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Thesis

Nietzsche's Circle: And a Way Out!

by

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NIETZSCHE'S CIRCLE: AND A WAY OUT!

JORDAN FINKLE

ABSTRACT

In the always connected and fast-paced modern world we live in, questions about who we are, what our values are, and how to act are more pertinent than ever. What better way to reconcile these questions than turning to a seemingly out of touch 19th century German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche? Interestingly enough, Nietzsche lamented that his contemporaries would never understand his work; similarly, he thought of his own work as directed towards 'philosophers of the future.' As any present moment passes and as history progresses, we, in a sense, run away from ourselves. This projecting of oneself into the future is unavoidable. Could one ever strictly pin down oneself in such a way to eliminate this problem of time? Of course not! This is an absurd question. What we should really be asking is can we at least exist in a way that is at one with the movement of time and the immediacy of modern technology? The purpose of this paper is to illuminate what would be involved in the task of figuring out how to authentically be-alongside-oneself in this way, qua Nietzsche. However, once we, if successful, are able to achieve a mode of being-alongside-ourselves, it is fruitless, in a sense; we are always being thrown into the future and are therefore no longer alongside-ourselves as such. This is why we shall pivot at the end of this paper in order to suggest how it is possible to orient our being-thrown-into-the-future in the most useful and timely way.

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Introduction

What if it was possible catch up to ourselves, to race forward into the future alongside ourselves? Could this be the only way to truly find meaning in life and be happy in modernity? When we think about the concept of selfhood we cannot avoid the problem of the existence of the self *over time*; this is why we must *catch up* to ourselves if we are to *be alongside* ourselves, if we are to *be* ourselves. We can begin the process of uncovering meaning from the problem of the existence of the self over time by identifying three specific aspects of the self in time: the self in the present, the self in the past, and the self in the future. Any robust notion of selfhood must touch upon the self in these three temporal states.

The purpose of this thesis is to understand Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of selfhood and in doing so, by virtue of our three distinctions, we hope to catch up to ourselves in time. This will allow us to make meaningful suggestions about how best to orient ourselves towards the future based on who we are and who we have been. The purpose of orienting ourselves towards the future in this way is to come up with a more complete and useful way of discussing and understanding how to be happy or rather to be able to *find, uncover, create meaning for ourselves in our time*.

This paper is divided into three chapters; the themes of the three chapters correspond to a different temporal aspect of selfhood, i.e. the self in the present, the past, and the future. Of course, since these different aspects of the self are, in actuality, unified, each section presupposes conclusions from the other two and will necessarily bleed into each other. In the conclusion, an attempt is made to jump out

of this cyclical dance between present, past, and future. Certain parallels between the content of Nietzsche's writing and the stylistic form in which he presents it helps ground the purpose of his philosophy and its deliberately unsystematic character. I conclude by suggesting how certain Buddhist principles can help a self, in the Nietzschean context, psychologically orient itself in the *present* towards finding meaning in life through the *future* after coming to know one's *past* as such.

Chapter One: Nietzsche's Philosophy of Mind

Nietzsche's philosophy of mind is a fitting place to begin this investigation since it can be read as focusing on the self in the present. In this section, we will attempt to fix and contain the notion of 'the self in the present' in order to illustrate some of its constituent parts, unconscious states and conscious states. In this illustration, we will make hard distinctions between conscious states and unconscious states in order to emphasize their differences and possible incompatibility. These distinctions, however, will be softened at the end of this section to make a larger point and to move forward. We will see how unconscious states both compete with as well as generate conscious states in order to create our perspective. This created perspective, in its 'fixed' state in the present will be fragmented (not unified), incomplete (perspectival), and transformative (linguistic conceptualization). This created perspective, we will see, *becomes distorted in its historical instantiation.* This process of the *becoming* of consciousness and its historical instantiation will not only parallel how Nietzsche's aphoristic style affects the reader, it will also illustrate how and why Nietzsche thinks we need to create meaning out of our perspectivally distorted condition. Further, this competing-generating nature will parallel how honesty and artistry compete with and regulate each other in order to create a truthful illusion that redeems the meaning in life. This interconnectivity between Nietzsche's philosophy of mind and his philosophy of meaning, their respective parallels between their content and form, as well as the overall parallels between the content and form of both sets of theories will allow us to suggest why Nietzsche

was so poetic. Nietzsche does not write out the 'dos and don'ts' of his philosophy of mind in one concise and systematic treatise. Instead, he hints at important ruling principles and deliberately contradicts himself or is purposefully vague while discussing his theories on conscious states, unconscious states, perspective, and distortion. Further, Nietzsche does so over the course of various publications. The purpose and affect of these stylistic choices will be illustrated after investigating Nietzsche's philosophy of mind in more detail. Chapters Two and Three of Paul Katsafanas's *The Nietzschean Self* serve as my life raft in the form(less) sea of the content of Nietzsche's philosophy of mind.

Nietzsche himself discusses the influence exercised on his own theories of consciousness by three philosophers: Gottfried Leibniz, Immanuel Kant, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. He explicates their influence on him in *The Gay Science* Book 357. By exploring the Leibnizian, Kantian, and Hegelian understandings of the relationship between conscious states and unconscious states not only will we be able to see their respective influence on Nietzsche's philosophy of mind, but we will also be able to see how the experience of consciousness of a self in the present is necessarily fragmented, incomplete, and transformative; at the end we will also suggest that this conception of the self in the present as *perspectival* lends itself to a conception of the self in the present as being *perspectivally distorted*. This shape of distortion becomes concrete, however, only in its historical instantiation. This chapter is divided into three parts, one for the connection with each philosopher.

1.1 The Leibniz Connection: Consciousness & Unconsciousness, Language &

Conceptualization

Nietzsche states that Leibniz's great contribution to philosophy is the

sacrilegious thought that consciousness is not the alpha and omega of the human

character; Leibniz thinks that our thoughts constitute our consciousness in a way

that is not necessarily objectively true. Nietzsche states, "Leibniz's incomparable

insight…that consciousness is merely an *accidens* (accident, inessential property) of

the power of representation and *not* its necessary and essential attribute; so what

we call consciousness constitutes only one state of our spiritual and psychic world

(perhaps a sick state) and *by no means the whole of it*" (GS 357). Here, we see

Nietzsche himself praises the sacrilege of Leibniz's idea that consciousness not only

has constituent parts, but also that it is, itself, merely an *inessential* part of the

totality of representation. This assertion is pretty stark since many of us (as well as

many philosophers) typically think that consciousness is the most important,

trustworthy, and paradigmatically human aspect of the mind. Leibniz employs an

example of how the roar of the surf, which is typically thought of as a singular and

unified sound of a wave, when reflected upon, is actually an amalgamation of sounds

created by the crashing of many individual drops of water onto many individual

grains of sand. Just as we perceive one roar, conscious perceptions are actually

made up of individual *petites perceptions*, which are inaccessible to the

consciousness, according to Leibniz. Nietzsche credits Leibniz as discovering, so to

speak, the unconscious and how the combination of unconscious states constitutes

conscious states. A simple acknowledgement of the role the unconscious plays in the formulation of conscious states has its bearings in the Nietzsche as well. Nietzsche states, "All qualities of a person of which he is conscious...are subject to laws of development entirely different from those qualities which are...badly known to him" (GS 8). The way in which these laws of development, which generate conscious states, do not form a unified Ego is best illustrated by way of a brief digression to the theories of Sigmund Freud.

Katsafanas reminds us of a common misconception of Freud's theories, a reminder that will help make sense of Leibniz's theory in an essentially Nietzschean, but initially counterintuitive way. In this pseudo-Freudian model, the unconscious is a fully formed system that competes with the fully formed system of the conscious. This understanding is clearly at odds with the Leibnizian tradition of the unconscious; Leibniz states that unconscious states constitute or generate conscious states while this pseudo-Freudian model states that unconscious states are distinct from and compete with conscious states. What is shared in these two traditions is that unconscious states are not accessible to introspection but the reasons as to why this is the case differ. Although, initially, these two theories seem at odds with each other, Nietzsche's theory employs Leibniz's understanding in a way that may account for the unconscious as *both* generating as well as competing with the conscious. As the argument goes, consciousness, for Nietzsche, does not refer to a unified substantive faculty characterized by causal efficacy; this is not the same as saying that conscious states are epiphenomenal, however, because for Nietzsche,

they are not. Despite the allure of such a way of thinking about conscious states, Nietzsche vehemently denies the idea of an Ego in terms of a unified substantive faculty. Nietzsche denies the Ego in this way because he thinks that, as Katsafanas notes, "our best accounts of thinking, feeling, and willing do not mention an Ego. In other words, the Ego is a fictional concept; nothing corresponds to it" (NS 25). A reformulation of this refined denial of a unified Ego, but not of consciousness can be understood as "*subject-multiplicity*," which would, in turn, negate the possibility of a unifying structure behind a multiplicity of unconscious mental states, the sum of which could be denoted as consciousness or the 'Ego.' This ruling out of the possibility of a "behind-the-scenes," unifying 'Consciousness' is consistent with Nietzsche's crusade against all reifying concepts and is the grounds for our assertion that consciousness is fragmented in some sense.

If consciousness is to be understood as not having a unified, behind the scenes Ego or as fragmented, then the conscious state generated by the competition of unconscious states must not be a unification of the totality of these states involved in the generation. In order to understand the nature of the relations between unconscious states and conscious states in a way that can possibly reconcile our Leibnizian and pseudo-Freudian models, it is important to note, as Katsafanas does, *why* unconscious states must lie outside of introspective awareness as well as *how* they are introspectively inaccessible in our conception of unconscious states thus far. The answer to these questions (*why* and *how*) will have something to do with the initial utility of consciousness.

If the unconscious cannot be accessed by a conscious state, one could infer that this renders the conscious state slightly more impotent than one would typically feel comfortable with. Katsafanas asserts that consciousness as such is not completely useless. Nietzsche notes that the utility of consciousness actually stems from the impotence of man, from the need to *communicate* in order to survive. Clearly, this conception of consciousness cannot stem from the same type of communication used by animals, since they do not have conscious states in the way humans do. That is why Nietzsche notes the specifically *linguistic* character of the communicative utility of conscious states. Nietzsche states:

> [T]he [continual] thinking that rises to *consciousness* is only the smallest part of all this – the most superficial and worst part – for only this conscious thinking *occurs in words, which is to say signs of communication* and this fact uncovers the origin of consciousness. In brief, the development of language and the development of consciousness (not of Reason but merely of the way Reason enters consciousness) go hand in hand. (GS 354)

This linguistic character of conscious thinking is unique to consciousness and is not involved in unconscious processes. For Nietzsche, understanding a concept is the same as understanding a concept's place in the system of relations between all concepts, which entails the mutual necessity of words and concepts.

By asserting the linguistic character of consciousness, Nietzsche is also asserting that, "conscious thinking is conceptually articulated…conscious mental

states have conceptual content" (NS 29). This is an important move in the distinction between conscious and unconscious states because, as Katsafanas states, while conscious states have conceptual content, unconscious states have nonconceptual content. Further, by asserting the linguistic character of consciousness, Nietzsche is also asserting that conscious states will somehow be an insufficient representation of the self, overtly influenced by the common aspect of the possibility of communication; this suggests that consciousness is transformative in its linguistic determination. Nietzsche, in discussing how an individual can communicate to a group, laments, "Must he not first translate himself into the grotesquely obvious and present his entire person and cause in this coarsened and simplified version?" (GS 236). Obviously, Nietzsche thinks that the communicability of conscious states somehow dumbs down who the person is. The point here is that a person can only communicate a portion of himself, his conscious states, thus presenting a 'coarsened and simplified version' or dumbed down version of himself.

Nietzsche hints at why this limited or dumbed down version is necessarily the case, when he remarks: "Even one's thoughts one cannot entirely reproduce in words" (GS 244). Clearly, Nietzsche thinks that we cannot express our unconscious states in words. Again, this impossibility stems from two facts about the self in the present and foreshadows the incomplete and transformative character of consciousness. First, that unconscious states are inaccessible to conscious states (conscious states cannot speak about something it cannot know) and, second, conscious states have conceptual content, which allows them to be conceptually

articulated or communicated in language, while unconscious states have

nonconceptual content and cannot be communicated as such.

Nietzsche illustrates this inaccessibility of unconscious states to conscious

states by stating that we cannot prove our conscious concepts by way of what they

refer to (unconscious nonconceptual states) since the reference is inaccessible to

the referrer.

> Our opinions, valuations, and tables of what is good are certainly
>
> some of the most powerful levers in the machinery of our action, but
>
> that in each case, *the law of its mechanism is unprovable.* (GS 335,
>
> emphasis added)

Again, this 'unprovability,' so to speak, goes hand in hand with the inability to

linguistically express unconscious states in conscious states. As Nietzsche explains:

> *Consciousness in general has developed only under the pressure of the*
>
> *need to communicate*…[The fact] that our actions, thoughts, feelings,
>
> and movements – at least some of them – even enter into
>
> consciousness is the result of a terrible 'must' which has ruled over
>
> man for a long time: as the most endangered animal he *needed* help
>
> and protection…he had to express his neediness…and to do so, he first
>
> needed 'consciousness' (GS 354).

Therefore, it seems to be the case that Nietzsche believes that the need for

communication in the service of early survival is what gave consciousness its

linguistic character. Further, this linguistic character and the communicability

thereof, in turn, solidified the herd or group instinct in the individual at the cost of the individuality of the individual; this negative transformation of orienting to the herd over the individual is why Nietzsche calls consciousness the 'shallowest,' 'worst,' and 'most superficial' aspect of the self. Finally, the inaccessibility of this shallow, linguistic aspect of the self can be attributed to the necessarily conceptual part of consciousness. Consciousness necessarily has conceptual content because of its linguistic character and unconscious states are necessarily inaccessible to conscious states precisely because conscious states have this linguistic-conceptual aspect and unconscious states do not; the inability of conscious states to access unconscious states suggests consciousness is incomplete.

What is immediately pressing in this task is the need to refine our understanding of the term 'contents.' The kind of content belonging to a mental state is, according to Katsafanas, made up of simpler concepts and structured in a way that adequately characterizes the content itself. This entails a sort of necessity for a familiarity, so to speak, with the concept in order to make sense of the conceptual content in a mental state. The relation between the unconscious and the conscious satisfies this need for a familiarity with a conscious concept before actually becoming conscious of the concept. *Unconscious perceptions, which are nonconceptual, generate and constitute our conscious concepts.* Strictly speaking, one could not know that the jacket is blue if one lacked the concept 'jacket' or 'blue.' This strict conceptualization of the perception of the content as content that is a jacket, which is blue, is not present in our unconscious perception. In our example, one can

unconsciously and nonconceptually perceive 'blue jacket,' however the person perceiving would not understand that what she is perceiving is a jacket, and all that entails about weather, which is blue, and all that entails about the length of light waves. The content in unconscious perception is the same as that in conscious perception, but the content is represented to the unconscious as nonconceptual, or pre-conceptualized (and by implication, necessarily non-linguistic).

The distinction now becomes more intelligible. Conscious states have conceptual content that is constituted by the nonconceptual content of unconscious perception. The way in which one is 'familiar' with a concept in conscious representation before actually becoming conscious of that concept is just to say that concepts represented to conscious states are generated by nonconceptual perceptions in unconscious states. Katsafanas illustrates the distinction that allows us to make sense of how unconscious states can generate yet compete with conscious states: "And Nietzsche's surprising claim is this: conscious mental states have conceptual content, whereas unconscious states have nonconceptual content" (NS 31). Moving forward, in order to move even closer to this full understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy of mind or of the self in the present, we shall focus on the second philosopher who influenced Nietzsche, Immanuel Kant.

To summarize, at this juncture, we have called attention to the way in which Nietzsche's philosophy of mind incorporates a Leibnizian understanding of consciousness as being constituted by petite perceptions in unconsciousness and a pseudo-Freudian understanding of unconscious states being distinct from and

inaccessible to conscious states in virtue of the latter's linguistic determination. We have also illustrated how consciousness should be identified with 'subject-multiplicity' more so than with a unified, behind-the-scenes Ego; the previous two assertions suggest that consciousness is fragmented or at least not unified. The linguistic character of consciousness, of course, is what characterizes its process of conceptualization; this suggests that consciousness is transformative. Further, we have suggested that consciousness is merely an accidental quality of the self and not its necessary nor its demarking quality or essence; this suggest that consciousness is incomplete.

1.2 The Kantian-Schopenhauerian Connection: Abstract & Concrete Content, Universal & Individual Content

Although Nietzsche aggressively disagrees with Kant's assertions about things-in-themselves, Kant's distinction between the world of noumena and the world of phenomena is an initial jumping off point for understanding the limited roll of conscious concepts in relation to the totality of perception, representation, and understanding. Nietzsche's explication of the utility of Kant's distinction is confusing because Nietzsche typically disagrees with all of Kant's ascetic philosophical tendencies yet in this instance seems to be praising him. It is also confusing because Nietzsche articulates this point by way of reference to Schopenhauer, the philosophy of whom Nietzsche also has a love-hate relationship. Kant wants to limit

the realm that concepts can be intelligible in by questioning causality. Nietzsche makes the following observation:

> Let us recall, secondly, *Kant's* colossal question mark that he placed on the concept 'causality'....he started much more cautiously to delimit the realm in which this concept makes any sense whatsoever (GS 357).

While Schopenhauer agreed that abstract knowledge involves concepts, he asserted that perceptual knowledge is nonconceptual. Of course, these two types of knowledge are closely linked; *abstract knowledge* conceptualizes insofar as it takes *nonconceptual perceptions* and makes them communicable, transforms them. This argument is derived from the fact that both man and animal have perceptual knowledge of nonconceptual content as well as the more important fact that it is only man who uniquely has abstract knowledge of conceptual content insofar as it is only man who has language as such.

When referring to the word consciousness throughout *The Gay Science,* Nietzsche uses the word *Bewußtheit* instead of *Bewußtsein*, which is more commonly used, because the former's suffix (*-heit*) typically signifies an abstract property in German (GS 11). Further, Schopenhauer extends the distinction between nonconceptual and conceptual content to feelings insofar as man and animal can have the same feelings, but only man conceptualizes these feelings. This conceptualization of nonconceptual perceptual content by the consciousness, of course, manifests as conceptually articulated thinking of abstract knowledge, which,

for Schopenhauer, makes the existence of reflective thinking possible. Not only does this make reflective thinking possible, it has important implications for our previous discussion on the linguistic character of conceptual thinking. Further, this entails a very important and new distinction between concepts as abstract and non-individual (universal) and perceptions as particular (concrete) and individual. Further still, this means that consciously represented conceptual content is not made up of individual unconsciously perceived nonconceptual content since, strictly speaking, abstract concepts' linguistic character cannot have introspective awareness of nonlinguistic nonconceptual perception[1].

In order to fully understand how the self in the present is characterized by the relationship of unconscious states competing with yet generating conscious states even though conscious states cannot have introspective awareness to unconscious states, we must further elaborate how the difference between abstract universal (non-individual) perception and concrete (particular) Individual perception fits into the conscious/unconscious and the conceptual/nonconceptual distinction, respectively. Consistent with the clean relationship between conscious/unconscious and conceptual/nonconceptual, Nietzsche thinks that perception of conceptual content is conscious and perception of nonconceptual content is unconscious. This, of course, entails the idea that perception of unconscious nonconceptual content is determinately structured and has

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[1] This claim of the impossibility of introspective awareness of nonlinguistic conceptual perception by the abstract concept's linguistic is highly controversial and by no means proven. However, this claim is introduced for three reasons: first, to be

determinate content, but does not involve concepts as previously stated. This means

that unconscious content is nonconceptually perceived, but not linguistically

articulated. As Katsafanas observes:

> Unconscious perceptions have conceptual content, in the sense that
>
> they represent their objects in a definite way, but do not represent
>
> them as instantiating concepts; conscious perceptions have
>
> conceptual content, in the sense that they represent their objects as
>
> instantiating concepts (NS 37).

All of this is, of course, consistent with the concrete and individual character of

unconsciously perceived nonconceptual content illustrated above.

So what would an unconscious perception that is concrete and individual yet

is not conceptualized look like? This hinges on the discriminatory function involved

in this unconscious perception. Katsafanas notes that although concepts must

involve discriminatory abilities, they cannot be reduced to a simple discriminatory

faculty, similar to how reflection is the product of conceptual capacities, which must

involve nonconceptual perception, but is not reducible to it. Katsafanas elaborates

by remarking that concepts not only involve discrimination, but also involve

classification, whereas the nonconceptual does not. Katsafanas illustrates the

difference between discrimination and classification, "concepts are systematically

related to other concepts, and concepts can be employed in non-perceptual

contexts…concepts are classificatory capacities" (NS 39). Further, this type of

conceptualization involving classification can be abstract, i.e. take place in non-

perceptual contexts. Concept possession incorporates discriminating individual instances of a concept, incorporates relations between concepts, and incorporates abstraction when concepts are not present to perception. Therefore, concepts get their abstract and universal (non-individual) character from nonconceptual perceptions (in a way that is a-traditionally causal), through the conscious classification of the unconsciously discriminated concrete and individual perceptions. The conscious abstraction, universalization, and classification inherent in the linguistic conceptualization of non-conceptual content suggest that conscious states transform the content of unconscious states.

So now, our distinction between the conceptual nature of content in conscious states and the nonconceptual nature of unconscious states is more refined. By way of Schopenhauer's critique of Kant's way of delimiting of content, we have acquired a new viewpoint into the linguistic character of conceptual content in consciousness and its implications for how unconscious states can *compete* with conscious states. In addition, also by way of Schopenhauer's critique of Kant's approach, we have a new viewpoint into how unconscious states can *constitute* conscious states. This process of *becoming*, this illustration of how conscious conceptual representation is abstract and how concepts are universal (non-individual) as well as how unconscious nonconceptual perception is concrete and how nonconceptual perceptions are individual further refines the possibility of how unconscious states can compete with yet generate conscious states insofar as concepts are linguistic and universal abstractions (transformations) of concrete and

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individual nonconceptual perceptions. Our distinction between the character of

conscious states and the character of unconscious states not only refines our

understanding of the relationship between conscious states and unconscious states,

i.e. the latter competes with, yet generates the former. It also illustrates how there is

a gap, if you will, between what is present in conscious states and what is present in

unconscious states; at the very least we can say that competing unconscious states

cannot be wholly unified in conscious states and that conscious states themselves

are incomplete in some way. Now we turn to Hegel's great philosophical insight on

the nature of becoming and how antonymous (competing) notions generate

concepts in the Nietzsche text.

1.3 The Hegelian Connection: The Becoming of Consciousness, Antinomies in Nietzsche

   This is where our conversation gets interesting. Our nuanced understanding

of why concepts must be identified with conscious states and not with unconscious

states is based on Hegel's understanding of how concepts develop out of each other.

Nietzsche states:

> We Germans are Hegelians…insofar as we…instinctively attribute a
>
> deeper meaning and greater value to becoming and development than
>
> to what 'is'… and also insofar as we are not inclined to concede that
>
> our human logic is logic as such or the only kind of logic (we would
>
> rather persuade ourselves that it is only a special case and perhaps
>
> one of the oddest and stupidest) (GS 357).

Hegel's influence on German philosophy – as Nietzsche understands it, the emphasis on *becoming* over being and the recognition of the lack of the all-encompassing power of human logic – manifests itself in the way concepts develop out of each other. We know that somehow conscious states conceptualize and make possible for communication nonconceptual content in unconscious states by abstracting and universalizing the concrete and particular perceptions in unconscious states. But we still do not have a full account of how we can ascribe a competing and generating character to this process of becoming.

Paul Katsafanas sheds light here by appealing to a Higher Order Theory (HOT) of consciousness in a way that does justice to becoming over being and the lack of an all-encompassing character of human logic (themes which have further implications for the distorted perspective humans create for themselves in history). This version of HOT clarifies how conscious states are conceptual while also making intelligible how unconscious states can compete with yet generate conscious states. *If nothing else, this version of HOT does away with the notion that consciousness or the self in the present is some unified fixed substance that is infallible (complete) and our grounds for accepting reality as such.* Before we introduce Katsafanas's version of HOT for these purposes, let us try and get a Nietzschean sense of how antimonies can compete with one another yet be unified in the generation of a singular concept. This will give us a view point into how concepts in consciousness as well as consciousness itself is a useful transformation of fragmented and competing meanings and wills that, in their contrived unification, are incomplete.

Nietzsche has a special place in his heart for seeming contradictions that are actually not so contradictory. The way in which antimonies relate to one another in the context of concepts as well as in the context of the relationship between unconscious states and conscious states significantly helps us understand the becoming (competing-generating) of concepts and conscious states in a way that transforms one-sided and incomplete meanings and wills into a singular meaning or will, which is itself somehow incomplete in its singularity. First, we will illustrate this point in the context of conceptualization and then in the context of the becoming of consciousness. Nietzsche puts the general point as follows:

> All of us harbor in ourselves hidden gardens and plantations…we are
>
> all growing volcanoes approaching their hour of eruption (GS 9).

This is to say that our hidden gardens somehow erupt to the surface of our being. Less metaphorically, Nietzsche discusses how our concept of displeasure is intimately related to our concept of pleasure and that our concept of pleasure without displeasure is inauthentic or false.

> Pleasure and displeasure are so intertwined that whoever wants as
>
> much as possible of one must also have as much as possible of the
>
> other (GS 12).

It should be stated that the way in which our concept of pleasure is intimately intertwined with our concept of displeasure to such an extent that it is impossible to have one without the other, mimics the way, and one could even argue is grounded in the way, in which conscious states are intimately intertwined with unconscious

states to such an extent that it is impossible to have one without the other. In a

sense, one could say that our concept of displeasure competes with pleasure, since

they are antonymous in definition, yet also generates our or transforms into our

singular concept of pleasure, because of how it is impossible to have pleasure

without displeasure. This is clearly similar to the way in which unconscious states

compete with yet generate conscious sates.

Nietzsche applies this general idea of how antimonies actually constitute a

singular concept to the concept of benevolence.

> We *benefit* and show benevolence towards those who already depend
>
> on us in some way…we want to increase their power because we thus
>
> increase our own (GS 13).

This counterintuitive conception of benevolence involving self-interest in increasing

one's power (which is typically left out of the conception of benevolence) is

consistent with this overall theme of competing senses generating singular concepts

and is a nice way of understanding how unconscious states can possibly compete

with yet generate conscious states. If you think that we should not get our sense of

consciousness from off-hand remarks about concepts, consider the continual

commitment to this view of antinomies and their generating nature. As Nietzsche

remarks, continuing this same theme:

> Yes that this love has furnished the concept of love as the opposite of
>
> egoism when it may in fact be the most candid expression of egoism
>
> (GS 14).

The way in which the concepts of pleasure, benevolence, and love are all generated out of their seemingly antonymous (or 'competing' for our purposes) counterparts clearly parallels the way in which unconscious states compete with yet generate conscious states.

Nietzsche also illustrates *how* this process works. Clearly, these antinomies do not unify themselves. Instead, it is a process of conceptual re-interpretation, a point that has an important bearing on the next sections of this thesis. Nietzsche states this process, in the context of virtues, when he observes:

> There is clearly no trick that enables us to turn a poor virtue into a rich and overflowing one, but we can surely reinterpret its poverty nicely into a necessity, so that its sight no longer offends us (GS 17).

He sees this sort of process at work across the virtues.

> Ask yourself whether…any misfortune and external resistance, whether any kinds of hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, mistrust, hardness, greed, and violence do not belong to the *favourable* conditions without which any great growth even of virtue is scarcely possible (GS 19).

This theme continues ad nauseam, as Nietzsche finds this process at work in our conceptions of prudence, selflessness, violence, generosity, laughter, nobility, punishment, and faithfulness.[2]

There is an obvious theme at play here. Nietzsche thinks that most of our concepts (in consciousness) are not unified concepts, but concepts that are generated by unreconciled oppositions or competing antinomies; one-sided antimonies are transformed into a singular meaning. While this non-formal understanding of the unreconciled contradictions at play in concepts is slightly different from the hard line in the sand that we previously drew about individual concrete unconscious perceptions competing with and generating universal abstract concepts, the sense of the former is important to keep in mind while continuing to generate our understanding of the latter and how it has manifested itself in history.

Before delving into Katsafanas's conclusion about how this competing and generating becoming manifests itself in the present, let us briefly look at what Nietzsche himself says about the unreconciled character of consciousness. Nietzsche

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[2] See his remarks about *prudence* ("Everything men will do will display the highest prudence: But just that way prudence will lose all its dignity"(GS 20,)); *selflessness* ("…the neighbor praises selflessness because it brings him advantage…and above all he would affirm his selflessness by not calling it good…the motives to this morality stand in opposition to its principle…and thus one preaches, in the same breath, a 'Thou shalt' and a 'Thou shalt not' (GS 21)); *violence* ("when individuals had to protect themselves against violence and to that end had themselves to become men of violence" (GS 48)); *generosity* ("with the rich, generosity is often just a type of shyness" (GS 199) *laughter* ("laughter means: to gloat, but with a good conscience " (GS 200); *nobility* ("You envisage a noble ideal…isn't all your work a barbarous sculpting? A blasphemy against your ideal" (GS 215); *punishment* ("the purpose of punishment is to improve the one who *punishes*" (GS)); and *faithfulness* ("from defiance he clings to something he has come to see through, but he calls it 'faithfulness'" (GS 219)).

illustrates how consciousness is itself not unified by comparing the wills of consciousness to constantly and rapidly crashing waves.

> How greedily this wave is approaching…but already another wave is nearing, still more greedily and wildly than the first…that is how the waves live – that is how we live, we who *will* – I will say no more (GS 310).

Further, in GS 317, Nietzsche confesses that he thought the fixed conception of his self was a lasting state of character, when in reality it is a multiplicity of temporary states of being affected.

When critiquing Spinoza's conception of knowledge, Nietzsche discusses how consciousness has to make sense of un-reconciled one-sided wills or antimonies in our language. In aphorism 333, Nietzsche just happens to single out the examples of laughter, lamenting, and cursing. But this way of making sense of un-reconciled one-sided antimonies is not limited to the aforementioned impulses. As he puts it,

> Before knowledge is possible, each of these impulses must first have presented its one-sided view of the thing or event, then comes the fight between these one-sided views, and occasionally out of it a mean, an appeasement, a concession to all three sides (GS 333).

Nietzsche summarizes the meaning of this one-sided fight for conscious conceptual knowing and the transformative supposition accompanying it.

We suppose that *intelligere* must be something conciliatory, just, and good, something essentially opposed to its instincts, when in fact *it is only a certain behavior of the drives towards one another*...*Conscious* thought...is the least vigorous and therefore also the relatively mildest and calmest type of thought (GS 333).

Clearly, Nietzsche does not only remark, in passing, that some of our concepts in consciousness are not singular and unified but are instead generated by competing or antonymous meanings, but he also clearly asserts that consciousness itself is not singular and unified and is instead a state of being affected by unreconciled and one-sided antonymous wills. Therefore at this juncture, our investigation into the process of becoming, of the antonymous meanings present in a singular concept, and the antonymous wills present in a singular conscious state suggests that consciousness is not unified and is transformative; of course, in light of the totality of our discussion we can also suggest that consciousness is incomplete.

1.4 The Higher Order Theory of Consciousness

It should now be clear, not only how concepts involve seemingly contradictory meanings, but also how consciousness itself is the result of or is generated by competing unconscious wills – and, indeed, in a way that is consistent with the parallel distinctions, drawn earlier, between conceptual and nonconceptual, linguistic and a-linguistic, abstract and concrete, universal and

individual, reflective and non reflective, and classificatory and merely discriminatory contents. Before formally delving into the perspectival and transformative nature of consciousness, let's review Katsafanas's formal conception of how to understand the becoming of consciousness, the competing and generating nature of the relationship between unconscious states and conscious states.

The Higher Order Theory of consciousness (HOT) supports that mental states are conscious if and only if the organism has a non-inferential higher order representation with the content of the mental state. Partly due to the fact that higher-order states are typically unconscious, the presence of a second-order state brings about a first order state of consciousness where one of the two present unconscious states make the other its object. This doubling or mirroring of mental states turning two unconscious states into one conscious state could be viewed as rendering the conscious/unconscious and conceptual/nonconceptual distinctions false, however Katsafanas rejects this conclusion. Katsafanas endorses a version of the HOT theory that incorporates the higher-order thought into the conscious state and not just the conscious-making state, focusing on the becoming conscious and not merely on the being conscious. Katsafanas states, "The conscious state is a composite state, which includes both the meta-thought and the original unconscious state" (NS 46). This, as Gennaro notes, entails that conscious states contain a world-directed mental state and a metapsychological thought (NS 46). Therefore this model not only accounts for the conscious state as partially conceptual, but it also accounts for how unconscious states are actually *transformed* by the higher-order

thought, *not merely brought into awareness.* This HOT theory that accounts for Nietzsche's adoption of the conscious/unconscious and conceptual/nonconceptual distinctions is also consistent with Nietzsche's assertions that the conceptual framework in conscious states is contingent and historically changeable, the metapsychological thought is world-directed. Of course, what is valuable is contingent to or dependent on the historical situation one finds oneself in. Katsafanas concludes, "Conscious mental states are those with conceptual content, whereas unconscious mental states are those with nonconceptual content. States with conceptual content are introspectively assessable and communicable, whereas states with nonconceptual content are not" (NS 51). This illustrates how concepts in the consciousness do not directly refer to the contents of experience. Instead they *refer to a valuable transformation of the contents of experience*; this further suggests that consciousness is incomplete in virtue of, but not limited to, this transformation and the lack of direct reference to the contents of experience. This way of explicating how unconscious states can constitute yet compete with conscious states is consistent with Hegel's cryptic assertion that concepts develop out of each other. It also is consistent with our distinction between the refined natures of conscious concepts and unconscious concepts and the implications for the relations.

The result of the foregoing considerations is a very specific understanding of the German philosophical tradition's influence on Nietzsche's philosophy of mind. Thus far, we have shown, in 1.1 that Nietzsche's philosophy of mind reconciles Leibniz's conscious/unconscious distinction, the pseudo-Freudian

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concept/nonconceptual distinction, the implication of the (im)possibility of

linguistic articulation, introspective awareness for the conceptual content in

consciousness and the nonconceptual content in unconsciousness, and an

understanding of consciousness as inessential and as subject-multiplicity. This

suggests that conscious states are fragmented or not unified and incomplete.

Further, in 1.2 we have shown how Leibniz's understanding of how unconscious

states underlie conscious states is reconciled with Schopenhauer's refinement of

Kant's understanding of the delimited role of conscious concepts through the

linguistic and reflective classification of the unconscious discrimination of individual

and concrete nonconceptual perceptions as abstract, universal (non-individual)

conceptual representation in conscious states in the Nietzschean system. This

suggests that conscious states are transformative in their linguistic determination.

In 1.3, we have shown how Hegel's assertion that concepts develop out of each other

is consistent with Nietzsche's illustration of how concepts are made up of many

antonymous one-sided senses of said concept. This suggests that conscious states

are singular instances of multiple competing wills, which are not fully reconciled.

1.4, we have shown how Katsafanas's HOT of consciousness makes sense of Hegel's

emphasis on becoming by accounting for the creation of conscious concepts in

conscious states out of the interaction between and transformation of unconscious

world direct mental states and metapsychological thoughts, in a way that is

consistent with our previous conceptual/conscious and nonconceptual/unconscious

refined set of distinctions as well as in a way that grounds how unconscious states

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can generate yet compete with conscious states. This suggests, of course, that consciousness is transformative in its world orientation. In reflecting on the totality of these influences, we can state that, at the very least, consciousness is not unified and does not explicitly account for the totality of perception of the phenomenological world. The strongest argument for the fragmented, incomplete, and transformative character of consciousness is the fragmented nature of how antonymous wills are present in one conscious state and the linguistic determination necessary to and inherent in the logicizing of perception. Even if the strength of our aforementioned distinctions begin to weaken upon scrutiny, we can at least say that the distinctions are a useful tool in illustrating the presence of antonymous wills within one will or of antonymous conceptual meanings within one concept that allows us to get a sense of the competing-generating nature of the process of becoming. Even if the distinction falls apart, the presence of differences in a singular concept is a useful exercise in gaining a good conscience towards our new conception of consciousness as perspectival (fragmented and incomplete) and transforming (distortive in its historical instantiation). The fragmented and incomplete character of consciousness and the useful simplification of conceptualizing in consciousness (the 'contrived and fixed' end of the process of becoming) suggest that consciousness is merely perspectival. This created perspective, if you will, suggests that the transformative character of consciousness is opened up to the possibility of distortion in its historical instantiation.

1.5 The Perspectival Character of Consciousness

Nietzsche thinks that while concepts are determined by what is common, insofar as concepts are communicable, we do not share concepts, strictly, with other individuals. Crudely put, Nietzsche's theory of *perspectivism* states that concepts are unique to each individual in question.

> The material of the senses organized by the understanding, reduced to rough outlines…Thus, the indistinctness and chaos of sense impressions as it were logicized…the world of 'phenomena' [and] is the organized world which we see to be real. The 'reality' lies in the…recurrence of the like, familiar, related things in their logicized character. (WP 569)

Similarly, he exclaims: "As if a world would still remain over after one had subtracted the perspective!' (WP 567). Clearly, Nietzsche thinks that an individual's perspective always characterizes the way in which the person conceptualizes. This assertion goes hand in hand with Nietzsche's talk of utility in the context of how concepts arise. Katsafanas notes that even if we could refine our concepts to be extremely specific, "it wouldn't matter. For the way in which various unconscious contents become conscious will depend upon the perspective (i.e. system of concepts) that the agent employs; but there are no independent standards for determining which of these perspectives is best" (NS 57).

The upshot is that there are many different, incompatible ways of conceptualizing the nonconceptual content of unconscious perception, even though

the process (along with the linguistically determined character of conceptualization) is common to all. Nietzsche himself discusses the thoroughly perspectival character of our conscious states. "For him, an individual is always an individual, something first and last and tremendous; for him there are no species, sums, or zeroes" (GS 1). Indeed, Nietzsche goes even further when he claims:

> Egoism is the perspectival law of feeling according to which what is closest appears large and heavy, while in the distance everything decreases in size and weight"(GS 162).

Further, Nietzsche states, casually, how the law of perspectivism manifests in nature, "the sacrificial animal thinks differently about sacrifice than the spectator" and "'Our eyes are also intended for hearing', said the old father confessor who had gone deaf, 'and among the blind he is king who has the longest ears'" (GS 220, 223).

Of course, this perspectival aspect involved in all conscious conceptualization of unconsciously perceived nonconceptual content is what makes 'maximally specific' concepts impossible in the Nietzschean philosophy of mind. Concepts that are strictly and 'scientifically' specific are not only *not* the most useful concepts, but they also would never be objectively specific, because, although they would be linguistically communicable and therefore common in a sense, they would also always be referring back to or would be constituted by a subjective perspective.

> The world and the concept are the most manifest ground for our belief...through words and concepts we are still continually misled into imagining things as being simpler than they are...each existing in

and for itself. A philosophical mythology lies concealed in language

(WS 11; cf. HH I.11).

The multiplicity of perspectival conceptualizations that each accurately account for conscious experience, dare one say 'truths,' is Nietzsche's jumping off point for claiming that consciousness's perspectival and transformative character is *distortive* in its historical instantiation.

1.6 The Transformative Distortion of Consciousness

The final part of Nietzsche's philosophy of mind to be considered is his claim that consciousness is essentially superficial, falsifying, and dangerous; this is to say that consciousness historically distorts. Consciousness is inherently perspectival (fragmented, incomplete, competing) as well as inherently transformative in its becoming (linguistic determination, world-direction of HOT, generating). The perspectival and transformative aspect of consciousness gains a distorting character when we look at how this perspectival transformation has played out in the theater of history. Here, again, Katsafanas shows the way by illustrating Nietzsche's assertions that only part of the content in unconscious states is apprehended in conscious states and that through transformative interaction with conscious states, unconscious states are altered in conscious thought. Katsafanas begins this discussion of the superficiality of consciousness by illustrating that the content of our unconscious states do not make it all the way up to, so to speak, our conscious states and by asserting that the process of conceptualization is not fixed. As Nietzsche puts it:

Due to the nature of *animal consciousness*, the world of which we can

become conscious is merely a surface- and sign-world…all becoming

conscious involves a vast and thorough corruption, falsification,

superficialization, and generalization (GS 354).

Clearly the mere surface and sign nature assigned to the world known by

consciousness is corrupted, falsified, superficialized, generalized insofar as the

world known to the unconscious is outside of the scope of the conscious and is made

intelligible to the consciousness in a way that *transforms.* Since conscious

perception cannot account for all of the detail contained within the unconscious

perception, "[unconscious] experience outstrips our [conscious] conceptual

recourses" (NS 53).

It should be noted that conceptual knowledge does not mean knowledge

containing more detail. When the conscious states superimpose conceptual

knowledge on nonconceptual unconscious perception, more knowledge does not

exist, one could say. While conceptualization is a creation or transformation, so to

speak, it is one that *generalizes* and *simplifies* the nonconceptual perception of the

unconscious so as to make it *useful* for consciousness. Nonconceptual content is

useful for consciousness insofar as it is dumbed down to the shared aspect of the

perception that makes it *linguistically communicable and intelligible.* Katsafanas

notes that Schopenhauer endorses a similar claim about unconscious nonconceptual

content exceeding the conscious conceptual knowledge thereof. Schopenhauer

states, "Abstract rational knowledge is…by no means so congruent with

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[representation from perception] that it could everywhere take its place; on the contrary, it never corresponds wholly to this representation" (WWR I, 13). This lack of correspondence, of course, limits conscious conceptual knowledge – this, however, is not consciousness's only handicap. Concepts arise, as Katsafanas notes, out of the need to communicate and they, accordingly, have a linguistic character, which is the therefore the end of consciousness. This end stands opposed to the notion that the purpose of consciousness is to accurately describe the totality of unconscious nonconceptual perception, which it obviously is not.

Unconscious perception of nonconceptual content surpasses our conscious conceptual framework because of the general character of concepts or the *simplification* inherent in *generalization* of *conceptualization*. Just as conceptualization arose with the need to communicate, conceptualization is always driven by practical concerns, specifically a social one, to communicate. Remember, Nietzsche states, "*consciousness in general has developed under the pressure of the need for communication*…and it developed only in proportion to the degree of its utility (GS 354). Katsafanas argues that our conscious conceptualization arose out of a need to communicate and therefore only gained concepts that fulfilled the function of conceptualizing perceptions that needed to be linguistically communicated to others. Clearly, in the early ages of society, collaboration was necessary to survival and the particulars of the need for that collaboration constituted the concepts created by the consciousness. Katsafanas illustrates how the conditions in which

communicative needs arose are at odds with the type of clarity typically ascribed to consciousness by philosophers and scientists, which grounds the distortion claim.

> [I]n engaging in these sorts of activities [planning, mutual aid, et cetera], one needs to communicate quickly and efficiently. Hesitation and the transmission of excessive amounts of information hinders these sorts of activities (cf. GS 111)....the need for speed and efficiency cut against the desire for maximal accuracy and specificity [of philosophers and scientists] (NS 55).

Clearly, concept acquisition is pragmatic insofar as it is useful to the individual who substantiates the concept, so to speak. Rarely in the early forms of conceptualization, which has, for better or for worse, cemented many of our modern conceptions or has, at least, linguistically determined them, was there a need for clear, thorough explication. Almost exclusively, the needs that constituted our conceptions were needs for a society to communicate in order to survive or needs for a group of individuals to gain power over others, in order to survive better than others.

Katsafanas notes that the general character of concepts is *necessary* in both Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's conception of concepts. Schopenhauer asserts that concepts are general insofar as they are common and universal, which Nietzsche iterates when he observes that "'to know ourselves', will always bring to consciousness precisely that in ourselves which is 'non-individual,' that which is average" (WWR I, 8-10 / GS 354). As Katsafanas notes, the general nature of

concepts entails that consciousness itself is characterized by what is linguistically communicable, by what is common, and by what is general. However, the transformation that takes place in the process of becoming conscious is not limited to the superficial, abstract, and linguistic character thereof.

Let us return to *The Gay Science* to understand what Nietzsche says about the perspectival (fragmented, incomplete, and simplified) nature of consciousness himself and then return to *The Nietzschean* Self in order to formalize (and distort!) our conception of the transformation that takes place in the perspectival becoming of consciousness.

Nietzsche speaks generally about our conscious logicizing of nonconceptual perceptions into concepts in a way that transforms the original perception.

> To this end he [man] invents a second, different existence and takes
> by means of his new mechanics the old, ordinary existence off its old
> ordinary hinges" (GS 1)

And, in the context of how we place purpose onto our insignificant lives,

> Human nature on the whole has surely been altered by the recurring
> emergence of such teachers of the purpose of existence (GS 1).

In aphorism 11, entitled *Consciousness*, Nietzsche repeatedly discusses the transformative nature of the namesake of the aphorism in a negative light.

> Consciousness gives rise to countless mistakes…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.... It is only beginning to dawn on the human eye and is

yet barely discernible...that so far we have incorporated only our

errors and that all of our consciousness refers to our errors! (GS 11)

Nietzsche even goes so far as to mock the people who think that consciousness is a

fixed and infallible unity instead of useful construction generated by competing

unconscious wills.

One thinks it [consciousness] is the kernel of man, what is abiding,

eternal, ultimate, most original in him...Sees it as 'the unity of the

organism'! This ridiculous overestimation and misapprehension of

consciousness has the very useful consequence that an all-too-rapid

development of consciousness was *prevented* (GS 11).

Clearly, Nietzsche does not consider consciousness as the unification of or the

essence of man, but he also does not think that the development of our

understanding of consciousness as such is without some utility.

Nietzsche continues his crusade of illustrating the distorting nature of

consciousness while also preserving the usefulness of understanding consciousness

in this less 'accurate' way.

The insight into general untruth and mendacity that is now given to us

by science – the insight into delusion and error as a condition of

cognitive and sensate existence – would be utterly unbearable (GS

107).

Here, Nietzsche is stating that knowledge of the thoroughly perspectival, in its incompleteness, and transformative, in its linguistic simplification, character of consciousness would be 'utterly unbearable' in a way, which is to say that Nietzsche understands why we have not expressively discussed this nature of consciousness hitherto. The exact reasons for this fact are taken up in our discussion of history.

> Through immense periods of time, the intellect produced nothing but errors; some of them turned out to be useful and species-preserving…thus the *strength* of knowledge lies not it its degree of truth, but in its character as a condition of life" and, "What, then, are man's truths ultimately? – They are the *irrefutable* errors of man (GS 110, 265).

Clearly, the transformation (not limited to, but characterized by the linguistic simplification of nonconceptual content in perception) of the reality in consciousness has its ground in the utility of its errors. Nietzsche goes on, "What is the origin of logic [logicizing, linguistic simplification] in man's head? Surely it arose out of the illogical" and, "Man has been educated by his errors: first, he saw himself only incompletely, secondly, he endowed himself with fictitious attributes" (GS 111, 114). These instances of Nietzsche seemingly putting 'our errors' and 'the illogical' on the pedestal that philosophers usually reserve for 'Consciousness,' 'Reason,' 'Truth,' 'Rationality,' and 'Logic' is a rhetorical tool meant to bring to mind this exact juxtaposition. What Nietzsche means to illustrate is that when philosophers (and people in general) posit 'Consciousness,' 'Reason,' 'Truth,' 'Rationality,' and 'Logic' as

the alpha and omega of human nature and essence what we are really doing is positing 'our errors' and 'the illogical' as the alpha and omega of human nature and essence without knowing it. Clearly, as demonstrated by the entirety of our above discussion, the concepts that we typically posit as the essence of humanity are actually indebted to and formed out of their antonymous concepts. However, instead of systematically illustrating the importance of the unconscious for the conscious, of unreason for reason, of untruth for truth, of irrationality for rationality, and of the illogical for the logical, Nietzsche instead chooses to cleverly and impolitely admonish those who think otherwise.

The error of incompletion, consisting of overtly identifying oneself with conscious states and these fictitious attributes, is the supposed 'fixed' and 'unified' character of consciousness. Nietzsche also makes this point by pointing out the etymological relation between the Latin word 'mentiri' meaning 'to lie' with the Latin words 'mens' and 'memini' meaning 'mind' and 'to remember,' respectively, in GS 157. Further, Nietzsche asserts the distortion principle indirectly, but succinctly, "Thoughts are the shadows of our sensations – always darker, emptier, *simpler*" and, "He is a thinker: that means he knows how to make things *simpler* than they are" (GS 179, 189 emphasis added). Clearly, Nietzsche is attributing a simplifying character to thoughts and the activity of thinking, and he is contending that this simplifying requires us to identify consciousness with distortion.

At this juncture, we have given an account of the perspectival and transformative nature of consciousness, which includes, but is not limited to its

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superficiality, its abstracting, its linguistically simplifying, its classifying and

logicizing, its species-preserving errors, its world-directed transformative, and its

perspectival nature. However, before finally returning to the Katsafanas, we must

make an important note. The perspectival (fragmented and incomplete) character of

consciousness and its transformative nature, in virtue of its linguistic determination,

is itself transformed, in a sense, into a distorting nature when it is instantiated over

the course of history. However, this distorted instantiation is not as negative as one

may think at first glance; in fact, it proves to be incredibly useful in its species-

preserving function, until it becomes self-defeating that is.

But, by way of anticipation, we may ask – what is this other sense of the

utility of the distortion (historical transformation) that is not simply species

preserving? The other sense of the utility of the distortion of consciousness pertains

to the *motivation* behind an individual or group of individuals to preserve

themselves and their species. Distortion will play a pivotal role in *uncovering or*

generating meaning in life, which is *crucial to finding happiness.*

> Did Prometheus first have to *imagine* having *stolen* light and pay for it
>
> before he could finally discover that he had created light *by desiring*
>
> *light*, and that not only man but also *god* was the work of *his own*
>
> hands and clay in his hands? (GS 300)

In a similar vein, Nietzsche remarks: "*We*, however, want to be poets of our lives"

(GS 299). Nietzsche thinks that somehow we distort our own understanding of our

own reality and our own life in a way that is somehow Promethean as well as poetic

and culminates in the creation of meaning. These points will be essential to our understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy of meaning.

Back to formalization, Katsafanas notes, a generalization or linguistic simplification of unconscious experience further characterized by an unavoidable perspectival condition culminating in conceptualization is hardly the same as 'distortion;' the term 'distort' is hardly a better descriptor for this condition than 'incomplete' or 'different' is. With these concerns in mind, let us examine exactly why Nietzsche thinks our conceptualization in consciousness is inherently transformative, ceteris paribas, and is inherently distortive in its historical instantiation. Recalling our appeal to Schopenhauer's influence on Nietzsche, we must remember Schopenhauer's assertions on how concepts essentially alter what is perceived and do not simply preserve what is. Katsafanas argues for four different types of conscious transformation.

First, our conceptualization *transforms* or, at the very least, alters our unconscious perceptions (not yet conceptualized in consciousness) insofar as for every one unconscious perception there is not *necessarily* only one conscious concept. Katsafanas notes that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between conscious states and unconscious states; conscious states can conceptualize a plurality that refers to an unconscious unity as well as conceptualize a unity that refers to an unconscious plurality.

Second, our conceptualization *transforms* unconscious perceptions (not yet conceptualized in consciousness) by the way in which a metapsychological thought

in consciousness interacts with an unconscious perception in a world directed manner.

Third, our conceptualization *transforms* unconscious perceptions (not yet conceptualized in consciousness) by linguistically determining them into generalized and simplified concepts.

Fourth, our conceptualization *transforms* unconscious perceptions (not yet conceptualized in consciousness) since the way in which conscious states interact with each other does not nicely map onto the way in which unconscious states interact with one another.

These four types of transformations of unconscious perceptions in consciousness (which is not to say a 'conscious transformation') become more concrete and intelligible by way of Nietzsche's history of the progression (or transformation over time) of moral valuation and of the transformation of feelings of indebtedness into the feelings of guilt, both of which are described in the *Genealogy of Morality*. These concrete examples will be grounds for illustrating how our perspectival (fragmented and incomplete) and transformative (see the four instances of transformation above) consciousness distorts conscious states or reality as such in its historical instantiation. Further, this discussion of how consciousness as such has been historically affected is not only a way to make intelligible the perspectival and transformative character of consciousness in its distortive historical instantiation, it is also the reason why Nietzsche thinks that our historically influenced way of finding meaning in life is self-defeating. This is why he

thinks we need to create a new way to find meaning that accounts for history as such with consciousness as such. This need for a new way to find meaning amounts to a need for a philosophy of how to make sense of the self in the present as well as the self and selves as they have manifested in the past in order to best project oneself into the future.

Chapter Two: Nietzsche's Philosophy of History

Now that we have a preliminary understanding of how the self makes sense of the world at any given present moment, we will investigate the Nietzsche's account of this perspectival transformation of consciousness as it has manifested itself over the course of history in a way that distorts what is. The specific ways in which the transformative faculty of consciousness of groups of selves in history have distorted concepts informs how values rise to prominence and fall from grace as well as how values interact with each other as history progresses. Any action that has taken place by any individual self or group of selves in the past (which is just to say any historical action) contains this perspectival distortion, in a certain sense. While, in history, there is not a clean process of a nonconceptual historical action being distorted into a conceptual historical action, there is a fairly distinct way in which certain values prominent at a given historical time are revalued or (re)conceptually distorted, in a way that begets an entirely new value or system of valuation. Again, the process of valuation consists of a value that is initially conceptualized in a certain way becoming revalued in a way that is akin to the distortion of consciousness. Understanding if and how the selves involved in the re-conceptualization understand their own actions will also be pertinent to our task.

From a birds-eye-view, we can lay out the path of how selves in the past distort feelings, emotions, and historical facts and then, in turn, reify these distorted concepts into values. Once these distorted concepts are valued, we can then turn to how these values progress in history. At first, we will examine how an initial conceptualization of what is 'good' is revalued or distorted as a conceptualization of

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what is 'evil' and how an initial conceptualization of what is 'bad' is revalued or

distorted as a conceptualization of what is 'good.' The rise to prominence of the

Judeo-Christian ethic of 'good' and 'evil' that results from this slave revolt in

morality *is not only a historical example of how moral concepts are revalued into*

different moral concepts, it is also the necessary precondition for the way in which the

punitive conception of debt in civil society, and the bad conscience towards ourselves

that accompanies it, is then revalued into the religious conception of guilt. Then, we

will examine how feelings of indebtedness are conceptualized in a way that

transforms or distorts them into feelings of guilt, which, in turn, begets a bad

conscience towards oneself. These feelings of guilt are reconceptualized or distorted

in a transition from a guilt-conceptualized-in-civil-society to a guilt-conceptualized-

in-the-Christian-context. The bad conscience that accompanies this Christian

conception of guilt is the necessary precondition for the historical positing of

understanding the 'truth about God' as the prescription for this guilt of sin.

Nietzsche believes that the societal origins of bad conscience become so deeply

ingrained as the concept of sin that humans, in order to be happy, desperately

needed to understand the reason for their supposed sinfulness. This reason

historically, took a religious shape, i.e. the Truth about our guilt towards God due to

original sin. Understanding the Truth about God is meant to endow our suffering

with *meaning* and therefore make life bearable. However, we will also show how

Nietzsche thinks this bad conscience is never actually resolved by the Christian

notion of truth; historically, the quest for the Truth about God is revalued or

distorted into the quest for Truth in Science. Once the Christian notion of truth is revalued into the scientific notion of truth, the very prescription meant to resolve our bad conscience towards ourselves, is defeated by itself when modern science significantly questions the possibility of the existence of God. Since our historical prescription for our feelings of bad conscience and meaninglessness are self-defeating, our discussion will turn to Nietzsche's philosophy of meaning.

2.1 The Historical Instantiation of Distortion Part One: From Good and Bad to Good and Evil through the Slave Revolt in Morality and Ressentiment

The slave revolt in morality is the title for the historical phenomenon of the revaluation of terms denoting 'good' and 'bad' into terms denoting 'evil' and 'good,' respectively. Further, this revaluation is marked by a specific characteristic, which Nietzsche denotes as *ressentiment*. Nietzsche, being the esteemed philologist he was, begins his story of the progression of the valuation of moral concepts in Ancient Greece. Nietzsche starts by illustrating the character of the conception of 'good' and the character of the conception of 'bad' in Ancient Greece. The term 'good' in the ancient Greek is 'Esthlos' and connoted terms such as 'brave' and 'noble.' The term 'bad' in ancient Greek is 'Kakos' and connoted terms such as 'common' or 'base.' Nietzsche explicates how the moral conception of 'good' and 'bad' and the valuation of 'good' over 'bad' in ancient Greece were ingrained in notions of political and physical superiority:

The judgment "good" did *not* originate with those to whom "goodness" was shown! Rather it was "the good" themselves, that is to say, the noble, powerful, high-stationed, and high-minded who felt and established themselves and their actions as good, that is, of the first rank, in contradistinction to all the low, low-minded, common and plebeian (GM I.2).

Essentially, Nietzsche is positing a narrative that states that the powerful and aristocratic class of ancient Greece had the political power to value moral concepts and, being the powerful class, i.e. politically and physically superior, they created a moral concept that described themselves as the 'good.' Once they, through internal examination of their own qualities, knew themselves to be the 'good,' they looked outward and called that which they are not, the 'bad.'

After an etymological investigation, ad nauseam, of the terms 'good' and 'bad' in the context of Ancient Greek, Latin, German, French, and English, Nietzsche begins a deliberately provocative and intentionally unsystematic account of how these politically and physically infused ancient notions of 'good' and 'bad' become the Christian infused modern ethical notions of 'evil' and 'good,' respectively. Nietzsche argues that the people characterized as 'bad' by the ancient Greek system of valuation were, simply, upset with being at the bottom of the valuation totem poll. In order to secure a better chance at survival for themselves, these 'bad' individuals decided to turn the prevailing system of valuation on its head so that they can be on the top of the valuation totem poll. We must note the distinctive characteristic of

this revaluation. When the Greeks determined their system of valuation, it began with looking inward and positing what one is as 'good' and by virtue of opposition, what is not 'good' is 'bad.' The slave revolt in morality, however, is characterized by looking outward and saying that what is commonly understood as 'good' is actually 'evil' and by virtue of opposition, what is not 'evil' is 'good.' This is external denial is the unique characteristic of *ressentiment*. Nietzsche elaborates:

> While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is "outside," what is "different," what is "not itself"; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye- this *need* to direct one's view outward instead of back to oneself – is the essence of *ressentiment* (GM I.10).

This is affectionately called the '*slave* revolt in morality' not simply because these men of *ressentiment* where in the lower class of society, but also because, due to their externally denying essence, the men of *ressentiment* were slaves to that which was not themselves. This is just to say that the men of *ressentiment* needed an already prevailing system of valuation to externally deny; the slave revolt in morality is dependent on and originates in another system of valuation and is therefore, in a sense, enslaved to it.

Here, not only do we see a historical instance of the distortion of concepts (of 'good' to 'evil' and of 'bad' to 'good') we also see an instance of historical *distortion* based in a theory of *perspectivism*. In a famous analogy, Nietzsche likens the slaves

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of *ressentiment* to 'little lambs' who, from their perspective, clearly believe that the 'birds of prey' (Ancient Greek nobility) that feed on them are evil. However, the birds of prey simply regard the little lambs as food and, in fact, love the little lambs for their nourishment. Essentially, Nietzsche wants to illustrate that the valuing of 'good' over 'evil' is not some divinely inspired end-all, be-all notion of morality but instead is an incredibly clever and effective power grab based on revaluing the center of the prevailing moral system. Nietzsche summarizes this revaluation:

> How different these words "bad" and "evil" are, although they are both apparently the opposite of the same concept "good." But it is *not* the same concept "good": one should ask rather precisely *who* is "evil" in the sense of the morality of *ressentiment*. The answer, in all strictness is: *precisely* the "good man" of the other morality (GMI.11).

At this juncture, we not only have made intelligible our first historical instance of perspectival distortion, in the context of moral valuation, we also have laid the groundwork for the necessary precondition of the second historical instance of perspectival distortion. It is important to remember, as we move into section 2.2, that there are two narratives at play here. The first narrative is a speculative narrative regarding how our conclusions about the perspectival transformation of conscious states are given a sense of instantiated actuality in the history of the progression (conceptualization and re-conceptualization) of moral valuation, which is characterized by distortion. The second narrative is a more historically chronological one in which we trace the progression of historical moments of moral

valuation and revaluation. In regard to this second narrative, we have just moved from a historical moment of master morality to the historical moment of the slave morality of the Judeo-Christian ethic; it was of course the Jewish hate of or *ressentiment* towards the powerful and noble that beget the Christian love for the weak and common. Working within the context of slave morality, we can have a better understanding of how the conceptual revaluation of the societal notion of debt to the religious notion of guilt begets a bad conscience towards oneself that is incredibly difficult to purge. Bad conscience arises from societal notions of debt, but bad conscience becomes dangerous only in the religious context.

2.2 The Historical Instantiation of Distortion Part Two: From Debt to Guilt through Bad Conscience

The way in which feelings of indebtedness transform into feelings of guilt hinges on a proper understanding of the concept of 'bad conscience.' As understood by any historian who looks at the vast amount of blood and cruelty present throughout humanity's darkest as well as brightest civilizations and achievements, Nietzsche argues that humans have a very strong and primal desire for hostility and destruction. This desire cannot be consummated *explicitly* within the confines of a civil society. This desire must be reconciled in a different way, since the desire for cruelty does not merely disappear upon the lack of consummation, as the argument goes. Nietzsche states that we internalize this unconsummated desire for cruelty

and reconcile it, in a way, by forming a 'bad conscience' towards this cruelty. As he puts it:

> This drive…forcibly made latent…pushed back and repressed, incarcerated within and finally able to discharge and vent only upon itself: that, and that alone, is what the bad conscience is in its beginnings (GM II.17).

Our bad conscience arises not simply due to the way we must sublimate our cruel drives in society, but also by the fact that it is juxtaposed with healthier internalizations of other drives in society.

Commenting on this process, Katsafanas observes:

> Not *all* drives are internalized in this way. Nietzsche is careful to stress that it is the drives of "hostility, cruelty, joy in persecuting, in attacking, in change, in destruction" which are internalized (GM II.16). But *other* drives are not internalized: drives for social bonding, for food, for sex…are…aided by the establishment of a community. (NS 62)

The feeling of anguish, the negative aspect of 'bad conscience,' arises from the lack of reconcilability of our inability to consummate our drives to cruelty within the context of civil society with our drives for social bonding, et cetera, which are actually cultivated by and flourish within the context of civil society. This is why Nietzsche states that the person in society has a "soul voluntarily at odds with itself" (GM II.18).

When we form civil society and community, we favor drives towards social bonding, food, sex, et cetera over our drives towards cruelty, but as stated above, these drives do not go away, they are internalized. Katsafanas notes the paradoxical, almost comically futile way in which humans have historically 'ridded' themselves of their drives to cruelty. Resulting from the anguish of being pulled in multiple directions, humans are forced to choose a type of drive to explicitly consummate, so to speak. By forming civil society, humans chose to consummate drives that are consistent with the values of community, as expressed above. However, the internalization of the drives we did not choose were internalized, sublimated, and transformed in a way that allowed them to be consummated in civil society (one might even say that they were *distorted* in the process). Here, we might keep in mind a parallel to how unconscious nonconceptual perceptions are *transformed* or *conceptualized* into concepts in conscious states.

By explicitly consummating drives that are consistent with the values of civil society at the expense of drives that are not (i.e., the drive to cruelty), we end up consummating drives that we thought we left behind at the gates of Community, albeit in a disguised form, by internalizing and changing (transforming) these drives enough so they can be in a form that is consistent with civil society. This sublimation does not do away with the inherent opposition of the differing sets of drives, which, coupled with the entirety of this process, results in a 'bad conscience' towards oneself.

We should not ignore the fact that this is a clear historical expression of how the HOT of consciousness illustrates our manner of conceptualizing. As Katsafanas observes:

> Paradoxically, the internalization of the aggressive drives consists in the repression of the aggressive drives by the social drives, which, in this act of repression, express the aggressive drives in a new internalized form…So the social drives come to include, as an essential component, a drive to repress the outwardly directed aggressive drives…The internalization of the aggressive drives, then, consists in the aggressive drives finding expression in the social drives' repression and condemnation of the outwardly directed aggressive drives. (NS 62-63)

Now that we have an understanding of what bad conscience is, we should turn our discussion to the exact historical feelings that were conceptualized or distorted in a way that begot this state of bad conscience.

As previously noted, this process begins with how feelings of indebtedness are transformed into feelings of guilt. By way of anticipation, the way that these feelings of indebtedness are reconceptualized to feelings of guilt and then again to feelings of guilt towards God illuminates our discussion of master and slave morality. Nietzsche argues that the bad conscience towards ourselves based in our anguish over our 'soul at war with itself' is conceptualized in a religious context by the Judeo-Christian ethic. Indebtedness, which was originally a feeling of unfulfilled

obligation that was immediately and explicitly reconciled with cruel punishment, is sublimated in society in the aforementioned way. This sublimating of indebtedness is accompanied by a bad conscience in society and transformed into guilt. However, when bad conscience is conceptualized in a religious context, under the historical moment of the prominence of slave morality, the Christianized bad conscience that accompanies indebtedness as guilt is now guilt towards an unfulfilled obligation to God; our bad conscience towards an unfulfilled obligation to God is then retroactively reasoned as originating in an inherent sinfulness present in all humans, i.e. the Christian notion of original sin. Katsafanas states, "That is, bad conscience, the complex affect resulting form the internalization of aggressive drives, is interpreted as the feeling of guilt that results from our sinful nature" (NS 63). In other words, what was once a feeling resulting from an unfulfilled promise (the concept of indebtedness in primal society) becomes the concept of guilt (the concept of indebtedness in civil society), which begets a bad conscience towards oneself, culminating in the concept of sin when placed in the Christian context (guilt towards an unfulfilled obligation towards God, which is accompanied by a bad conscience).

Of course, as Nietzsche states, when one views oneself as inherently sinful, there are profound affects and effects. Nietzsche argues that one develops such a contempt for what is natural in oneself, one learns to deny oneself and to deny life, which causes a sick desire for more pain and more denial of life because one thinks that this is the antidote for their inherent sickness, when it is really a symptom of a

religiously (Judeo-Christian) conceptualized bad conscience as guilt towards an unfulfilled obligation to God. Yet out of this transformation of the religious bad conscience as guilt (where sinfulness is a compelling reason for the inherent suffering of the world), one finds positive results. Humans become more interested in finding a meaning for or an explanation of the ever-present suffering in life, e*ven if it means desiring denying oneself (one's natural drives) over desiring suffering meaninglessly*. The power of accounting for the human condition of suffering that comes with the explanation of original sin is the historical reason as to why we never ridded ourselves of this bad conscience, even though it clearly has its own negative affects. Katsafanas summarizes:

> Nietzsche claims that the becoming conscious of the bad conscience as guilt leads to all of the following, "(a) It causes the bad conscience to become "more firmly rooted" and "to spread" (GM II.21 and III.15). (b) It eliminates the depression engendered by the thought that one's suffering is senseless (GM III.15, III.20). (c) It creates a craving for new types of suffering (GM III.20). (NS 64)

Further, Katsafanas notes the amalgamation of causal influences at play: the consciousness of the newly conceptualized bad conscience as guilt retroactively alters the unconscious states (moving from discharging a lack of fulfillment of one's obligations to indebtedness to guilt) as well the new desire for suffering based on this created understanding of sin among others.

This conceptualizing of the bad conscience as religious guilt, which is then, in turn, reasoned to originate in an inherent sinfulness is a type of conceptualization that makes the affects of bad conscience worse than it already was. This type of conceptualization does not allow for a way to understand what is natural in humans as natural, and instead forces us to understand what is natural as counterproductive to a civil society and therefore undesirable. It further sublimates these aggressive drives, stifling, altering, and distorting them more while making one feel guilty more and more since they never truly go away by this process, which makes the entirety of this type of conceptualization self-defeating. Katsafanas notes that Nietzsche believes this is why the Greeks stressed the concept of the contest, because it allowed for an awareness of the animal drives as well as a safe outlet to express these drives, as opposed to sublimating and not doing away with them in a vicious circle.

Now, we are in a position to revisit the distortion thesis. If the conscious state of guilt presents its self as a unified emotion even though it is actually a complex system involving societal sublimation of animalistic tendencies, secular indebtedness, religious guilt, feelings of inherent sin, etc., then is it not true that a conscious unity transforms an unconscious plurality in a distortive manner in its historical instantiation? Furthermore, if the unconscious state of bad conscience originating from entering into society and sublimating aggressive drives without extinguishing them is transformed into this religious conception of failing God and being inherently sinful in consciousness, then is it not true that conscious states

causally influence (transforms) the unconscious state in a way that distorts the original unconscious state? Moreover, if one understands the difference between someone who has a bad conscience and someone who feels guilty, in the way described above, is it not true that conscious states transform unconscious states and distort them historically?

Finally, if the ascetic priest actually increases feelings of guilt by trying to rid himself of this guilt (renouncing aggressive drives actually sublimates them and gives them a new form), do relations between conscious states not differ from the relations between unconscious states? The priest thinks that ridding oneself of guilt is as simple as renouncing what makes him guilty. However, in Nietzsche's view, unconscious states do not work as logically nor as linear as their conscious counterparts.

Herein lies another way in which the conscious states differ from and distorts the unconscious states as manifested in history. As Katsafanas puts it: "Conscious thought presents itself as linear, ordered, logical, connected, sentential…But unconscious thought doesn't – it may be associative, a-rational, shifted about by various drives, and so forth" (NS 67). The linguistic aspect of our conceptualization in conscious states tricks humans, so to speak, into thinking that concepts themselves are logical, when their unconscious grounding is not. The fact that conscious states behave differently than unconscious states not only causes problems (as in the case of the ascetic priest), it also provides an additional aspect of how consciousness historically distorts.

The allure of grammar not only tricks us into thinking that the entirety of perception (conscious and unconscious states) is as logical as grammar is, when unconscious states are, in fact, not logical in that way. Grammar, specifically the subject-predicate structure, formulates our belief about a unified ego behind all action, thereby contributing to the distortion inherent in that belief.

Nietzsche himself endorses this picture of how we take our concepts about the world that are originally meant to merely be a useful way of understanding our relation between our unconscious states and the world in our conscious state and mistake them for fixed laws about the world. Nietzsche states, " We *created*…Small wonder that later he was always found in things only that *which he had put into them*" (TI VI.3).

2.3 The Historical Instantiation of Distortion Part Three: From Truth and Illusion through the Possibility of Meaning over Nihilism

The ascetic priest thinks, as noted, that people are doing away with their sins by denying their natural cruel tendencies, when they are in fact consummating these same cruel drives in a sublimated and distorted way. This scenario is not only consistent with the account, given above, of how consciousness creates a transformed perspective out of the unconscious states that compete with yet constitute said conscious state. It is also consistent with our historical valuation of truth as the highest value. Enlightenment thinkers thought that they were doing away with the historical mistake of blind belief in God by positing truth as the

highest value and by attempting to be true by using their objective, interest-free reasoning capabilities. However, like the ascetic priest who mistakenly thought he was doing away with his guilt towards inherent sin, but was actually perpetuating his guilt, these Enlightenment thinkers were actually continuing the historical effect of the ascetic ideal.

This manner of positing truth above all else originates in the Christian tradition of striving towards discerning the truth about God. Nietzsche illustrates how the Enlightenment and scientific will to truth originate in the Christian ascetic ideal and the will to truth about God by stating that the scientific ideal is the ascetic ideal's "most recent and noblest form":

> What *compels* one to this, however, this unconditional will to truth, is the *belief in the ascetic ideal itself,* even if as its unconscious imperative – do not deceive yourself about this, -- it is the belief in a *metaphysical* value, a value *in itself of truth* as it is established and guaranteed alone (GOM III.23, III.24).

This account of the belief is not only consistent with our theories of how consciousness arises out of a transformation of unconscious states. It is also consistent with how our consciousness distorts or is distorted and how we create values based on perceived utility.

The unfortunate thing is that the logical conclusion of this distortion is not actually useful; in fact, it is self-defeating. By transforming our Christian ethic and our hope for the Christian afterlife into a sublimated version of Truth as such we

actually posit a way of disproving the Christian ideal of God and heaven. The logical

conclusion of the Christian ascetic ideal as Truth as such disproves itself and

therefore annihilates our values and our 'answers' for our deepest concerns. When

our deepest values are annihilated in this way, we fall into a very dangerous,

nihilistic place.

> If one disregards the ascetic ideal: man, the *animal* man, has until now
>
> had no meaning...precisely this is what the ascetic ideal means: that
>
> something *was lacking*, that an enormous *void* surrounded man – he
>
> did not know how to justify, to explain, to affirm himself; he *suffered*
>
> from this problem of his meaning. (GM III.28)

Basically due to the lack of inherent meaning in life, we used our distorting

consciousness to posit a way to create meaning, *but we did so in a way in which the*

logical conclusion of our created meaning defeats itself. This is why Nietzsche thinks

we need a new way to create meaning in our lives.

Chapter Three: Nietzsche's Philosophy of Meaning

The third constituent of the totality of the self is the part of the self that makes sense of the prior two and creates meaning within it. This is to say the best or most useful way for any self to project itself into the future consists first, in making sense of its own consciousness and process of conceptualization (the self in the present, philosophy of mind). It consists, secondly, in developing a meaningful account of this becoming of consciousness and of the conceptualization or distortion of concepts as they have manifest over the course of history (the self in the past, philosophy of history). The interesting thing here is that the making sense of the self in the present and the making sense of the self in the past is under the umbrella of, if you will, making sense of one's own personal history. In the experience of internal, lived time or factical existence, we are automatically placed into a specific point in history. Our self in the present is placed on or thrown into a point on the timeline of history. Our self in the present then moves along this timeline or projects himself into the future. This is just to say that as time passes in an individual's life, history splits into two: the external history of the world (typically written in textbooks) and the internal history of lived experience or of factical existence. However, since the self in the present is inherently perspectival, the facts of external history are experienced within the context of factical existence. This means that when one attempts to find meaning in life, the effort amounts to creating meaning by (a) unifying the implications of the perspectival conceptualization of the self in the present with the perspectival concepts, values, and actions of the self in one's own past and (b) by

projecting oneself into the future in a specific way over time. Of course, all of this already takes place at a specific point on the external historical timeline

The way in which one unifies all of the constituents and sub-constituents of the self qua meaning takes place in the future. Of course, it is seemingly absurd to write (in the present) of the unification of meaning taking place in the future, but the projection of the future is the theater in which meaning can be outlined and grasped. As previously stated, the way in which we unify *meaning* is dependent on both facts about values and actions in external and internal history. This means that our created meaning must take into account as well as neutralize, in a sense, the self-defeating conceptions and valuation thereof by selves in external history; our created meaning must take into account the historical instantiation of distortion. Further, this means that our created meaning must also transform any disharmony between the values and actions making up our internal history. Finally, our created meaning must be created in a way that is actualized over time, but somehow accessible to the perspectival self in the present. The way in which we take into account yet cure, so to speak, our positing of self-defeating conceptions as the highest values in external history and the bad conscience that arose from it with our created meaning in the projected future is a matter of reconceptualizing 'truth' and 'illusion' (see 3.1 below). The way in which we harmonize the disharmony of our values and actions in internal history with our created meaning in the future is closely connected to Nietzsche's practical thought experiment of the eternal recurrence as well as a new conceptualization of artistry and honesty (see 3.2

below). At issue throughout the following considerations is how we can understand the projects of both curing an external history of valuing self-defeating conceptions and of harmonizing our own internal history of values and actions in the present, and doing so in a way that meaningfully unifies these two aspects of our historical experience.

3.1 Truth as Illusion and Illusion as Truth

Returning to our main theme, we note that Nietzsche thinks that we must find a new way to create meaning that accounts for the becoming of consciousness as well as our historically affected consciousness that *hinges on a way to make our thoroughly perspectival and historically distortive condition more useful. The best way to make this intelligible to our historically affected consciousness as such is to discuss different ways of understanding our conception of truth and illusion. Then, we can illustrate how our new conception of truth and illusion can be useful through honest assessment and artistic illusion in order to redeem the meaning of our lives.*

One way to understand this process is through Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal recurrence. The connections that have been drawn between the becoming of consciousness and the historically affected consciousness are intimately related

to this doctrine. Establishing this relationship will help make intelligible the

continued esotericism present in this overall Nietzschean system.[3]

Our guide into the curious connection between truth and illusion in

Nietzsche's text is R. Lanier Anderson' paper, "Nietzsche on Truth, Illusion, and

Redemption." In this paper, Anderson attempts to illustrate the natures of truth and

of illusion. *With the help of an explication of Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal*

recurrence and of Nietzschean affirmation, Anderson is then able illustrate the close

connection between truth and illusion and how to practically implement the meaning

of this connection in our lives through honesty and artistry.

Anderson begins his discussion of the natures of truth and illusion by

illustrating how to provide a consistent and genuine framework for understanding

Nietzschean distortion while avoiding a self-referential paradox. After reconciling

the existence of truth and knowledge with distortion, he attempts to affirm the *value*

of truth as such, scientific truth, without compromising the value of illusion. Moving

from the possibility of existence of the two seemingly contradictory ideas, Anderson

elucidates how the value of these two ideas, truth and illusion, can function together.

Here, Anderson even demonstrates the reasons why Nietzsche chose to affirm these

two seemingly contradictory concepts without trying to explicitly reconcile them.

(Consideration of these reasons will help us understand the ties to the deliberate

contradiction seen in Eastern mysticism.) Then, by invoking Nietzsche's doctrine of

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[3] In light of all of this we will finally be in a position to ask ourselves what the meaning of
this esoteric and confusing way of presenting a deeply thought through and sneakily
systematic philosophy is.

eternal recurrence, *Anderson attempts to show how a genuine affirmation thereof involves the affirmation of both of these ideas.* Anderson concludes with a discussion of how honesty and artistry help our understanding of the implications of the relationship between truth and illusion for our redemption.

Anderson explains the task of unpacking the conceptions of truth and illusion as follows: "Clearly, then, the real exegetical burden we must face is to explain how Nietzsche could have thought himself entitled to *both* kinds of claim at *once*" (NTIR 186). Anderson wants to draw our attention to the possibility that we have hitherto alluded to, the possibility that Nietzsche is deliberately contradictory in his explicit musings on truth and illusion in order to fully explicate the nature of the formal content, the close relationship between truth and illusion themselves. Our new conception of truth and illusion and their literary affect hinges on an understanding of how the becoming of consciousness and of our historically affected consciousness as such relates to the way in which we use truth and illusion practically as honesty and artistry, respectively, in order to find meaning in our historical lives as such. *If we can re-conceptualize 'truth' and 'illusion' in a way that is more consistent with our thoroughgoing perspectival consciousness and its distortive historical instantiation, then we will be able to have a good conscience towards new illusions affirmed as truths that actually redeem meaning in our lives instead of illusions merely purported as truths that defeat themselves.*

Obviously, it makes sense to question the value of truth at this point, given that Nietzsche denies the existence of objective, interest free, necessary truths yet

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he still posits their historical utility. The value, or lack thereof, of truth will, of course, further inform the value of illusion, which will, in turn, make intelligible the value of the relationship between the two seemingly contradictory concepts. So, how can truth as such still be valuable? We have an understanding of how concepts become valuable in general and how objective and a-perspectival necessary 'Truths' are impossible, given the interpretation of the becoming of consciousness in Chapter One. (Hereafter, I capitalize 'Truth' to designate this understanding). We also have an understanding of how Truth is historically thought to be valuable, given the account of the evolution of moral concepts in Chapter Two. Yet we do not yet know exactly how a truthful illusion can be valuable in a way that is authentic and not self-defeating.

Nietzsche consistently asserts that art lies about the world by suggesting what the world could be like or even by simply transforming the world ever so slightly, which is reminiscent to how our perspectival consciousness transforms and the world of non-conceptualized perception and of historical values. This deliberate artistic distortion of the world, *consistent with how we already transform and distort the world mind you, is the lie with good conscience, the illusion of art*. Nietzsche sates, "Now our honesty has a counterforce which helps us to avoid [its bad] consequences: art as the good *will to appearance*" (GS 107). Further, Nietzsche states that artists help us, "make things beautiful, attractive, and desirable for ourselves when they are not" (GS 299). The suggestion is that conscious artistic distortions asserted as truths, i.e. truthful illusions, are the most useful deceptive

conceptualizations for us. Interestingly enough, truthful illusions in the vein of art are not only consistent with the transformative character of conscious conceptualization and its historical instantiation. The way in which one creates and affirms a truthful illusion (two seemingly irreconcilable antimonies) is also consistent with the competing nature of unconscious states that constitute our conscious states, with the becoming of consciousness. The challenge in Chapter One was to explain how it was possible for a multiplicity of unconscious states can compete with as well as constitute a singular conscious states. The challenge in Chapter Two was to explain how a multiplicity of distorted meanings is instantiated in a singular historical concept. The challenge in the present context is to understand how two seemingly opposing virtues such as honesty (the 'truthful' aspect of the concept 'truthful illusions') and artistry (the 'illusion 'aspect of the concept 'truthful illusions') can be employed in a new way of finding meaning in life as such, i.e. life at this particular point in history.

Essentially, we must ask how artistry's emphasis on creating and endorsing illusions is different from cowardly faith in the biblical ideal and how Nietzsche's emphasis on intellectual honesty is different from world-denying asceticism. Nietzsche believes, as we know, that most of our 'knowledge' can be traced back to simple errors that were accepted as a circumstance of life, which eventually began to compete with other claims rooted in basic errors of a similar vein. We choose which basic error is most compatible with our experiences, according to Nietzsche. Nietzsche says real knowledge and honesty begins when we find these errors and

pick the illusions, which are most useful *and* most compatible to our experiences

and our goals and then make them our 'Truths,' so to speak. For Nietzsche, the way

to find valuable artistic illusions that are not (a) instances of cowardly faith in an

ideal with poor proof of strength (based *solely* on the truth of convention) and (b)

intellectually honest (but not in the way of world-denying asceticism) is to

experimentally answer the doctrine of eternal recurrence.

3.2 Honesty and Artistry through the Eternal Recurrence and Redemption of Meaning

A proper understanding of the doctrine of eternal recurrence is meant to bridge the

gap between the parallels hinted above in the relationships of truth and illusion to

honesty and artistry. If one reacts with joy to the prospect of the doctrine of eternal

recurrence (the exercise of imagining the *endless* recurrence of one's life in the *same*

exact way that it is lived now), then presumably one has lived a happy life. Let us

now try and understand how an honest analysis of one's life, by way of this doctrine,

can help us find the most useful artistic illusions. Anderson gives us an objective

way, so to speak, for individuals to analyze their lives that accounts for the

perspectival nature of conscious analysis. Anderson writes:

> It becomes clear that Nietzsche's test does identify a substantively
>
> important part of what makes a life good – viz., a deep-going
>
> consistency between the agent's avowed values and her actual
>
> life...Avoiding such inconsistency or division within the person is
>
> deeply important to Nietzsche. (NTIR 199)

As long as each individual lives a life that is consistent with their values insofar as their actions, for the most part, are embodiments thereof, as much as they can be, this consistency or harmony should bring about a joyful response when positing the prospect of eternal recurrence. Judging value-action consistency in this way is difficult due to the possibility of self-deception but, if the doctrine of eternal recurrence is understood in the strict sense of the phrase, it forces the individual to assess her life honestly. This approach which hopefully mitigates the possibility of suspiciously overemphasizing the future and understating the past in a way that results in a bad faith positive judgment about one's life.

If every detail of every event of one's life must eternally recur, then affirming one's life with joy at the thought of this recurrence would be genuine or honest, but if unharmonious events could be left out, then this affirmation would be in bad faith. Unfortunately, however, in our actual lives, as Anderson notes, rarely do our actions always line up with our values, which may prompt one to say that Nietzsche is endorsing a type of affirmation that is inherently impossible and is therefore self-defeating in the same way as the ascetic priest is self-defeating. However, Nietzsche is not saying that in order to affirm the eternal recurrence of every detail of one's life that each minute detail of one's life must be harmonious with one's values. Nietzsche is simply saying that we must look at our lives as a whole, which includes actions that were and were not in harmony with our values. Therefore, if one had acted in a way that did not exemplify one's values, if it was for a greater purpose (i.e. learning from one's mistakes), then the entirety of one's life can still be affirmed in

its minute detail eternally, including the unharmonious actions. Anderson states, "Fragmentary, accidental, puzzling, or regrettable aspects of a person's life or character can be redeemed by being brought into a whole that the person can affirm" (NTIR 200).

Anderson wants to understand the doctrine of eternal recurrence in a manner that allows for a subject to affirm their life by understanding their unharmonious actions in the context of the completeness of their life in order to illustrate harmony in the whole of one's actions and the entirety of the narrative of one's life. In order to do so, Anderson states that we need a strategy and, "that is the task of redemption, which Zarathustra characterizes as a product of 'willing' and 'creating'" (NTIR 200). Nietzsche himself can be cited in support here:

> [One must] create and carry into One what is fragment and riddle and dreadful accident…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…All 'it was' is a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident – until the creative will says to it, 'But thus I willed it.' Until the will says to it, "But thus I will it; thus I shall will it." (Zarathustra II, 'Redemption')

At this juncture, we can understand not only the value in assessing one's life through the doctrine of eternal recurrence as such, but we can also understand how honestly assessing one's life by accounting for unharmonious action actually allows us to retroactively create meaning out of the unharmonious actions within the context of

the whole of one's life by turning an 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it.' One may argue that this transformation of or this useful distortion of an 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it' is an inauthentic, self-deceptive, and self-defeating notion of redemption. Although we will further explicate how this narrative redemption is authentic, it is important to ask ourselves at this juncture if this concern is itself authentic or if it is overtly influenced by our historically inauthentic conception of Truth.

This retroactive affirmation runs dangerously close to inauthentic affirmation, which is why we must elaborate two points. First, turning an 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it' retroactively can be genuine if it is simply changing one's perspective on how one views one's failures or shortcomings in the context of the success of the entirety of one's life. Second, and most importantly, we can do this in the present, not only retroactively. The following explication of the necessity of the pretense of the belief in an artistic illusion yet to be affirmed, which is then affirmed over time, is consistent with how we are 'familiar' with our conscious concepts before they are conceptualized. Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal recurrence as such illustrates a way in which we can take hardships in stride.

Anderson uses the example of Jimmy Carter's loss to Ronald Reagan in the presidential election of 1980, which threatened to define his career as a failure. As Anderson puts it, Carter redeemed the 'it was' of his loss by turning it into a 'thus I willed it' by transforming his Presidential library into the 'Carter Center,' which allowed him to work on important projects such as, "disease eradication, human rights protection, and poverty alleviation," culminating in the 2002 Nobel Prize for

Peace and the "greatest U.S. Ex-Presidency ever" (NTIR 201). Clearly, even though

Carter might not want to *only* will the eternal recurrence of his 1980 loss to Reagan,

in the context of his entire life including his rise to moral leadership hitherto

unknown by an ex-President, Carter would most definitely want to will that loss

since it gave him the opportunity to achieve great success outside of the world of

'white house' politics that he most likely would not have been able to achieve within

the context and limitations of a presidency. Anderson continues by acknowledging

that Carter did not know that his loss in the election of 1980 would actually work

out for the best, but he also acknowledges that foreknowledge of the success of a

'thus I willed it' is beside the point. Anderson states, "Nietzsche is aware that having

a good life in his sense often depends on luck. But it was not *merely* luck that

effected Carter's redemption. He also had to *do* something" (NTIR 202).

This understanding of redemption, by way of turning an 'it was' into a 'thus I

willed it,' helps illustrate the practical meaning of the thought experiment of the

doctrine of eternal recurrence. The doctrine of eternal recurrence precludes the

possibility of feeling as though we have moved beyond our past failures and forces

us to create meaning out of these past failures in a way that is harmonious with our

values in the context of our entire life. The measure of that meaning corresponds to

genuinely affirming the eternal recurrence of our lives, which is to say that we must

create useful conceptions of them, useful truthful illusions. Furthermore, as noted

above, creating these conceptions also allows us to bring a good or hopeful

conscience to our failures in the present by "taking arms against our troubles" and

constructing "a unifying, redemptive story rendering life meaningful and affirmable" (NTIR 202). By orienting oneself towards one's life in this way, narrative becomes the ruling principle of one's self-understanding, which, in turn, helps shape new events in one's life and helps one create a meaning for the entirety of one's life. This is just to say that one is attempting to bring about a good conscience, as well as one can, towards their newly created concepts that are just as distorted as the self-defeating ones, but hopefully more useful. This utility, of course, is confirmed in the future.

The experimental answers given to the doctrine of eternal recurrence help us understand how we can orient our conscience towards our lives in a more healthy way, so to speak, in order to create conceptions of our life that best uncover meaning. Yet how honesty and artistry are different from an ascetic will to truth and blind faith remains to be elucidated. Such an elucidation is necessary to determine how to create meaning in our lives despite our historically affected becoming of consciousness. Nietzsche thinks that artists know how to create beautiful things out of an honest assessment of the world that is illusory in a way that does not completely do away with honesty.

> Moving away from things until there is much of them that no one longer sees and much that one must 'see into' them, *in order still to see them*…all this we should learn from artists while being wiser than they are in other things. (GS 299)

Anderson illustrates that we must not only learn how to make things beautiful from

artists, but we must also learn how to acknowledge the beauty in things especially

when they are not beautiful in themselves. This change in perspective towards the

beauty of a thing is a meaningful change in the actual beauty of the thing because

nothing *is* purely in itself without a for-another structure. All facts are necessarily

perspectival. An artist's creation of beauty onto a thing and our positing of meaning

onto our life are just as authentic as our conscious transformation and our historical

distortion. This kind of redemptive meaning is Truthful as such.

While neither Nietzsche nor Anderson explicitly discuss a necessary

connection between truth and honesty nor between illusion and artistry, an implicit

connection between the pairs of relationships should be obvious. Despite the

similarities in the names of each term, the relationship between honesty and artistry

as honestly, but artistically creating a beautiful illusion out of something not

beautiful is clearly similar to how distortions do not preclude the possibility of

positive truth claims. Anderson makes a cognate point when he observes:

> By all these means, artistic representation glorifies its object by
>
> depicting it as *other than it is*…'we want to be poets of our lives'…the
>
> artistic redemption that Nietzsche seeks…is a 'counterforce' against
>
> our honesty. (NTIR 205, GS 299, GS 107)

Nietzsche wants us to be poets of our lives by creating artistic illusions out of our

honest assessment of our lives. Clearly, at this point, Nietzsche not only thinks that

there is a genuine perspective and distortion behind all of our simple and useful

truths, he thinks there is a genuine perspective and distortion behind even the

truths that allow us to discern these perspectives and distortions as well. But he also thinks that in valuing our own lives and attempting to affirm the world as beautiful even when it is not, we need a healthy dose of artistry and artistic illusion in order to *balance* a pure will to truth. This is why Anderson asserts that the will to truth and the will to illusion stand in tension with one another, but do not contradict one another. The way in which the will to truth and the will to illusion are antinomies that regulate each other, but are present in a singular instance of an artistic illusion is similar to how antonymous wills are present in a singular conscious state and how antonymous meanings are present in singular concepts and moral valuations. "Nietzsche's ideal," Anderson contends, "is precisely a virtue in which the honesty of 'scientific thinking' is synthesized with illusion-generating 'artistic forces', plus the practical wisdom to deploy both in the service of perfecting human life" (NTIR 206). Anderson thinks that this synthesis is not a mere fantasy since honesty and artistry are not constitutive principles, but regulative principles allowing for them to be simultaneously valid, yet have opposing tendencies. Upon scrutiny, honestly affirmed artistic illusions are truthful by the very standards of valuation that would trick one into thinking that these artistic illusions are false.

If honesty and artistry are regulative principles that are meant to limit each other, then clearly Nietzsche thinks we must balance the two in a way that tells the narrative of our lives in the most beautiful and meaningful way possible that also does not oppose the possibility of honest affirmation. Of course, we do not want to sound like a Walgreens greeting card philosopher or, to use a more modern

example, a feel good empty Facebook meme maker. So, we should clarify what stating that the narrative of our lives is meant to make life beautiful means. Life is supposed to be made beautiful from a truthful illusion in the sense that art is made beautiful. However in the context of our lives it makes more sense to say that the artist's way of making something beautiful is akin to the creation of meaning as the narrative whole of a truthful illusion. As we already know, due to the thoroughly perspectival condition of cognition, the intellectual conscience can never know a thing in itself, apart from interpretation, but that does not mean it does not know useful and simple truths or even intellectual truths. *Clearly, over the course of history, mankind has posited the temporarily useful truths of Christianity, the simple truths of phenomenology, as well as the intellectual truths of science. In this vein, honesty demands that we are aware of the final and certain reasons within the limits of perspectival character of cognizing in order to find the most useful or 'cognitively superior' illusions that are still true to our the phenomena.* Just as the raw sense material of perception takes on a different meaning in the logicizing of cognition, which is both truthful *and* characterized by a transformation, the facts of one's life, discerned through an honest assessment thereof, take on a different meaning by abstracting away and fitting them into a larger narrative ("thus I willed it") of the whole of one's life. *The regulating yet constituting character of honesty and artistry in the process of redeeming the meaning of one's life through affirming artistic illusions is paralleled by the way in which our unconscious perceptions are perspectivally transformed into concepts, by the presence of competing unconscious wills in the*

constitution or generation of conscious states, and by the presence of antonymous

meanings in a singular concept. This is not to say that one grounds the other; the

parallels are noted in order to point to the unity across Nietzsche's vast body of

work.

To finish our discussion of redemption, Anderson focuses on what we would

need to do to actually create values, to actually make an object beautiful and to no

longer deceive oneself. In order to get out of an interpretation of artistry that

reduces it to a mere pretense, Anderson explicates Nietzsche's theory on Raphael's

Transfiguration in The Birth of Tragedy IV. Nietzsche thinks that the content of the

painting, Christ's redeeming the possessed boy, is merely a symbol for Raphael's

larger point about the redemption of life through art. Anderson states, "The

beauteous vision of Christ's transfiguration depicted in the painting symbolizes the

experience of viewing the painting itself, whose actual splendor does the real work

of transfiguring the possessed boy, bewildered disciples, and the rest, into

something that is, unquestionably beautiful" (NTIR 209). Here, Anderson notes, that

we 'pretend' the patches of color on the painting are the possessed boy and the

confused disciples, similar to how the individual, concrete, and nonconceptual

content of unconscious perception is distorted by our conscious conceptualization.

Yet we do not pretend that the painting as a whole is beautiful. The painting simply

is beautiful, it is truly made beautiful through this illusion of the brushstrokes as the

possessed boy, et cetera. This is artistry's role in redemption, to actually make

things beautiful thereby truly bestowing value.

Conclusion

At the end of our investigation, it does not seem so absurd as it did at the onset to state that our commonly accepted conception of self is distorted, if not false! There is clearly a thoroughgoing distorting character inherent in the three determined aspects of the unity of the self. Of course, the distorting character of the self in the present is exhibited by the way conscious states transform and logicize unconscious perceptions. The way in which this distorting nature has manifested itself in the past is exhibited by the way our valuations of good become valued as evil, how our valuations of bad become valued as good, how legal notions of debt become religious notions of guilt, how our good conscience towards ourselves becomes a bad conscience towards ourselves, and how our valuing of religious truth becomes our valuing of scientific truth. Of course, the self-defeating affects of the final instance of historical revaluation is what grounds the necessity of finding a new system of valuation that better allows for us to create meaning in internal time that reconciles external time by being consistent with the values thereof. Further, the prospects of the self in the future are not simply 'distorted' in virtue of their being affected by the historical distortive instantiation of conceptual transformations in conscious states, but also by the ways in which we artistically redeem the negative facts of our internal timeline through affirming a narrative that unifies the meaning of these facts about our past with activity in the future. It should be somewhat clear, now, as to why the success of finding meaning in life and therefore being happy is necessarily predicated over the success of catching up to oneself in this way; we

could not accurately diagnose ourselves nor could we effectively treat ourselves if our historical self was too far ahead of our present self. But, what can be said about the being conscious of this project of catching up to oneself?

This is where Buddhist metaphysical principles can psychologically orient oneself towards rectifying one's historically affected sickness of grossly overvaluing Truth at the expense of meaning. The last task of this paper is to make intelligible the possible role the valued concepts of Buddhist metaphysics can play in our becoming healthier. A brief examination of the esoteric relationship between content and style in Nietzsche's philosophic system suggests that, while Nietzsche spoke unfavorably about Buddhism in his lifetime, Nietzsche himself valued the same concepts that are most significantly valued in Buddhist metaphysics. These values, of course, are a treatment for our historical sickness since it could restore our good conscience towards the singular instantiation of antinomies, towards illusion. Again, it is important to note that Nietzsche does not want to discredit truth and science. He just wants to make room at the top of our mountain of valuation for illusion next to truth. So, too, the Buddhist metaphysical principles of nothingness, flux, impermanence, and emptiness are values, which if held to the same standard as truth, can help restore our good conscience towards illusion, which is, again, necessary for us to find meaning in our age of the self-defeating valuation of Truth over and above all other values.

In order to show how the aforementioned concepts that are valued as the highest values in Buddhist metaphysics can help resolve our historically affected

consciousness as such, let us briefly recount how Nietzsche's deliberately

unsystematic philosophy (and style) itself echoes these Buddhist metaphysical

concepts. Nietzsche's philosophy of mind supports the view of the self constantly in

flux, moving from one conscious state to the next without a unifying, behind-the-

scenes ego. Further, Nietzsche's philosophy of mind supports a view of the self that

is *impermanent*, a 'singular' and 'fixed' instantiation multiplicity of competing wills

which themselves are fleeting. Not co-incidentally, both aspects of this view of the

self and the mind are reinforced by the aphoristic, non-linear style in which

Nietzsche elaborates them. Nietzsche's philosophy of history contends that moral

concepts are also constantly in *flux*, only existing contingently not as fixed and

divinely inspired. Moreover, Nietzsche's philosophy of history contends that moral

concepts are filled with these contingent, superficial meanings in a way that

supports the view that the notion of objective moral concepts such as 'Truth' and

'Reason' are inherently *empty*. Here too, the genre in which Nietzsche expounds the

doctrine, namely, a polemic, is a fitting vehicle for it. Also, Nietzsche's philosophy of

meaning supports a view that there is *no* objective meaning to life; instead the only

meanings are those subjectively posited. What more apt form to present the content

of his philosophy of meaning than the fictional, redemptive narrative, *Thus Spoke

Zarathustra.* Further, it is fitting that Nietzsche's philosophy of meaning, which rails

against the notion of Truth set into motion by the Christian ethic, is presented in an

allegorical fiction deliberately resembling the Bible. Moreover, the way in which the

inner structure of Nietzsche's philosophy of mind, history, and meaning all bleed

into each other supports a view of Nietzsche's whole philosophical system as in *flux* and purposefully unsystematic. Finally, the presence of deliberately contradictory and unreconciled statements across Nietzsche's unsystematic system is itself an exercise in cultivating a good conscience towards the presence of competing, antonymous, and regulating wills, meanings, and artistic illusions in singular instantiations of conscious states, moral values, and redemptive truths.

In the aforementioned ways, Nietzsche's approach to selfhood values some of the most basic Buddhist principles (nothingness, flux, impermanent, emptiness). This similarity raises some interesting, fundamental questions. What would happen if Western societies made room for these concepts at the top of our system of valuation? Would we, as members of these societies, have a better conscience towards the presence of competing wills in our present selves? Would we have a better conscience towards (and understanding of) the ugly origins of our modern values, their lack of objective Truth, and their self-defeating nature? Would we be able to reconcile ourselves by creating illusions for ourselves, enabling us to honestly affirm the negative facts of our internal timeline in order to meaningfully project ourselves into the future? Would we be happier? Once we have finally caught up to ourselves, in this Nietzschean context, are Buddhist metaphysical principles the best way to help us develop a good conscience towards ourselves as such?

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CV

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Education
Boston University College of Arts and Sciences; Boston MA
Undergraduate:
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  - o Dean's List
- **Graduate:**
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  - o Fall Semester GPA: 3.6
  - o Dean's List

Other Education:
General Assembly (Summer 2013-Spring 2016)
- Completed course entitled 'Back End Web Development -- Ruby on Rails,' 48 hours over the course of 8 weeks
- Completed course entitled 'Introduction to Product Management,' one day
- Completed course entitled 'How to Build a Mobile Application,' one day
- Completed course entitled 'How to Start: 30 Days from Idea to Decision,' one day
- Completed course entitled 'What is this User Experience Thing?' one day
- Completed course entitled 'Growth Hacking,' one day

Columbia University (Summer 2011)
- Completed study program in Narrative and Religion: The World of Religious Narrative in New York.

University of Wisconsin (Summer 2010)
- Completed study program in Entrepreneurial Studies and Broadcast Communication administered by American Collegiate Adventures program.

Paul D. Schreiber High School (2008-2012)
- Principal's Honor Roll
- National Honors Society
- Spanish Honors Society
- Varsity Athlete: Soccer and Wrestling

Work Experience
Capital A Entertainment, New York, New York (Summer, Fall 2015 – Spring 2016)
- Help plan and book venues for concerts, listening parties, and various events
- Helped with artist discovery

- Helped with artist development

Syrch, inc., Boston, Massachusetts (August 2014 – July 2015)
President of Operations at Boston University
- In charge of introducing software that connects students and tutors on a university specific level to Boston University, which has been successful at the University of Michigan for the past two years.
- In charge of on-boarding tutors, adding students to the platform, marketing the platform, and everyday operations.
- In charge of managing the relationships between professors and students as well as professors and tutors

Arc Angel Fund, New York, New York (Summer 2013, Summer 2015)
Observer
- Attended screening meetings for early stage angel investment fund focused on technology startups
- Attended partner meetings where investment decisions were made

ServiceChannel, New York, New York (Summer 2014)
Product Management Intern
- Helped manage ongoing product feature rollouts
- Helped manage ongoing product testing
- Helped with translating web and mobile app features to multiple languages through Google Translate Website Translator Management tool
- Conducted competitive analysis

AliceApp, New York, New York (Summer 2014)
Front-End Development Intern
- Helped sketch, redesign, and discuss ideas for new Content Management System

Rietler Advisory, New York, New York (Summer 2013)
Intern
- Helped analyze companies for acceptance into the Venture Advisory Program
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- Conducted market analysis and competitive research
- Attended investor demo days for numerous incubator and accelerator programs

Citelighter, New York, New York (Summer 2013)
- Performed sales lead qualification for education technology startup company focused on improving student writing and research skills

Promoting Specialized Care and Health (PSCH) (2013)
Freelance Writer
- Proposed and executed writing project concerning the daily lives, care, stigmas, and existential significance of adults with mental illness
- Interviewed five mentally ill adults and six PSCH program directors and coordinators

Promoting Specialized Care and Health (PSCH) (Summer 2011)
- Organized and participated in recreational activities for mentally ill adults
- Prepared materials for State Audit
- Reviewed case files of mentally ill adults for completeness

Organizations

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Summary: I am a graduate student at Boston University working on my Master's Thesis in philosophy with an interest in the intersection of philosophy, art, technology, entrepreneurship, and investment. I plan to leverage the strong reasoning skills and 'know-how' acquired in my undergraduate and graduate education to solve problems in the education technology and art spaces, with an entrepreneurial spirit of course!