

# 1 NIETZSCHE'S ETHICS IN OUTLINE

## 1.1. Terminology

To begin with, it will be helpful to distinguish three things: (i) *a morality*; (ii) a particular instance of a morality, which I call *Christian morality*; (iii) Nietzsche's own *ethics*.

- (i) A morality is a particular value system, belonging to a historical group or groups of people, arising among them for contingent reasons which can be the object of sociological study. Nietzsche has various different examples in mind, including Ancient Greek morality, Ancient Israelite morality and Christian morality.
- (ii) Christian morality is a particularly important *instance* of a morality, which can provisionally be thought of as Nietzsche's target, as the villain of Nietzsche's story – even if, as we shall see, the situation is more complicated than this provisional characterisation suggests. Christian morality is dominant and highly significant in modern Europe. Christian morality's adherents are not necessarily faithful Christians, nor are all faithful Christians adherents of Christian morality. It is best understood as a technical term in Nietzsche, not as a description of all-and-only Christian believers, but we will shortly explore its link to Christianity itself (2.1).
- (iii) I will refer to Nietzsche's own moral outlook as his 'ethics'. Although 'ethics' and 'morality' are often synonymous in philosophical writing, I give them distinct definitions here because it would be confusing to speak of 'Nietzsche's morality', given (i) and (ii). That is, it would suggest, wrongly, that Nietzschean ethics, like Christian morality, is just another instance of a morality. Once we understand his ethics, we quickly grasp that he does not see things this way (2.5).

Though he clearly distinguished between these three things, this terminology is not Nietzsche's. He can use 'morality' to denote (i), (ii) or (iii). He does speak of 'Christian

morality’, but in fact he usually refers to Christian morality simply as ‘morality’, because it is the dominant form: for example, *On the Genealogy of Morality* is really a genealogy of *Christian* morality. He does not use the term ‘ethics’ at all, in my sense. However, my terminology enables us to set out the situation with greater clarity. For example, Nietzsche often argues that Christian morality is unethical, but he does not think that every morality is unethical. He also holds that ethical activity is Christian-immoral, i.e. immoral by Christian standards, though not immoral by the standards of every morality.

Nietzsche’s ethics, as presented here, combine a descriptive thesis and a normative command. We begin with the former.

## 1.2. The Descriptive Thesis: The Life Theory

When Nietzsche looks out at the realm of living things, what he sees is a domain necessarily characterised by power-seeking. Organisms and, as we shall see, even *parts* of organisms, seek dominance and control; they look to increase whatever they have and to subordinate or exploit whatever they encounter. It is a shifting, unstable domain: one entity overwhelms, consumes, destroys or annexes another; or it is, in turn, overwhelmed, consumed, and so on. Nietzsche does not deny the existence of cooperative behaviour, but he sees it as instrumental – a variety of power-seeking, not a counter-example to it.

Power-seeking is not merely Nietzsche’s characterisation of how living things usually or often happen to behave: it is biologically essential. As Nietzsche puts it, life, when correctly understood, ‘cannot be thought without’ such a characterisation (*GM* II 11). *Living* and *power-seeking* cannot be pulled apart, from the simplest to the most complex lifeforms.

In expressing this view, Nietzsche often appeals to something like a power-seeking force, which he variously calls ‘Life’, ‘nature’, ‘will’, ‘will to life’ or ‘will to power’. This force accounts for the power-seeking behaviour inherent in the organic realm. I will refer to this force as ‘Life’, using the proper noun (including in some translated passages) in part to remind the reader that something unusual is being picked out here. I will still speak of ‘life’ in other contexts, amongst other things to indicate the organic realm as a whole, rather than the force that operates through it: thus, for example, one might say that, for Nietzsche, Life governs all life. But readers should note that the Life/life distinction is not explicit in the texts, not least because all nouns are capitalised in German.

Life is often presented as an independent agent, a person-like entity with intentions (*Absichten*) (*TI* Morality 6; also *GM* III 16) and interests (*GM* III 11; *TI* Untimely 36) set apart from our own. Life issues ‘commandments’, for example (*TI* Morality 4), it ‘aims at’ various outcomes (*GS* 344), plays tricks on us (*GM* II 7) and ‘forces us’ to do things (*TI* Morality 5, my translation). Life can ‘gain advantage’ from certain actions or types of people (*TI* Untimely 36). As might be expected, what Life aims at, what it gains advantage from, has something to do with power. So we can sketch Nietzsche’s view as follows: living things are necessarily governed by Life, a force which operates through them to achieve power-increasing ends. In this study, ‘the Life Theory’ is my name for this view.

In a number of respects, the Life Theory may appear peculiar to the present-day reader. What is the evidence for the theory? What kind of force are we talking about and by which mechanism does it operate? How could this force, ‘Life’, have its own goals and intentions? We can make the theory less alien by saying something about Nietzsche’s sources and

motivations; in any case, we need not pretend that the theory is free from ambiguity, nor that it is given adequate philosophical or empirical support in his texts. Ultimately, though, we should not lose the wood for the trees: the Life Theory is *presupposed* by Nietzsche's ethics, and questions about the theory's finer details, and about how he supports the theory, are less pressing than the question of what he needs it for and what he does with it.

We can therefore leave open the question of whether, for Nietzsche, the *inorganic* realm is also characterised by the same force that governs living things. Nietzsche at least entertains this more ambitious thesis (*BGE* 36; *KSA* 13: 14[121]), which had precedent in Schopenhauer, Mainländer and others. But his ethics do not depend on it. Similarly, we need not closely examine the troubling question of how Life has 'aims' and 'intentions'. While Nietzsche speaks of Life as an intentional agent, Life is not a transcendent deity which directs living things from without. For Nietzsche also insists that Life does not, strictly speaking, have conscious and causally efficacious intentions in the way that these formulations suggest (see *BGE* 9 on 'nature'). 'Of course,' Nietzsche might say, 'Life does not want things in the way that we typically think of humans as wanting things. Speaking of Life's 'intentions' is just a useful shorthand.' What, though, would talk of Life's 'intentions' be shorthand *for*? The answer would be complex: as we shall see, Life is portrayed as a dynamic force, which can be highly creative and tenacious in seeking out quite specific ends. Reducing or naturalising Nietzsche's language of goals and commandments would not be easy. But, simply put, we don't need to worry about this. A study of Nietzschean metaphysics, teleology or biology might work with the texts, thin though they are in this regard, to speculate about his account of the underlying reality. But those interested in Nietzsche's ethics do not have to draw any firm conclusions about the metaphysical status of Life's goals. What matters for us is why he *speaks* this way. He asks us to think in terms of Life's intentions and interests, because he is going to categorise human beings, their actions and their values, in terms of whether they work for or against what Life 'wants' (whatever that turns out to mean on a metaphysical level). He will therefore speak of those on Life's team, the 'party of Life' (*EH* BT 4), and those who at least seem to be on the opposing side (*EH* Destiny 8). Whatever the underlying metaphysical or biological commitments of the Life Theory, this is the division it needs to support: for Life or against Life.

To understand how Nietzsche's ethics puts the Life Theory to work, it will be helpful to say something more about Nietzsche's influences. One clue lies in Nietzsche's occasional adoption of the term 'will to life' (*Wille zum Leben*) to speak of Life, a term which clearly points back to Schopenhauer (*A* 18, 50; *TI* Ancients 4-5; *KSA* 13: 16[86], p. 516; 25[1], p. 637; Nietzsche also speaks of '*Lebenswille*', another Schopenhauerian term usually translated either 'will to life' or 'life-will', see *GM* II 11-12; cf. Schopenhauer 2014. Sections 54, 70, 2018, chap. 44). Schopenhauer had argued that something appropriately called 'the Will' was the thing-in-itself, the real, metaphysical basis of the everyday world as we know it. On Schopenhauer's account, this metaphysical entity operates through all living things, ensuring that biological life continues as it is. Schopenhauer often referred to the Will, when at work in the organic realm, as the 'will to life' (Schopenhauer 2014, sec. 54), primarily because it makes organisms pursue survival and reproduction. Our individual, human wills – our individual faculties of wanting or desiring – are the clear manifestation of what this will to life is aiming at on our behalf: hence, a human individual's will is at its strongest, and hardest to resist, in relation to matters of survival and especially reproduction. (The Will makes

parents prioritise their offspring's survival at their own expense, so *individual* survival is not the ultimate goal, even in Schopenhauer, let alone in Nietzsche's development of Schopenhauer.) To speak anachronistically, the will to life programmes our individual wills for its own advantage. The idea of such a will underlying and controlling biological behaviour was, in the wake of Schopenhauer, extremely influential. Nietzsche was not just reading Schopenhauer himself, but also others who, following Schopenhauer, produced related but alternative versions, wills which had slightly different programming (e.g. Hartmann 1869; Mainländer 1879; for discussion, see Beiser 2016; Stern 2019b).

Note that one can disconnect Schopenhauer's claim about the metaphysical Will – that there is a single thing-in-itself and it is best called 'Will' – from the biological model of a force (called 'will to life') that operates through all living things. This, in essence, is Nietzsche's move: he need not endorse the story about will as metaphysical thing-in-itself, but he maintains that something like the will to life, albeit with different programming, explains the organic realm.

In addition to Schopenhauer and Schopenhauerians, Nietzsche was also drawing, selectively and inventively, on contemporary scientific or at least quasi-scientific literature. His reading and use of evolutionary theory is particularly relevant (see Moore 2002; Sommer 2010; Emden 2014; Brobjer 2016; Holub 2018, 313–59). Nietzsche certainly knew about Darwin, albeit mediated through other commentators. But Darwin's ideas, though influential, were not universally accepted or understood at this time, even within the scientific community (on German reception of Darwin, see Richards 2013; Holub 2018, 322–29). There were other, non-Darwinian evolutionary theories, which did not seem as implausible as perhaps they would now. For example, one contemporary, Wilhelm Roux, argued that a sort of Darwinian struggle for survival is taking place not merely between animals but *within* them, within their organs and their cells, and that life would be impossible without this permanent struggle (Roux 1881; on Nietzsche's reading of Roux, see Holub 2018, 340–43). Another, William Henry Rolph, argued that life is characterised by permanent 'insatiability', even at the cellular level, and therefore by an ongoing, internecine 'war of aggression', in which each element, by nature never satisfied, sought to accumulate as much of the available resources as possible (Rolph 1884, 97; on Nietzsche and Rolph, see Moore 2002; Brobjer 2008, 170–73; Sommer 2010; Emden 2014, 176–83; Holub 2018, 343–51). Generally, Nietzsche brings together ideas of this kind: Life by necessity seeks increase and accumulation; it operates not just between living beings, but within them.

The combination of the Schopenhauerian and natural-scientific contexts led, in Nietzsche, to a 'will', Life, characterised more in terms of power, conflict, insatiability and exploitation than its Schopenhauerian counterpart. Nietzsche is attempting to correct Schopenhauer, for example, when he speaks of 'the true life-will, which seeks power' (*GM* II 11). What he means is: the correct version of the will that Schopenhauer was talking about, namely the one that seeks *power*, not mere survival or reproduction. Indeed, Nietzsche often emphasises that the 'true life-will, which seeks power', can or ought to ensure that certain individuals do *not* survive or reproduce (see 6.2, 6.3).

Context can also help to understand some of Nietzsche's vagueness, which he inherits from his interlocutors. Earlier, we noted Nietzsche's references to Life's aims and intentions, together with his official insistence that Life is blind. The same tension is found in

Schopenhauer and even Darwin, who often presents natural selection as an intelligent agent with specific aims. We might now naturally think of (Darwinian) evolution as goal-less. In Nietzsche's time, though, there was considerable debate about the extent to which Darwinian theory implied that nature was goal-directed in a more substantial way (Richards 2009; Holub 2018, 328–29).

We are now able to understand why Nietzsche claims, for example, that 'life itself seems to me to be instinct for growth, for continuation, for accumulation of forces, for *power*' (A 6, translation altered), that 'the truly basic life-instinct [...] aims at *the expansion of power*', that the 'great and small struggle revolves everywhere around preponderance, around growth and expansion, around power and in accordance with the will to power, which is simply the will to life' (GS 349). Or, again: 'what man wants, what the smallest part of every living organism wants, is an increase of power' (KSA 13: 14[174], my translation; in this study, '[...]' indicates that I have omitted some of Nietzsche's text, whereas '...', without the square brackets, is Nietzsche's own punctuation). In such cases, his ideas, in context, would certainly have sounded less unfamiliar: they are developments and, he thinks, correctives of their contemporary counterparts.

The Life Theory draws, however idiosyncratically, on contemporary philosophy and natural science to posit Life, a Schopenhauerian 'will' of sorts, directing the organic realm – organisms and parts of organisms – towards the pursuit of power, without which they could not live. As an interpretation of Nietzsche's remarks on will to power, the Life Theory has plenty of competitors in the secondary literature. Some of these resemble it to an extent (for readings that agree closely with mine, see Hussain 2011; Holub 2018, 353; Porter 2013 treats some of the same material from a different angle; the account of Nietzsche's ethics given in Katsafanas 2018 bears a more superficial resemblance to the Life Theory, in part due to the emphasis he places on action and drives). To give some flavour of the available materials, one recent analysis lists eleven *categories* of will to power interpretation (Hatab 2019). But in the quotations just given, and in more to come, taking Nietzsche both in context and at his word yields this reading above all others. It also guides us through the aim and execution of his late writings. This does not mean that the Life Theory grounds Nietzsche's ethics *unproblematically*: indeed, my analysis will suggest the opposite (see 3.). Moreover, as made plain at the start, the Life Theory need not amount to the interpretation which is philosophically most complex or satisfying to the modern reader. Consider this remark: 'the attribution of what seems to be some kind of metaphysical agency to 'life' [...] seems to me one of Nietzsche's least inspired and most unfortunate ideas' (Geuss 1999, 28). Nothing I say contradicts this statement, but my aim is to show that this attribution runs much deeper than is often supposed – so deep, in fact, that the nature and distinctiveness of Nietzsche's ethics during the period in question is impossible to understand without it.

### 1.3. The Normative Command: Further Life's Goals!

The most important point to take from the previous subsection was that, for Nietzsche, to be alive is to be a power-seeker: it is to be governed by Life, a power-seeking force which can helpfully be described as having goals and issuing commandments. Now, to put it simply, Nietzsche's basic ethical position is as follows: *it is ethical to further the goals of Life and it is unethical to impede them*.



The Life Theory, sketched above, has little inherent connection with an ethics of any kind, because it is merely a description of how living things function, not obviously connected to an ‘ought’ of an ethical kind. To a contemporary eye, though, a connection would have been obvious. Again, Schopenhauer is key. We saw that, for him, our individual wills are implanted in us by the will to life, such that we further its interests. However – and this is the crucial point for Schopenhauer – *its* interests and *our* individual interests do not align: the will to life is hostile to our interests. For example, the will to life wants human life to continue, so it implants in us sexual desires and the desire to have children (Schopenhauer 2018, chap. 44). These are perfectly natural, because the will to life governs nature. But, Schopenhauer argues at length, we would in fact be better off not being natural, that is, not seeking sexual satisfaction and not having children. Most people simply go along with what the will to life wants from them, following their individual desires (implanted by the will to life). But the best kind of human life, Schopenhauer claims, is to deny, oppose or frustrate the goals of the will to life, for example by refusing to have sex or reproduce.

Schopenhauer introduced the terms ‘affirmation’ and ‘denial’ to describe different ways of behaving in relation to the Will’s goals (Schopenhauer 2014, sec. 60). To ‘affirm’ the will (to life) is to go along with what it implants in us as values and desires, which make the continuation of life possible. To ‘deny’ the Will is to struggle against such values and desires. For Schopenhauer, then, we ought to deny the will to life. Simply put, Nietzsche is arguing, contra Schopenhauer, that affirmation, rather than denial, is best. (For an overview of affirmation in the different phases of Nietzsche’s writing, and in its Schopenhauerian context, see Stern 2019b.) As we can see, Life-affirmation, in this context, is not (primarily or typically) a matter of thinking that it’s great to be alive. It means acting on Life’s orders or furthering Life’s goals. On Nietzsche’s understanding, affirmation means to increase, seek power, expand, exploit, while Life-denial means the opposite. Nietzsche also refers to Life-denial as nihilism, because the Life-denier, in effect, acts in a way that would bring about the destruction of living things (on nihilism and Life-denial, see *A* 6-7, 11, 58). Life-affirmation also connects with Nietzsche’s idea of eternal recurrence, the repetition of all things over and over again – a notion which first appeared earlier in his writing (on the connection, see in particular Stern 2019b, see also Stern forthcoming). Notice that one can hold that being alive is good, independently of whether one acts on Life’s orders. A Life-denier might say ‘It’s great to be alive!’ while opposing power-seeking and impeding Life. Similarly, some *apparent* Life-deniers might say ‘being alive is horrible!’ as part of a strategy for pursuing power and hence for affirming Life.

We already noted the natural-scientific context of Nietzsche’s Life Theory. But Darwinian and other evolutionary ideas were not restricted to descriptive accounts of species development. They were quickly applied to the practical domain in particular ways that Nietzsche sought to reject (O’Connell 2017). Morality, some Darwinians argued, and altruistic morality, in particular, could be explained and justified on evolutionary principles. Darwin himself had argued along these lines (Darwin 1871, 1:152–77), as Darwinians continue to do (for 21st-century versions, see Ruse 2017; Richards 2017). Nietzsche, however, focused more on the influential Darwinian philosopher Herbert Spencer, who argued that (what Spencer called) a ‘higher phase of evolution’ occurs when ‘members of a society [...] give mutual help in the achievement of ends’ (Spencer 1879, 19; for Nietzsche’s hostility, see e.g. GM I 3; EH Destiny 4; GS 373). On Spencer’s account, in other words,

more evolved behaviours are more altruistic. Closer to home, Nietzsche's erstwhile friend, Paul Rée, had also claimed, in his *The Origin of the Moral Sensations* (1877), that morality, again conceived as a form of altruism, was an evolutionary advantage (Ree 2003; *GM P*; on Nietzsche and Rée, see Small 2005, 74–91; Janaway 2007, 74–90). Another contemporary ethicist, J.-M. Guyau, was criticised by Nietzsche for his attempt 'to prove that the [Life-denying] moral instincts have their seat in Life itself' (marginal comments, quoted in Brobjer 2008, 91).

Keeping Schopenhauerian denial and evolutionary altruism in mind allows us to see what Nietzsche is doing with both. Although he is not consistent on this point, Schopenhauer (writing, of course, prior to Darwin) generally presents altruism as *contravening* the natural order: the Will encourages us to be selfish at the expense of others, and altruistic activity is therefore a step in the direction of *denying* the Will's goals. One could therefore imagine a philosopher somewhat like Nietzsche, critical of Schopenhauerian denial, who welcomed the new (purported) evolutionary basis of altruism, because it drives a wedge between being moral and denying Life: 'altruistic morality turns out to be just what Life wants!', this philosopher could say, 'so altruism is Life-affirming and, contra Schopenhauer, not a step towards Life-denial!' This is the opposite of the route that Nietzsche takes. Instead of accepting that altruism is grounded in biological life, his Life Theory agrees with Schopenhauer's analysis on the point that altruism is anti-Life. So, what to make of those, like Spencer, who attempt to ground altruism biologically? Not only are they wrong about Life, *they look anti-Life, too, just like Schopenhauer* (*GM II 12*). Rolph appealed to Nietzsche precisely because he argued against Spencer in a similar way: on Rolph's account of life as expansion and insatiability, the idea that one ought to limit what one has, or that, in an ethical context, one could respect the equal rights of others by not taking as much as one could, goes against the fundamental conditions of life (Rolph 1884, 61, 120–21, 222–23).

Nietzsche's normative thesis is: Affirm Life! The 'affirm' part goes against Schopenhauer, who advocated denial. But the *kind* of 'Life' Nietzsche posits is more Schopenhauerian than that of the evolutionary altruists: Nietzschean Life, like Schopenhauerian will to life, encourages egoism and self-expansion, where Spencer had argued that it favours altruism. All in all, both the descriptive and the normative components become more understandable once we see that his contemporaries were trying to show that altruism – a form of Life-*denial*, Nietzsche thought – was biologically embedded: 'even the basic conditions of life are falsely interpreted for the benefit of [Christian] morality' (*KSA 12: 2[165]*).

This analysis enables us to see how Nietzsche builds his ethical arguments. Of course, there is his famous remark: 'What is good? – All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man. What is bad? – All that proceeds from weakness.' (*A 2*) In the same aphorism, he writes: 'The weak and ill-constituted ought to perish: first principle of *our* philanthropy. And one ought to help them to do so. What is more harmful than any vice? – Active sympathy for the ill-constituted and weak – Christianity...' (translation altered). This passage gives the general sense that power should be promoted and the weak should perish, or be helped to perish. But we get a better sense of his mode of argument from what he calls a 'primordial fact of all history' (*BGE 259*):

‘[L]ife itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation.’

He continues:

“‘Exploitation’ does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the *essence* of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is the consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will of life.’

Here, we see Nietzsche setting out part of the Life Theory, describing how Life, and therefore the organic realm, works. This accounts for his claim, at the start of the same aphorism, that ‘refraining mutually from injury, violence, and exploitation and placing one’s will on a par with that of someone else’, when these are made into general rules for society, reveal ‘a will to the *denial* of Life’ (*BGE* 259). In other words, as we can see, power-seeking, exploitation, appropriation and injury are so fundamental to being alive – ‘the essence of what lives’, ‘a basic organic function’ – that opposition to them equates to an opposition to Life itself. If ‘a living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength’, if ‘life itself is *will to power*’, then opposing such things equates to Life-denial.

Such Life-denying activities may be contrasted with Nietzsche’s own, Life-promoting ethical vision:

‘I formulate a principle. All naturalism in morality, that is all *healthy* morality, is dominated by an instinct of Life – some commandment of Life is fulfilled through a certain canon of ‘shall’ and ‘shall not’, some hindrance and hostile element on Life’s road is thereby removed. *Anti-natural* morality [...] turns on the contrary precisely *against* the instincts of Life – it is a now secret, now loud and impudent *condemnation* of these instincts.’ (*TI* Morality 4, translation altered)

As we can see from this quotation, Nietzsche often equates Life with nature, as Schopenhauer had done. By ‘naturalism in morality’, he means a ‘healthy’ morality which is on the side of nature, that is, Life. This is what he claims to find, for example, in Goethe, who ‘did not sever himself from life, he placed himself within it’ and in Goethe’s conception of Napoleon, who ‘dare[d] to allow himself the whole compass and wealth of naturalness’ (*TI* Untimely 48-9). In the late works, Nietzsche speaks with marked frequency of anti-Life morality as being ‘anti-natural’. He complains of ‘the utterly gruesome fact that *antinature* itself received the highest honours as morality’ (*EH* Destiny 7). This idea occurs again in *A* 24-7, when he praises the ‘natural values’ promoted by ancient Israelites, prior to the developments which led to Judaism and Christianity. The natural, Life-promoting Israelite value system includes a god who supports their agricultural and military efforts – both being natural or Life-affirming, in Nietzsche’s terms. Nietzsche also praises the Dionysian Greek mysteries, which affirm sex, birth and hence Life (*TI* Ancients 4-5). We will shortly be looking at Christianity itself in more detail, but Nietzsche makes no secret of claiming that it, or the morality that it inspires, is hostile to sex (*TI* Ancients 4-5) and generally, to nature: ‘*all* the concepts of the church are recognised for what they are: the most malicious false-coinage there is for the purpose of *disvaluing* nature and natural values’ (*A* 38). Indeed, it would be hard to overemphasise the frequency with which Nietzsche, in this period, associates or identifies Christianity or Christian morality with what is anti-natural (e.g. *A* 15, 16, 18, 24-6, 39; *A*’s



‘Law’ [KSA 6, p. 254]; *TI* ‘Morality’; *GM* I 16, II 22-24, III 3, 12; *GS* 344; *BGE* 51, 55; *KSA* 6, p. 431; *KSA* 12: 8[3]; 10 [45]; 10 [152]; 10 [157]; 10 [193]; *KSA* 13: 14 [138]; 15[4]; 15[110]; 17[4]; 23[1]; 23[10]).

We now have a clear sense of what counts as ethical (Life-promoting) and unethical (Life-denying) for Nietzsche, so we can build on the tripartite distinction between (i) *a morality*, (ii) *Christian morality* and (iii) Nietzsche’s *ethics*. Nietzsche’s ethics combine a biological claim – the Life Theory – with the normative command to affirm Life. When Nietzsche analyses *a morality*, he is ultimately asking how *ethical* it is, whether or not it is Life-affirming or Life-denying, whether or not it furthers or obstructs Life’s goals. Some moralities appear Life-affirming, others do not. In the next section, we follow Nietzsche’s analysis of Christian morality in these terms.