP* 22). Nietzsche places himself alongside the philosophers of the future in the theoretical-active category.

	Active	Passive
Theoretical	Nietzsche, Philosophers of the Future, Free Spirits, Free Minds, the Romans, pre-Socratics, Machiavelli	Heidegger, Foucault, Rorty, Derrida, Buddhists
Practical	Socialists, liberals, conservatives ^[34] ; Jews, Muslims	Christians

The categories are inclusive in that, in a sense, it is impossible not to be a nihilist, because nihilism, in Nietzsche's view, is an existential condition. As one interpreter notes, "nihilism is tied to being."^[35] The only way, Nietzsche argues, to avoid being a nihilist is to see life as more than the will to power, a notion he deems undesirable and impossible. "There is nothing to life that has value, except the degree of power — assuming that life itself is the will to power (*WP* 55). Yet if it is impossible to avoid thinking nihilism, it is essential that we avoid living nihilism.^[36] Nihilism is tied to being as it articulates Nietzsche's appreciation for the problem of nature. Once the Greek problem, before Socrates at least, this is the problem that Nietzsche seeks to resurrect in his philosophy of the future. For Nietzsche, nihilism is "ambiguous" (*WP* 22; emphasis removed).^[37] Nietzsche sees "nihilism as a normal phenomenon [that] can be a symptom of increasing *strength* or of increasing *weakness*" (*WP* 585B). Nihilism can lead to strength as easily as it can lead to despair (*WP* 23). This was the

reason that Nietzsche could speak with little difficulty of himself as a nihilist (*WP* 25). He was unaffected by the passive and practical nihilism that was spreading over Europe because he saw past it. Nietzsche writes: "He that speaks here...has done nothing so far but reflect: a philosopher and solitary by instinct, who has found his advantage is standing aside and outside, in patience, in procrastination, in staying behind;...as the first perfect nihilist of Europe who, however, has even now lived through the whole of nihilism, to the end, leaving it behind, outside himself" (*WP* Pr. 3). That Nietzsche could look past the nihilism made him wish to advance it all the more. Nietzsche saw *value* in nihilism. Nietzsche calls his revaluation of values "a movement that in some future will take the place of this perfect nihilism—but presupposes it, logically and psychologically, and certainly can come only after and out of it" (*WP* Pr. 4). Nietzsche's philosophy does not so much celebrate nihilism, as it recognizes the overcoming of nihilism as the only true foundation upon which culture can thrive (*UD* 3).^[38] Heidegger and Rorty miss the niceties of Nietzsche's philosophy. To them, Nietzsche would most likely respond: "there may actually be puritanical fanatics of conscience who prefer even a certain nothing to an uncertain something to lie down on—and die. But this is nihilism and the sign of a despairing, mortally weary soul—however courageous the gestures of such a virtue may look" (*BGE* 10). In Nietzsche's view, there is no essential difference between Plato's "pure spirit and the good as such" and Rorty's relativism, as both are bent on the tyranny of "denying *perspective*" (*BGE* Pr.). Both have anointed their opinion as truth and remain unwilling to consider rival truth-claims. Rorty's teaching is merely the culmination of Plato's teaching: a decayed modernism. Much to Rorty's chagrin, Nietzsche would argue that there is a clear line from Plato to Rorty: both are nihilists, hostile to life. Rorty did not follow Nietzsche in his break from Platonic political philosophy; rather, Rorty continued modernity in spite of Nietzsche.^[39] In this sense, Nietzsche would not consider Rorty the herald of the postmodern, but the continuation of the exhausted modern project. The difference between Nietzsche and Rorty is clearest concerning what each calls truth. While Nietzsche opposes the influence of democracy on philosophy, Rorty uses democracy, or a belief in the equality of individuals

and consensus, as the standard for his "truth." For Nietzsche, consensus is no standard by which to judge truth. Nietzsche, we should recall, was the first to proclaim the death of god as a fact of history, and he opposes Christianity and democracy despite their ability to achieve and maintain consensus. Truth—or what he more often calls "reality"—exists for Nietzsche independently of opinion, shared or otherwise. That most philosophers have agreed on any number of issues by no means increases the likelihood that they are correct; rather, it is more likely that their views are either partially mistaken or entirely false. The more perspectives that exist, the greater the chance that one is useful or true. Diversity, not consensus, and perspective through experience are prerequisites for a claim to truth. That others have misunderstood Nietzsche's point is also evident in what Rorty says of Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Dewey. He writes that each tried, in his early years, to find a new way of making philosophy 'foundational'....Each of the three, in his later work, broke free of the Kantian conception of philosophy as foundation, and spent his time warning us against those very temptations to which he himself had once succumbed. Thus their later work is therapeutic rather than constructive, edifying rather than systematic, designed to make the reader question his own motives for philosophizing rather than to supply him with a new philosophical program.^[40]

Viewing philosophy as therapeutic rather than creative or active is what Nietzsche means by theoretical and passive nihilism. Nothing is believed, so nothing is done. The best we can do is to comfort each other as we dangle over the abyss.

Nietzsche may think modernity to its conclusion, but his perspectivism is not nihilism.^[41] Nietzsche is not a nihilist in the conventional sense in that he does not consider all values to be of equal worth.^[42] For Nietzsche, in fact, absolute relativism and absolute truth are virtually indistinguishable in their hostility to life.^[43] Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return is an attempt to avoid both extremes: it is not metaphysical, or "otherworldly," because it is not absolute. It is nevertheless superior to other perspectives because it derives from a profound appreciation of nature and man's will to power. Nietzsche presents the will to power as the fundamental fact of nature, and

the eternal return, the embrace of eternal becoming, as the highest attainable goal. While Nietzsche recognizes the theoretical nihilism, or chaos, in which we exist, he advocates a philosophy that willfully transcends it.

All too beautiful

The other, more serious charge, against Nietzsche is that his philosophy is disquieting, dangerous, and just plain ugly. Consider Allan Bloom, who writes:

Nietzsche wanted to destroy all scientific and metaphysical doctrines that would turn us away from a free examination of what we are and from taking ourselves seriously. He wanted to know the knower in order to evaluate what is said to be knowledge, and that is the most difficult of all philosophical undertakings. His is a model of the gifts and the dedication necessary for seeing what goes on within and developing adequate hypotheses about what it all means. He came to the conclusion that man is will to power, which is not, in the centrality of aspiration that it underlines, entirely without kinship with Eros. But Nietzsche could not call it Eros because he could not bring himself to believe that there is anything naturally beautiful. ^[44]

Bloom acknowledges Nietzsche's importance as a philosopher, yet takes issue with his doctrine of the will insofar as it does not admit, or at least that Nietzsche himself could not admit, that anything is "naturally beautiful." There is much in Nietzsche's works to support this view. Nietzsche thought, for example, that beauty was relative to matters of growth and preservation. In this respect, the strong and the weak both conceptualize the beautiful in different terms. The strong will know beauty in vastly different ways. Some may, for example, view the Christian as beautiful, while others may see beauty in Nietzsche's will to power or the eternal return. In this formulation, "*the beautiful exists just as little as does the good, or the true*" (WP 804). Bloom misses the point, however; for Nietzsche, nothing was more beautiful than natural man, and the will to power is a doctrine that reflects this belief.

"The world is overfull of beautiful things," Nietzsche writes, "but nevertheless poor, very poor when it comes to beautiful moments and unveilings of these things. But perhaps this is the most powerful magic of life: it is covered by a veil interwoven with gold, a veil of beautiful possibilities, sparkling with promise, resistance, bashfulness, mockery, pity, and seduction. Yes, life is a woman" (GS 339). If nothing is naturally beautiful, it is only because man has lost his capacity for recognizing it. The world as will to power is beautiful because it serves what is most beautiful in man (AOM 342, GS 336).^[45] The most we can say is that the will to power makes the naturally beautiful ugly as much as Plato's *eide* makes the naturally ugly beautiful. Others claim that Nietzsche's philosophy is dangerous or potentially disruptive. For Rosen, Nietzsche's teaching is an appeal to the highest, most gifted human individuals to create a radically new society of artist-warriors[,]...expressed with rhetorical power and a unique mixture of frankness and ambiguity in such a way as to allow the mediocre, the foolish, and the mad to regard themselves as the divine prototypes of the highest men of the future. A radically new society requires as its presupposition the destruction of an existing society; Nietzsche succeeded in enlisting countless thousands in the ironical task of self-destruction, all in the name of a future utopia.^[46] Rosen does not mince words: Nietzsche is not on par with Plato as a philosopher; he appears alongside Marx as the philosophers most hostile to Western values. Rosen writes: "There cannot be the slightest doubt that, on Nietzschean grounds, theology, metaphysics, and ontology are all utter nonsense. Unfortunately, the same can be said of science and scientific philosophy, because these lead to the negation of sense and of the significance of human existence. The only consolation is art."^[47] In *Herzog*, Saul Bellow puts it this way: "Dear Herr Nietzsche...Humankind lives mainly upon perverted ideas. Perverted, your ideas are no better than those of the Christianity you condemn. Any philosopher who wants to keep his contact with mankind should pervert his own system in advance to see how it will really look a few decades after adoption."^[48] Although Nietzsche did not have the luxury of responding to Rosen and

Bellow directly, he might have done so by referring to the passage from *Ecce Homo* where he writes: "Ultimately, nobody can get more out of things, including books, than he already knows. For what one lacks access to from experience one will have no ear" (*EH* Books 1). In other words, Nietzsche's books are mirrors for the soul. Interpreting Nietzsche as ugly or dangerous says more about ourselves and our view of the world than it does about his philosophy.

Furthermore, Nietzsche was well aware that his philosophy could be misused. "A book full of spirit communicates some of it to its opponents too," he writes (*AOM* 160). Later in the same piece, he argues: "It says nothing against the ripeness of a spirit that it has a few worms" (*AOM* 353). Nietzsche understood the power of words, and did not hesitate to effect great change through his books. A better defense would include Nietzsche's acknowledgement that his project requires a long period of time; he does not envision an overnight revolution or violence on a world-scale. "If a change is to be as profound as it can be," Nietzsche writes, "the means to it must be given in the smallest doses but unremittingly over long periods of time! Can what is great be created at a *single stroke*?" (*D* 534).^[49] If there is violence or destruction, it is more likely done to founders and creators whose strength and capacity for selfless deeds is great (*TI* Skirmishes 44).^[50] Nietzsche saw his philosophy as a service to man. As a great destructive force, Nietzsche also embodies great potential (*EH* Destiny 2). "It is incontestable," he writes, "that the spirit of humanity is almost in greater danger during the approach of such eras than it is when they and the chaotic turmoil they bring with them have actually arrived: the anxiety of waiting and the greedy exploitation of every minute brings forth all the cowardice and the self-seeking states of the soul, while the actual emergency, and especially a great universal emergency, usually improves men and makes them more warm-hearted" (*SE* 4).^[51] If Nietzsche's philosophy is dangerous, it is only because he is cognizant of the greater danger he is trying to avert. Like Rorty, Nietzsche has real problems with how knowledge is esteemed in the modern world. Unlike Rorty, Nietzsche wishes to restore the possibility of philosophy, and uses the will to power as a starting point. As Nietzsche

writes: “of what concern to us is the existence of the state, the promotion of universities, when what matters above all is the existence of philosophy on earth! [Or]—to leave absolutely no doubt as to what I think—[it] is so unspeakably more vital that a philosopher should appear on earth than that a state or a university should continue to exist” (SE 8). Nietzsche’s primary task is the recovery of philosophy in a grand fashion; conversely, Rorty claims that such an act is neither possible nor desirable.^[52] While Rorty and many postmodernists celebrate the end of philosophy, Nietzsche heralds its restoration as his primary goal. He wishes to change what is called philosophy, to uncover the moralism that has suffocated it for centuries, and to return it to its rightful place in the service of humanity. Nietzsche’s opposition to Plato and the tradition he inspired is not so much a negation of truth as an affirmation of perspective as an element of philosophy. Nietzsche’s new philosophy is not tyrannical: it does not value truth as its highest aim, nor does it perceive its subjective claims on truth as objective and absolute. It does not, and indeed cannot, create the world in its own image, for it does not claim such an act even to be possible, much less desirable. Nietzsche’s perspectivism incorporates experiences past and future. It is not the end or the limit of philosophic or scientific activity as much as it acts as a starting-point; his perspectivism is a floor, not a ceiling. In this sense, philosophy *is* perspective. Leo Strauss once wrote of Nietzsche: “It is certainly not an overstatement to say that no one has ever spoken so greatly and so nobly of what a philosopher is as Nietzsche.”^[53] It is also not an overstatement to say that greater praise could not come from the pen of Strauss. However much Strauss is ambiguous on the nature of Nietzsche’s philosophy, he is firm in his praise of Nietzsche’s view of philosophy.

Nietzsche’s virtues

Nietzsche’s break with modern morality and modern standards for philosophy means that we must look elsewhere to determine how he should be evaluated. We need not look far for such a standard, for Nietzsche

himself presents one: Nietzsche too has his virtues. Of course Nietzsche's virtues are neither Christian nor Aristotelian; Nietzsche's virtues are those of a philosopher, a philosopher of the future. Nietzsche lists four key virtues of a new philosopher: solitude, insight, courage, and sympathy.^[54] The first, solitude, is the most explicit in Nietzsche. Solitude is a virtue because it is the means by which camel spirits, those individuals most burdened by the decadence of modern society, can save themselves. It is in solitude where camel spirits become lion spirits, destroyers of values. And it is through this metamorphosis that the natural creative impulses are revealed. Solitude is contrasted with society, the mass who value what is low in man, those who have no ambition, no goal, and indeed no god, whether they know it or not. Solitude is a virtue because it saves man from great vice. It is an opportunity for man to know nature, to know himself, and to allow himself to become an agent of nature. In solitude the will dialogues with nature. The second virtue, insight, accords with the next step in fashioning a philosophy of the future. The destruction made possible by solitude results from appreciating perspective through experience and a newfound sense of will. Christianity and democracy are vices insofar as they hinder the ability to know nature and man's true self. As a virtue, insight replaces the rigid dogmatism of science and moral philosophy. Insight is a product of experience and an appreciation of perspective. Perhaps the most important virtue for Nietzsche is the one most lacking in modern society: courage (*D* 551). Courage is most simply understood as strength. As Nietzsche writes, "the first thing a philosopher needs: inflexible and rugged manliness" (*SE* 7). Courage is the mark of a strong will, one willing to risk oneself (*EH* Pr. 3, *Wise* 5, 'Wagner' 4), often to the point of compromising one's own happiness (*SE* 4, *TI* Pr.). Courage, the virtue most similar to the will itself, is present at all three metamorphoses detailed by Zarathustra, and it is required by each. In this sense, without courage, philosophy is not possible. "Even the most courageous among us rarely has the courage for that which he really knows," Nietzsche claims (*TI* Maxims and Arrows 2). Nor does philosophic courage simply mean courage on the page (*WP* 841). Insight, and with it action, both require courage.

The final virtue, sympathy, is the one least likely to be associated with Nietzsche. Of his virtues, it certainly appears the least often. This is the consequence, it would seem, of sympathy already being the most common virtue in modern society. Modern morality is nothing if not an exercise in sympathy. Nietzsche's sympathy is not altruism or simply being a good neighbor; it is something far more substantial. The eternal return is an act of sympathy in that it demands that we will the past, present, and future in their entirety, warts and all. The eternal return is not possible under conditions of pity, *ressentiment*, or pessimism, for these are the symptoms of the weak and the world-weary. For all of Nietzsche's talk of responsibility, however, it is not right to say that the philosophers of the future will be duty-bound to "ordinary human beings"; rather, "one has duties only to one's peers" (*BGE* 260). Nietzsche's philosophers serve their equals, those of rank who understand the conditions necessary for the spiritual advance of a people.^[55] For Nietzsche's new philosophers, duty is the culmination of a philosopher's virtue and the greatest source of joy (*D* 339, *SE* 5). Sympathy is the highest of Nietzsche's virtues in that it incorporates the others. Nietzsche's sympathy is a profound achievement, where the will to power meets a genuine love of humanity. It is an act of "Roman Caesar with Christ's soul." Nietzsche's virtues are not his own; they are by no means self-serving. He determined them based on what was most needed for modern society, what could save and restore a corrupted society. He writes: "A man's virtues are called *good* depending on their probable consequences not for him but for us and society: the praise of virtues has always been far from 'selfless,' far from 'unegoistic'....When you have a virtue, a real, whole virtue...you are its *victim*" (*GS* 21). Christianity and modern morality erred in thinking that virtue had anything to do with characteristics other than strength and the qualities needed to found and support a healthy culture (*TI* Skirmishes 37, *WP* 255). Nietzsche's virtues, those of a self-proclaimed immoralist, are those of a philosopher concerned with the future of man. It is these virtues that he exhibits in his books and fosters in his readers.

Conclusion

Will to power is the “essence” of life because it is “the fundamental instinct” of nature. In this sense, it can neither be free nor unfree. The choice available to man is not *whether* to will, but *what* to will. Nietzsche’s depiction of solitude makes clear, however, that value-creation is not a wholly internal or arbitrary process, and Nietzsche’s philosophers are compelled to justify their beliefs according to what they advance in man. The will to power may be the heart of Nietzsche’s philosophy, but it is not the whole of it. Nietzsche’s new philosophy is that perspective best able to use the natural order of rank to guide art, science, religion, and politics for the sake of man and culture.

Although Nietzsche views the eternal return as the highest that is attainable, it also reveals the moral and intellectual limits of man. Just as he resists universal morality, Nietzsche presents a philosophic imperative to resist universal truth.^[56] Recognizing the limits of the will and of what we can know is the only means of appreciating the new philosophy and founding a healthy politics. The eternal return is an acceptance of man’s limitations: it is the highest expression of man’s will consistent with nature and the order of rank. Nietzsche transcends the nihilism of modernity and deploys the eternal return to bring a modicum of morality and order into what he views as an otherwise chaotic world. Nietzsche diminishes what man cannot know in favor of what man can become. The eternal return was Nietzsche’s definitive statement on the value of life: he loved life more than anything else, and above all else, more than its meaning.^[57] We may well expect that Nietzsche’s last thoughts were: “Thus I willed it,” or “Once more..!” Like his Zarathustra, Nietzsche danced with Eternity. Nietzsche is the first postmodern in that he was the first to comprehend the consequences of modernity, what he called Plato’s “higher swindle” (*TI* Ancients 2). Insofar as his successors have failed to grasp his message, Nietzsche may be the *only* postmodern. His meditations may still be “untimely.” What has come to be known as postmodernism, Nietzsche would contend, is merely the fulfillment of the modern project—another straw on

the camel's back. Heidegger and Rorty do not follow Nietzsche's break, but continue modernity in spite of him. Rorty's decadence, Nietzsche would argue, is evident in his preference for the rule of diversity and opinion over a respect for nature and the order of rank. Heidegger's ignorance stems from his inability to think through the consequences of his philosophy, and more specifically, an inability to differentiate between freedom and fascism. For Heidegger, Nazism was just another politics. Nietzsche points away from these men. Nietzsche's works are an attempt to inspire greatness, redirect philosophy, and revitalize Western culture. Unlike most of his successors, Nietzsche did not destroy the possibility of philosophy; rather, he sought to reinvigorate it in what he considered to be a superior form. Nietzsche changed both the aims and limits of philosophy, making it less concerned with the love of truth and more concerned with a love of mankind. A Nietzschean philosopher must not mistake wisdom for life or choose a dance with the former over an eternity with the latter. A Nietzschean philosopher loves truth, but it is a truth that is life-preserving and, ultimately, life-affirming. At once Nietzsche makes philosophy dangerous to and responsible for the political. In sum, Nietzsche takes philosophy seriously. Nietzsche claims that the modern project erred insofar as it sought to overcome the problem of nature. What is now called postmodernity has erred insofar as it has ignored altogether the problem of nature. Nietzsche argues it was appreciating nature as something noble yet unsolvable that drove Greek culture to its heights, and makes the Greeks so worthy of imitation. For Nietzsche, the distance between *physis* and *nous* is to be bridged by what he calls philosophy. If nature is *the* problem for man, then a philosophy in the service of life is the best possible answer and the only likely solution.

[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage, 1968). I use the following abbreviations for Nietzsche's works: *A=The Antichrist*, *AOM=Assorted Maxims and Opinions*, *BGE=Beyond Good and Evil*, *BT=The Birth of Tragedy*,

D=Daybreak, EH=Ecce Homo, GM=On the Genealogy of Morals, GS=The Gay Science, SE=Schopenhauer as Educator, TI=Twilight of the Idols, TL=Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense, UD=Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life, WP=The Will to Power. References are to section; *EH* and *TI* include chapter titles.

I agree with R. J. Hollingdale on the content and the use of Nietzsche's *Nachlass*; he writes, "the *Nachlass* can be read with profit only by someone familiar with Nietzsche's published works, the reason being...that its content is rejected material. In itself it is an enormous and confusing jumble of notes, aphorisms and brief essays, some in a recognizably Nietzschean style—although lacking the finish and the 'speaking' quality of the published writings—but many no more than memoranda, jotting, or lists of themes. To attempt to absorb this mass of unorganized material without some guiding principle is a lost labour, and the only principle which does not impose a spurious order upon it is that of comparison and collation with the published work." *Nietzsche*, 223.

[2] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Volume 4: Nihilism*, Frank A. Capuzzi, trans. (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1979), 138.

[3] Martin Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God is dead,'" *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, William Lovitt, trans. (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1977), 94.

[4] Martin Heidegger, "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra," *The New Nietzsche*, David B. Allison, ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977), 78.

[5] Nietzsche himself suspects the latter: "The doctrine of 'eternal recurrence,' that is, of the unconditional and infinitely repeated circular course of all things—this doctrine of Zarathustra *might* in the end have been taught already by Heraclitus. At least the Stoa has traces of it, and the Stoics inherited almost all of their principal notions from Heraclitus" (*EH* 'Birth' 3).

[6] Rorty indicts even Heidegger and Jacques Derrida, claiming that they "deify" language, "letting 'Language' substitute for 'God' or 'mind'—something mysterious, incapable of being described in the same terms in which we describe tables, trees, and atoms." *Essays on Heidegger and others, Philosophical papers, vol. 2* (New York, NY: Cambridge University

Press, 1991), 3-4.

[7] Cf. Plato, *The Republic*, 477a-478d and 533d-534c.

[8] Richard Rorty, "Solidarity or objectivity?" *Objectivity, relativism, and truth, philosophical papers, vol. 1* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 22.

[9] Rorty, "Solidarity or objectivity?" *Objectivity, relativism, and truth*, 24.

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense," *The Portable Nietzsche*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1982), 42-47. Note: Rorty's use of this quote does not include the sentence past the colon and incorrectly reads "anthromorphism." See his "Solidarity or objectivity?" *Objectivity, relativism, and truth*, 32.

[11] Stanley Rosen, *The Ancients and the Moderns: Rethinking Modernity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 226.

[12] Rosen, *Ancients*, 198.

[13] Rosen, *Ancients*, 201-02.

[14] Rosen, *Ancients*, 195.

[15] Rosen, *Ancients*, 198.

[16] Leo Strauss, "Relativism," *Relativism and the Study of Man*, Helmut Schoeck and James W. Wiggins, eds. (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1961), 153-54; emphasis added.

[17] Strauss, "Relativism," 153.

[18] Strauss, "Relativism," 153.

[19] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1966).

[20] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage, 1989).

[21] This tension is found in *The Birth of Tragedy*, too. After attacking Friedrich Schiller and his take on the Greek chorus as against "all naturalism in art," Nietzsche confesses: "I fear, however, that we, on the other hand, with our present adoration of the natural and the real, have reached the opposite pole of all idealism" (*BT* 7). Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Random House, 1967).

[22] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage

Books,

1974).

[23] Nimrod Aloni, *Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche's Healing and Edifying Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 60.

[24] This brand of nihilism is best described by Maurice Blanchot; he writes: nihilism "is not an individual experience or a philosophical doctrine, nor is it a fatal light cast over human nature, eternally vowed to nothingness. Rather, Nihilism is an event achieved in history, and yet it is like a shedding off of history, a molting period, when history changes its direction and is indicted by a negative trait: that values no longer have values themselves. There is also a positive trait: for the first time, the horizon is infinitely opened to knowledge." "The Limits of Experience: Nihilism," *The New Nietzsche*, Allison, ed., 122.

[25] "Nihilism is not the doctrine which he seeks to defend...but rather the *problem* with which his philosophy begins." Robert C. Solomon, *From Rationalism to Existentialism: The Existentialists and Their Nineteenth-Century Backgrounds* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1970), 112. Elsewhere, Solomon argues: "Nihilism is not a thesis; it is a reaction. It is not a romantic 'Nay-saying' so much as it is a feature of good old enlightenment criticism in the form of a critical phenomenology or a dialectical hermeneutics." "A More Severe Morality: Nietzsche's Affirmative Ethics," *Nietzsche: Critical Assessments*, Vol. III, Daniel W. Conway, ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), 325. Solomon goes on to compare Nietzsche with Kant and Aristotle. According to Solomon, all three were engaged in the same "intellectual exercise, that is, to present and promote a theory of morality." Interpreters who contrast Aristotle and Nietzsche, such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Solomon continues, "[close] off to us the basis upon which we could best reconceive morality: a reconsideration of Aristotle through Nietzschean eyes" (331). Cf. MacIntyre's *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2d ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

[26] Jean-François Lyotard, for example, defines the postmodern as "incredulity to metanarratives," and goes on to ask: "Where, after the

metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?" *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, trans. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv-xxv. For Jürgen Habermas, "incredulity toward metanarratives" is only a desirable path if we "preserve at least one standard for [the] explanation of the corruption of *all* reasonable standards" in order to escape a "totalizing self-referential critique." "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Re-dreading Dialectic of Enlightenment," *New German Critique* 26 (1982): 28.

[27] Alexander Bain, *The Emotions and the Will* (1859).

[28] William James, "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results," *Pragmatism, The Works of William James*, Frederick H. Burkhardt, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975-88), 259.

[29] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1991), 69. Rosen also uses the former definition of nihilism as Nietzsche's definition. *Nihilism: A Philosophical Essay* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2000), xiii. It occurs in *WP* 602: "Everything is false! Everything is permitted!" Yet Nietzsche's use of quotation marks makes it unclear as to which perspective he is actually adopting.

[30] Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," *The Portable Nietzsche*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1982), 565-658.

[31] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, trans. (New York, NY: Vintage, 1989).

[32] Nihilism "is the problem to which the Will to Power is the answer." Robert C. Solomon, "Nietzsche, Nihilism, and Morality," *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Robert C. Solomon, ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), 203. Cf. Gillespie who thinks that the will to power is the root cause of nihilism. "Previously, nihilism was understood as the consequence of the hubristic magnification of man. In Nietzsche's view, it is the consequence of the democratic diminution of man. On the basis of this new understanding, Nietzsche argues that the solution to nihilism is a turn to the superhuman, that is, a turn to exactly that notion that previously was conceived to be the essence of nihilism" (xx). Gillespie concludes, "nihilism arises in the context

of a new revelation of the world as the product not of reason but of will....The solution to nihilism thus lies not in the assertion of the will but in a step back from willing" (xxiii). Gillespie cleverly argues that Nietzsche's misunderstanding of the term nihilism results in a misrepresentation of his own thought. Gillespie overlooks, or willfully ignores, that Nietzsche often co-opts words for his own use. Hence Gillespie's case against Nietzsche becomes a matter of semantics. *Nihilism Before Nietzsche* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[33] As White lists them: "'Active' and 'passive' are paired, as are 'theoretical' and 'practical' nihilism, and 'complete' and 'incomplete' nihilism. Other forms appear in relative isolation, including 'authentic' nihilism, 'contagious' nihilism, 'ecstatic' nihilism, the 'most extreme' nihilism, 'first' nihilism, 'final' nihilism, 'fundamental' nihilism, 'genuine' nihilism, 'philosophical' nihilism, 'radical' nihilism, 'religious' nihilism, 'tired, nihilism, and 'suicidal' nihilism. Commentators have further complicated matters: Heidegger has added 'classical nihilism' as though it were a Nietzschean term, Deleuze 'reactive' nihilism, and Rosen the opposition, to which he refers as 'Nietzsche's fundamental distinction,' between 'base' and 'noble.'" Alan White, *Within Nietzsche's Labyrinth* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1990), 15-16.

[34] To the extent that conservatives are beholden to a particular religion, they move into the passive-practical quadrant alongside Christians.

[35] Blanchot, 126.

[36] "Philosophical nihilism is the doctrine which is founded on the initial premise of the complete absence of absolute values and standards—either theological or rational in origin—to which man can appeal in the matter of beliefs and values." Aloni, 73.

[37] Others interpret this to mean that nihilism is impossible. Blanchot writes: "Nihilism is the impossibility of coming to an end and finding an outcome in this end....Nihilism here tells us its final and rather grim truth: it tells of the impossibility of nihilism." He concludes that "Nihilism would be identical with the will to overcome absolutely" (126).

[38] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the uses and disadvantages of history for life," *Untimely Meditations*, R. J. Hollingdale, trans. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[39] Stanley Rosen presents a searching take on Rorty's philosophy and his "cartoons." *Ancients*, 175-188.

[40] Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 5-6.

[41] For an example of the nihilistic interpretation of Nietzsche, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Frederick Lawrence, trans. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

[42] Alexander Nehemas makes this distinction, and rightly so. "Nietzsche, modernity, aestheticism," *Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, 223-251.

[43] Compare Hegel's metaphysics with Nietzsche's, for example. See, Frederick C. Beiser, "Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics," *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, Frederick C. Beiser, ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-24.

[44] Allan Bloom, *Love and Friendship* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 544-55.

[45] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Assorted Opinions and Maxims," *The Portable Nietzsche*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1968), 64-67.

[46] Rosen, *Ancients*, 190.

[47] Rosen, *Ancients*, 198-99.

[48] Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (New York, NY: Penguin, 1996), 319.

[49] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, R. J. Hollingdale, trans. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[50] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Twilight of the Idols," *The Portable Nietzsche*, Walter Kaufmann, trans. (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1982), 463-563. Nietzsche argues that cause and effect should be used "only as pure concepts, that is to say, as conventional fictions for the purpose of designation and communication—not for explanation. In the 'in-itself' there is nothing of 'causal connections,' of 'necessity,' or of 'psychological non-freedom'; there the effect does *not* follow the cause, there is no rule of 'law.' It is we alone who have decided cause, sequence, for-each-other, relativity, constraint, number, law, freedom, motive, and purpose; and when we project and mix this symbol world into things as if it existed 'in itself,' we act

once more as we have always acted—*mythologically*” (BGE 21). Cf. William James, who writes, “the word ‘cause’ is...an altar to an unknown god.” “The Principles of Psychology,” *The Works of William James*, vol. 2, 1264.

[51] Friedrich Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as educator,” *Untimely Meditations*, R. J. Hollingdale, trans. (New York, NY: Cambridge, 1997).

[52] “Whatever happens, however, there is no danger of philosophy’s ‘coming to an end.’ Religion did not come to an end in the Enlightenment, nor painting in Impressionism....There will be something called ‘philosophy’ on the other side of the transition.....The only point on which I would insist is that philosophers’ moral concern should be with continuing the conversation of the West, rather than with insisting upon a place for the traditional problems of modern philosophy within that conversation.” Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 5-6.

[53] Leo Strauss, “An Introduction into Heideggerian Existentialism,” *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: An Introduction to the Thought of Leo Strauss*, Thomas Pangle, ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 40.

[54] Nietzsche originally lists them in the following order: courage, insight, sympathy, and solitude (BGE 284). The order of my treatment seems more aligned with their role in fashioning a new philosophy. *Redlichkeit* certainly holds a high place for Nietzsche; he writes, “Nothing is rarer among moralists and saints than honesty” (*TI* Skirmishes 41). Elsewhere, Nietzsche includes honesty [*Redlichkeit*] among them (BGE 227 and *D* 556), but I would argue, honesty is a combination of insight and courage. For a longer treatment of honesty as a virtue, see Alan White, “The Youngest Virtue,” *Nietzsche’s Postmoralism: Essays on Nietzsche’s Prelude to Philosophy’s Future*, Richard Schacht, ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 63-78. Robert C. Solomon suggests the following list of “distinctively ‘Nietzschean’ virtues: exuberance, ‘style,’ ‘depth,’ dynamism, venturesomeness, fatalism (*amor fati*), playfulness, aestheticism, solitude.” “Nietzsche’s Virtues,” *Nietzsche’s Postmoralism*, 141. Solomon concludes that, unlike those like Aristotle, whose virtues are of a social nature, Nietzsche’s virtues are “better

understood in an extremely individual context" (143). In one of his other books, co-authored with Kathleen M. Higgins, Solomon expands the list of virtues to include "courage, courtesy, egoism, 'the feminine,' friendship, generosity, hardness, health, honesty, integrity, justice, 'presence,' pride, responsibility, strength, temperance." *What Nietzsche Really Said* (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 2000), 183.

[55] "We would agree with Gillian Rose that Nietzsche unlike Foucault did not attempt to separate politics from knowledge; his aim was not retreatism but to secure personal independence without *ressentiment* and to develop a new politics." Georg Stauth and Bryan S. Turner *A Commentary on Nietzsche's Ecce Homo* (Lanham, MA: University Press of America, 1994), 23. Cf. Gillian Rose, *Dialectic of Nihilism, post-structuralism and law* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1984), 183.

[56] Randall Havas notes that "rather than claiming that we should take responsibility for the meaning that we impose on the world, Nietzsche means to show us how—in a philosophic mood—we resist the meaning that we find in the world." *Nietzsche's Genealogy: Nihilism and the Will to Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 17.

[57] Dostoevsky, 231.