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Nietzsche on the Future and Value

by

John Ranta

Under the Direction of Andrew Altman

ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses two interpretative questions concerning the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. The first is to ascertain the primary objection that Nietzsche has to a morality that he describes as decadent. The conclusion reached is that Nietzsche's objection to decadent morality is based on the harm it does to a class of "higher" individuals who have valuable work to perform in achieving a desirable future for humanity. The second question is to determine the manner in which Nietzsche's own values are to be understood based on the skepticism he expresses concerning the objectivity of value. The conclusion reached is that Nietzsche's values are objects of the same analysis he applies to human values generally. The values Nietzsche endorses, including the valuing of "higher" individuals, are to be understood as symptoms of a particular physiology and its relationship to living.

INDEX WORDS: Nietzsche, Future, Value, Decadence, Symptom, Morality, Leiter, Eternal Recurrence, Revenge, Higher Type Individual, Physiology

NIETZSCHE ON THE FUTURE AND VALUE

by

John Ranta

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in the College of Arts and Sciences

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2006

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2006

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for Anna, Syrah, and Daphne

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List of Abbreviations

A	*The Anti-Christ*
BGE	*Beyond Good and Evil*
EH	*Ecce Homo*
GM	*The Genealogy of Morality*
GS	*The Gay Science*
TI	*Twilight of the Idols*
WLN	*Writings from the Late Notebooks*
Z	*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

I. Introduction

The philosophical work of Friedrich Nietzsche is comprised almost exclusively of an examination of human morality and value. A prominent result of this investigation is his consistent criticism of what he calls a morality of decadence, one representative of a decaying and deteriorating form of life. Any attempt to understand Nietzsche's work in this area must confront at least two related questions. First, due to the numerous criticisms he advances, as well as the unsystematic manner in which he presents them, there is a need to determine the core objection that Nietzsche is putting forward. In the final chapter of *Ecce Homo*, his autobiographical self-assessment, Nietzsche enumerates a number of the failings of this moral system but concludes what is "most terrible of all" is that through it "an ideal is fabricated from the contradiction against the proud and well-turned-out human being who says Yes, who is sure of the future, who guarantees the future – and he is now called *evil*. – And all this was believed, *as morality*! – *Écrasez l'Infâme*!" (EH[1] IV: 8).[2] As a result of this and other textual evidence Brian Leiter has concluded that Nietzsche's primary objection to the morality of decadence is the adverse effect it has upon this "well-turned-out human being."[3] Furthermore, this effect is disvaluable because such an individual and others of his type "manifest human excellence"[4] and hence are valuable as ends in themselves. However, while this interpretation is largely correct, it is incomplete. The "well-turned-out human being" also possesses instrumental value for Nietzsche because through his activities he

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[1] See the List of Abbreviations on p. vi.
[2] Nietzsche's emphasis throughout unless otherwise noted. "*Écrasez l'Infâme*!" ("Crush the infamy!") was Voltaire's slogan of defiance to Christianity.
[3] Leiter, p. 114.
[4] Leiter, p. 134.

"guarantees the future." Therefore, the disvalue of decadent morality for Nietzsche is not simply that these individuals are thwarted, as Leiter suggests. Nietzsche's objection to decadent morality is also based on the value of the activity such individuals perform in achieving some desirable future for humanity.

The second question concerns how Nietzsche's criticisms of decadent morality, as well as his positive evaluative claims concerning the "well-turned-out human being", are to be understood when the skepticism he expresses concerning the objectivity of value is taken into account. Perhaps the most explicit statement of this skepticism is his claim that "whatever has *value* in the present world has it not in itself, according to its nature – nature is always value-less – but has rather been given, granted value, and we were the givers and granters!" (GS: 301). Based on this apparent rejection of objective value Leiter concludes that Nietzsche's positive evaluation of the "well-turned-out human being", and hence his objection to decadent morality, rests ultimately on what Leiter characterizes as an "evaluative taste." However, there is another manner in which Nietzsche's evaluative position can be viewed, namely as being of a piece with the mechanisms by which he proposes to analyze human values generally. Nietzsche develops two notions of how human values are to be understood as symptoms of a particular physiology. In the first values are analyzed as representing the conditions suited for a particular physiology's maximal expression of strength. In the second values are analyzed as being the result of the confrontation between a physiological system and the world. There is good evidence to conclude that Nietzsche's own primary valuations are to be understood in these symptomatic terms. What this suggests is that the correct manner of understanding Nietzsche's valuations in general, and his positive valuation of the "well-turned-out human being" and corresponding objection to decadent

morality in particular, is the same manner in which Nietzsche proposes we understand human value generally. In short, Nietzsche's analysis of human value as being symptoms of a particular physiology applies to those values he himself endorses.

§ 1. Methodological Notes

Formulating an accurate conception of Nietzsche's philosophy is difficult for a number of reasons. First there is the problem of the metamorphosis of his thought through time. As Nietzsche notes: "We are misidentified – for we ourselves keep growing, changing, shedding old hides. ... Like trees we grow – it's hard to understand, like all life!" (GS 371). This is by no means a problem that uniquely confronts Nietzsche scholars, but it suggests that it would be wise to establish bounds for the proposed interpretive effort at the outset. I will focus on the later works of Nietzsche, those published from 1882 until his mental collapse in 1889. The working presumption is that these works represent the most mature expression of his philosophy and are thus worthy of special attention.

Yet another interpretive problem is presented by the wealth of Nietzschean *Nachlass* material. Again, adjudicating the canonical status of notebook material is not a problem unique to the study of Nietzsche, but the problem has been exacerbated in his case due to unfortunate historical events. Nietzsche's sister, Elizabeth Forster, assumed legal control of his notebooks after his fall into insanity. In 1901 portions of these notebooks were published in a manipulated and highly edited form under the title *The Will to Power*. This volume was purported by Frau Forster to be Nietzsche's final statement of his philosophical system. Although this ruse has been thoroughly debunked[5] and Frau Forster's corruptions remedied

[5] Hollingdale, pp. 221-222.

by subsequent publications of the *Nachlass* material, the status of this and other notebook material is still controversial and opinions diverge dramatically. On one end of the debate are those like Martin Heidegger who consider the notebook material superior to the published work in terms of its importance. On the other end are those like Maudemarie Clark who give the notebook material "a very secondary status".[6] There is one factor that is decisive in recommending a position akin to Clark's over that of Heidegger. Despite Frau Forster's claims to the contrary, the material to be found in the *Nachlass* was not intended as the basis for a *magnum opus*, a work that was unfortunately never realized due to Nietzsche's incapacitation. Although he alludes to such a forthcoming work in places (see GM III: 27), letters and notebook entries make it clear that Nietzsche eventually abandoned this project altogether and utilized the material he had been assembling for this work in *The Anti-Christ* and *Twilight of the Idols*.[7] Thus there is every reason to consider the *Nachlass* as material that Nietzsche passed over for publication for one reason or another and not as a trove of first-rate Nietzschean philosophy that remained unpublished only for the cruel and sudden circumstances of his demise as a thinker. This suggests a healthy caution be exercised with regard to the *Nachlass*. However, it is reasonable to suppose that such material might legitimately be used in supporting various interpretive claims if the source of those claims lies primarily in the published work. The present study will focus heavily on the published works, but reserves the right to utilize notebook material in a secondary and supporting role.

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[6] Clark, p. 26.
[7] Hollingdale, p. 219.

II. Higher Type Individuals and Decadent Morality

§ 1. Decadent Morality and Institutionalized Decadence

I will consistently use "decadent morality" to refer to the target of Nietzsche's critique. Concerning the primary focus of his work Nietzsche writes, "I negate a type of morality that has become prevalent and predominant as morality itself -- the morality of decadence or, more concretely, Christian morality" (EH IV: 4). He refers to it elsewhere as "herd animal morality" (BGE: 202) and "slave morality" (BGE: 260)[8] and identifies its values in multiple religions,[9] political movements,[10] and philosophers,[11] as well as the modern faith in science.[12] I choose to use the term "decadent morality" because, in Nietzsche's view, all of these variations are alike in that they embrace values befitting a declining and deteriorating (i.e. decadent) form of life, one that is enervated, unsure, and suffering from its existence.

Decadent morality is characterized by a set of evaluative as well as descriptive claims. The evaluative claims of decadent morality center primarily around the virtues of selflessness. Traits such as "pity, self-denial, [and] self-sacrifice" (GM preface: 5)[13] are valued positively and anything expressive of egoism is valued negatively. Leiter notes that Nietzsche also identifies decadent morality by the positive evaluation of happiness, equality, peace, and utility as well as the negative evaluation of their counterparts (i.e. suffering,

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[8] See also GM I 10.
[9] Judaism (BGE: 195), Buddhism (A: 20), but *not* Islam (A: 59).
[10] democracy (BGE: 203), socialism (A: 57) and anarchism (TI IX: 34).
[11] Socrates (GS: 340), Plato ["Christianity is Platonism for 'the people'" (BGE: preface)], Kant ["a *cunning* Christian" (TI III: 6)], and Schopenhauer ["the heir of the Christian interpretation" (TI IX: 21)].
[12] "our faith in science rests ... [on] the thousand-year old faith, the Christian faith" (GS: 344).
[13] See also Christianity as the "religion of pity" (A: 7), decadent morality as the "morality of pity" (GM preface: 6).

inequality, conflict, and disutility).[14] Three descriptive claims of decadent morality concerning human agency provide the prescriptive force of these values: the existence of free will, the transparency of the self, and the moral equivalence of all human beings. By affirming these descriptive claims decadent morality can then engage in three characteristic activities: holding individuals responsible for their actions, evaluating the motives from which agents act, and applying its own moral code to all.[15]

The other major evaluative theme of decadent morality is the negation of the natural world's value. This includes the descriptive claim that there exists as distinct from the natural world another realm of existence (e.g. the world of Platonic Forms, the Christian Heaven, Kant's noumenal realm). In comparison with this 'real' world, from which all value is derived, the natural world is wholly inferior, being merely 'apparent' and possessing only the capacity to deceive and corrupt. This distinction and its valuations are reproduced in the subject, whose body and all its drives are considered inferior to the value and welfare of an eternal 'soul.'

Another crucial feature of the circumstances under which Nietzsche's critique takes place is that decadent morality has become "prevalent and predominant" so that "in all moral judgments Europe is now of one mind ... *Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality*" (BGE: 202). This dominance is extant anywhere the various expressions of decadent values are prevalent, which included then, as it does today, most of the world. I will refer to this circumstance as institutionalized decadence, which indicates the existence of influential formal institutions of decadent value (e.g. the Christian church) as well as a climate in which

[14] Leiter, p. 128.
[15] Leiter, p. 80.

decadent values prevail throughout society in an entrenched manner, which renders them a veritable monopoly on moral authority.

§ 2. Leiter on Nietzsche's Criticism of Decadent Morality

Throughout the bulk of his philosophical work Nietzsche takes issue with both the descriptive and the evaluative claims of decadent morality. For example, he claims decadent morality "has made of every value a disvalue ... [and] of every truth a lie" (A62). However, Leiter contends that Nietzsche's primary objection to decadent morality is neither that its descriptive claims are false, nor that its evaluative claims are incorrect. Rather, what is really objectionable about decadent morality is that it harms a group of individuals Nietzsche calls "the higher type of men" (BGE: 30). In order to clarify and support Leiter's interpretative claim several issues need to be addressed: the reasons to agree with Leiter concerning the secondary importance of Nietzsche's other criticisms of decadent morality, Nietzsche's conception of "higher type of men," the evidence that decadent morality harms these individuals, and the reason why Leiter thinks this harm is considered disvaluable by Nietzsche. I will briefly consider each of these issues in turn.

There is textual evidence to suggest that Nietzsche's attacks on the veracity of decadent morality's descriptive account could not be central to his objection. As to the value of truth in general he writes "the falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment" (BGE I: 4). More to the point concerning the descriptive claims of decadent morality he notes that among investigators into human morality "the mistake of the more subtle among them is that they uncover and criticize the possibly foolish opinions of a people about their morality, or of humanity about all human morality – opinions about its

origin, its religious sanction, the myth of the free will and such things – and then think they have criticized the morality itself ... A morality could even have grown out of an error, and the realization of this fact would not as much as touch the problem of its value" (GS V: 345). According to Nietzsche a morality's value is not compromised by it being based on untruths, nor that it arose under certain, perhaps unsavory, conditions. More than this, it is also not necessarily a problem if a morality is based on a deceitful untruth, a lie. Rather, Nietzsche claims, "ultimately the point is to what *end* a lie is told. That 'holy' ends are lacking in Christianity is *my* objection to its means" (A: 56). In short, when Nietzsche surveys a landscape dominated by decadence "it is not error as error that horrifies me at this sight" (EH IV: 7). Now, it cannot be doubted that Nietzsche thought revealing the falseness of the descriptive claims of decadent morality was an important part of his enquiry.[16] However, it would seem clear from the preceding that this activity cannot reasonably be viewed as forming the heart of his criticism.

Neither can the charge that decadent morality makes false evaluative claims be part of Nietzsche's criticism. The evaluative claims of moral theories are those that ground the prescriptions such theories make concerning human conduct. The question is the status of these values, whether they reflect an objective fact of the matter concerning what is really valuable, which would allow for veridical moral prescriptions. Many, or even most, moral theories make some claim of objectivity with regard to the things they value. That is, they claim their values are the correct ones because of the truth of certain relevant facts. Often these are facts about the world, facts concerning what things (intentions, acts, states of

[16] See "Am I understood? -- The self-overcoming of morality, out of truthfulness" (EH IV: 3) and "What defines me, what sets me apart from the whole rest of humanity is that I *uncovered* Christian morality" (EH IV: 7).

affairs, character traits, etc.) possess certain intrinsically valuable properties. A moral theory that claims this sort of objectivity for its values holds some entity ***x*** to be valuable because, by its lights, ***x*** is *actually* valuable due to some set of facts being true, even if that set of facts consists only of the single non-reducible fact that ***x*** has value or is good. Such facts would be moral facts in that they would be the facts that determined the values and hence the prescriptive content[17] of a moral theory. Now, the question is not whether values exist, for clearly they do. Every moral theory is chock full of values of one kind or another. No, the real question is the epistemic one, namely whether those values attain to the sort of objectivity they claim by virtue of certain moral facts. Nietzsche's answer is that they do not:

> "One knows my demand of philosophers that they place themselves *beyond* good and evil – that they have the illusion of moral judgment *beneath* them. This demand follows from an insight first formulated by me: *that there are no moral facts whatever*. Moral judgment has this in common with religious judgment that it believes in realities which do not exist. Morality is only an interpretation of certain phenomena, more precisely a *mis*interpretation." (TI VII: 1)

There simply are no facts concerning what things possess value in the way that objectivist moral theories claim. In a related fashion, recall Nietzsche's claim that "whatever has *value* in the present world has it not in itself, according to its nature – nature is always value-less – but has rather been given, granted value, and we were the givers and granters!" (GS: 301).[18] Values exist only in virtue of being "given" to things by humans. Developing what this rejection of moral facts means for understanding Nietzsche's own evaluative claims will be the primary subject of chapter III. For now, it is sufficient to note that Nietzsche cannot

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[17] Or its procedural content in the case of Kantian constructivism.

[18] See also "Verily, men gave themselves all their good and evil ... Only man placed value in things to preserve himself"(Z I: 15), "All names of good and evil are parables: they do not define, they merely hint. A fool is he who wants knowledge of them." (Z I: 22, 1), "good and evil that are not transitory, do not exist" (Z III: 12), "There are no moral phenomena at all, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena" (BGE 108).

criticize decadent morality's evaluative claims on the grounds that they are false. To do so would imply that there is a fact of the matter concerning what is valuable, which is precisely what he seems to reject. So, although he appears to do so in various passages (e.g. Nietzsche charges decadent morality with devaluing "everything *valuable in itself*" [A 26]), Nietzsche's rejection of the existence of relevant facts that could underwrite the existence of objective value means that he cannot directly criticize the evaluative claims of decadent morality.

However, despite rejecting the existence of moral facts, and hence objective moral values that would allow for the formation of veridical prescriptive claims of the kind moral theories traffic in, Nietzsche does accept the existence of a more modest manner in which facts yield objective value. As Leiter puts it, "when it comes to value judgments pertaining to welfare or prudential goodness – what is good or bad for particular sorts of persons – Nietzsche seems to believe there is an objective fact of the matter."[19] This kind of value is grounded in various facts concerning what some organism or system needs for its continued operation. In her exploration of the various connotations of the word "ought" G.E.M. Anscombe points out the non-moral use of "ought", which relates to the idea of prudential value.[20] As an example she notes that, "machinery needs oil, or should or ought to be oiled, in that running without oil is bad for it, or it runs badly without oil."[21] In other words, oil is prudentially valuable with respect to the machinery that relies on it for its continued operation. This kind of value is relevant to our discussion of decadent morality because Nietzsche thinks moral values have prudential value with regard to certain individuals in much the same way as nourishment: "What serves the higher type of men as nourishment or

[19] Leiter, p. 147.
[20] see Anscombe, pp. 30-33.
[21] Anscombe, p. 30.

delection must almost be poison for a very different and inferior type. The virtues of the common man might perhaps signify vices and weaknesses in the philosopher" (BGE: 30).[22] In the same way certain foods are correct for one kind of individual based on their physical constitution, moral values are suited more or less well to different sorts of individuals. Concerning the supposed virtues of self-lessness Nietzsche writes that "in a person, for example, who is called and made to command, self-denial and modest self-effacement would not be a virtue, but the waste of a virtue" (BGE: 221) and that "the value of egoism depends on the physiological value of him who possesses it" (TI IX: 33).[23] It is important to note that there is a fact of the matter concerning what moral values are *good for* a type of individual based on the relevant facts that describe them. One cannot choose what moral values are best suited to one just as one cannot choose what sorts of substances will sustain one's body and which will bring about its death. To tie this into our discussion of moral facts, while there are no facts determining whether we ought to have compassion for others, there are facts that determine whether a particular individual ought to have the relevant intentional states and exhibit those behaviors consistent with affirming that one ought to have compassion for others. In some individuals such an affirmation of compassion might be conducive to their continued existence and flourishing, while in others embracing such a moral value might prove disastrous. More needs to be said about what it means for an agent to flourish in Nietzsche's view and this will be taken up later. For the moment it will suffice to note that Nietzsche's commitment to an objective prudential value opens up logical space for a

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[22] See also "The poison from which the weaker nature perishes strengthens the strong man – and he does not call it poison." (GS: 19),

[23] See also "In a man devoted to knowledge, pity seems almost ridiculous, like delicate hands on a cyclops" (BGE171).

criticism of the normative claims of decadent morality based on their being *bad for* a certain type of individual. Such a criticism is precisely what Leiter believes Nietzsche is ultimately offering. However, the type of individual so harmed still needs to be described.

It is Nietzsche's view that people are divided into differing types based on the physiological facts that describe them. Furthermore, these types are often described as existing in a hierarchical ordering. Nietzsche recognizes an "order of rank, chasm of rank, between man and man" (BGE: 62). The sort of person Nietzsche is primarily concerned with is what he calls "the higher type of men" (BGE: 30). Nietzsche describes this type of individual as representing "the ascending movement of life, well-constitudedness, power, beauty, [and] self-affirmation on earth" (A: 24).[24] In terms of specific traits, a higher type individual has reverence for himself (BGE: 265), possesses great health (EH III: Z-2), loves fate (*amor fati*) (EH II: 10), is independent (BGE: 212), embraces responsibility and leadership (BGE: 213), and wills the eternal return of his life and all things (Z III: "The Convalescent", 2). Higher type individuals possess a wealth of creative ability, the strength and will to command, an inherent and unflagging faith in themselves, a sense of mission, a scrupleless egoism, and a Yes-saying nature. Nietzsche considers himself an example of this higher type (EH I: 2).

Before proceeding it is worth reflecting briefly on Nietzsche's use of the term "higher" to describe higher type individuals. This modifier suggests a number of possible interpretations. Our discussion of moral facts suggests that what "higher" cannot mean is that these individuals possess greater value than others in some objective moral sense. In

[24] See also, "the most high-spirited, alive, and world-affirming human being" (BGE: 56), "the higher man, the higher soul, the higher duty, the higher responsibility, and the abundance of creative power and masterfulness" (BGE: 212).

other words, they cannot be higher because certain facts about them allow for objective prescriptive directives concerning them. Leiter, whose own specification of what Nietzsche is attacking is MPS (morality in the pejorative sense), concludes from similar considerations that while "it may be an objective fact that MPS thwarts the flourishing of those Nietzsche views as higher types; ... it is not an objective fact that they are *really* higher."[25] I concur if what Leiter means by "*really* higher" is that there is no fact according to which greater value is attached to higher type individuals in the moral manner just mentioned. However, there are at least one way in which higher type individuals might be viewed as "*really* higher," namely in some purely descriptive manner. For instance, one could quantify a property in a scalar manner by use of various measurements and then rank individuals on this basis. Across any sufficiently diverse population some individuals would rank higher than others and could thus be legitimately be described as higher. There is a sense in which Nietzsche views higher type individuals as being higher in this descriptive sense. In comparison to the ordinary run of man he claims that higher type individuals possess greater strength, health, self-assuredness, and creative energy. If these claims are correct, then there is a manner in which higher type individuals are "*really* higher." Nevertheless, the fact that they are higher in this regard does not of itself provide the grounds for any normative judgment concerning them.

In Leiter's view, Nietzsche's primary complaint with decadent morality is that it "thwarts the flourishing of those Nietzsche views as higher types."[26] There is ample textual

[25] Leiter, p. 152.
[26] Leiter, p. 152.

evidence to support the enmity of decadent morality for higher type individuals.[27] Nietzsche says that it has waged a "*war to the death* against this *higher* type of man, it has excommunicated all the fundamental instincts of this type .... [and] has made an ideal out of *opposition* to the preservative instincts of strong life" (A: 5). In advocating the "preservative instincts" of weak life decadent morality has resolved to "break the strong o'er great hopes, cast suspicion on the joy in beauty, bend everything haughty, manly, conquering, domineering, all the instincts characteristic of the highest and best-turned-out type of 'man', into unsureness, agony of conscience, [and] self-destruction" (BGE: 62). This passage also illustrates in what way the development of higher type individuals is hindered. Decadent morality infects them with a bad conscience, engendering a crippling suspicion of the self. It has "seduced us into the belief that man's natural inclinations are evil" so that those who "could trust themselves to their inclinations with grace and without care ... do not for fear of the imagined 'evil essence' of nature!" (GS: 294). Notice that the problem is not with the values of decadent morality, it is rather the effects of those values being adopted by persons for whom they are inappropriate. In short, embracing decadent values is *bad for* higher type individuals. Thus, commentators like Alexander Nehamas get close to the truth when they say that Nietzsche's "main objection to morality is its absolutism."[28] However, the real problem is not that decadent morality insists on the categorical application of its values as such. In and of itself this is just another descriptive mistake of decadent morality, a false

[27] In fact, even in the absence of the negative pressure exerted by institutionalized decadence Nietzsche thinks the deck is stacked against the development of higher men, "whose complicated conditions of life can only be calculated with great subtlety and difficulty" (BGE 62). He points to a natural leveling of men to the averaged that takes place due to the survival benefit to be found in the "easy communicability of need" (BGE 268), which is predicated on a basic similarity between the individuals attempting to communicate. Due to this natural pressure "the human beings who are more similar, more ordinary, have had, and always have, an advantage" (BGE 268). However, decadent morality only exacerbates this already tenuous position and the result is that "the corruption, the ruination of the higher men, of the souls of a stranger type, is the rule" (BGE 269).
[28] Nehamas, p. 223.

belief concerning the moral equivalence of all individuals such that the same moral values legitimately hold for all. No, the problem is that under conditions of what I have called institutionalized decadence higher type individuals are "seduced" by the ubiquity of decadent valuations and influenced into pursuing an internally conflicted and self-defeating mode of existence.[29] Certainly decadent morality's claim to universality contributes to this effect, but according to Leiter the real problem for Nietzsche is that institutionalized decadence "will have the effect of leading potentially excellent persons to value what is in fact not conducive to their flourishing."[30]

However, even if it is true that institutionalized decadence stunts the development of higher type individuals, this fact does not give us any reason to consider that state of affairs disvaluable, much less generate a reason why we ought to resist it ("*Ecrasez l'infame*!"). When considering a judgment concerning an organism's requirements for survival Anscombe puts the point as follows, "to say that it [the organism] needs that environment is not to say, e.g., that you want it to have that environment, but that it won't flourish unless it has it. Certainly, it all depends whether you want it to flourish!"[31] And the same goes for the claim that institutionalized decadence is a poor environment for higher type individuals, that it harms them. Alone this is merely a factual claim about the prudential disvalue of decadent values for higher type individuals and lacks any normative component. Filling in this gap will require an answer to a first order question and a subsequent second order question, each of which will be discussed in turn within the following sections of this paper. The first order question concerns the particular way Nietzsche thinks higher type individuals are valuable,

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[29] See also, Leiter's conclusion that "universality would be unobjectionable if agents were relevantly similar" (p. 113).
[30] Leiter, p. 133.
[31] Anscombe, p. 32.

which will help to clarify how it is that institutionalized decadence is disvaluable. The second order question concerns how we are to understand the status of Nietzsche's valuations of higher type individuals, a particularly important and complex issue in light of our previous consideration of Nietzsche's value-skepticism.

Leiter's answer to the first order question springs from his interpretation of Nietzsche's worry that decadent morality would be "to blame if man, as a species, [Typus Mensch] never reached his highest potential power and splendour" (GM preface: 6). He claims that Nietzsche's "central objection to MPS[32] is that it thwarts the development of human excellence" because it serves to "undermine the development of individuals who would manifest human excellence."[33] Although he is not particularly clear in expressing this point, what Leiter appears to be saying is that individuals of the higher type just *are* the "highest potential power and splendor" of man and the danger of decadent morality is that their development is hindered or defeated entirely.[34] What this claim suggests is that higher type individuals have value for Nietzsche as ends in themselves. The harmful effect of institutionalized decadence is that this valuable end (i.e. the flourishing of higher type individuals) is not realized. However, the next section of this paper will conduct an exploration of the relationship Nietzsche constructs between higher type individuals and the future and will conclude that higher type individuals possess value as instruments to some further end for Nietzsche as well, which suggests that Leiter's interpretation of the harm done by decadent morality is importantly incomplete. The second order question concerning how

[32] Recall MPS, morality in the pejorative sense, is Leiter's manner of referring to what I have called decadent morality.
[33] Leiter, p. 134.
[34] Leiter, p. 114.

we are to understand Nietzsche's evaluation of higher type individuals under either interpretation will be bracketed for the moment and taken up for consideration in chapter III.

§ 3. Higher Type Individuals and the Future

Nietzsche describes man as fundamentally preoccupied with the future, he is "the still-unconquered eternal-futurist [ewig-Zukünftige[35]]" whose "future mercilessly digs into the flesh of every present like a spur" (GM III: 13), but this future is jeopardized by the influences of decadent morality. According to Nietzsche, the advocates of decadent values "sacrifice [kreuzigen[36]] the future to *themselves* – they sacrifice all man's future" (EH IV: 4).[37] Furthermore, the victory of decadent values is achieved "at the expense of the *future*" (EH IV: 4).[38] Of course, Nietzsche is not accusing decadent morality of stopping the passage of time, so what is lost is not the future *per se*, but some quality of it. The danger seems to be that institutionalized decadence erodes the likelihood, or even the possibility, that the world will have certain properties at some time in the future. This erosion is disvaluable because this possible future is a valuable state of affairs, so valuable that Nietzsche figuratively equates a future in which this state of affairs does not obtain to being no future at all. Recall that Leiter takes Nietzsche's normative qualm with decadent morality to be the crippling of higher type individuals through an effect of institutionalized decadence. Furthermore, Leiter also suggests that higher type individuals possess value as ends in

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[35] "ewig-Zukünftige" could also be translated as "eternal future-dweller"

[36] Kaufmann's choice of "sacrifice" does not quite do justice to "kreuzigen", more literally "crucified", a choice that obscures the double meaning of the future being sacrificed *and* in the manner most symbolic of Christianity.

[37] The same passage appears at Z III: 12, 26.

[38] See also decadent morality as "an attempt to assassinate the future of man" (GM II: 11) and its values as "the opposite values of those which alone would guarantee its health, its future, the lofty *right* to its future." (EH, preface 2).

themselves for Nietzsche. Now, if higher type individuals are *only* valuable as ends then the possible future at risk is merely one in which there are more higher type individuals who embrace values that are *good for* them than would exist if institutionalized decadence continued to prevail. In other words, a larger population of higher type individuals who embrace the correct moral values exhausts the possible future being "sacrificed" by a continuing state of institutionalized decadence. However, the statements that Nietzsche makes concerning higher type individuals and the future do not support this conclusion.

Nietzsche describes higher type individuals in active roles with regard to the future. As noted at the outset of this paper, Nietzsche describes a higher type individual as one "who is sure of the future [zukunftsgewissen]" and one "who guarantees the future [zukunftverbürgenden]" (EH IV: 8).[39] Elsewhere he insists that the higher type should not be pressed into the service of the lower, that one "*ought* to ensure that their tasks are kept separate for all eternity," because individuals of the higher type "alone are *guarantors* [Bürgen] of the future, they alone have a *bounden duty* [verpflichtet] to man's future" (GM III: 14).[40] These passages suggest that an increased population of healthy higher type individuals does not exhaust the possible future jeopardized by institutionalized decadence. Rather as "guarantors" of that future it is the unique "task" of higher type individuals to realize that state through some further activity. The plausibility of this interpretation is bulwarked by Nietzsche's discussion of one group of higher type individuals, those he calls the "philosophers of the future" (BGE: 210).

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[39] See also higher type individuals as "more certain of the future [zukuntsgewisseren]" (A:3).
[40] See also Nietzsche asking of higher men "Is not something thronging and pushing in you – man's future?" (Z IV: 13, 14).

According to Nietzsche, the "philosophers of the future" are to have a particularly strong effect on the course of the future. These "*genuine philosophers ... are commanders and legislators*: they say, '*thus* it shall be!' ... With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer" (BGE: 211). Such philosophers will "know of a new greatness of man, of a new untrodden way to his enhancement [Vergrösserung]" (BGE: 212). On the basis of this knowledge their task will be "to teach man the future of man as his will, as dependent on a human will, and to prepare great ventures and over-all attempts [Gesammt-Versuche] of discipline [Zucht] and cultivation [Züchtung]" (BGE: 203).[41] This type of individual is "the man of the most comprehensive responsibility who has the conscience for the over-all development of man" (BGE: 61).[42] In discharging this responsibility he "will make use of religions for his project of cultivation [Züchtungs] and education, [Erziehungswerke] just as he will make use of whatever political and economic states are at hand" (BGE: 61). When considering the inauspicious condition of modern society and its remedy Nietzsche writes, "It is the image of such leaders that *we* envisage" (BGE 203).[43] Thus the "philosophers of the future" are a group of higher type individuals who possess the specific task of shaping the course of mankind's future through a program of "cultivation." This supports the claim that higher type individuals do not exhaust the future being "sacrificed" by the effects of institutionalized decadence, but rather contribute to the realization of some desirable future. It would stand to reason that the program of "cultivation" also then contributes to the

[41] See also Zarathustra's command to "become procreators and cultivators and sowers of the future" (Z III: "On Old and New Tablets" 12), "He ... creates man's goal and gives the earth its meaning and its future" (Z III: "On Old and New Tablets" 2).
[42] See also their "capacity for long-range decisions" (BGE: 212).
[43] See also "the cultivation of a new caste that will rule Europe" (BGE 251), "a new caste that will rule Europe, a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goals millennia hence" (BGE 208).

description of the possible future at risk. However, precisely how it does so remains to be seen.

There is reason to believe Nietzsche attached great value to the work by which higher type individuals will form this possible future. Concerning "philosophers of the future" he speculates on the "conditions that one would have partly to create and partly to exploit for their genesis", including "a revaluation of values under whose new pressure and hammer a conscience would be steeled, a heart turned to bronze, in order to endure the weight of such responsibility" (BGE: 203), namely the grave responsibility inherent in forming mankind's future. Nietzsche closely associated the revaluation of values with himself, describing it as "an act of supreme self-examination on the part of humanity, become flesh and genius in me" (EH IV: 1). The fact that it would be undertaken "in order" for these future philosophers to bear the burden of their task is indicative of the immense value that this task possesses for Nietzsche. Since the "philosophers of the future" are uniquely destined to execute this task, the value of the latter presumably contributes to the value of the former.

The foregoing discussion requires brief recapitulation so that some intermediate conclusions can be made. First, Nietzsche claims that decadent morality threatens the possibility of some desirable possible future being realized. Second, higher type individuals are associated with the future in an active capacity, especially in the case of the "philosophers of the future." Third, this active role of higher type individuals with regard to the future has significant value for Nietzsche. From this we can reasonably conclude that the program of "cultivation" of higher type individuals or its effects are at least partially constitutive of the possible future that is at risk. This leads to several other conclusions. It first suggests that Leiter's interpretation of the harm done by decadent morality is incomplete and in need of

modification. It appears that the "highest potential power and splendor" (GM preface: 6)[44] jeopardized by institutionalized decadence is not merely a dearth of higher type individuals, but also a consequent disvaluable effect that this dearth has upon the character of the future. It also suggests that while Leiter might be correct to assert that higher type individuals "manifest human excellence,"[45] they do not possess value solely by dint of their excellent characteristics. In addition to whatever value they possess as ends in themselves, higher type individuals also possess instrumental value in virtue of the value possessed by their task to bring about the circumstances of some desired possible future.

These intermediate conclusions stand on fairly firm ground. Unfortunately, the conclusions themselves are somewhat lacking in solidity. Vague hand-waving at some future-forming task and talk of a program of "cultivation" are intolerably imprecise unless given further specification. Regrettably, Nietzsche provides little more than broad generalities in the passages specifically discussing the "philosophers of the future." However, Nietzsche's conclusion concerning the reasons why decadent morality, described here as the ascetic ideal, has become dominant might prove helpful both in elucidating the task of higher type individuals as well as explaining why Nietzsche speaks of it only in generalities:

> "Except for the ascetic ideal: man, the *animal* man, had not meaning up to now. His existence on earth had no purpose; 'What is man for, actually?' – was a question without an answer; there was no *will* for man and earth ... he himself could think of no justification or explanation or affirmation, he *suffered* from the problem of what he

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[44] Leiter thinks this passage from GM is one "in which Nietzsche sums up his basic concern particularly well" (Leiter 2002: 114). It is worth noting that in this passage Nietzsche makes mention of value "in the sense of advancement, benefit and prosperity for man in general (and this includes man's future)" and wonders whether the present "*lived at the expense of the future*" (GM preface: 6). We've already seen why there is good reason to think Nietzsche's concerns for the future are not equivalent to the concern that higher type individuals flourish.

[45] Leiter, p. 134.

> meant. Other things made him suffer too, in the main he was a *sickly* animal: but suffering itself was *not* his problem, but the fact that there was no answer to the question he screamed, 'Suffering for *what*?' Man, the bravest animal and most prone to suffer, does *not* deny suffering as such: he *wills* it, he even seeks it out, provided he is shown a *meaning* for it, a *purpose* for suffering. The meaninglessness of suffering, *not* the suffering, was the curse which has so far blanketed mankind, – and *the ascetic ideal offered man a meaning*! Up to now it was the only meaning, but any meaning at all is better than no meaning at all ..." (GM III: 28)

The dominance of decadent morality is attributable to it fulfilling humanity's need for some reason or goal for its existence, above all that there be meaning in suffering. As Nietzsche puts it elsewhere, it is an interesting psychological truth about human beings that, "if we possess our *why* of life we can put up with almost any *how*" (TI I: 12). However, this dominance is also the result of decadent morality being completely unopposed. There has been no counter-ideal to challenge decadent morality's exclusive dispensation of purpose for human life. That is, there was no counter-ideal until Zarathustra.

The ideal embodied by Zarathustra that is set against decadent morality must resemble it in one significant manner. Zarathustra must also provide humanity with a meaning for suffering and some purpose to existence. He does this by pronouncing, "Behold I teach you the overman. The overman is the meaning of the earth." (Z I: prologue, 3). The notion of the overman is simply the notion that "what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end" (Z I: prologue, 4). In other words, the meaning that Zarathustra's counter-ideal imparts to the world, to human existence, is that humankind has a future. Indeed, in a sense Zarathustra defines humanity as a future waiting to happen. What is distinctive of this future is that it is a human future of this world. Zarathustra's manner of providing humankind a meaning for its suffering is to make this suffering part of an earthly future for humanity. If higher type individuals have a responsibility for humanity's future, it would

seem that their first, and perhaps most important, task must be to promote this counter-ideal by which the future of humanity replaces the decadent ideal as the dominant self-understanding of human existence. We have perhaps failed to give sufficient attention to the fact that philosophers of the future must first "teach man the future of man as his will, as dependent on a human will" (BGE: 203). What must be a prominent feature of the possible future that higher type individuals are to construct is that Zarathustra's counter-ideal be sufficiently dominant so that humanity collectively regards the meaning of its existence, and its suffering, to be found in its relation to a humanly defined process aimed at realizing an equally humanly defined enhancement of the species in the future. This means that another feature of this possible future is the overthrowing of institutionalized decadence. It is only when a Zarathustran will to humanity's future has replaced the pervasive influence of decadent values that any program of "cultivation" becomes possible.

The generality with which Nietzsche describes how higher type individuals will form the future can be explained by Zarathustra's will to humanity's future being a manifestly human ideal. Specifically, this means that what will constitute the future of humanity must be created by human hands. Until this creative act one can do nothing but speak in general terms like "cultivation." What is required is the creation of values by a value legislator from which an image of humanity's future will emerge. As Zarathustra puts it, "what is good and evil no one knows yet, unless it be he who creates [Schaffende]! He, however, creates man's goal [Ziel] and gives the earth its meaning [Sinn] and future. That anything at all is good and evil – that is his creation." (Z III: 12, 2). As we've seen, Nietzsche identifies higher type individuals as those who are to create values and the future of humanity, as "*commanders and legislators*: they say, '*thus* it shall be!'" (BGE 211). However, prior to this creative act

nothing about the direction humanity will take, or *should* take, is established. Thus out of necessity Nietzsche says little or nothing about where higher type individuals will lead humanity in the future. The emphasis Nietzsche places on creativity and the characterization of Zarathustra and higher type individuals as artists is also instructive in this regard. For example, Nietzsche complains that an effect of institutionalized decadence is that "men, not high and hard enough to have any right to try to form *man* as artists" (BGE 62) have been in control. Nietzsche writes of Zarathustra "man is for him an un-form, a material, an ugly stone that needs a sculptor [Bildners]" (EH III: Z, 8). Finally, Zarathustra admits, "my fervent will to create [Schaffens-Wille] impels me ever again toward man; thus is the hammer impelled toward the stone" (Z II: 2). The analogy suggested is that higher type individuals are to the future of humanity as an artist is to a block of marble. To attempt to characterize in any detail what form higher type individuals should impart upon the future of humanity would be akin to suggesting precisely what form should emerge from a slab of marble placed before an artist. Of course, one might speculate what will in fact be done with that material, but it appears to be almost a matter of indifference to Nietzsche just how higher type individuals work the material of humanity. Rather, Nietzsche is instead preoccupied with securing the conditions under which higher type individuals are in a position to form something out of humanity at all, which is ultimately predicated on the triumph of the Zarathustran ideal over decadent values. However, there is one feature of a future determined by the creative acts of higher type individuals that Nietzsche repeatedly mentions.

Nietzsche consistently invokes the concept of redemption when describing the effect Zarathustra, and higher type individuals generally, will have on the future. He anticipates the

day when Zarathustra will "return with the *redemption* [Erlösung] of this reality" (GM II: 24). Zarathustra states that it is the task of higher type individuals "to work on the future [Zukunft schaffen] and to redeem with their creation all that *has been* [und Alles, das war –, schaffend zu erlösen]. To redeem [erlösen] what is past in man and to re-create all 'it was' until the will says, 'Thus I willed it! Thus I shall will it!'" (Z III: 12, 3).[46] Similarly, he commands higher type individuals to "become procreators [Zeuger] and cultivators [Züchter] and sowers [Säemänner] of the future" and claims that "in your children you shall make up for being the children of your fathers: thus shall you redeem [erlösen] all that is past" (Z III: 12, 12). The significance of higher type individuals redeeming the past is made clear if one considers what part the past has in the development of a will to revenge. Nietzsche defines revenge as a negative disposition towards the past: "this, indeed this alone, is what revenge is: the will's ill will against time and its 'it was.'" (Z II: 20). From this description of revenge it would seem what Nietzsche means by "redeeming" the past is the overcoming of this negative disposition toward the past, the end of revenge. Now, Nietzsche identifies resistance to revenge as being of paramount importance to his work, remarking on the great degree to which his "philosophy has pursued the fight against revengefulness and rancor [Rach-(gefühl) und Nachgefühl], even into the doctrine of 'free will' – the fight against Christianity is merely a special case of this" (EH I: 6). A preoccupation with overcoming revenge is also echoed by Zarathustra: "For *that man be delivered* [erlöst] *from revenge* [der Rache], that is for me the bridge to the highest hope, and a rainbow after long storms" (Z II: 7). It is interesting then that Nietzsche identifies the creative action of higher type

[46] See also "To redeem those who lived in the past and to recreate all 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it' – that alone should I call redemption" (Z II: 20).

individuals in the future as the manner in which revenge is ultimately dispelled. It certainly leads to one conclusion. From the fact that resisting revenge is viewed by Nietzsche as being valuable, something to which his philosophy his importantly devoted, and the fact that he considers the end of revenge to be the product of the activities of higher type individuals in the future it follows that some substantial portion of value Nietzsche places in higher type individuals must be instrumental with respect to their achieving this end. However, what is also interesting is precisely how this redemption takes place.

It seems that the outcome of higher type individuals emblazoning their will onto the substance of humanity, the product of their creative influence on the future, whatever shape this takes, allows for the past to be reclaimed from revenge. It places the events of the past in a temporal chain leading to this creation. All the past becomes a necessary condition of this enhancement of man. As a result, the melancholic eye for the past is replaced with not just resignation and acceptance, but an affirmation, a "thus I willed it." By learning that the meaning of its existence is its future, a will to a future, humanity also learns to "will backwards" and thereby destroys the conditions for revenge. However, there is another degree to the affirmation of the past. One could also will that the past occur again, that the past be the future. Redemption of the past and an end to revenge is a "thus I willed it", but also a "thus I shall will it." However, this is just another manner of expressing Nietzsche's famous eternal recurrence doctrine. In a significant confession Nietzsche remarks that, "Zarathustra once defines, quite strictly, his task – it is mine too ... he says Yes [jasagend] to the point of justifying [Rechtfertigung], of redeeming [Erlösung] even all the past" (EH II: Z, 8). Eternal recurrence will be discussed in some detail later in this paper. What merits notice here is that the redemptive creation wrought by higher type individuals upon the future of

humanity by which revenge is overcome also seems to lead to the inculcation, or at least the germination, of a will to eternal recurrence, perhaps across the entire of humanity.

This chapter began with Leiter's hypothesis concerning the value of higher type individuals and how this value determines the possible future jeopardized by institutionalized decadence. It is Leiter's claims that higher type individuals are valuable as ends in themselves because they manifest human excellence. From this we surmised that the possible future put at risk by decadent morality is just an increase in the population of higher type individuals who are not seduced into adopting decadent values that are prudentially bad for them. However, it was shown that the relationship Nietzsche develops between higher type individuals and the future indicates that they are to play an active role in forming such a desired future. That is, the possible future at risk is a product of higher type individuals rather than being embodied by these individuals themselves. Nietzsche does not provide many details concerning the manner in which they will impress their will upon the future, but it was suggested that this is because the future to be formed by higher type individuals is necessarily a creative act that cannot be prescribed or predicted before hand. Nevertheless, two specific effects higher type individuals are to have on forming the future were identified. The first is their creation of the environment in which a future for humanity can be formed at all. This requires the destruction of institutionalized decadence and its replacement with the Zarathustran ideal, which makes the humanly dictated future of humanity the meaning and goal of existence and suffering. The second effect identified was the destruction of revenge by the redeeming effect their enhancement of humanity, whatever its form, would have on the past. The value of this effect is of particular importance in light of Nietzsche's concern for combating the will to revenge. I conclude from this that the possible future jeopardized

by decadent morality is something more than the existence of higher type individuals, but is rather a future that higher type individuals are to bring about. As such, higher type individuals have instrumental value for Nietzsche due to the valuable effects they are to have on the future. Consequently, a complete account of institutionalized decadence's disvalue needs to include the loss of these effects on the formation of humanity's future over and above the damage done to higher type individuals generally. It is important to note that none of this requires rejecting the position that Nietzsche's primary objection to decadent morality is the harm it does to higher type individuals. What is proposed is simply a different manner of understanding the reason why this harm to higher type individuals is itself harmful or disvaluable. Leiter has proposed that this is due to the value higher type individuals have as ends in themselves. I have endeavored to demonstrate that such an individual also has value as an instrument of humanity's future. It is he alone who knows what "might yet be made of man; he knows with all the knowledge of his conscience how man is still unexhausted for the greatest possibilities" (BGE: 203). From this I conclude that resistance to decadence does not concern merely the harm done to such individuals, but also what is thereby lost, that the "greatest possibilities" for mankind will never be realized through their work.

III. Values as Symptoms

§ 1. Nietzsche and value

Now that the first order question concerning how Nietzsche values higher type individuals has been explored it is time to turn our attention to the second order question dealing with how we are to understand Nietzsche's valuation of higher type individuals,

either solely as ends in themselves, as Leiter suggests, or also as means to some other end as I have it. Leiter's answer to the second order question is based on various remarks scattered throughout Nietzsche's works to the effect that "what decides against Christianity now is our taste, not our reasons" (GS 132). From such statements and because for Nietzsche "there are no objective facts about non-prudential value" Leiter concludes that Nietzsche's positive evaluation of higher type individuals is ultimately just "giving expression to the evaluative taste of a certain type of person – a 'higher' or 'noble' person."[47] Furthermore, if one were to ask Nietzsche whether it was a "fact" that one should resist institutional decadence ("*Ecrasez l'infame*!") he would have to respond, "'No; only crush it – and only view it as infamy – if you share my evaluative taste for the flourishing of higher men'."[48] In my view this is an unsatisfactory manner of interpreting the grounds for Nietzsche's value of higher type individuals and his corresponding call to resist decadent morality. Rather than chalking it up to "taste," the value of higher type individuals should be understood in the terms that Nietzsche proposes to understand human value generally. In order to argue to this conclusion what is required first is a general sketch of the Nietzschean self. Second, two manners in which Nietzsche analyzes morality and values as being symptomatic of a particular physiological system will be outlined. In each case evidence will be put forward leading to the conclusion that Nietzsche's own values are to be understood as inclusive in this analysis. The ramifications of this conclusion on the grounding of Nietzsche's value of higher type individuals will then be assessed.

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[47] Leiter, p. 150
[48] Leiter, p. 154.

§ 2. The Nietzschean Self

In order to understand how Nietzsche construes morality and human value a brief sketch of his understanding of human agency must first be put forward. Prominent in Nietzsche's conception of the nature of human agents is his insistence that they do not inhabit a fundamentally different, much less privileged, position with respect to other animals. As he puts it, "man is absolutely not the crown of creation: every creature stands beside him at the same stage of perfection" (A14). The continuity between humans and the rest of the natural world, a circumstance made patently clear by the fact that "God is dead" (GS 125),[49] is central to what Nietzsche views as one of his primary tasks:

> "To translate man back into nature ... to see to it that man henceforth stands before man as even today, hardened in the discipline of science, he stands before the *rest* of nature, with intrepid Oedipus eyes and sealed Odysseus ears, deaf the siren songs of old metaphysical bird catchers who have been piping at him all too long, 'you are more, you are higher, you are of a different origin!'" (BGE 230).

Since, "we no longer trace the origin of man in the 'spirit', in the 'divinity', we have placed him back among the animals" (A 14), it follows that "he who has knowledge walks among men *as* among animals [als unter Thieren]" (Z II: 3). As a result, Nietzsche developed explanations of human beings and their behaviors that were also continuous with explanations concerning other animals. The various enquiries into human behavior that Nietzsche conducts proceed on the premise that humans are merely another species of animal to be studied. The death of God removes any *a priori* distinction between man and other

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[49] Though surely meant to be provocative, this statement was also merely reporting what Nietzsche believed to be a *fait accompli* of the late modern age. Due to advances in human knowledge and science, "the belief in the Christian God has become unbelievable" (GS 343). The death of God is just a fact of the modern condition: "The priest knows as well as anyone that there is no longer any 'God', any 'sinner', any 'redeemer' – that 'free will', 'moral world-order' are lies – intellectual seriousness, the profound self-overcoming of the intellect, no longer permits anyone not to know about these things" (A 38). Of course, Nietzsche views the will to truth that motivates science as merely a more refined version of the Christian ascetic ideal. Thus, it is a distilled version of Christianity itself that kills God when it "finally forbids itself the *lie involved in belief in God*." (GM III: 27).

animals, but another factor also influenced Nietzsche's view in this regard. Although he had some negative things to say about Darwin,[50] evolutionary theory, as well as German biological materialism,[51] clearly had a substantial impact on Nietzsche's thought. John Richardson has even argued that Nietzsche's thinking is "deeply and pervasively Darwinian."[52] Of course, evolution only lends further credence to the methodological premise that to understand humans is to understand them, first and foremost, as animals, a mode of explanation Nietzsche consistently pursued.

Nietzsche seeks explanations of human beings akin to those that might be offered for any other animal and so he constructs an appropriate conception of the self based in biology and physiological facts. For Nietzsche, human beings have unity as a physiological system. The body is the unit of explanation and defines the human self, rather than an immaterial soul, or even a self-conscious mind. Nietzsche claims that, "behind your thoughts and feelings ... there stands a mighty ruler [Gebieter], an unknown sage [Weiser] – whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body" (Z I: 4).[53] In the same way that physiology factors prominently in explanations of animals and their behavior, the set of facts most relevant to explaining human behavior are those that describe her as a physiological system. In a related fashion, Nietzsche praises Descartes because he "ventured to think of the animal as a *machine*" and because humans are just another physiological system amenable to mechanistic explanation, he concludes "our knowledge of man today is real knowledge

[50] For example, see TI IX: 14 entitled "Anti-Darwin."
[51] Leiter (2002), p. 65.
[52] Richardson (2004), p. 14.
[53] See also from Z I: 4 "the awakened and knowing say: body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body" and "an instrument of your body is also your little reason."

precisely to the extent that it is knowledge of him as a machine" (A 14). In short, human beings are best understood as mechanistically determined physiological systems.

Continuity with the rest of the animal world also pervades Nietzschean psychology. This is most evident in the claim that human psychology is dominated by the interactions of drives or instincts based in human physiology rather than the reflective deliberations of an apperceptive subject. Central to this psychology is the view that consciousness, in the sense of a unified self-awareness consisting, at least in part, of second order representations concerning first order phenomenal representations, is neither exhaustive of human psychology, nor is it central to its primary operations. Rather, "consciousness [Bewusstsein] is a surface" (EH II: 9) and what manifests itself to human beings in consciousness is only a fraction of mentation, "by far the greatest part of our mind's activity proceeds unconscious [unbewusst] and unfelt [ungefühlt verläuft]" (GS 333). In fact, "the predominant part of our lives actually unfolds without this mirroring [in consciousness] – of course also our thinking, feeling, and willing lives, insulting as it may sound to an older philosopher" (GS 354).[54] The processes that are decisive in guiding and motivating human activities occur beneath the veneer of consciousness among various drives and instincts.

What is most distinctive of Nietzschean drives is that they far outstrip those commonly associated with explanations of animal behavior. As Richardson notes, "the drives that Nietzsche is most concerned to explain are not such 'animal' instincts as hunger

[54] Nietzsche even argues that this subordinate role for consciousness is necessary for human survival: "If the preserving alliance of the instincts were not so much more powerful, if it did not serve on the whole as a regulator, humanity would have to perish with open eyes of its misjudging and its fantasizing, of its lack of thoroughness and its incredulity – in short, of its consciousness; or rather, without the instincts, humanity would have long ceased to exist!" (GS 11).

or sex. Instead they are our dispositions for complex social and cognitive practices."[55] Throughout his works Nietzsche mentions a host of various drives. As only one string of examples he identifies "the doubting drive, the denying drive, the waiting drive, the collecting drive, the dissolving drive" (GS 113).[56] What is common to all of the drives Nietzsche discusses is that they are identified by as being forces "for" some purpose or as exerting pressure "to" some end. Such descriptions suggest that drives are possessing of an awareness of some end or purpose. However, what Nietzsche says of drives, particularly their distinctness from conscious thought, consistently points to the conclusion that drives are not the kind of things possessing such mentalistic properties. Richardson has suggested that Nietzsche's description of drives as being "for" or "to" is meant to describe an evolutionary fact, that "the drive was selected for that outcome,"[57] which I think is probably the most promising manner of understanding Nietzsche's manner of naming drives. As to their constitution drives are physiological forces operating below the level of consciousness, each of which engenders a characteristic direction to human thought or action when circumstances allow for it to overcome whatever resistance exists to its expression. What is perhaps most interesting is that the pervasive influence of drives extends to the level of conscious theoretical thought: "'being conscious' [Bewusstsein] is not in any decisive sense the *opposite* of what is instinctive [Instinktiven]: most of the conscious thinking of a philosopher is secretly guided and forced into certain channels by his instincts [Instinkte]" (BGE 3). Again and again Nietzsche points to the influence of various drives as explaining human behavior. However, what is often decisive in these explanations is the organization of drives

[55] Richardson, p. 38.
[56] See also "instinct for slandering, disparaging, and accusing life" (TI III: 6).
[57] Richardson, p. 37.

within the particular human subject. It is important then to also address the structure of drives within the Nietzschean subject.

Nietzsche contends that each particular human psychology is comprised of a "social structure of drives [Triebe] and affects [Affekte]" (BGE 12).[58] What's more, these drives exist in a state of constant competition within the subject, "for every drive [Trieb] wants to be master – and it attempts to philosophize in *that* spirit" (BGE 6). As Leiter puts it, what we recognize as the conscious self is merely "an arena in which the struggle of drives ... is played out."[59] What unity there is in human psychology consists of the structuring of these drives or instincts.[60] Nietzsche does not provide much information concerning the nature of this structure, but the inherently competitive nature he attributes to drives suggests that it is hierarchical in nature. He does seem to think that in some, or perhaps most, individuals one drive or some group of them comes to dominate the others and operates as the stable motivational force within humans. As he puts it, "to our strongest drive [Triebe], the tyrant in use, not only our reason [Vernunft] bows but also our conscience [Gewissen]" (BGE 158). However, such stability can also be lacking and this is part of what is definitive of decadent human beings. For example, Nietzsche mentions that it was the "dissoluteness and anarchy of his instincts which indicate decadence in Socrates" (TI II: 4). In fact, Nietzsche identifies an unstable drive structure as a feature of modern life: "In times like these, to have to rely on one's instincts is one fatality more. These instincts contradict, disturb and destroy

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[58] See also "our body is but a social structure composed of many souls" (BGE 19).
[59] Leiter (2002), p. 100.
[60] There is an interesting parallel between Nietzsche's drive structures and their ramifications for human value and Plato's tripartite soul, as developed in Book IX of the Republic. Of course, the primary difference is that Nietzsche does not recognize an autonomous rational part of the soul ("reason is merely an instrument" [BGE 191]), nor does he make any argument for one particular drive structure being better than another on objective grounds.

on another. I have already defined the modern as physiological self-contradiction [Selbst-Widerspruch]..." (TI IX: 41). As either a stable hierarchy under the domination of a few or an anarchic collection of mutual antagonism, the structure of a Nietzschean subject's drives determine the direction of his activities. They also determine what it means for such a physiological system to flourish, the definition of which needs now be addressed.

The Nietzschean sense of flourishing is linked with the infamous doctrine of the will to power. There is wide variance among commentators concerning the correct manner of interpreting the will to power and I will not attempt to settle the issue here. However, I believe what can be agreed upon by all is that the will to power is *at least* a primary explanatory principle of human behavior. In this context the following is a concise statement of the will to power:

> "Every animal ... instinctively [instinktiv] strives for an optimum of favorable conditions in which fully to release [herauslassen] his power [Kraft] and achieve his maximum of power-sensation [Machtgefühl]; every animal abhors equally instinctively, with an acute sense of smell which is 'higher than all reason', any kind of disturbance and hindrance which blocks or could block his path to the optimum (– it is not his path to 'happiness' [Glück] I am talking about, but the path to power [Macht], action [That], the mightiest deeds [mächtigsetn Thun], and in most cases, actually, his path to misery [Unglück])."
> (GM III: 7)

For our purposes the descriptive thesis concerning the will to power is simply that the attainment of these optimal conditions is a primary, if not exclusive, goal of human activity. Further, attaining such favorable conditions is the sole component of the Nietzschean definition of flourishing, health, and hence prudential value. Anything that promotes those conditions is *good for* the agent, anything that tends to defeat those conditions is *bad for* the agent. However, what constitutes the expression of strength for any particular physiology is determined by various facts about it, most importantly its drive structure. Each unique

hierarchy of drives will have a correspondingly unique expression of strength. A person's flourishing is then measured by whether he attains the conditions optimal for the expression of the particular sort of strength determined by their drive structure. One important contingency is the existence of an unstable drive structure within a physiology. Anarchy amongst the drives leads to a rather curtailed notion of flourishing because the maximum expression of strength might just be survival in such a conflicted system. Such is the case in the decadent human physiology and, as we will see, this helps in part to explain the content of decadent values. With this brief sketch of the Nietzschean subject in place our attention can now be turned to Nietzsche's considerations of morality and value.

§ 3. Morality and Values as Symptom Generally

Before putting forward Nietzsche's positive account of value and morality it will pay to briefly revisit what he thinks values are not and cannot be. Remember that Nietzsche rejects objective moral values, that "nature is always value-less." In order to interpret just what this means some conceptual distinctions developed by Christine Korsgaard concerning value or goodness will prove useful. It would seem that what Nietzsche rejects is the existence of intrinsic value. Korsgaard has described intrinsically valuable things as those that "have their value in themselves, they are thought to have their goodness in any and all circumstances – to carry it with them, so to speak."[61] As we've seen, Nietzsche believes that value is "given" by us, it does not inhere in things independent of agents. If Nietzsche explicitly rejects intrinsic value, then all Nietzschean value must be extrinsic, meaning the

[61] Korsgaard (1983), p. 171.

source or location of value lies outside the valued thing itself.[62] Another important distinction to note is that between things valued instrumentally, as a means to some other end, and those possessing a final value as ends in themselves.[63] Korsgaard points out that what distinguishes intrinsic and extrinsic value from instrumental and final value is that the former concern the location or source of value while the latter describe the way something is valued.[64] Although Leiter does not explicitly avail himself of these distinctions, employing them we can conclude that what his position claims is that higher type individuals are "extrinsically good yet valued as an end."[65] My position is that higher type individuals are extrinsically valuable (or good) and also, if not exclusively, valued instrumentally. The end for which they are the means, their activities in forming the future or the results of those activities, would then be extrinsically valued as an end. It's important to note that although nothing has intrinsic value for Nietzsche, it is still possible that something be valued as an end. The difference between Leiter and myself lies in our respective understandings of the nature of Nietzsche's extrinsic valuations, especially as it regards higher type individuals.[66]

With this better understanding of the sort of value Nietzsche rejects we can now turn to his positive account of value and morality. Nietzsche repeatedly describes morality as being symptomatic of a physiological system and the disposition of its motivating drives, "morality is merely sign-language [Zeichenrede], merely symptomatology

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[62] Prudential value is an extrinsic value inasmuch as the facts concerning the agent or system will decisively determine prudential valuations rather than the properties of the thing so valued.
[63] Korsgaard (1983), p. 170.
[64] Korsgaard (1983), p. 170.
[65] Korsgaard (1983), p. 172.
[66] Of course, Korsgaard utilizes these distinctions to develop the Kantian notion of an extrinsic value that is nonetheless objective because it is ultimately grounded on the intrinsic and unconditioned value of the (in)famous "good will". No such parallel considerations apply for Nietzsche since there is nothing intrinsically valuable.

[Symptomatologie]" (TI VII: 1).[67] As in all things, the physiological features of human beings are the best manner to understand and explain their values and morality, "behind the highest value judgements [Werthurtheilen] that have hitherto guided the history of thought are concealed misunderstandings of the physical [leiblichen] constitution [Beschaffenheit] – of individuals or classes or even whole races" (GS preface 2). An individual's "morality bears decided and decisive witness to who he is – that is, in what order of rank [Rangordnung] the innermost drives [Triebe] of his nature stand in relation to each other" (BGE 6).[68] Values and moral systems are symptomatic of the particular constitution of a human physiological system, specifically the structure of his motivating drives, a structure which defines "who he is" as a Nietzschean subject. Since morality is symptomatic of a ranking of drives, "wherever we encounter a morality, we find an evaluation [Abschätzung] and ranking [Rangordnung] of human drives [Triebe] and actions" (GS 116), which finds expression in the normative content of the moral system. As a result, Nietzsche thinks that, "every 'thou shalt' known to history or the study of ethnology, needs first and foremost a *physiological* [physiologischen] elucidation and interpretation" (GM I: 17 note).

Nietzsche's analysis of values and morality as symptom takes two forms. First, all moralities represent the "conditions for existence" of a particular physiological system, the means to their preservation and flourishing. Second, the formulation of a moral systems basic content is symptomatic of a particular physiological system's regard for its own existence. We now turn to developing these two methods of analysis and to the evidence suggesting that Nietzsche's own values are best understood as objects of that analysis.

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[67] See also "moralities are also merely a *sign language of the affects*" (BGE 187) and "Your judgment, 'that is right' has a prehistory in your drives, inclinations, aversions, experiences, and what you have failed to experience ..." (GS 335).
[68] See also values as a "living crystallization" (BGE 186) of a physiological type.

§ 4. Morality and Values as Preserving Conditions

Nietzsche consistently affirms that "the values [Werthschätzungen] of a human being betray something of the *structure* [Aufbau] of his soul [Seele]" and indicate "where it finds its conditions of life [Lebensbedingungen], its true need [eigentlicke Noth sieht]" (BGE 268).[69] Human values, and specifically those that guide the formation of morality are how a certain physiological system, or a group of similarly constituted systems, has either found success, or has attempted to find success in expressing the maximal strength pertaining to the structure of their drives they instantiate. Each morality is an attempt to codify the path of least resistance for a particular mode of the will to power, "some commandment of life [Gebot des Lebens] is fulfilled through a certain canon of 'shall' and 'shall not', some hindrance and hostile element on life's road [Wege des Lebens] is thereby removed" (TI V: 4).[70] This is reflected in Nietzsche's discussion of the ascetic lifestyle embraced historically by philosophers, which was done not out of considerations of right or virtue, but "as the most proper and natural prerequisites for their *best* existence and *finest* productivity" (GM III: 8). The upshot is that moral values serve the interests of advancing prudential value. This claim has already been encountered in section II.2. However, Nietzsche does not just propose that moral values have prudential value for a particular type of physiology, but rather that moral values *only* have value as it relates to the flourishing of some physiology, which might be expected considering his rejection of moral facts and intrinsic value. Along these lines

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[69] See also "In *valuations, conditions of preservation* and *growth* express themselves" (WLN, Notebook 9, Autumn 1887, 38), "By morality, I understand a system of valuations which is contiguous with a being's conditions of life" (WLN, Notebook 34, April-June 1885, 264).

[70] See also Nietzsche identifying it as a problem when "morality [is] no longer the expression of the conditions under which a nation lives and grows" (A 25). Nietzsche analyzes other beliefs in a similar manner: "Behind all logic ... there stands valuations or, more clearly, physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life. (BGE 3).

Nietzsche describes the softened morality of modern times as being the product of "a different, a more belated constitution, a weaker, more delicate, more vulnerable one, out of which is necessarily engendered a morality *which is full of consideration*. If we think away our delicacy and belatedness, our physiological ageing, then our morality of 'humanization' [Vermenschilichung] too loses its value at once – no morality has any value in itself [an sich hat keine Moral Werth]" (TI IX: 37). Morality only has value in relation to the demands of a particular physiological system, what is good or bad for the flourishing of that system. In conclusion, Nietzsche takes morality to be symptomatic of a particular physiological system and the structure of its drives in that its values express the conditions required for the flourishing of that type of physiology.

§ 5. Nietzsche's Values as Preserving Conditions

Examining Nietzsche's relationship to the foremost negative valuation he endorses suggests that his values are to be seen as representing the conditions for his flourishing. The evaluative claim of decadent morality that Nietzsche finds most objectionable is its "predilection for and over-valuation of pity [Mitleidens]" (GM preface 5). Nietzsche's own valuation of pity is clear: "What is more harmful than any vice? – Active sympathy [Mitleiden] for the ill-constituted and weak – Christianity ..." (A2).[71] As in the case of the value of higher type individuals, out attention is here focused on the second order question concerning just how it is that pity is disvaluable for Nietzsche. Nietzsche claims that for Zarathustra, a paradigmatic higher type individual, "to keep the eminence of one's task [Aufgabe] undefiled by the many lower and more myopic impulses that are at work in so-

[71] See also "the overcoming of pity [Mitleids] I count among the noble virtues" (EH I: 4).

called selfless actions, that is the test, perhaps the ultimate test, which a Zarathustra must pass – his real *proof* of strength [Beweis von Kraft]" (EH I: 4).[72] Pity must be overcome in order that Zarathustra's performance of his "task" not be hindered. Fine, but what about Nietzsche himself? A particularly poignant and revealing passage on the subject of Nietzsche's own relationship to pity is GS 338. The section is comprised in part by an answer to the question: "Is it good for you yourselves to be above all else compassionate [mitleidige] persons?" In answering this question Nietzsche expresses concern for finding the manner in which one might "keep *one's own* path [Wege]". He remarks that "there are a hundred decent and praiseworthy ways of losing myself *from my path* [Wege]" and pity is a most dangerous one because "I too, know with certainty that I need only to expose myself to the sight of real distress and I, too, *am* lost!" There is a great temptation to "lose *one's own* way [Wege] like this in order to help a neighbor" because "our own way is so hard and demanding and far from love and gratitude of others that we are by no means reluctant to escape from it, from it and our ownmost conscience – and take refuge in the conscience of others and in the lovely temple of the 'religion of compassion'." So it is with the "noblest men" who in time of war seek to be part of the action immediately because they desire "the permission *to deviate from their goal* [Ziele]". Nietzsche further confesses, "I do not wish to keep quiet about my morality, which tells me: Live in seclusion so that you *are able* to live for yourself [damit du dir leben kannst]!" What this life amounts to is Nietzsche's work to teach "what is today understood by so few, least of all by the preachers of compassion [Mitleiden]: to share not pain, but *joy* [Mitfreude]!", a reference to eternal recurrence. Just as

[72] See also the section of Zarathustra entitled "On the Pitying": "'Myself I sacrifice to my love, *and my neighbor as myself* – thus runs the speech of all creators. But all creators are hard." (Z III: 3).

in the case of Zarathustra, pity is dangerous because it threatens to distract Nietzsche from his task. It is a condition of Nietzsche staying on his path that he separate himself from the world, that he reject pity because in the context of maintaining his life's trajectory pity is *in fact* "more harmful than any vice". For individuals of Nietzsche's type "one must know how to conserve oneself: the hardest test of independence" (BGE 41), which means that one cannot expend one's energy on pity.[73] Interestingly, this also means remaining above pity for higher type individuals: "Not to remain stuck to some pity – not even for higher men into whose rare tortures and helplessness some accident allows us to look" (BGE 41).[74] The ordering of drives that defines Nietzsche determines that his expression of strength is to be found in his creative philosophical work. By Nietzsche's own estimation pity would harm the accomplishment of this task. Since this task is tantamount to his attaining the conditions for expressing the strength unique to an individual constituted in the manner of Nietzsche, pity is *bad for* him.[75] For Nietzsche pity is disvaluable because this is a condition of his flourishing, the precise nature of which is symptomatic of the particular physiology of which he is a representative.

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[73] See also of higher type individuals: "to do what *they* alone ought to do, how can they at the same time be physicians, consolers, and 'saviors' of the sick? And therefore let us have fresh air! fresh air! and keep clear of the madhouses and hospitals of culture! ... So that we may, at least for a while yet, guard ourselves, my friends, against the two worst contagions that may be reserved just for us – against *the great nausea at man*! against *great pity for man*!" (GM III: 15).

[74] Overcoming pity for the suffering of the higher man is also the specific nature of Zarathustra's test. Of which he says, "My suffering and my pity for suffering – what does it matter? Am I concerned with *happiness*? I am concerned with my *work*." (Z IV: 20).

[75] In a similar vein Zarathustra warns higher type individuals that, "Where your whole love is, with your child, there is also your whole virtue. Your work, your will, that is *your* 'neighbor': do not let yourself be gulled with false values!" (Z IV: 13, 11). The emphasis placed on the "work" of higher type individuals is interesting in the context of the previously considered first order question concerning the value of higher type individuals. If their "work" is the location of their "whole virtue" this suggests that their value is also to be found in this work.

§ 6. Morality and Values as a Symptomatic Result

We've already examined one thesis concerning the symptomaticity of morality, which posited moral theories to be codifications of the means by which a physiological system of a particular type seeks its own flourishing. Nietzsche seems to hold that this is a property of all moral systems. However, a second way Nietzsche views morality to be symptomatic concerns the manner in which aspects of its content are determined as well. Nietzsche does not develop this content symptomaticity thesis in a thorough or systematic manner and so much of what I will be proposing is my own reconstruction of his position based on textual evidence. In various passages Nietzsche offers a developmental account of what I will call an agent's fundamental evaluative posture, from which perspective individuals of a particular type conduct their other evaluating activities. This evaluative posture is determined by the value ascribed, either explicitly though often implicitly, to living. This meta-value, for lack of a better word, concerning the value of life itself determines the agent's evaluative posture, which is then foundational in the formation of the agent's other values, as well as its descriptive account. In one manner the content of moral systems is symptomatic in that its first order values, as well as its descriptive account, are symptomatic of the meta-value according to which living itself is evaluated. However, this meta-value is also symptomatic. It is a result of the lived experience of a particular type of physiological system under the conditions that it finds itself. The values of an individual generally, but "especially answers to the question about the value of existence, must always be considered first of all as symptoms of certain *bodies*; and if such world affirmations or world negations lack altogether any grain of significance when measured scientifically, they give the historian and psychologist all the more valuable hints as symptoms of the body, of

its success or failure [Gerathens und Missrathens], its fullness, power [Machtigkeit] and high-handedness [Selbstherrlichkeit] in history, or of its frustrations [Hemmungen], fatigues, impoverishments, its premonitions [Vorgefühls] of the end, its will to an end" (GS preface, 2). The valuations of a moral theory are at least partially explicable by reference to the life meta-value, which is in turn explicable by reference to the lived experience of a valuing agent.

What is emblematic of decadent morality, what makes it a morality of decadence at all, is its negative valuation of living. As a matter of history Nietzsche comments that, "in every age the wisest have passed the identical judgment on life: it is worthless. Everywhere and always their mouths have uttered the same sound – a sound full of doubt, full of melancholy, full of weariness with life, full of opposition to life" (TI II: 1). Furthermore, "the consensus sapientium about the worthlessness of life proves that these wisest men, were in some way in physiological accord since they stood – had to stand – in the same negative relation to life" (TI II: 2). One passage is particularly illuminating in fleshing out the decadent "negative relation to life":

> "For a condemnation [Verurtheilung] of life by the living is after all no more than the symptom of a certain kind of life [Art von Leben]: the question whether the condemnation is just or unjust has not been raised at all. One would have to be situated *outside* life, and on the other hand to know it as thoroughly as any, as many, as all who have experienced it, to be permitted to touch on the problem of the *value* of life at all: sufficient reason for understanding that this problem is for us an inaccessible [unzungängliches] problem. When we speak of values we do so under the inspiration and from the perspective of life [Optik des Lebens]: life itself forces us to posit values, life itself evaluates through us *when* we establish values [das Leben selbst werthet durch uns, wenn wir Werthe ansetzen]… From this it follows that even that *anti-nature of a morality* which conceives God as the contrary concept to and condemnation of life is only a value judgment on the part of life [ein Werthurtheil des Lebens] – of *what* life? of *what* kind of life? – But I have already given the answer: of declining [niedergehenden], debilitated [geschwächten], weary, condemned [verutheilten] life. Morality as it has been understood hitherto – as it was ultimately

> formulated by Schopenhauer as 'denial of the will to life' – is the instinct of decadence itself, which makes out of itself an imperative: it says: 'Perish!' [geh zu Grunde!] – it is the judgment of the judged [das Urtheil Verurtheiler]." (TI V: 5)

Initially it is worth noting that Nietzsche, somewhat oddly, claims that judgments about the value of life must be understood symptomatically because there is no epistemic position from which one could ever verify the truth of such a judgment.[76] However, it is not clear why this is the case. Despite the fact that one might never *know* that his evaluation of life was correct, it could for all that still be correct. After all, if I value life positively and you value it negatively, one of us must actually be right, or more right, than the other, even if there were no accessible epistemic position from which we might decisively adjudicate our dispute. That is, one of us must be more in the right *if* there were such a thing as intrinsic value, the sort of value with which our valuations could either accurately or inaccurately correspond. Of course, this is precisely the sort of value Nietzsche rejects. It seems to me that what Nietzsche should instead argue is that evaluations of life, positively or negatively, are only sensibly understood as symptoms because they are either never true or false because they do not purport to be descriptive (non-cognitivism) or they are always false because there is nothing factual for them to report, "nature is always value-less." That *affirmative* judgments of life also fall under the same symptomatic analysis will be an important fact to which we will return. Let us now turn to the task of trying to construct the mechanism that Nietzsche appears to sketch whereby the life meta-value arises.

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[76] See also "Judgments, value judgments concerning life, for or against, can in the last resort never be true; they possess value only as symptoms – in themselves such judgments are stupidities. One must reach out and try to grasp this astonishing *finesse, that the value of life cannot be estimated*. Not by a living man, because he is a party to the dispute, indeed its object, and not the judge of it; not by a dead one, for another reason" (TI I: 2).

Nietzsche claims, figuratively speaking, that the life meta-value is the result of a "value judgment on the part of life." In a literal sense I take this to mean that the meta-value is a projection of some facts about a physiological system's own life onto the rest of living. As we have seen, according to Nietzsche we are best understood as physiological systems striving to attain a maximal expression of strength, the details of which are dictated by our particular drive structure. The process of living for such a being would then be a series of confrontations between it and various obstacles to its striving in the external world, which Nietzsche appears to define in places as being defined by a network of resistance to the spontaneity of the will.[77] In every confrontation either the resistance is overcome or the striving force is frustrated. Each result has a corresponding effect in the physiology of the subject. Success results in a positive effect, a feeling of strength that tends to confirm the self and its striving. Failure results in a negative effect, a feeling of weakness that tends to dis-confirm the self. The latter is of particular interest because it is in the face of failure that the mettle of the physiological system is tested. If it has strength for it, then the physiological system remains assured of its worth and disposed favorably towards the next confrontation, of which life is but a never-ending series. If it does not, then the system loses some faith it its own value and it faces the next confrontation with diminished vigor. Now, Nietzsche claims that valuing is a process inherent in such a life. Through the course of an existence such as our own some things come to be valued and others disvalued. This process takes place from the perspective of the valuing agent's own life, from within the context of the confrontations with the various obstacles to that agent's striving.[78] As discussed in the

[77] See Poellner pp. 88-108 for Nietzsche's conception of externality
[78] This value perspectivism can be seen as being a parallel of Nietzsche's more general epistemic perspectivism, the most explicit expression of which can be found at GM III: 12.

last section, the values that emerge from this process reflect a proposed means to attaining that agent's expression of strength, though there is no guarantee that they will be the means best suited to that task. The life meta-value also emerges from this process as something like an aggregate result of the series of confrontations between a physiology and its environment, which is its life. If failure has weakened the system so that it's strength is at an end, from this weariness it evaluates life negatively. If on the other hand the physiology has not suffered failures sufficient to erodes its strength, either due to its superior abilities to overcome resistance or its resilience in the face of failure, and retains its will to further confrontations, which is to say life, then it evaluates life positively. In one case there is a negation of life and in the other an affirmation of life. However, in both the life meta-value is merely symptomatic of the physiology's regard for its own life, which arises from the travails that compose it and the manner in which they have been met. In this manner it is nothing but "the judgment of the judged."

§ 7. Decadent Values as a Symptomatic Result

The decadent is defined by a negative relation to life, which is just her reflexive judgment concerning her own life's experience expressed as a negative life meta-value. As Nietzsche puts it, "instead of saying simply 'I am no longer worth anything', the moral lie in the mouth of the decadent says: 'Nothing is worth anything – life is not worth anything'" (TI IX: 35).[79] However, the pervasiveness of the will to power as an animating physiological force does not relinquish its grasp on the decadent even it its defeated condition. Rather, a

[79] That Nietzsche calls this a lie seems to suggest that life actually does have value, and even that the decadent knows that it does and is being deceitful. This is clearly in conflict with the remarks Nietzsche makes concerning value judgments of life in either direction being symptomatic. I think that his claim that the decadent is lying in this passage is probably best interpreted as being hyperbolic.

manner of its preservation is still sought. It is from an evaluative posture composed of a negative life meta-value coupled to a will to power reduced to a mere will to survive and revenge that the rest of decadent morality follows in various ways. One manifestation of decadence that Nietzsche identifies is slave morality, which is the system of values that arose amid ancient Jewry as a reaction against their dominators.[80] It is defined primarily by a negation, as are all decadent moralities owing to their negative life meta-value, "whereas all noble morality grows out of a triumphant saying 'yes' to itself, slave morality says 'no' on principle to everything that is 'outside', 'other', 'non-self': and *this* 'no' is its creative deed." (GM I: 10). In the case of slave morality it is a negation of the ruling class, as well as the ruling values, who are identified, perhaps correctly, as the overwhelming obstacle to the Jews flourishing as a people. This is the crudest form of decadent morality, but its more refined versions follow the same pattern. What characterizes the most distilled, spiritualized, and corrosive forms of decadent morality is that it does not take a people to be its obstacle. Rather, the ultimate perversity of decadence is that it takes life itself to be the obstacle, it represents "an unfulfilled instinct and power-will [Machtwillens] which wants to become master, not over something in life, but over life itself and its deepest [tiefste], strongest [stärkste], most profound [unterste] conditions" (GM III: 11). At its logical conclusion the decadent is a life opposed to living:

> "this hatred of the human, and even more of the animalistic, even more of the material, this horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this longing to get away from appearance, transience, growth, death, wishing, longing itself – all that means, let us dare to grasp it, a *will to nothingness*, an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental prerequisites of life, but it is and remains a *will*! ... And ... man still prefers to *will nothingness*, than *not* will." (GM III: 28)[81]

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[80] see GM I.

[81] See also "God degenerated to the *contradiction of life*, instead of being its transfiguration and eternal *Yes*! In God a declaration of hostility towards life, nature, the will to life!" (A 18), "Anti-natural morality … turns on

One important manner in which decadents seeks to accomplish this profound coup is through valuations. Decadent morality either denies the reality of life's conditions or evaluates them negatively. For example, Nietzsche explains the positive valuation of selflessness in decadent morality as a reaction against the confrontational nature of living for human beings. The high value placed on compassion and pity by decadent morality is reflective of the difficulty a decadent physiology encounters in overcoming resistance, which is at least partially the result of the decadent's anarchic drive structure: "'Not to seek one's own advantage' – that is merely a moral figleaf for a quite different, namely physiological fact: 'I no longer know how to find my advantage' ... Disgregation of the instincts [Instinkte]!" (TI IX: 35).[82] Furthermore, Nietzsche accuses decadent morality for creating a "purely fictitious world" of imaginary causes, objects, and psychology and concludes, "it is the expression of a profound discontent [Missbehagens] with the actual [Wirklichen] ... *But that explains everything*. Who alone has reason to *lie himself* out of actuality? He who *suffers* from it. But to suffer from actuality means to be an *abortive* [verunglückte] actuality ... The preponderance of feelings of displeasure [Unlustgefühle] over feelings of pleasure [Lustgefühle] is the *cause* of a fictitious morality and religion: such a preponderance, however, provides the *formula* for *décadence* ..." (A 15).[83] As a result of finding the phenomenon of living an odious burden, and with it the realities of that life, the will to survive and revenge demands that the decadent fashion a false descriptive account of the

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the contrary precisely against the instincts of life – it is a now secret, now loud and impudent condemnation of these instincts. By saying 'God sees into the heart' it denies the deepest and the highest desires of life and takes God for the enemy of life …" (TI V: 4).

[82] See also "'I know not which way to turn; I am everything that knows not which way to turn' – sighs modern man ..." (A1)

[83] See also "it was the sick and decaying who despised body and earth and invented the heavenly realm" (Z I: 3).

world that is more agreeable. This is done out of necessity, "it is his deepest instinct of self-preservation [Selbsterhaltungs-Instinkt] which forbids any part of reality whatever to be held in esteem or even spoken of" (A 9).[84] Nietzsche addresses the decadent and his disgust with the body as also being a reflection on their negative relation to living, "your self wants to die and turns away from life. It is no longer capable of what it would do above all else: to create beyond itself. That is what it would do above all else, that is its fervent wish [Inbrunst]. But now it is too late for it to do this: so your self wants to go under [Untergehen], O despisers of the body" (Z I: 4). The decadent negative valuation of the body is also a symptom of his weariness, his negative life meta-value, which leads to a negative evaluation of the body, which is the locus of life. The body is a distasteful reminder of the decedent's impotence and so it, and all things pertaining to it, are denigrated and denied any place of consequence. In short, Nietzsche repeatedly considers the evaluations of decadent morality, "that one taught men to despise the very first instincts [Instinkte] of life; that one mendaciously invented a 'soul,' a 'spirit' to ruin the body; that one taught men to experience the presupposition of life, sexuality, as something unclean; that one looks for the evil principle in what is most profoundly necessary for growth, in *severe* self-love [strengen Selbstsucht],"[85] as symptomatic of a negative life meta-value, of "the fact, 'I am declining' [ich gehe zu Grunde], transposed into the imperative, 'all of you ought to decline' [ihr sollt alle zu Grunde gehn]" (EH IV: 7).

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[84] See also "They are not free to know: the decadent *needs* the lie – it is one of the conditions of the their preservation" (EH III: BT 2).

[85] This amounts to egoism of the kind demanded by the path to flourishing determined by one's drive structure. For example, speaking of lesser individuals with respect to the egoism of higher type individuals Nietzsche writes, "They have neither the right nor the strength for *your* egoism. In your egoism, you creators, is the caution and providence of the pregnant" (Z IV: 13, 11).

§ 8. Nietzsche's Values as a Symptomatic Result

I propose that Nietzsche's own values are to be understood as symptoms of the same mechanism by which the decadent arrives at his values, that they too are the "judgment of the judged." What is at the heart of decadent morality is negation, as an organism the decadent stands in a negative relation to the process of living, which is then manifested in a negative life meta-value and a consequent negation of those things which are the facts of and conditions for life. However, Nietzsche also claims that, "saying Yes to reality, is just as necessary for the strong as cowardice and the flight from reality – as the 'ideal' is for the weak, who are inspired by weakness" (EH III: BT, 2). As mentioned in passing previously, the process that leads the decadent to deny life can also result in a physiological system affirming life. Through success or an abiding resilience in the face of failure there can arise a great 'Yes' that is the counterpart of the decadent 'No'. As a consequence, values can arise which are symptomatic of a physiology's "fullness, power and high-handedness in history" rather than "frustrations, fatigues, impoverishments" (GS preface 2). The values that would be symptomatic of an affirmative life meta-value and corresponding evaluative posture would likely read as a complete reversal of decadent values. Of course, Nietzsche appears to systematically endorse the value of those things disvalued by decadent morality and vice versa, which might in itself provide evidence of their being symptomatic. Also, in the same way that decadent values negatively evaluate the conditions and realities of life, those springing from the affirmative life meta-value would evaluate them positively. For example, if human life is just a string of confrontations between a physiological will to power and resistance, the affirmative life-value would result in an affirmation of that struggle: "What is good? All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man" (A 2).

This might be the explanation for the normative naturalism in Nietzsche's valuations whereby seemingly everything that is natural is judged good. However, in my view the best manner of demonstrating why Nietzsche's values should be seen as symptomatic of an affirmative life meta-value is found by taking the consequences of such an evaluative posture to its logical conclusion.

We start with the affirmative disposition a physiological system has for its own living. From this an affirmative life meta-value arises, life is good, it is of value. Values symptomatic of this affirmative meta-value then develop, affirming the various realities and conditions for life. To what further extent could such an affirmation be taken? One affirms the general facts and conditions of life (the body, the will to power, etc.), but a greater affirmation yet would be to affirm the particular facts of life, those of actual events. Accordingly, there could be affirmation of all the events in one's own life. Greater yet would be to affirm the events of all lives. Greater still would be the affirmation of all events, those that have come to pass and those that will come to pass. But, affirmation could also rise to a height from which one could will that the particular facts of one's life, of all lives, of all history, occur again. Finally, at its logical extreme affirmation would take the form of a will for all things to occur again in infinite series, a will for eternal recurrence. This would be the ultimate gratitude that a physiological system could bestow upon the reality that it has judged good, a judgment resulting from its own feeling of affirmation after facing a life of confrontation and resistance. Such affirmation would be symptomatic of the most successful, the strongest, and the most self-confirmed physiology.

The will for eternal recurrence is Nietzsche's most prominent positive evaluative position. He refers to himself as "the teacher of the eternal recurrence" (TI X: 5) and of

Zarathustra he writes, "*you are the teacher of eternal recurrence* – that is your destiny [Schicksal]!" (Z III: 13, 2). At times Nietzsche frames eternal recurrence in terms of a single life (e.g. "Was *that* life? Well then! Once more!'" [Z III: 2, 1]), and as love of one's fate: "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary [Nothwendige] ... but *love* it" (EH II: 10). However, it is also more broadly construed as "the unconditional [unbedingten] and infinitely repeated circular course of all things" (EH III: BT, 3).[86] Eternal recurrence is "the ideal of the most high-spirited, alive, and world-affirming human being who has not only come to terms and learned to get along with whatever was and is, but who wants to have *what was and is* repeated into all eternity, shouting insatiably *da capo* – not only to himself, but to the whole play and spectacle" (BGE 56). It is put forward as a descriptive thesis, "which is most strictly confirmed and born out by truth and science" (EH III: BT 2),[87] but what is of interest to us is not evaluating Nietzsche's endorsement of the fact of eternal recurrence, that it correctly describes the universe in some fashion.[88] Rather, we are interested in establishing the grounds upon which Nietzsche arrives at the normative affirmation of all things and their recurrence, that he *wills* eternal recurrence.

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[86] See also "we know what you teach: that all things recur eternally, and we ourselves too; and that we have already existed an eternal number of times, and all things with us" (Z III: 13, 2).

[87] Although, Nietzsche also contends that "to comprehend this requires courage and, as a condition of that, an excess of strength" (EH III: BT 2), suggesting that knowledge, that one's' epistemic possibilities, are also symptomatic of a particular physiology. I feel that an exploration of this theme in Nietzsche's work could be very fruitful, but I will leave it for another time.

[88] To those who would take up eternal recurrence as a descriptive metaphysical thesis independent, and perhaps logically prior, to Nietzsche's evaluative position I would pass along a caution from Nietzsche himself: "If one would explain how the abstrusest metaphysical claims of a philosopher really came about, it is always well (and wise) to ask first: at what morality does all this (does *he*) aim?" (BGE 6).

However, we've already seen that taking an affirmative life meta-value to its logical conclusion results in a will to eternal recurrence. It would be exceedingly odd if it were merely a coincidence that Nietzsche's most central positive evaluative position could be derived, in a quite straightforward manner, from the same mechanism by which he analyzes the production of decadent values. Remember too that Nietzsche himself admits that affirmative judgments of life, of which eternal recurrence is just the most radical form, must also be understood as symptoms. Finally, Nietzsche's own statements concerning eternal recurrence are revealing in this regard. He describes it as "a formula for the *highest affirmation* [höchsten Bejahung], born of fullness, of overfullness, a Yes-saying [Jasagen] without reservation, even to suffering, even to guilt, even to everything that is questionable and strange in existence" (EH III: BT, 2) and wonders "how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to long for nothing more fervently* than for this ultimate eternal confirmation [Bestätigung] and seal [Besiegelung]?" (GS 341). Such remarks only reinforce the conclusion implied by eternal recurrence being so readily derived from Nietzsche's analysis of human value generally, namely that Nietzsche's own values are to be understood as symptoms of a particular physiological system and its affirmative relation to life.

§ 9. The Value of Higher Type Individuals as a Symptom

The preceding has endeavored to demonstrate that two of Nietzsche's fundamental evaluative claims are symptomatic in the same manner he thinks other human values are. The task now is to apply this conclusion to Nietzsche's evaluation of higher type individuals. There are at least three separate considerations deserving of attention. First, the reasons to

understand Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals as a symptom rather than being the product of a something like an "evaluative taste" need to be presented. Second, if the value of higher type individuals is to be understood as a symptom, the manner in which it is a symptom of Nietzsche's particular physiology needs to be addressed, at least in a preliminary manner. Third, how Nietzsche's call to resist institutionalized decadence is impacted by the conclusions reached in both this chapters and chapter II also requires some comment. I will consider each of these in turn.

It is not necessary that Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals be understood as a symptom simply because there are good reasons to think that his most central positive and negative valuations are to be understood in this manner. However, the analysis of values and morality as symptoms is the only manner Nietzsche consistently endorses for their explication. As such, there must be a presumption in favor of interpreting Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals in such a manner. Now, Leiter utilizes several scattered references to build the notion of an "evaluative taste" by which he suggests we understand the value of higher type individuals, but there is nothing in the remarks he cites to support the existence of a second Nietzschean analysis of value in terms of taste. Nevertheless, this is not a wholly implausible suggestion. It might be unreasonable to suppose that Nietzsche takes all valuations, no matter how trivial, to be symptomatic of underlying physiological in the two manners we've identified, regardless of whether he ever explicitly set out such an analysis. For example, it might seem a little odd if Nietzsche were to insist that my preference for red wines produced with syrah grapes over those produce from cabernet sauvignon grapes to be symptomatic either of my conditions for expressing my own mode of the will to power or as being the result of my underlying physiological disposition toward

life. Certainly there must be room for the determination of relatively trivial matters of preference outside the symptomatic analyses presented thus far. Let us hypothesize that there is such an independent manner of preference analysis, a Nietzschean understanding of taste. I leave it to others to develop such an account. I will instead suggest that even if such an account were developed, Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals would fall outside of it.

I have argued that primary Nietzschean values, such as the disvalue of pity and the will for eternal recurrence, are best understood as symptoms. As a result of this I assert that if there is a Nietzschean analysis of taste, then it will not apply to valuations that figure in a physiological system's attaining its maximal expression of strength or those that are a consequence of that physiological system's life meta-value. In II.3 we reviewed evidence to suggest that Nietzsche viewed his philosophical work as being preparatory for future higher type individuals, of which he describes himself and others as "heralds and precursors" (BGE 44). Specifically, his work was to abet them in their activities. For example, recall that he speaks of "a revaluation of values under whose new pressure and hammer a conscience would be steeled, a heart turned to bronze, in order to endure the weight of such responsibility" (BGE: 203). Nietzsche viewed his work as existing for this abetting end. We also saw in II.3 that he closely associated himself with his work, and especially the revaluation, which he describes as "an act of supreme self-examination [Selbstbesinnung] on the part of humanity become flesh and genius in me" (EH IV: 1). The identification of Nietzsche with his work was further explicated in section III.5, in which we considered Nietzsche's disvalue of pity. This section concluded that Nietzsche's disvalue of pity is a symptom of his particular physiology in that such a valuation is a condition of his

flourishing, namely his achieving the maximal expression of strength characteristic of his particular drive structure. What constitutes Nietzsche's flourishing is his task, his philosophical work. From this it follows that Nietzsche sees his own expression of the will to power as being for the abetting of higher type individuals. Hence, I conclude that Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals must be closely related to the same physiological facts that determine his expression of the will to power. That is, their value is of the kind that falls outside the purview of any proposed analysis of taste and is instead best understood as being symptomatic of Nietzsche's particular physiology.

The same conclusion follows from considerations of the value higher type individuals have in virtue of their bringing about a future for humanity. It was concluded in section II.3 that the value of higher type individuals is in part due to the effects they have on the future. One of these effects is bringing about the triumph of the Zarathustran counter-ideal whereby the will to humanity's future becomes the commonly understood meaning and purpose of human existence and suffering. The other is the redemption of the past through their creative formation of humanity's future, which puts an end to revenge. The overcoming of revenge is held by Nietzsche to be one of the highest goods, which supports the conclusion that higher type individuals have value in no small part due to their being instruments of this good. However, the extinction of revenge is ultimately a will that the past return as the future, a will to eternal recurrence. If higher type individuals have value because of this redeeming effect, then it must be linked in some significant way to the will to eternal recurrence. It was the conclusion of section III.8 that the will to eternal recurrence is a symptom of Nietzsche's physiologically affirmative relation to life and living. From this I conclude again that the

value of higher type individuals cannot be explained with reference to a proposed analysis of Nietzschean taste, but is instead to be understood symptomatically.

If Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals is to be understood symptomatically, the next logical question is to wonder precisely how it is a symptom. Answering this question in any depth will be set aside for further research as I think it will require much sifting through the ramifications of taking this valuing to be symptomatic at all. However, I am inclined to think that the value of higher men is symptomatic of Nietzsche's affirmative life meta-value and will here offer one manner of understanding it as such. As a descriptive matter Nietzsche associates life with a form-giving and creative activity. Certainly there is some plausibility to this association. Procreation would be a paradigmatic example of the creative nature of life. Furthermore, living organisms appear to universally engage in various nutritive processes during which foreign materials have a biologically dictated form imposed upon them that results in either the sustenance or growth of the organism. By all appearances it would seem that living things are not just organisms, but organizers. In II.3 the relationship between higher type individuals and the future was explored. One prominent feature of higher type individuals in the future is their role as creators, as artists who will impose a form upon the future of humanity. In this manner higher type individuals are a form-giving and creative force operating at the level of societies and civilizations. Perhaps it could be said that in virtue of this activity higher type individuals are just the creative force characteristic of life *writ large*. They are the organisms *qua* organizers *par excellence*. If Nietzsche has an affirmative life meta-value, then he values positively those things most characteristic of life, which would include creating and the imposition of form. If higher type individuals are incarnations of creative force in some concentrated and rarefied form,

then Nietzsche would also value them positively. I think this is one manner that Nietzsche's value of higher type individuals could be plausibly interpreted as a symptom. However, I suspect that there is something vitally important to understanding Nietzsche's value of higher type individuals related to the fact that the products of their creativity will redeem the past, which is in turn related to eternal recurrence. As such, if the value of higher type individuals is a symptom, then I expect its full explication will only be revealed by exploring further the symptomatic nature of Nietzsche's will to eternal recurrence. This task I commend to future research.

Finally, let us reconsider briefly the question that Leiter hypothetically asks of Nietzsche, whether it is a "fact" that we ought to resist institutionalized decadence ("*Ecrasez l'infame*!"). Recall that Leiter has Nietzsche respond, "'No; only crush it – and only view it as infamy – if you share my evaluative taste for the flourishing of higher men'."[89] Our conclusion concerning Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals as a symptom suggests at least one amendment to this response. If the value of higher type individuals is to be understood as symptom, then whether one should, or will, view institutionalized decadence as infamy will depend on whether some relevant physiological facts are true of that person, namely those same facts that determine Nietzsche's own valuing of higher type individuals. However, the relationship higher type individuals have to the future yields some interesting suggestions concerning why resistance to institutionalized decadence might be of consequence to individuals other than higher type individuals.

Nietzsche conceives of the work of higher type individuals in the future as having an impact on humanity generally. Remember, in his role as social-architect the philosopher of

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[89] Leiter, p. 154.

the future "will make use of religions for his project of cultivation [Züchtungs] and education [Erziehungswerke], just as he will make use of whatever political and economic states are at hand" (BGE: 61). What Nietzsche goes on to say in this passage about the use of religion by higher type individuals is provocative. He claims, "the selective [auslesende] and cultivating [züchtende] influence, always destructive as well as creative [schöpferische] and form-giving [gestaltende], which can be exerted with the help of religions, is always multiple and different according to the sort of human beings who are placed under its spell and protection." Most interestingly, for "ordinary human beings, ... the vast majority who exist for service and the general advantage, and who *may* exist only for that – religion gives an inestimable contentment [Genügsamkeit] with their situation and type ...". In an extremely uncharacteristic moment of praise Nietzsche then says, "perhaps nothing in Christianity or Buddhism is as venerable as their art of teaching even the lowliest how to place themselves through piety in an illusory higher order of things and thus to maintain their contentment [Genügen] with the real order, in which their life is hard enough – and precisely this hardness is necessary." What this suggests is that higher type individuals will make of religion, at least as it regards the majority of humanity, in a manner that is functionally equivalent to decadent religions such as Christianity. A religion for the masses under the influence of higher type individuals will also serve to justify their lives and promote their contentment. This is not surprising when one considers again that part of the work of higher type individuals is to not just destroy institutionalized decadence, but replace it with the Zarathustran counter-ideal through a revaluation of values. It is an end to one answer for the "why?" of human existence and suffering, but the beginning of a new answer grounded in the will to an earthly future for humanity. At least in this important respect there is nothing

about a future shaped by higher type individuals that is worse than one of continued institutionalized decadence for the majority of human beings. However, there is also reason to suppose that Nietzsche takes the ramifications of such a revaluation to be beneficial.

The work of higher type individuals in the future ultimately accomplishes an overcoming of the will to revenge. Nietzsche locates the source of vengefulness, or *ressentiment*, in weakness. It is a symptom of those who experience chronic feelings of impotence in the face of overwhelming resistance. Nietzsche defines decadent morality as "the idiosyncrasy of decadents with the ulterior motive of revenging oneself against life – successfully" (EH IV: 7). The ascendancy of decadent values is attributable in part to the appeal vengeance has for the majority of humanity, whose lives are comprised largely of frustration and suffering resulting in exhaustion and feelings of impotence. However, Nietzsche also claims that vengefulness is harmful for weak individuals: "Nothing burns one up faster than the affects of *ressentiment*. Anger, pathological vulnerability, impotent lust for revenge, thirst for revenge, poison-mixing in any sense – no reaction could be more disadvantageous [nachtheiligste] for the exhausted [Erschöptfte]." (EH I: 6) Vengefulness has the effect of exacerbating the condition of those already enervated. As a result, "born of weakness, *ressentiment* is most harmful [schädlicher] for the weak themselves" (EH I: 6). This suggests that those aspects of decadent morality that foster vengefulness are *bad for* the same individuals among whom decadent morality has had the most influence. This is to say that the sort of flourishing dictated by the drive structure of such an individual, which might perhaps be merely that they play some function in a larger human project, is not advanced by vengefulness. The desire for revenge is a common symptom of a particular type of physiology under inhospitable conditions, but vengefulness is not a condition for the

flourishing of these individuals. On the contrary, the vengeance mongering of decadent morality encourages a wasteful dissipation of energy that hinders the fullest expression of their strength. For the sake of their flourishing, it would be better for them, the majority of humanity, to overcome the will to revenge. We've seen that Nietzsche claims that the overcoming of revenge is a product of the activities of higher type individuals in creating an earthly future for humanity. It's also been established that Nietzsche thinks institutionalized decadence in the present has the effect of harming the flourishing of higher type individuals and jeopardizing this possible future in which revenge is overcome. From this it follows that resisting institutionalized decadence in the present promotes the flourishing of the majority of humanity in the future. It would appear that the work of higher type individuals does not just result in the deployment of religious institutions in a manner that provides the same comfort and sense of purpose that decadent morality has traditionally provided for the bulk of humanity. In addition, the creation of an environment in which the will to revenge has been overcome serves the prudential interests of this large portion of humanity in a manner that decadent morality does not. These abbreviated reflections point to the conclusion that when one takes into account the manner in which higher type individuals are to impact the future for all humanity the significance of Nietzsche's call to resist institutionalized decadence in the present is altered in a potentially dramatic fashion. Developing in further detail just how considerations of the future impact the disvalue of institutionalized decadence in the present is also commended to future research.

IV. Conclusion

Herein I have addressed two questions arising from Nietzsche's claim that decadent morality has been "mankind's greatest misfortune" (A: 51). The first concerned establishing precisely in what way decadent morality is considered disvaluable by Nietzsche. To this end Leiter's interpretation was considered whereby decadent morality is disvaluable because of the harmful effect institutionalized decadence has upon the flourishing of a certain class of "higher" individuals. In Leiter's view this effect is disvaluable for Nietzsche because such individuals are valuable ends in themselves as manifestations of human excellence. However, an exploration of the manner in which Nietzsche describes the active relationship these individuals have to humanity's future revealed good reason to believe Nietzsche also values higher type individuals as instruments of bringing about some valuable state of affairs in the future. This value is particularly evident in Nietzsche's claim that the end of revenge will be a result of their work upon the future, an end ultimately related to the will to eternal recurrence. The importance Nietzsche attaches to overcoming revenge as a goal of his philosophy, as well as the central position of the will to eternal recurrence within it, suggest that the value higher type individuals possess as instruments to this end is significant. The conclusion thus reached is that the disvalue Nietzsche attributes to decadent morality due to its harming of higher type individuals is not due entirely to their value as ends in themselves, but is also substantially composed of their value as instruments in shaping the course of humanity's future.

The second question considered was the manner in which Nietzsche's disvaluing of decadent morality should be understood, especially in light of the skepticism he expresses concerning the objectivity of value. In response to this question Leiter asserts that Nietzsche

is merely giving expression to a certain "evaluative taste" when he condemns decadent morality on the grounds that it harms higher type individuals. This conclusion was disputed by developing a different interpretation of Nietzsche's values generally, and his valuing of higher type individuals specifically, in the terms Nietzsche himself proposes to understand human values, namely as symptoms of a particular physiology. Two of the ways Nietzsche proposes to understand values symptomatically were developed and in each case evidence was given supporting the conclusion that central Nietzschean valuations are to be understood as symptoms. The proximity Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals has to these central valuations leads me to conclude that it is likewise to be understood as a symptom. This conclusion is made particularly compelling due to two facts. The first is the substantial value higher type individuals appear to possess for Nietzsche as instruments to achieving a future in which revenge is overcome, an end Nietzsche closely identifies with the will to eternal recurrence. The second is the existence of strong evidence to suppose that Nietzsche understands the will to eternal recurrence as being a symptom of a physiological system's affirmative relation to living. I take this as sufficient grounds to conclude that Nietzsche's valuing of higher type individuals is an object of his own manner of analyzing human value generally. The value he accords to higher type individuals is to be understood as a symptom of Nietzsche's particular physiology. Developing such an understanding of Nietzsche in terms of a physiology and its relation to life only seems fitting for a philosopher who claims, "I turned my will to health, to *life*, into a philosophy" (EH I: 2).

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