

NIETZSCHE ON CONVALESCENCE

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ABSTRACT

NIETZSCHE ON CONVALESCENCE

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In this thesis, I will attempt to clarify Nietzsche's notion of convalescence. To grasp his notion of convalescence requires a proper understanding and examination of his critique of traditional metaphysics that permeates his writings. In the context of his critique of metaphysical way of thinking, I will problematize the life-denying dualistic structure of metaphysics with its oppositional components and the Cartesian subject with respect to Nietzsche's notion of life as will to power. Then, I will examine Nietzsche's understanding of convalescence with respect to his physiological way of thinking and with his genealogical analyses that emphasize the human being as a multiplicity of forces and unconscious drives. Finally, I will attempt to make a possible connection between convalescence and forgetting from the inhuman perspective that constitutes a greater health.

Keywords: Nietzsche, Convalescence, Forgetting, Health

ÖZ

İYİLEŞME ÜZERİNE NIETZSCHE

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Bu tez Nietzsche'nin iyileşme kavramını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Nietzsche'nin iyileşme kavramının doğru anlaşılması için, onun bütün yazılarında izlerine rastlanabilecek olan geleneksel metafizik eleştirisinin kavranması ve açıklanması gerekmektedir. Tezde, Nietzsche'nin metafizik düşünme şeklini eleştirisi bağlamında, metafiziğin hayatı değilleyen ikilikli yapısı ve bu yapının içindeki zıtlıklar ile Kartezyen özne, Nietzsche'nin hayatı güç istenci olarak kavraması rehberliğinde sorunsallaştırılmaktadır. Sonrasında, Nietzsche'nin iyileşme anlayışı onun fizyolojik düşünme şekli ve insanın güdüler ve bilinçaltı itkiler çokluğu olduğunu vurgulayan soykütüsel çözümlenmeleri çerçevesinde incelenmektedir. Son olarak, tez Nietzsche'nin iyileşme kavramı ve unutma arasında, insan merkezli olmayan bir perspektiften daha büyük bir sağlığa işaret eden olası bir bağlantıyı aramaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Nietzsche, İyileşme, Unutma, Sağlık

To those who are lost and find themselves, only to lose themselves again.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

F.W.Nietzsche wrote “with his blood” as Bataille says, and whoever criticizes or experiences him “can only do so by bleeding in his turn”.¹ Apparently, reading Nietzsche is easy, “a euphoric, even exalted, flight”. But in fact it poses the problem of communication in a painful way.² The most distinctive character of Nietzsche’s way of doing philosophy is the fact that it defies any unambiguous reading. He is undoubtedly the most provocative figure in nineteenth-century philosophy and many prominent twentieth-century philosophers, most particularly francophone ones, Deleuze, Foucault, Derrida, Klossowski, Bataille, to name a few, have established unique relationships with Nietzsche.

Jacques Derrida in his book called: *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles* delivers the powerlessness (impouvoir) that one may encounter in reading Nietzsche’s text³, and Gilles Deleuze attributes this powerlessness we feel while reading his texts to the fact that they are designed to perplex us by way of deranging our prevalent frames of mind.⁴ It is this feeling of powerlessness that reveals Nietzsche’s text to various and diverse readings and it is this very feeling of powerlessness, which makes Nietzsche worthy to read. Deleuze reports that it is this unique character of Nietzsche's writing style that intrigues him.

¹ Georges Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, trans. Stuart Kendall (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 7.

² Bataille, *On Nietzsche* , 334

³ Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, trans. Barbara Harlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p.127

⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Nomad Thought*, in David B. Allison (ed.), *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p. 144.

Nietzsche, according to Deleuze, “is the only philosopher who makes no attempt at recodification.”⁵ It may be precisely because of this lack of imposed recodification that each reader immanently establishes his or her own relationship with Nietzsche. Bataille’s book *On Nietzsche* is, in his terms, such an attempt to ‘communicate’⁶ with Nietzsche’s texts. Bataille pursues his relationship with Nietzsche by identifying ‘expenditure’ as a principal tendency within the energetic processes, which constitute life⁷. For both Nietzsche and Bataille, life itself ultimately depends on self-expenditure rather than self-preservation. For Bataille, this movement of immanent⁸ self-expenditure is sacred since, as he states, “(I)mmanence signifies “communication””⁹ , from the sound of confused voices rising toward me from all of the past, nothing ever reaches me in this intimate, shattering way, nothing calls, addressing itself to me in this way:Not hearing Nietzsche's voice, the earth would not seem to me complete...”¹⁰.

This thesis is my attempt to communicate with Nietzsche and his philosophy. My main motivation for communicating Nietzsche lies in his unique way of doing philosophy. His continuous emphasis on the “earthliness” of human being and his seducing invitation to our bodily presence seems to be a kind of philosophical therapy. In my thesis, I will examine Nietzsche’s notion of convalescence in the context of his physiological way of thinking.

In the first part of my thesis, I attempt to elucidate the problem of Metaphysics for Nietzsche by focusing on the basic tenets of traditional philosophy. I try examine the Nietzsche’s deconstruction of traditional metaphysical structure and its components with respect to his genealogical

⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Nomad Thought*, p.143

⁶ Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, p. 22.

⁷ Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, p. 54, 228.

⁸ Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, p. 136, 143, 146, 151.

⁹ Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, p. 145.

¹⁰ Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, p. 333.

critique. In the second part, I will mainly concentrate on Nietzsche's prominent and widely analyzed book called : "*On the Genealogy of Morality*". In the guidance of that book, I try to display the modern understanding of subject and how it is overrated throughout the history of Western tradition from a nihilistic perspective. In the last chapter, I intend to shed light to Nietzsche's notion of convalescence. I will discuss the process of convalescence in relation with forgetting and attempt to demonstrate how forgetting plays a role in convalescence and how to re-conceptualize the human being in his physiological way of thinking.

Modern culture is erected upon principles idealized and sanctified within Cartesian philosophy and Christian morality. Nietzsche claims that, by conceiving themselves as if they were merely rational subjects, traditional philosophers have contributed to the continuation of the oppositional structure of metaphysics. The denial of becoming and the devaluation of their senses and body are idiosyncrasies of philosophers, and in doing so they ignore the entire empirical world of change, and they have sought something 'higher' or more 'real'.¹¹ Nietzsche thinks that this way of thinking is life-denying or, in other words, nihilistic. Nietzsche believes that there is something sickly at the core of this philosophy and to cure this sickness, the critique must arrive at its roots and shake the very structure that has been founded upon them –i.e. it must reevaluate all values. Since he thought that the old metaphysical values that have been embraced throughout the history of philosophy are life denying, he presents his own understanding of what this life is like. While traditional metaphysics rests on a static conception of Being, Nietzsche sees that life is not static indeed, it is always in flux. Nietzsche's concept of health is rooted in this understanding of life as a ceaseless cycle of processes, the physical world of flux. Nietzsche launches powerful critique of traditional philosophy based on a transvaluation of all values.

¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols in Twilight of the Idols in The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols and Other Writings* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.166.

He enacts his genealogical approach as I may call symptomatology in order to diagnose the sick and decadent body of Judeo-Christian morality in his book *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Indeed, there is no concrete response or any suggestion that Nietzsche offers us. We may infer from his radical (r)evaluation that simply reversing the values or opposing the metaphysical structure is not a solution. Rather destabilizing the structure from within is a key to overcoming the Metaphysical paradigm.

CHAPTER 2

NIETZSCHE'S CRITIQUE/DECONSTRUCTION OF METAPHYSICS AND HIS INTRINSIC ONTOLOGY

The main purpose of this chapter is to attempt to examine Nietzsche's thought in terms of his criticisms of metaphysics. For Nietzsche, Western metaphysics is a way of thinking that operates with oppositional structures and life denying aspects including a hierarchical distribution of concepts. Nietzsche intends to overcome the traditional/ metaphysical way of thinking and bring a life-affirming perspective by initiating a radically new way of thinking: physiological way of thinking¹².

2.1. Critique Of The Structure of Western Metaphysics

In the core of the metaphysical thinking for Nietzsche is decidedly its oppositional structure. Metaphysical thinking divides existence into two opposite realms called "the true world" and "the apparent world". Whereas the apparent world is taken to be totally illusionary and inferior (deficient, changing, subject to time), the true world, convenes all the value and superiority (ontologically perfect, self-identical, timeless, absolute). On one side of this binary structure (the true world), we find concepts such as being, which, as we will see, are indeed empty, and function merely as a shelter from the flux of life. As it will be elaborated shortly, this binary structure has led to the traditional thinkers' inability to grasp life in its totality; with the "true world", conceptualized in an absolute opposition to the apparent world, amounting in effect to a negation of life¹³.

¹² Andrea Rehberg, "The Overcoming of Physiology" in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 23, 2002.

¹³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols in Twilight of the Idols in The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols and Other Writings* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.171.

Corresponding to and embedded within the above-mentioned opposition between the “true world” and the apparent world are a number of thematic oppositions which the western philosophical tradition has operated within. These are mainly being and becoming, mind and body, and reason and the senses.

2.1.1. Being and Becoming

The distinction between ‘*being*’ and ‘*becoming*’, in which a world of being is taken to be superior to a world of becoming is defined by Nietzsche as the ‘idiosyncrasy’ of all philosophers: ‘hatred of the idea of becoming’¹⁴. Being is considered to be more valuable than becoming, because the dynamic conditions of becoming frustrate our desire to grasp, control and preserve life. What is unsteady signals what is dangerous while “Being” permits the attainment of various forms of stability, and thus control or exclusion of such undesirable conditions. Thus, Nietzsche interprets the valuation of being as higher than becoming as a symptom of the traditional philosophers’ inability to tolerate change. The traditional thinker is at home in inert concepts and perpetually seeks the “being” that excludes becoming and is undamaged by its fluid contraries. In contrast, Nietzsche goes along with the idea of Heraclitus, according to whom everything is in a constant flux and all things are in process and nothing stands still¹⁵.

“Egyptianism” lies in traditional philosophers’ praise of being and hatred of becoming, which embalms both our concepts and life¹⁶. Alongside the supersensible realms, which were all created by different philosophers with the same oppositional structure, “this” world possesses little or no value. In contrast to the metaphysical world, which is seen to possess a higher value, the phenomenal world is described in terms that are negatively charged,

¹⁴ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 167.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *ibid.*

pejorative, and deprecating. Since being and becoming were entrusted to separate worlds where there is no chance of any passage between them, what is eternal, immutable, and real cannot have its origin in becoming and cannot undergo change.

..... whatever is of the first rank must be *causi sui*. ...All the highest values are of the first rank; all the highest concepts, that which has being, the unconditional, the good, the true, the perfect—all these cannot have become and must therefore be *causa sui*¹⁷.

For the entire metaphysical tradition there is a conception of a time out of time, a conception of time that is exempt from becoming. For example, in Plato's philosophy, forms belong to another world and are timeless and eternal. Plato's 'two-world' view implies that all true being, reality and truth lie in another world. Forms are not here in 'this' world with us and are not in 'this' life, which comes to mean that our bodily being, our lives are not real. Accordingly, Plato's ontology of human being also involves a dualism of *body and mind*. Plato posits the soul before the embodied life and the immortality of soul as well. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, all problems come from the body. Soul is pure and belongs to pure being while the body represents the unfortunate incarnation of the soul in body. The body has been marked as external to mind and the mind or the soul as imprisoned in the body.

The continuance of Platonism through Christianity has served to preserve this static model. The transition from Platonism to Christianity was easily realized by the transformation of the Forms into God as the source of all reality. The ideal of God and his kingdom of heaven find their place in this dualistic structure as the highest most desirable goal to be attained.

2.1.2. Reason versus Senses

For Nietzsche, the other significant idiosyncrasy is manifest in traditional philosophers' view that reason reveals the "truth" of "being" whereas the senses are treated as bearing false testimony to becoming. According to this

¹⁷ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 168.

mode of thinking, the senses lie by presenting plurality and change. Against this testimony of the senses these philosophers become defiant and accuse the senses of misleading and even lying. That is, since our senses show the world of ‘becoming’, they prevent us from gaining knowledge. The senses are illusory, deceptive and untrustworthy on this account. In the traditional way of thinking, our senses are insignificant in the search for truth, are not taken to be legitimate sources of knowledge. Truth lies in the domain of the mind. In order to have knowledge, one must save oneself from the illusion of becoming.

For Nietzsche, on the other hand, only the senses could lead us what really exists. “Insofar as the senses indicate becoming, passing away, change, they do not lie”¹⁸. For Nietzsche, any claim to permanence in the world, including notions like substance and thinghood, is not directly corroborated by the senses; rather it is an interpretation and reification of what the senses present. Reason refutes the evidence of the senses by imposing concepts like ‘unity’ and ‘substance’ on the dynamic process of change or becoming. To Nietzsche, this is a tendency that reason has. Thus, it seems that according to Nietzsche there is something degenerate (contrary to life) in reason itself. To put it more accurately, Nietzsche does not mean to deny reason and its function in life. What he is against is the way in which the function of reason is misconceived. What reason and the senses really tell us about are things pertaining to this life: “death, change, age, as well as procreation and growth”¹⁹. But these are clearly “objections even refutations” against what traditional philosophers desperately need to believe in²⁰.

As explained above, metaphysical thinkers have a vested interest in believing in being, and they believe in reason (or even faith if reason fails them) to take them there. Reason operates by finding similarities within the

¹⁸ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 167.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

flux of life; this is how it forms concepts, but according to Nietzsche, these concepts are mere 'lies' and they are far away from grasping the process of becoming when they are taken to be immutable forms belonging to an eternal realm. As this eternal realm is an illusion, they cannot find it.

At the end of the day, Nietzsche conceives that the senses gives us the apparent world as the only world, with its becoming and change. "Reason" is what leads us to falsify the evidence of the senses".²¹

2.1.3. Mind versus Body

The hostility to the senses contributes to the aforementioned opposition of traditional thinkers between the mind and the body because the senses belong to the body and, as explained above, the senses are rejected by the tradition. Consequently, the body altogether has been rejected. It has been marked, moreover, as a handicap to the mind for acquiring knowledge. This tendency, as mentioned above, begins with Plato for whom life is not a matter of bodily existence, and the rhizomes of this despise of the body can be considered as embodied in Platonism and Christianity. For both, body is the origin of sin and the deceiving deceiver. The rejection of the body is not only due to epistemological reasons; it also has to do with the being/becoming dichotomy. The ontological status of beings on the hierarchy of being depends upon their proximity to Being. To wit, the more material aspect the entity has the more its status of being is lowered while more immaterial aspects enable a certain being to be considered closer to God, the highest being.

Nietzsche thinks that this way of thinking is life-denying or, in other words, nihilistic. This illusionary thinking severs human beings from the life which is in fact one and after which there is no other. It is important to note that, in analyzing Plato's influence on the later history of philosophy, one has to be

²¹ *ibid.*

aware of the distinction between “Plato” and “Platonism”. In referring to “Plato” what should come into our mind is his theory of Forms and in referring to “Platonism” what should come into mind is the metaphysics of transcendence. With the commencement of Christianity, Platonic Forms has transformed into the monotheistic God that can be characterized as the personification of the highest form of the Perfect, and becomes the true being. Similarly, one can refer to dogmatism and morality that is dictated by such metaphysics as the “rhizomes” of Platonism. For Nietzsche, Plato and Socrates are simply symptoms of decay. No one of two are treated by Nietzsche as subjects responsible for the invention of metaphysics, rather it is life that evaluates and interprets itself through those physiological channels.

2.1.4 Language as “metaphor”

Nietzsche’s stance on the problem of language is another crucial aspect of his criticism of metaphysics. For Nietzsche, language cannot articulate the perpetual flux or becoming of life. Or rather, it is the structure of language that distorts the flux of life by compelling us to ‘think’ in metaphysical presuppositions. Language forces us to think about life in terms of the main distinctions like agent and act, subject and object, or doer and deed.

In contrast, Nietzsche thinks that even ‘things’ are produced by our grammatical habits. Hypostasizing processes and events and attributing a static existence to them under the name of ideas is just a misunderstanding and error of language, which can be useful for practical purposes but becomes misleading when such concepts and ideas are taken to be reflecting the reality. According to Nietzsche, this shortcoming of language underlies the erroneous view of Platonic ideas and the notion of substance. The subject-predicate structure of language creates a faith that reality has a similar substance-property structure. For Nietzsche, it is in this basic metaphysical bias, the presence of substance, unity etc. that traditional philosophical discourse is based. According to Nietzsche, we became a part

of “crude fetishism” when we embrace consciousness and the basic premisses of the metaphysics of language in plain saying, the presumptions of reason²². Everywhere "being", which is a by-product of the concept of ‘I’, is projected by thought and conceived as the cause²³. Thus, everywhere reason presupposes a subject. Language believes in the ‘I’ as a subject, the ego as substance. Again, if the "inner world" is, in Nietzsche's view, full of phantoms, if substance and self are merely metaphysical and grammatical fictions, grammatical fictions then what is thinking? And who, or what, thinks?

The process of thinking is as Nietzsche argued, largely unconscious; it is merely due to "the seduction of words" and "the superstitions of logicians" that we believe otherwise:

With regard to the superstitions of logicians, I shall never tire of emphasizing a small terse fact, which these superstitious minds hate to concede—namely, that a thought comes when "it" wishes, and not when "I" wish, so that it is a falsification of the facts of the case to say that the subject "I" is the condition of the predicate "think." It thinks; but that this "it" is precisely the famous old "ego" is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an "immediate certainty." After all, one has even gone too far with this "it thinks"—even the "it" contains an interpretation of the process, and does not belong to the process itself. One infers here according to the grammatical habit: "Thinking is an activity; every activity requires an agent; consequently."²⁴

A thought comes, then, "when 'it' wish, and not when “‘I’ wish”²⁵, consciousness, arising from social intercourse."²⁶

²² Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 169.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 24.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York, Random House, 1967), p. 284.

2.1.5 The Cartesian Subject

Human beings have a strong confidence of being in the core of giving meaning to the world. Nietzsche writes: “Our belief in the “ego” as a substance, as the sole reality from which we ascribe reality to things in general.”²⁷ Nietzsche critiques the concept of the ego which has a huge role in the history of traditional metaphysics among many great philosophers, both as a moral and epistemological subject. The concept of the ego or “I” serves for two important functions in Western philosophy. Ego is the subject of the verbs ‘to know’ and ‘to do.’ Epistemologically, in order to know an object, a subject is required, and morally, when there is an act, there is an agent behind it, and that agent is the “I”. To wit, Western philosophy presupposes the ego or “I” as the condition of all actions and knowing. Consequently, Western philosophy is characterized by an obsession with the concept of the ego or the “I”, and the subject has always occupied a central role in it.

Nietzsche’s conception of the ego/ subject is based on a quite different, specifically Nietzschean perspective. As mentioned above, in the Cartesian tradition, the concept “I” is held to be the condition of all knowledge, reasoning, and thus the construction of reality. However, Nietzsche rejects the idea that the ego/subject or “I” has any reality. For Nietzsche, the concept of ego, reason and consciousness are the inevitable consequences of alienation from nature. The ego is not a reality but a mere fiction and a device of faith, nothing but a pragmatic necessity²⁸. This is an unavoidable fiction for Nietzsche since the operations of reason are necessary for survival.

This crucial instrument operates with a memory of concepts that are treated as unchanging, and which are constituted by a relation between the beings

²⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 269.

²⁸ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 333, p. 281.

and the knowing subject. They are taken to be self-identical and the self-identity of the ego itself, guarantees them this self-identity of the concepts. Nietzsche's view of language is strictly connected to this aspect of his criticism of modern subjectivity. The proposition 'I think, therefore I am' (cogito ergo sum) by Rene Descartes, who is commonly regarded as the "father of modern philosophy", is well-known. In the formulation of this proposition are hidden the presuppositions which constitute the grounding for his concept of the self: ' . It is generally alleged that with the modern idea of the subject and a unified consciousness originates with Descartes. It is Descartes who identifies the self with the I and separates the mind from the body. In his widely known book, *Meditations*, Descartes asserts: "I am, I exist: this is certain", and then he continues as follows:

I am therefore precisely nothing but a thinking thing; that is, a mind, or intellect, or understanding, or reason—words of whose meanings I was previously ignorant. Yet I am a true thing and am truly existing; but what kind of thing? I have said it already: a thinking thing.²⁹

Descartes' understanding of the proposition 'I think' as an 'immediate certainty' and his following inference to the existence of the self conceived as an ego, "a thing which thinks", ground some of the basic assumptions of modern philosophy. On this formulation and inference Nietzsche states:

When I analyze the process that is expressed in the sentence, "I think," I find a whole series of daring assertions that would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to prove; for example, that it is I who think, that there must necessarily be something that thinks, that this is an activity and operation on the part of a being who is thought of as a Cause, that there is an "ego," and, finally, that it is already determined what is to be designated by thinking—that I know what thinking is.³⁰

Here, Nietzsche questions both the self-evidence of the proposition "I think" and the inference to the conclusion that an 'I' exists. What we take as immediately certain to us, accordingly, is nothing more than an assumption.

²⁹ René Descartes, *Meditations, Objections, and Replies*, trans. Roger Ariew and Donald Cress (eds.), (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006), p.15.

³⁰ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 23.

We cannot even prove that there is thinking, that we have a true grasp on what we mean by “thinking”. Even if we did, we cannot prove that the ‘I’ is the condition of the event of thinking. Also Descartes’ inference involves the hidden assumption that if there is an activity, there must be someone or something doing the activity. He thus assumes that if there is thinking, there must be something that thinks.³¹ Such inferences that we make from our assumptions are only the ‘interpretations’ or ‘falsifications’ of the event, and these ‘falsifications’ of events are in accordance with our belief in ‘grammar’ that forces us to presuppose that ‘to any activity pertains one who acts’.³² Briefly, Nietzsche’s critique of metaphysics also includes an aspect of his approach to the issue of ‘subjectivity’ in terms of the problem of language. The metaphysical character of language forces us to make the distinction between doer and deed and makes us believe in ‘subjects’ or ‘things’. Therefore, we suppose agents or subjects to be the basis of any act or event. In addition, there are also other aspects of Nietzsche’s critique of the subject.

In a famous section in the first treatise of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, containing an allegory with birds of prey and lambs, Nietzsche investigates the formation of subject/self through his critique of traditional morality by focusing on the psychological factors behind the creation of the notion of a subject with free will for the purposes of imputing guilt and punishment: “That is what sees doer and deed everywhere: it believes in the ‘I’, in the I as Being, in the I as substance and projects in the I –substance- onto all things- only then does it create the concept ‘thing’”.³³ This point will be analyzed in Chapter 2. Thus, the ‘metaphysics of language’ leads us to have the impression that there is a strict distinction between a subject and its activities, whereas in Nietzsche’s view there is in fact merely the chaotic

³¹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 268.

³² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 67.

³³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 26.

array of complex, unstable activities and relations. If thinking is largely unconscious, what of the thinker? "Body am I entirely". Said Zarathustra. But then how do we account for the sense of self? There is, we have seen, no reason to posit the existence of a substantive ego, and there is no need to assume the existence of one single subject; rather, "ego" is "a conceptual synthesis" and, in Nietzsche's hypothesis, the subject is "a multiplicity" rather than a unified substance.³⁴ An adequate account of Nietzsche's conception of the subject as multiplicity will also be presented in Chapter 2 as it can be made comprehensible only after a thorough discussion of the will to power and Nietzsche's genealogy.

2.1.6 Appearance vs. Reality

In the tradition, all the distinctions and oppositions discussed above find a condensed expression in the form of a distinction between the *apparent world* and the *real world*. Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics finds its ultimate formulation in his critique of the notion of truth/knowledge (i.e. a "real" world different from the "apparent" world) and how the opposition between "the real world" and "the apparent world" is established in history.

In his book *Twilight of the Idols*, the section entitled "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable: The History of an Error," Nietzsche chronicles the rise and fall of the "true world" by identifying various historical stages as Platonic, Christian, Kantian, and positivistic.³⁵ Kant's philosophy continued the duality of Western metaphysics by imposing a strict distinction between the noumenal and phenomenal worlds, which was reflected in his fragmented understanding of the self. Kant's distinction between the phenomenal, noumenal and transcendental selves continues to maintain an unbridgeable duality between facts and values, the body and the mind, etc.

³⁴ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 270

³⁵ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 171.

Lastly, even the positivism of science retains the dualistic structure because even though it restricts its legitimate area of discourse to the empirical world, the question of what lies behind the appearances is still left in doubt.

For Nietzsche, there is not any other reality beyond what appears or becomes. ‘Reality’ beyond ‘appearance’ is only a fiction of reason. Here, it is pivotal to see that Nietzsche’s ‘overcoming’ of metaphysics does not only aim at rejecting the idea of the real world. Instead, Nietzsche means to abolish the very structure of metaphysical thought: Thus, he famously exclaims in TI: “The true world we abolished: which world was left? the apparent one perhaps?...But no! *along with the true world we have also abolished the apparent one!*”.³⁶ What does this sentence mean? Nietzsche’s rejection of a separation between the intellectual realm of concepts (the phenomenal world) and the outside world (whether it be conceived as noumenal, the true world or under a different name) can be better understood in light of his critique of the unitary conception of the subject (which we have touched upon in section 1.1.5).

It is possible to argue that the distinction between an inner world of knowledge and the external world of becoming is a superposition that humans have attached to the world of experience, to insulate parts of it and create "havens" which they would like to believe are not subjected to the field of forces that inform all of reality. However, this is illusory: reality cannot be broken down into separate worlds (inner/outer; world of being/world of becoming).³⁷ On this point, Gemes quotes Nietzsche as saying, “the breach between inner and outer must vanish.”³⁸ Instead, Nietzsche reinterprets metaphysical polarities as existing along a continuum

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ken Gemes, “We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves”, in Christa Davis Acampora (ed.), *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals* (USA: Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), p. 198.

³⁸ Ibid.

of phenomena. The attempt to achieve a separation is just a "punctuation" that humans add to separate the narrative of a reality whose defining condition is "unity".

Since Nietzsche's deconstructive manner intends to clear the plane of established paradigms and to show us new ways of thinking, it is necessary, before proceeding further, to present the new way of thinking that Nietzsche opens up for us. I will do this in section 1.3. of this chapter. However, before doing that, I will delineate his critique of traditional metaphysics as also a critique of traditional western culture and values, which, as we have alluded to above, he has diagnosed as sickly and nihilistic.

2.2. History of western culture as the development of nihilism

... With Nietzsche nihilism becomes conscious for the first time.³⁹

In *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche attempts to reveal the foundation of the system by stating, "Christianity is a system, a carefully considered, integrated view of things. If you break off a main tenet, the belief in God, you smash the whole system along with it: you lose your grip on anything necessary"⁴⁰. Thus, in his most famous declaration through his madman, Nietzsche proclaims "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him"⁴¹. This statement of Nietzsche does not signify the actual death of God, because for him God has never in *fact* existed.

The belief in the Christian god has become unbelievable... is already starting to cast its first shadow over Europe. To those few at least whose eyes - or the suspicion in whose eyes is strong and subtle enough for this spectacle, somekind of sun seems to have set; some old deep trust turned into doubt: to them, our world must appear more autumnal, more mistrustful, stranger, "older"⁴²

³⁹ Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Vintage International, 1991), p. 65.

⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 193

⁴¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science : With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, ed. Bernard Williams, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff and Adrian Del Caro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 120.

⁴² Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 199.

Put differently, “the death of god” indicates the diminishment of Christian ideals, which used to serve as the structure of values of existence. Nietzsche was aware of the fact that “This tremendous event [the death of God...] is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men. Lightning and thunder require time; the light of the stars requires time; deeds, though done, still require time to be seen and heard”⁴³. Gemes, following Nietzsche, recalls that it is exactly "our love of truth that has allowed us to realize [...] the hollowness of religious claims"⁴⁴. However, while we have managed to realize and dismiss the mythical (human-made) nature of religion and of God, we have not yet managed to realize the same in science and in knowledge or in our allegedly secular ideals such as socialism or the belief in human rights.

By seeing and eliminating the ascetism/nihilism present in religion and God, we have not managed to get rid of ascetism/nihilism itself: in fact, we have failed ourselves, because exactly in the moment when we thought that our emancipatory push was at its peak (during the Enlightenment) we were right then sowing the seeds of a new ascetism, nihilism, this time in the guise of science and knowledge. What has not changed, through the ages, is what Gemes calls the "latent meaning of our commitment to truth"⁴⁵ And this meaning is a very much physiological instinct, which pushes us to avoid pain, suffering, and seek optimal conditions for our activity⁴⁶. Therefore, as men of knowledge, we instinctively feel aligned to ascetic values; they conform to us: they conform to our fear of life, and to our feeling of impotence towards it. As those inspired by religious ascetic values, "the modern scholar similarly removes himself from life by telling himself that

⁴³ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 120.

⁴⁴ Gemes, *We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves*, p. 193.

⁴⁵ Gemes, *We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves*, p. 194.

⁴⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 94.

what is of ultimate value is not acting in this world (...) but understanding the world"⁴⁷. So, ascetic ideals, though in different forms but not in different roles, continue to exist even in the contemporary age. Science, knowledge, by being hypostatized assume the same role (though not the same appearance or attributes) of God. They constitute a meaning, a sense, a description of reality that is beyond humanity; that is above them. While humans have got rid of the concept of "God", God's place remains there, it has not been abolished: and as long as it is there, a disparate range of concepts can fill it.

The criticism of the value of knowledge and science in our world would need to take into account the hypostatization of science, as a "new host" for the ascetic infection. As long as a "metaphysical" place remains, any type of object will fill it: science, the subject, materialism, existentialism. Our quarrel is not with the content of knowledge (we may devise the most critical, humanly; "body of knowledge" and still that would not solve the "ascetic problem"). Our quarrel is with the relationship that we have with the body of knowledge. As long as we ascribe to it any value that locates it above life, we will continue to have a higher meaning, an ascetic ideal to cultivate something more serious than just life as experience.

Nietzsche's philosophy does not seek to be bound to abrogated concepts that are hostile to life, but rather he seeks to create, enhance, and celebrate life. The affirmation, enhancement, and celebration of life, however, require a shift in perspective. Nietzsche questions values themselves. A traditional philosopher like Socrates or Kant might ask: "How can we know that we know something?", Nietzsche would ask "why would anyone want the truth at all". Knowing the contagious sickness of his contemporaries in relation to this question, Nietzsche suggested a cure for that disease: re-valuation/transvaluation of all values.

⁴⁷ Gemes, *We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves*, p. 194.

Deleuze claims Nietzsche's questioning of the value of truth reveals the "genetic" conditions of all reality, which are simply the multitude of forces that constitute the will-to-power. In other words, the value of truth or any other valuation or interpretation (any world-view) is to be understood with reference to will to power which is the (groundless) "ground" of Nietzschean ontology. According to Deleuze, the will to power is both a transcendental and an ontological concept; it is that which constitutes the actual conditions of reality. In other words, the will to power is not something that resides in the human mind; rather, it is something that can be used to understand the origin of historical and cultural phenomena. Here it shall be noted that Nietzsche's ontology has to be thought of as "ontology" and not as metaphysics. Deleuzian phraseology (eg "genetic condition")⁴⁸ is intended to avoid the possible misreading of Nietzsche as a metaphysician and to enable a reading of Nietzsche as advocating the immanent image of life, not a dogmatic and transcendent one.

2.3. Nietzsche's Physiological Way of Thinking

2.3.1. The Body/Physiology

Nietzsche attempts to dismantle this otherworldly and oppositional structure of metaphysics. In doing so he also attempts to interpret human existence as primarily bodily and to reinvest the life with meaning and value. Unlike the traditional western philosophy's dialectical attitude that places reason and truth above everything else, Nietzsche sees the body as a guide both for existence and for all kinds of reflection within life. Christopher Janaway asserts that there is a unanimity among modern Nietzsche scholars that in the widest sense of the term, Nietzsche is a naturalist.

In his book *Beyond Selflessness*, human beings are to be 'translated back into nature'. This is what one could imply as Nietzsche's naturalism in the

⁴⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, tran. Hugh Tomlinson, foreword by Michael Hardt (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) p. 52.

broad sense...⁴⁹ Nietzsche's emphasis on the body is asserted in his prominent works such as *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Will-to-power*. In the well-known part from *Zarathustra* called: In 'On the Despisers of the Body' Nietzsche's Zarathustra stands against what he calls 'The Despisers of the Body'. The conventional habit of neglecting what is bodily appears to Zarathustra as an example of nature turned against itself. In Western thought, any human activity, including thinking, is interpreted and evaluated on the basis of the body/mind dualism, which is related essentially to the traditional stance against life.

According to Nietzsche, the body needs to be seized as the starting point since it gives us the correct idea of this life. Nonetheless it is important to note that Nietzsche does not mean to find a superior place for the body over the mind. Instead, he uses the term body in a metaphorical way as an aggregate of forces or drives against the traditional mind/body duality. For this reason, he relies a great deal on the word 'physiology'⁵⁰. He often talks in physiological terms; he reveals his "physiological"⁵¹ approach, in his notes the will to power.

The word 'physiology' enables Nietzsche to emphasize what is bodily without falling into the old traditional mind/body dichotomy or other traditional oppositions within the dualistic structure of the metaphysics. In this view the body is not an instrument but a perspective, experienced and changed through history and culture, and motivated by drives and affects. The body itself is also constituted by a relationship of forces.⁵²

⁴⁹ Christopher Janaway, *Beyond Selflessness: Reading Nietzsche's Genealogy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 34.

⁵⁰ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 34, 78, 98, 220

⁵¹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 354, 378, 383, 428.

⁵² Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 337.

In this context, he approaches the ego as an instrument of body: “Most of a philosopher’s conscious thought is secretly directed and forced into determinate channels by the instincts”⁵³. Nietzsche links his own texts to the physiological demands of body. Every text of his tells us repeatedly that everything is so linked to the body and that everything can be read as a symptom of bodily conditions, rather than as the conscious product of reason.

It is displayed in the Preface of his book *Gay Science* as:

The unconscious disguise of philosophical needs under the cloaks of the objective, ideal, purely spiritual goes to frightening length—and often I have asked myself whether, taking a large view, philosophy has not been merely an interpretation of the body and a misunderstanding of the body. Behind the value judgements, which have hitherto guided the history of thought, there are concealed misunderstandings of the physical constitution—of individuals or classes or whole races.⁵⁴

In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche states that : “Even behind all logic and its autocratic posturings stand valuations or, stated more clearly, physiological requirements for the preservation of a particular type of life.”⁵⁵. This quotation clarifies that all seemingly universal truths, even logic, exist to serve our animal side. It is a dreadful mistake for Nietzsche to understand so-called universal truths such as science, logic and especially morality as masters of life instead of conceiving them as an instrument for flourishing life. But the fact that they are false, does not make them unnecessary for survival.

And we are fundamentally inclined to claim that the falsest judgments (which include synthetic judgments *a priori*) are the most indispensable to us, and that without accepting the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the wholly invented world of the unconditioned and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world through numbers, people could not live – that a renunciation of false judgments would be a renunciation of life, a negation of life.⁵⁶

⁵³ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 11

⁵⁴ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 5.

⁵⁵Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 11.

⁵⁶ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 12.

Nietzsche's views on truth and power are integrated in and understood through the physiology of the body as it is both the object and subject of his analysis, effectively overcoming the 'false' dichotomies of nature and civilization, of body and mind, of reality and illusion, of truth and untruth.⁵⁷

In the preface of *The Gay Science* he expresses his desire for a "philosophical physician" to pursue the problem of total health of a people, a time, a race or humanity.⁵⁸ In this passage he suggests that philosophizing has not been should not be (and really never has been) about the pursuit of absolute truth ...but rather the pursuit of health, future, growth, power, life. For such a task to be successful, a radical new interpretation of the world will be required, one that is oriented towards both health and sickness, in the service of life. This is as interpreted what he has in mind when he sets out to do with his corpus, in particular with regard to his deployment of will to power.

2.3.2. *Will-to-Power*

In place of the old values, Nietzsche envisioned a new value creation by transvaluating of values, which are enhancing/affirmative. A crucial concept that Nietzsche utilizes for this new valuation is 'will to power'. In fact, it can be argued that a proper understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy is not possible without referring to his doctrine of will to power. We have already noted that Nietzsche's search for a way of thinking that is life-enhancing requires a shift of perspective, which will destabilize the traditional notions of Western philosophy. At the basis of these traditional notions lies belief in a static Being as metaphysically foundational. In contrast, will to power introduces a new understanding of life which serves to explain seemingly static phenomena and is itself not static. It is precisely this radically new outlook provided by the doctrine of the will to power that is able to rupture the metaphysical foundations of our thoughts and values. As our valuations

⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 271

⁵⁸ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 6.

are deeply entrenched in our metaphysical beliefs, Nietzsche's doctrine of will power which disrupts these beliefs also simultaneously triggers the transvaluation of values.

What does will to power mean? The common understanding of will to power is misguided. It is interpreted as the idea that human beings have a will and they will power, specifically power over other people. But there is no will in itself in Nietzsche. Nietzsche is not talking about the will to power in relation to the individual, because it is not an anthropocentric concept, and the ontology it underlies is non-dualistic such that the will and the willed are not separate. The will to power is the will to more, it is always self-overcoming.

Similarly, it is a mistake to conceive of the will to power first as a desire to "manipulate and control something" or to "exercise one's powers"; nor is it first "a drive to realize one's potentialities." All of this may be involved in the expression of one's will-to-power, but it does not capture the basic idea of the notion. Rather, the concept of growth comes closest to expressing what Nietzsche means by the will-to-power.

This passage taken from *The Will to Power* makes the point:

Life, as the form of being most familiar to us, is specifically a will to the accumulation of force; all the processes of life depend on this: nothing wants to preserve itself, everything is to be added and accumulated . . . Life as a special case . . . strives after a maximal feeling of power; essentially a striving for more power; striving is nothing other than striving for power; the basic and innermost thing is still this will.⁵⁹

To begin with the analysis of the will-to-power as a dynamic notion (as opposed to the static concept of Being), Nietzsche underlines that everything in this world is subject to constant change, and he uses the will-to-power to explain all that becomes. Will-to-power is what propels and advances all change and becoming. In this characterization of the world as will-to-power,

⁵⁹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 365

which “is not an organism at all, but chaos”,⁶⁰ all that seems to have an identifiable essence is unsettled and disintegrates into a profusely turbulent process.

Nietzsche defines this conception of the world as his “*Dionysian world*”:

This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without end; a firm, iron magnitude of force that does not grow bigger or smaller, that does not expend itself but only transforms itself; as a whole, of unalterable size...a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back, with tremendous years of recurrence, with an ebb and a flood of its forms...this, my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying... –do you want a name for this world? A solution for all its riddles? A light for you, too, you best-concealed, strongest, most intrepid, most midnightly men?– This world is the will-to-power—and nothing besides! And you yourselves are also this will-to-power—and nothing besides!⁶¹

There are several aspects of this conception of the world as will-to-power that render it radically different from traditional ontologies and metaphysical ways of thinking. Firstly, traditionally, metaphysical thought arranges itself on the basis of a concept or concepts such as an origin, a ground, an unchanging substance, something unconditional that conditions everything else, etc. In contrast, Nietzsche’s conception, while prioritizing becoming, does not try to explain becoming with reference to a fixed origin. In Nietzsche’s thought, becoming is eternal; it has neither an origin nor a telos. We should be careful not to think of will-to-power as a fixed origin. While will-to-power is utilized as an explanatory concept, we would be falling into the habit of metaphysical thinking if we tried to grasp this notion as a unifying principle. Traditionally, the idea of a unifying principle serves to systematize everything and give form and meaning to life. Hence, traditional thought is all too often secretly, if not explicitly, anthropomorphic. Through his use of the notion of will-to-power, on the other hand, Nietzsche seeks to reveal the eternal process of becoming as thoroughly impersonal: there is no agency behind it. (This is also why it is important not to confuse will-to-

⁶⁰ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 379.

⁶¹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 550.

power with a personal will). Further, it would be more appropriate to call will-to-power a “differentiating principle” rather than “unifying”.

In addition, in stark opposition to the traditional notion of a ground, whether it be transcendent or immanent, will-to-power denotes groundlessness.⁶² Nietzsche writes that the world is “enclosed by ‘nothingness’ as by a boundary”⁶³, conjuring an image that challenges the all-too-human tendency in metaphysical thought to seek closure.

In short, the thought of life as will-to-power eliminates the idea of totality as well as the idea of a unified origin. This firstly means that what happens in the world is not pre-determined, but random, and there is no purpose or telos that it is moving toward, either. The world “does not aim at a final state” and is not governed by “an overreaching, dominating total force, or ... a prime mover”⁶⁴; it is “a becoming that knows no satiety, no disgust, no weariness”.⁶⁵ That it knows “no satiety” and “no weariness” accentuates that it is never-ending, and that it knows “no disgust” indicates its amoral nature.

Here it is important to remember and refer back to Nietzsche’s diagnosis of these metaphysical tendencies (to think in terms of a ground, unifying principle, origin, etc.) as nihilistic. Why are these tendencies nihilistic and why is the doctrine of the will-to-power not? According to Nietzsche, “one must admit nothing that has being because then becoming would lose its value and actually appear meaningless and superfluous”.⁶⁶ While what is real is becoming without any purpose or ground, if we arrive at a Being by

⁶² Alphonso Lingis, “The Will to Power”, in David B. Allison (ed.), *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p. 38

⁶³ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 550.

⁶⁴ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 377

⁶⁵ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 550

⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 377

abstraction from the process of becoming or imagine the presence of an agent-like principle or purpose behind it, and if we forget that this is merely an abstraction, and start thinking that it has more reality than becoming, then we will inevitably attribute more meaning to it. We will start relegating change and becoming to the realm of the illusory. However, Nietzsche insists that *this* World is the *only* world. This is why his notion of the will-to-power excludes reference not only to transcendent entities, but also to seemingly immanent entities that operate from behind the appearances and are alleged to give form and meaning to them. Hence, will-to-power is a *radically immanent* thought. In this view, everything that happens can only be made meaningful or justified in virtue of itself alone: “becoming must appear justified at every moment, the present must absolutely not be justified by reference to a future, nor the past by reference to the present”.⁶⁷

It is owing to this feature of radical immanence that in *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche directly identifies will-to-power with life, “life itself is will-to-power”⁶⁸ and “life simply *is* will-to-power”.⁶⁹ This formulation prevents us from thinking of will-to-power as anything over and above life.

Life, according to Nietzsche, is a dynamic totality that is shaped by continuous struggle. To put it differently, will to power can be described as essentially agonistic. Hatab claims that “the Greek agon is a historical source for what Nietzsche later generalized into... will-to-power.”⁷⁰ There is the constant play of unconscious forces, driven by the motor of eternal creation and destruction.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 148.

⁶⁹ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 21.

⁷⁰ Lawrence J.Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence: Coming to Terms with Eternal Recurrence* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), p. 17.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy* Deleuze articulates Nietzsche's notion of will-to-power, in terms of forces, which he differentiates as "active" and "reactive". In the preface to the English translation of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze writes: "Nietzsche was responsible for creating a whole typology to distinguish active, acted and reactive forces and to analyse their varying combinations... this book attempts to define and analyse their varying combinations."⁷¹

While it is controversial whether, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze is attempting to present Nietzsche's own views, a Deleuzian Nietzsche, or some combination of both, his analysis of will to power in terms of active and reactive forces seems to have sufficient justification. Firstly, it is uncontroversial that will to power denotes forces as Nietzsche writes "all reality is already quantity of force. What exists is nothing but quantities of force in mutual relations of tension."⁷² Secondly, as these forces are in constant struggle for domination, they must be unequal even if the resulting inequality is contingent. Consequently, these unequal forces, which constitute the will-to-power, are either active or reactive forces.

For Deleuze, there are dominant and superior forces in a body called the active and there are also inferior forces in a body that are dominated called reactive. "Active and reactive are precisely the basic qualities that express the relation of force with force."⁷³ To make it more specific: Active forces, in compare to the reactive ones, are more complex since they do not have an exact definition or concrete sense but they can be understood upon reactive forces. Reactive forces are defined as inferior forces and "they lose nothing

⁷¹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. xvi.

⁷² Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 548.

⁷³ Gilles Deleuze "Active and Reactive", in David B. Allison (ed.), *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p. 81.

of their force, or their quantity of force; they exercise it in securing means and ends, in serving the conditions of life and the functions and tasks of conservation".⁷⁴ Consciousness, for instance, is fundamentally reactive and it shows the relations between particular reactive forces to the active forces that dominate them.⁷⁵ In other words, the notion of force and its quality is key to Nietzsche's understanding of will and of the will-to-power. And, just as wills are commanding or obeying, so forces are active or reactive. "⁷⁶ Nietzsche introduces the notions of activity and reactivity in a passage in *Will to Power*:

The democratic idiosyncrasy which opposes everything that dominates and wants to dominate... seems to me to have already taken charge of all physiology and theory of life--to the detriment of life since it has robbed it of a fundamental concept, that of *activity* [One] places instead 'adaptation' in the foreground, that is to say, an activity of the second rank, a mere *reactivity* [...] Thus the essence of life, its will-to-power, is ignored: one overlooks the essential priority of the spontaneous, aggressive, expansive, form-giving forces [...].⁷⁷

Lastly, it should also be emphasized that will to power is not will-to-self-preservation.

Physiologists should think before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength-life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results.⁷⁸

This will-to-power is not only essential to life, but it also is the source of all values. According to Nietzsche, there are no transcendent or absolute value-facts to which our judgments rightly or wrongly correspond. Values don't come from god (god is dead) or from another "true" world beyond this one. They are simply expressions of will-to-power. As such, value judgments are not potentially true or false. But while value judgments are not potentially

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵ Deleuze, *Active and Reactive*, p, 82

⁷⁶ Philip N. Lawton, Jr. "Nietzsche's Convalescence" *Philosophy Research Archives*, Vol. XIII (1987-88) : 151-179.

⁷⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 342

⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 21.

true or false, they nevertheless reveal something about the valuer: they can be legitimately judged as “healthy” or “sick” depending upon one’s capacity for power. This point will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.

Nietzsche is more interested in examining the significance of value judgements than of metaphysical or epistemic judgements. Indeed he asserts in numerous places⁷⁹ that to truly understand any world view, it is important to look at what kind of morality this view would aim at. As a matter of fact, it is not possible to present a value-neutral, descriptive view of the world, according to Nietzsche. This is because reason is always at the service of will to power and will-to-power, by its very nature, cannot be value-neutral, because it cannot be indifferent to what exists and becomes. Thus, as any world-view is developed, it is done so from a certain perspective of a certain will-to-power. Such a perspective inevitably involves an interpretation, and not merely a mirroring description of the phenomena.⁸⁰

There are always value judgments embedded in these interpretations, which reveal a great deal about who we are and our will-to-power, and they serve as Nietzsche’s most powerful tool in diagnosing the type of will-to-power underlying them.⁸¹ Values then become signs and symptoms of an underlying type of life like and indicative of an underlying malady for Nietzsche. On the other hand, Nietzsche argues that it is not possible to assess the value of becoming itself. The reason for that is that “anything against which to measure it, and in relation to which the word ‘value’ would have meaning, is lacking”.⁸²

⁷⁹ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 13.

⁸⁰ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 16.

⁸¹ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 138.

⁸² Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 377.

The Will-to-Power is the new valuation; it is the principle in which the enhancement of life is to be found; “life is will-to-power”.⁸³ Our values, Nietzsche argues, are expressions of our capacity for power (i.e. our health) and he asserts his method of diagnosing decadence as a symptomatology, treating values as symptoms of one’s health like a physician who treats certain physiological signs as symptoms of underlying sicknesses.

⁸³ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 148.

CHAPTER 3

GENEALOGY: PHYSIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF MORAL SYSTEM

The vital point in Nietzsche's analysis and critique of Western metaphysics is that he sees the life-denying aspects at the roots of Western traditional metaphysics. He initiated a new mode of philosophical thought concerned with tracing the roots and criticizing the development of the concepts of morality called genealogy. According to Eric Blondel, the genealogy could be seen as the compass for biological history in terms of nature, psychological analysis on a cultural level, philological interpretation of language and questioning the value of values.⁸⁴

In *On the Genealogy of Morality*, which is considered to be his groundwork on morality, Nietzsche undertakes a serious (r)evaluation of the concepts of morality through a genealogical analysis and he endeavors to examine the value of moral values itself. In the Preface, he formulates the goal of genealogy as follows:

‘So let us give voice to this *new demand*: we need a *critique* of moral values, *the value of these values should itself, for once, be examined* -and so we need to know about the conditions and circumstances under which the values grew up, developed and changed (morality as result, as symptom, as mask, as tartuffery, as sickness, as misunderstanding; but also morality as cause, remedy, stimulant, inhibition, poison), since we have neither had this knowledge up till now nor even desired it. People have taken the *value* of these 'values' as given, as factual, as beyond all questioning’⁸⁵

Gemes's text “We remain of necessity stranger to ourselves: the key message of Nietzsche's genealogy”, aims at looking beyond the simplistic idea that

⁸⁴ Eric Blondel, ‘The Question of Genealogy’, in: R. Schacht (ed.), *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality. Essays On Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals* (Berkeley 1994) p. 309.

⁸⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 7.

Nietzsche is mainly occupied with giving a "genealogical" account of the formation of our morality. In Gemes' view, *Genealogy of Morality* is much more than that: it is an investigation in our present nature of modern humans, and therefore it is not just concerned with ancient people but it speaks directly to contemporary men, women and us. In carrying out this investigation, Gemes picks as the focus and as the leverage point in his reasoning the assertion made by Nietzsche in the very first sentence of *On the Genealogy of Morality* that "we remain of necessity strangers to ourselves, we knowers, and for a good reason".⁸⁶ Nietzsche continues: "We have never looked for ourselves, - so how are we ever supposed to find ourselves?".⁸⁷ This is the fundamental question of the seemingly unknowable self, the 'I' which Nietzsche tried to resolve through his a genealogical project.

Gemes concludes his text by showing how the real intent of Nietzsche (his "esoteric" intent) is not to offer an historical account of how morality originated, but rather, to talk about us: and talking about us not only insofar as we are the latest stage of the genealogy of morality but of us in a more fundamental way: which is that "we fail to engage , in a cognitive and deeper sense, with the nature and the level of our resentment that we remain, so profoundly, strangers to ourselves".⁸⁸

Nietzsche believes that we can understand ourselves better if we understand the history of our morality and values. Therefore he offers a diagnosis of society's physiological defects in *On the Genealogy of Morality*, in which he describes how society operates to the detriment of life. He asserts that the advent of Christianity explains the genesis of the unhealthy morality infecting Europe. The *On the Genealogy of Morality* is composed of three "essays": The first one, "'Good and Evil', 'Good and Bad' ", dedicated to the

⁸⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 3.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Gemes, *We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves*, p. 206.

inversion of terms that stands at the origin of our own concept of morality. The second, " 'Guilt', 'Bad Conscience', and the like", treating the emergence of conscience and the functions that it absolves. The third, "What is the meaning of the Ascetic Ideals?" , dealing with the ascetic ideals and the reason for their presence.

3.1 The First Essay of On the Genealogy of Morality

3.1.1. The Genealogical Method

At the beginning of the first essay, Nietzsche presents the “English psychologists”’ attempts at presenting a genealogy of morality, to illustrate how the genealogical method can be employed erroneously. While these philosophers are criticized by their contemporaries as “frogs creeping, hopping in a swamp”, Nietzsche sees them as having dedicated themselves to sacrifice anything “desirability to truth, every truth, even a plain, bitter, ugly, foul, unchristian, immoral truth . . . Because there are such truths”.⁸⁹ He appreciates their desire to question moral values and find their human origin, but he finds their views to be historically untenable because they are confused about the concept and judgement of “good”.⁹⁰

These English psychologists sought for the origin of the concept of “good” in the usefulness of certain actions to their “beneficiaries”, probably with the added hidden assumption that the intentions of the “doer” were unegoistic. The English psychologists infer that through continual use, and meaning of the term “good” has shifted so that it has become an independent value, rather than merely denoting the usefulness of a certain act for a certain beneficiary.

⁸⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 11.

⁹⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 12.

So how does Nietzsche's genealogy of morality differ? For Nietzsche, every moral value "has a prehistory in your drives..."⁹¹ out of which it has been formed, transformed and internalized over time. 'Good and evil' names one specific set of values, with its own genealogy which can be explored but what is the value of these values and what sort of unconscious drives are at work behind? In this sense, Nietzsche's genealogy of morality can be also characterized as the questioning of the value of the moral values.

In "*Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*"⁹², published in 1971, Foucault analyses Nietzsche's ideas about the differences between Genealogy and History and the triviality of History as a tool so as to find the origins. Foucault claims that the role of the genealogy is "to record its history: the history of morals, ideals, and metaphysical concepts, the history of the concept of liberty or of the ascetic life; as they stand for the emergence of different interpretations, they must be made to appear as events on the stage of historical process."⁹³

"Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times."⁹⁴ begins Michel Foucault his essay, "*Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*". Foucault, through Nietzsche, points out to the absurdity of searching for the pure, immaculate origin of truth, morality, or any values, as if they all existed as ideals. Genealogy is opposed to traditional continuous history. Genealogy, says Foucault, "must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality".⁹⁵

⁹¹Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 187.

⁹² Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York : Pantheon Books, 1984) p. 76.

⁹³ Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, p. 86

⁹⁴ Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, p. 76

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

It is anti-teleological, is not in search for origins and does not own any ideal significations.

In light of the perspectival character of genealogy and its strategic nature, one can respond to any grounded argument since genealogy does not appeal to truth. In Foucault's text, fundamental themes including 'origin', 'emergence', 'genealogy' and 'history' are explicated in order to clarify Nietzsche's notion of genealogy and his understanding of Nietzsche's genealogy. According to Foucault two features characterize Nietzsche's genealogy: "descent" and "emergence". The German word *herkunft* is synonymous with "descent," but not in the sense of following a single line up from its beginning to the present time. Rather descent can be seen as analogous to following a chosen thread in a huge tangle, from which we could extend back a multitude of threads which are insignificant in themselves. Descent does not head towards a final outcome; rather it is more like a tangle of threads to trace and investigate. As Foucault says: "to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion."⁹⁶ Descent does not trace a historical continuity.

Foucault's genealogy does not "demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form to all its vicissitudes".⁹⁷ Descent should be perceived such that differences are embraced.⁹⁸ Descent is not a matter of establishing pure origins. It is this point that Foucault emphasizes in his interpretation of Genealogy as a critique: the denial of a pure origin, and the interpretation of culture and values as products of chance and coincidence. It is a change in perspective. From the Nietzschean perspective this change can be seen as an affirmation of chaos.

⁹⁶Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, p. 81

⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, p. 82

Foucault, lastly states that the analysis of descent requires an examination of the body since every descent inscribes its impact in the body:

Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body.⁹⁹

Thus, genealogy is not simply a history of events, but an account of physical development. It requires attention to what is inherited, but also how multiple notions can come together so as to give birth to moral values.

The second feature that characterizes Nietzsche's genealogy, according to Foucault, is emergence. Emergence is "the moment of arising".¹⁰⁰ But as descent gives up continuity, emergence prohibits finality. That is to say, emergence neither represents a telos nor the actualization of purpose. Instead emergence is produced by conflicting forces. Hence it is better to consider emergence as resulting from various combinations of forces. Emergences like these occur in the place where the celebration of domination is played out perpetually.

3.1.2. *The Slave Revolt in Morality*

What makes Nietzsche's work a 'polemic' is that it's an attempt to unveil what he calls the slavish origins of morality, which have been covered over by human history.

In the first essay of *On The Genealogy of Morality*, named "Good and Evil" "Good and Bad", two kinds of morality are outlined: master and slave morality. The master type is defined by being dominant, powerful and capable of commanding, affirming their physicality and being a yes-sayer to life.¹⁰¹ These valuations comprise the master morality, and this type is the

⁹⁹ Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, p. 83

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 20.

very representation of what is good. What is bad is the failure of the master type.¹⁰²

For Nietzsche, the vivid example of this model are the Greeks in so far as the way they lived was based on self-expenditure and self-affirmation. The slave types are reversal of the master type. The slaves make a virtue out of resentment and the beginning point of their valuation is no-saying.¹⁰³ Nietzsche explains that the slave revolt in morality occurs when resentment itself becomes dominant and gives birth to values.¹⁰⁴

Thus, the slave morality is exactly what master morality is not.

Whereas all noble morality grows out of a triumphant saying ‘yes’ to itself, slave morality says ‘no’ on principle to everything that is ‘outside’, ‘other’, ‘non-self’: and this ‘no’ is its creative deed. This reversal of the evaluating glance – this essential orientation to the outside instead of back onto itself – is a feature of resentment: in order to come about, slave morality first has to have an opposing, external world, it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all, – its action is basically a reaction. The opposite is the case with the noble method of valuation: this acts and grows spontaneously, seeking out its opposite only so that it can say ‘yes’ to itself even more thankfully and exultantly, – its negative concept ‘low’, ‘common’, ‘bad’ is only a pale contrast created after the event compared to its positive basic concept, saturated with life and passion, ‘we the noble, the good, the beautiful and the happy!’¹⁰⁵

In this passage, Nietzsche relates what he calls ‘slave morality’ to resentment, reaction, and negation. Whereas the noble had defined ‘good’ positively, on its own terms, and then derived ‘bad’ out of that, slave morality first defines the masterly values as ‘evil’ and then defines ‘good’ in opposition to what is termed ‘evil’. The weak, the poor, the suffering are alone considered to be ‘good,’ while the inverse are considered ‘evil.’ Here is a main point of contrast between the noble manner of valuation and the

¹⁰² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 20.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

slavish one: for the noble, there's no longing for revenge. Their own positive action is simply good, while other forms of action are merely 'bad,' though not even worthy of consideration. 'Bad' is seldom even used to categorize humans as such, as opposed to characteristics or activities.

This joyful stance of the master type towards life is what the slave type could not endure, and thus becomes the basis of slavish resentful attitude towards the noble type. The noble is self-assertive and saying: "I am good, you are bad". The slave type takes the self-assertiveness of the noble as a point of reference and reacts to it by saying that: "Since you are evil, I am good." The slave's goodness, however, does not arise from his/her own nature since the slaves cannot value themselves without referring to the existence of the noble: they are only good because they live on the illusion that the noble is evil.

This reversal of the evaluating glance – this essential orientation to the outside instead of back onto itself – is a feature of resentment: in order to come about, slave morality first has to have an opposing, external world, it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all, – its action is basically a reaction.¹⁰⁶

Resentment is the perpetual hatred the ruled hold against the rulers. By recasting noble values as "evil," slave morality also declares them to be punishable in some other realm, if not this one. Nietzsche thus presents resentment as the psychologically motivating force behind the invention of another world along with slave morality. For Nietzsche, resentment is nothing more than a fiction or "imaginary revenge" which initiates the slave's revolt: "The slave revolt in morality begins when resentment itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the resentment of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*

3.1.3 The Formation of The Subject

In the first essay of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche investigates the formation of subject/self through the exposition of the perspectives of ‘nobles’ and ‘slaves’ by comparing them to ‘birds of prey’ and ‘lambs’.¹⁰⁸ While the ‘birds of prey’ do not feel any ‘anger’ towards the ‘lambs’, the weak lambs blame them for being ‘evil’ since they are full of ‘*ressentiment*’: the weak ones in fact “demand of strength that it not to express itself as strength” which is, as Nietzsche states, just ‘nonsensical’ as “to demand of weakness that it express itself as strength.”¹⁰⁹ No one ever expects of weakness to express itself as strength, but the reverse is equally trivial although it is seen as ‘possible’, for there is no ‘subject’ or ‘substratum’ that can be separated from the doing, becoming or ‘expressing’ behind the doing.

...no wonder, then, if the entrenched, secretly smouldering emotions of revenge and hatred put this belief to their own use and, in fact, do not defend any belief more passionately than that the strong are free to be weak, and the birds of prey are free to be lambs”¹¹⁰.

In doing so, the lambs not only hold the strong ones responsible for being strong, they also transform their weakness into goodness. As such, they pretend that their weakness is a free choice to be good as if it were possible for them to be strong. According to Nietzsche, the belief in a subject with free-will is the production of a need for ‘self-preservation’ of the weak lambs. The lambs preserve themselves against the noble bird of preys by means of the formation of the notion of a self/subject.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 25.

Nietzsche holds that human power just is its own expression, human activity cannot be isolated from a supposedly underlying human subject or soul. The slave morality, though, presumes such a separation it needs to posit a human nature that could potentially bear any kind of properties or acts. Nietzsche denies this. The powerful merely enact their power; there is no neutral substratum that merely bears the attribute of 'power' on some contingent basis. Thereby Nietzsche questions the very notion of a "moral subject."

3.1.4. *Comments on Essay Ome*

In the first treatise of *On The Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche shows how the moral values emerged out of the struggle of the nobles and the priests. What previously expanded itself through noble acts, get reflected back and internalization occurs. The important point to take into consideration is that the process of internalization that has taken place through causes the emergence of the priestly cast out of the nobles. The value judgments which were not moral, but related to bodily practices turns into moral values after the moment of transition when internalization happens. This is the basis of the slave revolt in morality. Prior to the moment of internalization there was no space for subjectivity, interiority and identity. The interior space hasn't been created. After the emergence of the priestly cast, an interiority of the subject has been developed. To demand of strength that it not express itself as strength, that is not be a desire to overwhelm, a desire to cast down, a desire to become lord, a thirst for enemies and resistances and triumphs, is just as nonsensical as to demand of weakness that is express itself as strength.¹¹²

For Nietzsche, the birth of slave morality as an important event in history; since then it has completed its part in history as the predominant value creator (the metaphysical worldview). Even though it is obviously the Judeo-Christian tradition that Nietzsche references, he does not point towards a

¹¹² Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 26.

specific historical event. Here it is useful to remember Foucault's explanation of the genealogical method as a critique without referring to a pure origin, and the interpretation of culture and its values as products of mere accidents and coincidences. As such, it is not in our choice to be master or slave. For Nietzsche, we could see noble expressions of life, which had been articulated in the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles in ancient Greece, but there is no possibility of turning back to those times. Internalize today we can often find both types within a unified self, and 'I'.

Originally, Nietzsche does not evaluate one type of morality to be superior to the other; he seems to be merely making observations on different types of morality. Nevertheless, he analyzes the slave revolt in terms of a typology of ascending and descending forces and characters. Thereby he introduces a criterion for evaluating different value systems, worldviews, interpretations, etc. While he rejects the morality of the Judeo-Christian tradition or any transcendent or absolute values, and does not see value judgments as objectively valid or invalid, they nevertheless reveal something about the valuer to him. They can be legitimately judged as "healthy" or "sick". What Nietzsche means by "healthy" and "sick" will be discussed in Chapter 3, but at this point, we can say that Nietzsche assents of all valuations and interpretations that are life-enhancing, and dissents of those that are life-denying.

For example, the slavish have a negative image of life and a resentful stance towards life. Slaves say No to what is 'outside,' what is 'different,' what is 'not itself'; and this No is its creative deed.¹¹³ Conversely, the master or the noble "develops from a triumphant saying 'yes' to itself ..."¹¹⁴ Ironically, as Deleuze notes, Nietzsche considers the reactive forces of life to have

¹¹³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 20.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

dominated the active forces. He explains this by asserting that active forces are not immune to the disease of reactive forces, which is a state of affairs that is the precursor to resentment, the revenge against life.¹¹⁵ Deleuze writes: “inferior forces can prevail without ceasing to be inferior in quantity and reactive in quality, without ceasing to be slaves in this sense.¹¹⁶ One of the finest remarks in *The Will to Power* is: “The strong always have to be defended against the weak”¹¹⁷

In a *healthy physiology*, i.e., an ascending life, active forces dominate over and give form to reactive forces. On the other hand, a descending life occurs when the outward manifestation of power is inhibited and hence internalized, forces “fail to re-act or not respond to the active forces when the latter act upon the former.”¹¹⁸ This is precisely how resentment became triumphant in history and expanded among the weakly type in the form of morality and religion.

Values then become signs and symptoms of an underlying type of life like and indicative of an underlying malady for Nietzsche. Our values, Nietzsche argues, are expressions of our capacity for power (i.e., our health) and he presents his method of diagnosing decadence as a symptomatology, treating values as symptoms of one’s health like a physician who treats certain physiological signs as symptoms of underlying sicknesses. Health is form that is defined, as one’s capacity for power; not something distinct from power. Health remains the sole criterion for assessing the value of values.

¹¹⁵ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.45

¹¹⁶ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 58.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.111.

Values and bodies that express a high degree of power are ranked higher than those that express low degrees of power.

3.2 The Second Essay of On the Genealogy of Morality

In the second essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche goes into deeper layers of the material and psychological conditions for the emergence of the modern subject.

3.2.1. Memory

In the second treatise of *On The Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche begins with a very important question in order to disclose a fundamental dimension of the formation of the subject/self:

To breed an animal that is *permitted to promise* – isn't this precisely the paradoxical task nature has set for itself with regard to man? isn't this the true problem of man?... That this problem has been solved to a high degree must appear all the more amazing to one who can fully appreciate the force working in opposition, that of *forgetfulness*.¹¹⁹

The paradoxical case for Nietzsche consists in human being's capability of promising because to promise means for human being to choose its own nature; human being, which is also an animal, belongs to nature and may choose to be the opposite of its own nature in being capable of 'promising'.

To make promises is to assert a subjectivity that will not be destroyed in the future. Such a subjectivity would require a memory. According to Nietzsche, however, this requirement is bound to be resisted by a more fundamental force of the human animal, which is forgetting. Nietzsche claims that forgetting is not a 'lack' or deficiency, it is an "active and in the strict sense positive faculty of suppression" which makes room for new experiences or thoughts.¹²⁰ In this sense, it is the faculty of 'digestion'. Against this

¹¹⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 35.

¹²⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 36.

proclivity, Nietzsche states, human being ‘has paradoxically bred in itself’ an opposite faculty, namely ‘memory’ by means of which it makes ‘promises’.¹²¹ With this formation of the ‘memory of the will’, human being has become ‘calculable, regular, necessary’; it has produced its own selfhood/subject. The formation of memory or the faculty of promise making, for Nietzsche, is at the same time “the long history of the origins of *responsibility*”.¹²² That is, the animal has become ‘calculable’ through the ‘work on itself’ and has also become the sovereign, responsible individual of the morality.¹²³

This part of *Genealogy* also explicates the emergence of reason. He speculates that the suppression of the instincts in human beings was followed by a great disaster; a disaster that results in separating of human beings from their instincts. In *On The Genealogy of Morality* Nietzsche speculates about such an event as follows:

... some pack of blond beasts of prey, a conqueror and master race, which, organized on a war footing, and with the power to organize, unscrupulously lays its dreadful paws on a populace which, though it might be vastly greater in number, is still shapeless and shifting.¹²⁴

As a result of the suppression of instincts human beings were imposed to obey certain code and rules in the name of civilization. Nietzsche has made an analogy between the subjection of human beings to such “civilization” and the situation of creatures living in water being thrown onto land.

Nietzsche writes:

It must have been no different for these semi-animals, happily adapted to the wilderness, war, the wandering life and adventure than it was for the sea animals when they were forced to either become land animals or perish – at one go, all

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² *ibid.*

¹²³ C. Davis Acampora, “Forgetting the Subject” in *Reading Nietzsche at the Margins*, ed. Steven V. Hicks & Alan Rosenberg. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008) p. 3.

¹²⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 58.

instincts were devalued and 'suspended'. Now they had to walk on their feet and 'carry themselves', whereas they had been carried by the water up till then: a terrible heaviness bore down on them. They felt they were clumsy at performing the simplest task, they did not have their familiar guide any more for this new, unknown world, those regulating impulses that unconsciously led them to safety – the poor things were reduced to relying on thinking, inference, calculation, and the connecting of cause with effect, that is, to relying on their 'consciousness', that most impoverished and error-prone organ!¹²⁵

It was this exact moment that was designated as the beginning of the creation of a soul in human beings:

All instincts which are not discharged outwardly turn inwards – this is what I call the internalization of man: with it there now evolves in man what will later be called his 'soul'. The whole inner world, originally stretched thinly as though between two layers of skin, was expanded and extended itself and gained depth, breadth and height in proportion to the degree that the external discharge of man's instincts was obstructed. Those terrible bulwarks with which state organizations protected themselves against the old instincts of freedom – punishments are a primary instance of this kind of bulwark – had the result that all those instincts of the wild, free, roving man were turned backwards, against man himself. Animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of pursuing, raiding, changing and destroying – all this was pitted against the person who had such instincts: that is the origin of 'bad conscience'.¹²⁶

The emergence of the resentment gives rise to slave morality when the animality of human being is denied or expression of its aggression is suppressed. Nietzsche states that this is the process of the transformation of the human animal into rational animal who invents a memory, subject and a conscience, requires that "...man himself must first of all have become calculable, regular, necessary,...".¹²⁷ Human beings have a short term memory similar to other animals. Pain is used in order to develop a memory that makes a slave type to remember his/her promise. Thus, memory is formed, according to Nietzsche through the application of pain. Further, the creation of conscience is also related to the creation of memory. When the aggressive instincts are suppressed through the memory of pain, they are internalized. This internalization may be the voice, the body or the presence

¹²⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 56.

¹²⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 57.

¹²⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 36.

of the master type when the punishment is concerned. Human being has turned into a domesticated animal, a trained animal.

As the result of this summary of Nietzsche's critique of subjectivity, it can now be argued that Nietzsche's view of the subject radically undermines the prevalent constructions of modern subjectivity. Far from being an immediate certainty, self, selfhood or subject is in fact something that has been 'constituted' through history. The key to the answer of the fundamental question posed at the beginning of *On The Genealogy of Morality* is to be sought for in this deconstruction of the modern view of the subject. I will take this point up in the last section of this chapter.

3.2.2. *Bad Conscience*

According to Nietzsche, the human is the animal that values and measures. What defines our life-experience is how we evaluate and appraise our world and ourselves. We order, we rank. This is not just one of our many activities but it is our driving and defining function. Many or perhaps even all of our relationships can then be explained in terms of value and exchange, especially via the creditor-debtor relation. However, a credit-debit relation can only obtain for an animal that can make promises that is, for one that can willingly bind itself to a future. To understand what it means to "owe" requires the ability both to promise and to remember. Owing incorporates obligations to both the future and the past.

Fixing prices, setting values, working out equivalents, exchanging – this preoccupied man's first thoughts to such a degree that in a certain sense it constitutes thought: the most primitive kind of cunning was bred here, as was also, presumably, the first appearance of human pride, man's sense of superiority over other animals. Perhaps our word 'man' (manas) expresses something of this first sensation of self-confidence: man designated himself as the being who measures values, who values and measures, as the 'calculating animal as such'.¹²⁸

According to Nietzsche, this is both the privilege and the prison of human consciousness. By managing their pasts and futures in this way, humans have

¹²⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 45.

striven to make themselves 'regular,' like clockwork. They need to be calculable and therefore predictable. But this goal is achieved, according to Nietzsche, through force, pain, and cruelty. Memories are burned into human minds through what he calls our violent "mnemo-technique." Nietzsche is interested in how we get to be promise making in the first place, how we become contractual. The value of such contracts might not originally be mutual benefit, but instead the power or right of making-suffer, the pleasure of punishment for the punisher.

From this foundational urge to make suffer, Nietzsche brings us to his concept of bad conscience. This is what results when the urge to make suffer is turned back on our own selves. This is the origin of the ascetic impulse. Violence against oneself burns memories into our own consciousness and we call this 'conscience.' Under the ascetic regime of 'good and evil,' pain becomes good; self-denial and self-sacrifice are affirmed, while life is negated. Internalized self-cruelty is what drives this whole process. When bad conscience and guilt are brought to their highest point of development, humanity stands before its highest possible creditor, the 'God.' First developed out of the idea of debt to one's ancestors, 'god' reached perfection so says Nietzsche in Christianity's doctrine of a God who died 'for you.' Even when we stop taking theology seriously, as Nietzsche thought was already the case in his time, we still feel guilty before some almighty creditor. The sense of sin seems to outlive even our belief in God. The very idea of God or gods would appear to have developed out of a prior sense of guilt. Religion merely heightens bad conscience and intensifies the ways we make ourselves suffer. But what would it mean to have a good conscience? What would it mean, we asked, to fully affirm life? Given what Nietzsche says about guilt outliving God, atheism would seem to be an insufficient answer here. Instead, he points us to the idea of a future hope, the one that is not found in heaven, but in a revaluation of all values. Perhaps the remnants of our bad conscience could be attached to otherworldly and life-

denying thoughts and practices to the values, we currently feel so good about, but which in fact conceal our underlying and motivating self-hatred.

3.3 The Third Essay of *On The Genealogy of Morality*

The third treatise of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, entitled “What do Ascetic Ideals Mean”¹²⁹ is obviously concerned with the formation and meaning of ascetic ideals. Nietzsche clarifies that the meaning of ascetic ideals is to endorse a specific mode of existence. Christian morality which is the ossification of the ascetic ideals foster an easy and comfortable mode of existence. For Nietzsche, indeed, it is at core merely life-denying. The values which are encouraged by Christian morality, including compassion, pity and self-sacrifice, represent ‘a will that has turned against life’.¹³⁰

For Deleuze, Nietzsche was the first to define nihilism as the triumph of the reactive forces of resentment and bad conscience, over the active forces inherent in becoming. The will-to-power, for Deleuze, is active or reactive, affirmative or negative, but, would ultimately, the will to power is affirmative.

Thus the only way that the will to power can manifest itself in a negative way is through a misrepresentation of it. This is what Nietzsche alludes to as nihilism and the ascetic ideal. Deleuze writes: “Nihil in ‘nihilism’ means negation as a quality of the will-to-power. Thus, in its primary and basic sense, nihilism signifies the value of nil taken on by life, the fiction of higher values which gives this value and the will to nothingness which is expressed in these higher values.”¹³¹

¹²⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 68.

¹³⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. xxvi.

¹³¹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 147.

Nietzsche had been skeptical about the underlying metaphysics of science because of his disbelief in a single fixed truth. The ‘will to truth’ of science is a physiological disorder and a sign of unhealthiness since it encourages a negation of life. Philosophers and scientists withdraw from the only world we have by standing back so as to contemplate, and by attempting to understand, rather than directly experience life. Nietzsche states us that “those who are truthful in that audacious and ultimate sense which faith in science presupposes thereby affirm another world than that of life, nature, and history.”¹³²

The obsession that we have for the pursuit of scientific knowledge or morality represents an incarnation of the ascetic ideal for Nietzsche. The scientist, just like the priestly type, still relies on faith in absolute truth. Their commitment to truth emanates from the same motivation that supports dedication to religious ascetic values: denial of life as becoming and will-to-power. Nonetheless ascetic ideals both offer a challenge to humanity and to other possible ideals to overcome these ideals. We are still in the metaphysical delusion because we still put our energies towards external pursuits of science like technological mastery and towards preservation. This pursuit may ease our sense of discontentment at life, serve our conscience well and make it easy to tame but it might be said that this pointless effort in the end meant that we failed to engage with life, and therefore we always remain ‘unknown to ourselves’.

3. 4 About Being Strangers to Ourselves

In his article, Gemes argues, Nietzsche does not present the real aim of the *On The Genealogy of Morality* in plain sight, for us all to see. The reason is very much linked with an important trait of Nietzsche's philosophy: the devaluation of conscious, intellectual knowledge. Therefore, coherently with this view, Nietzsche prefers to engage not our conscious mind but the deeper,

¹³² Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 201.

latent part of our selves. Human beings devoted to objectivity of knowledge, devoted to reflecting the world as if they were a clean, transparent mirror, cultivate a fallacious idea of themselves. Apart from the "passivity" and life-negation present in the desire to be a mirror, it is not possible for men and women of knowledge to achieve that state of being translucent and permeated by light like mirrors are: nothing more different from that, we humans are in reality an agglomerate of dark and not necessarily coordinated parts. This, Gemes explains, is what Nietzsche is telling us: "as the *Genealogy of Morality* unfolds, beyond our mere ignorance, a deeper estrangement is suggested, namely, that of having parts of ourselves that are split-off".¹³³

In fact, we can even say that "we have strangers in ourselves".¹³⁴ Gemes argues that it is because we have not yet understood, and accepted, the physiological basic forces that determine our commitment to knowledge that we are failing to know ourselves: for, how could we know ourselves if we fail to realize the real motivations of what we do and what we pursue?

In the *On the Genealogy of Morality* we learn that our system of values is the product of a genealogy; it has a history; it is the result of the interplay of several fields of forces, material, physiological, psychological, cultural, that have exerted their effects over a long time. Like all other phenomena of the world, the ego is also subject to the will to power and a multiplicity of impulses. It is simply an instrument of the drives and instincts, and does not remain one, or selfsame. In that respect, Nietzsche also likens the internal organization of drives in the human psyche/body to the organization of a society, in which there is always a structure of command and obedience.

¹³³ Gemes, *We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves*, p. 199.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche says:

On the one hand, we are, under the circumstances, both the one who commands and the one who obeys, and as the obedient one we are familiar with the feelings of compulsion, force, pressure, resistance, and motion that generally start right after the act of willing. On the other hand, however, we are in the habit of ignoring and deceiving ourselves about this duality by means of the synthetic concept of the "I."¹³⁵

Here, rather than an "individuality", of metaphysical derivation, Nietzsche reveals to us an internally divided subject; a multiplicity of wills that are commanding or obeying. Through his ontological and genealogical deconstruction, he transforms the idea of the subject into a combination of an interplay of forces (and, by this very same reason, it is now safe from the risk of any possible hypostatization). The result of this interplay of forces is us, "a jumble of different voices/drives having no overall unity"¹³⁶, just a momentary nexus without unified boundaries, "a porous membrane" in a field of forces.

This is the physiological basis that underlies our ego: will-to-power. The *Genealogy* illustrates the impossibility of escaping from will-to-power and the necessity of not resisting to the basic instincts of life. The following passage from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* might be taken to be making the same point in a more profound way. Here, Nietzsche does not speak of will-to-power, but he speaks of a Self that lies behind the ego and its conscious activities. He refers to it as "an unknown wise man", and claims that it is the true ruler of the ego:

The self also seeks with the eyes of the senses; it also listens with the ears of the spirit. Always the self listens and seeks: it compares, overpowers, conquers, destroys. It controls, and it is in control of the ego too. Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), pp. 20.

¹³⁶ Gemes, p.199

¹³⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), p.146.

If the task suggested by Nietzsche's fundamental question is a search for the self-prompted by the revaluation of all values and if the "unknowability of our selves [is] contingent and linked to the temporal-specific configuration of forces that currently have effect on our lives. Then the "knowability" of ourselves (if there is such a thing) would be something profoundly different from the "intellectual" knowledge against which Nietzsche so strongly takes position.

The next chapter attempts to approach this task by focusing on something that is indeed "profoundly different" from the "intellectual" ways. To find ourselves, we need to "unlearn" the ways this sickly culture and tradition has taught us—i.e., we should learn how to forget. In the next chapter, I will try to present this fundamental thesis of this study by elaborating on the relationships between convalescence, health and forgetting.

CHAPTER 4

CONVALESCENCE AND FORGETTING

Nietzsche's healing philosophical project is the task of revaluation of all values. For such a task to be successful, a radical new interpretation of world will be required, one that is oriented towards both health and sickness, in the service of life. This will be a perspective which is not anthropocentric, but a perspective of impersonal values. Nietzsche's own sickness offered him such a perspective on health from which he evaluates health and his sickness particularly equipped him for the "revaluation of all values". Again, by his own reckoning:

All long, all too-long succession of years meant recuperation for me,-it is unfortunately meant relapse, decay, the period of a type of decadence. After all this do I need to add that I am experienced in questions of decadence? I know it inside and out.... To be able to look out from the optic of sickness towards *healthier* concepts and values, and again the other way around, to look down from the fullness and self-assurance of the *rich* life into the secret work of the instinct of decadence-that was my longest training, my genuine experience, if I became the master of anything, it was this. I have a hand for switching *perspectives*: the first reason why a 'revaluation of values' is even possible, perhaps for me alone.¹³⁸

In the preface of *The Gay Science* Nietzsche expresses his hope for a "philosophical physician" to pursue "the problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity".¹³⁹ In this passage, he suggests that philosophizing should not be about the pursuit of absolute truth but rather the pursuit of health, future, growth, power, life. The fact that he seeks a philosophical physician to pursue the problem of health is revealing in his writings.

¹³⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo: How to Become What you Are in Twilight of the Idols* in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols and Other Writings*, edited. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) p. 76.

¹³⁹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 6.

By setting out a healthier order of values, he seeks to lay some kind of a foundation that future philosophers could use to replace life-negating values with life-affirming values and thereby cultivate greater states of health.

From Nietzsche's perspective, his task of revaluing all values is the first step in treating *décadence* because just as the astute physician can identify physical symptoms as an indicative of an underlying condition or sickness, values become signs and symptoms of an underlying type of life (ascending or descending) for Nietzsche.

4.1. Health, Sickness and Convalescence:

I turned my will to health, to *life*, into my philosophy¹⁴⁰

The terms of "health" and "sickness" are generally used in everyday language in ways, which concern mental or physical order / disorder. For the purpose of this section, they are examined with regard to Nietzschean terminology. The main aim of this section is to interpret the terms 'health' and 'sickness' in Nietzsche's philosophy. In doing so, these terms will be viewed in terms of their relationship with Nietzsche's doctrine of will-to-power.

I have mentioned the concept of the will to power so as to provide a proper ground for vindicating Nietzsche's notion of health, which is on a grand scale a manifestation of his emphasis on power. The most obvious aspect of Nietzsche's emphasis on health is because Nietzsche regularly speaks of health in terms of power.¹⁴¹ Thus, it is crucial to understand Nietzsche's concept of "will-to-power" in order to understand his view of life as a dynamic process as well as his concepts of health and sickness. Health and sickness, while opposed to each other, need each other. It needs to be clarified that there is no absolute health or sickness, these terms are mere horizons, and are to be seen in terms of degrees of life. Just as will to

¹⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 76.

¹⁴¹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 374.

power was not to be misunderstood as will to self-preservation, from a Nietzschean perspective, self-preservation is not to be considered as the defining feature of health, either. In Nietzsche's understanding, health is not a static physiological state or an ultimate goal of an organism nor is health merely the absence of disease. In a notorious passage from *Gay Science*, he introduces his notion of "great health" as follows:

... anyone who wants to know from the adventures of his own experience how it feels to be the discoverer or conqueror of an ideal, or to be an artist, a saint, a lawmaker, a sage, a pious man, a soothsayer, an old-style divine loner - any such person needs one thing above all - the great health, a health that one doesn't only have, but also acquires continually and must acquire because one gives it up again and again, and must give it up! . . .¹⁴²

Health has a peerless meaning for him as he regards both health and sickness as different aspects of the same essentially dynamic process within life itself. Once it is acquired, it is necessary to give it up. Nietzsche evaluates health by how much amount of disease can be tolerated, assimilated and overcome by an organism. In this respect, sickness can be conceived a stimulant to life and one can only be healthy with this stimulant. This is what Nietzsche describes as 'great health', "a health that one doesn't only have, but also acquires continually and must acquire."¹⁴³ Nietzsche's critique of the oppositional structure of traditional philosophy has been emphasized from the outset, and in this vein, in Nietzsche's understanding, health is not to be understood as the opposite of sickness. This suggestion is confirmed:

Health and sickness are not essentially different . . . One must not make of them distinct principles or entities that fight over the living organism and turn it into their arena . . . In fact, there are only differences in degree between these kinds of existence.. the exaggeration, the disproportion, the non-harmony of the normal phenomena constitute the pathological.¹⁴⁴

There can be no "will to health alone" since health welcomes sickness as something to be affirmed and overcome. Since health is primarily the overcoming of sickness i.e., emerges from the contrasting condition of

¹⁴² Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 246.

¹⁴³ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 29.

sickness sickness is a pre-requisite to health. In the strongest and most vital organisms, it can even lead to a higher form of health.

In short, great health is understood by Nietzsche as the native resilience of the body. Great health does not mean that one does not become ill, only that one is resilient in the face of illness, as he describes in the Preface to *The Gay Science*:

we philosophers, should we become ill, temporarily surrender with body and soul to the illness - we shut our eyes to ourselves, as it were. And as the traveller knows that something is not asleep, something that will count the hours and wake him up, we, too, know that the decisive moment will find us awake,...¹⁴⁵

Great health can be construed like the “something that is not asleep” in the traveler analogy described in the above passage. In other words, someone who has great health may occasionally go through periods when his health is in decline but he will know that this is a transitory phase. Nietzsche concludes that bouts of sickness can actually make strong types even healthier.

One might guess that i do not want to take any my leave ungratefully from that time of severe illness whose profits i have not yet exhausted even today: I am well aware of the advantages that my erratic health gives me over all burly minds.¹⁴⁶

To have this kind of health, transformation of suffering into a kind of triumph is necessary. It is not a simple optimistic task but it is a task of deriving strength from what is tragic in a way that enables one to endure and affirm further suffering. One must welcome suffering and pain to be healthier and stronger. Here, one may pose the following question: If Nietzsche sees sickness as a prerequisite for health, then how can he set health as the criterion to distinguish between what he affirms and what he is against, as we have argued in Chapter 2. The short answer is that sickness can be affirmed and welcomed (in order to be overcome), while Nietzsche's

¹⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

fight is primarily against what he calls “decadence”, which he defines as the decline in, or deterioration of, one’s vitality at the bodily level.

Nietzsche's use of the term *décadence* goes beyond the normal definition of the term and it is another technical term for him. Nietzsche's *décadence* surely involves the common understanding of the notion as the decline and decay of society or culture. However, for Nietzsche *décadence* becomes synonymous with denial of life, sickness, degeneration and disintegration of the instincts which he associates with Socrates and Christianity. Nietzsche remarks “nothing has preoccupied me more than the problem of *décadence* - I had reasons... If one has trained one’s eye to detect the symptoms of decline, one also understands morality, one understands what is lies concealed beneath its holiest names and table of values: impoverished life, the will to nonentity, the great exhaustion”¹⁴⁷. *Décadence* for Nietzsche thus represents declining life, a descending force, in any of its varying forms: morality, nihilism, pessimism, sickness etc. The cure for *décadence* would be the ultimate affirmation of life and self-overcoming.

A decadent body unlike the healthy one is unable to integrate and assimilate new stimuli. Nietzsche defines decadence as a “physiological regression” resulting from degenerate instincts. In *Twilight of the idols*, Socrates is defined as ugly plebeian, a *monstrum*... a decadent type: “We see signs of Socrates' decadence not only in the admitted chaos and anarchy of his instincts, but in the hypertrophy of logic as well as in his emblematic rachitic spite”.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner in The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols and Other Writings* ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, trans. Ronald Speirs (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2005), p 257.

¹⁴⁸ Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, p. 163.

Nietzsche classifies human beings into one of two categories: strong types, who suffer from an abundance of life, and weak types who suffer from the poverty of life.

There are two kinds of sufferers: first those who suffer from the over-fullness of life.... And then those who suffer from the *superabundance* of life... I ask in every instance, 'is it hunger or superabundance that has become creative?'¹⁴⁹

Suffering from over-fullness means that one has an excess of power which causes pain if not given an outlet in the form of creation. Beliefs and values that are borne out of this kind of suffering express one's underlying great health. Suffering from poverty is different. One suffers from poverty because one lacks the power to continue willing. There is a physiological regression in one's body, resulting in decline or diminishment of one's capacity for power.

Nietzsche has diagnosed traditional philosophy as decadent because it looks for a meaning and purpose in this world, and its static, oppositional and teleological structure allows it to see this purpose as a resting place. For Nietzsche, on the other hand, rest is not the last straw of things. There is only ever-lasting becoming and struggle for power. Life is constant struggle, with no higher other world to arrive at. Having defined life in this way, Nietzsche understands health as the ability to advantageously adapt to ever-changing conditions and becoming. At an utter physiological level, great health means being able to perpetually integrate new stimuli and to abandon that which has become quiescent and ineffectual.

Nietzsche suggests that while strong types periodically succumb to spiritual sickness, as their weak counterparts do, their sickness does not become chronic because they are capable of treating the source of their disease i.e., their attachment to values that no longer assist them in flourishing. By being able to relinquish their values when they fail to be effective, strong types are capable of rebounding from their sickness, as opposed to sinking

¹⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 234.

deeper into it, as weak types do when they continue to affirm values that are no longer beneficial. The resilience of these strong types proves that they are not only capable of rebounding from decadence, but indeed, of flourishing as a result of these periods of sickness. Nietzschean health, as the capacity to overcome sickness and benefit from it, is a manifestation of power.

4.2. Convalescence

As is well known, Nietzsche's philosophy is often read as centered on "the themes of suffering, healing and overcoming"¹⁵⁰; what is less noted is how a proper understanding of these themes would benefit from a detailed interpretation of his notion of convalescence. There has been little emphasis on Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of convalescence in the secondary literature on Nietzsche, yet the concept of convalescence has a great role both for his philosophy and for himself.

Nietzsche thinks that the emergence of nihilism has been one of the main concerns of his philosophy, and convalescence has been required for a long time. In all of his writings, draws our attention to an enduring sickness (metaphysical), which is contaminated by philosophers, theologians, and moralists, and has lasted for over two thousand years. This sickness of weakness and decay finally end with nihilism. The overcoming of this sickness requires a long road of recovery that Nietzsche explicitly identifies as convalescence¹⁵¹. The road is long in part because the sickness remains resistant within the organism.

Nietzsche forms his philosophy on convalescence by means of his ability to transform his body into a laboratory. Nietzsche claims, in *Human, All Too Human*, that "In your body, you have more wisdom than as it is in your philosophy" and, hence, clarifies the intelligence of body. For Nietzsche,

¹⁵⁰ Jeffrey Jackson, *Nietzsche on cultural convalescence, Subjectivity*, Macmillan Publishers, Vol. 3, 2, p.149–169 .

¹⁵¹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on cultural convalescence*, p. 150.

body is a propulsive force. Yet, against common sense, he does not determine such a force by means of an appeal to the healthy body; since the sick body has a *sui generis* propulsive force as well. He is able to see his pains which were available in every stage of his life as a meaningful and valuable source, and to use them on the basis of creating new values. In this sense, his pains are sacred for him, which are mentioned by him with a proud emphasis.

A truly healthy organism is always entangled with its own level of illness so that it can grow as strong as possible, push as far as possible. Nietzsche mentions in the preface to *The Gay Science* that this book comes after a long period of convalescence, and it is obvious that, in the case of Nietzsche, his sick body has not produced a corrupted perspective:

Gratitude pours forth incessantly, as if the unexpected has just happened—the gratitude of convalescent-for convalescence was unexpected. “Gay science”: this signifies the saturnalia of a spirit who has patiently resisted terrible, long pressure—patiently, severely, coldly, without submitting, but also without hope—and who is now all at once attached by hope, the hope for health, and the intoxication of convalescence. Is it any wonder that in the process much that is unreasonable and foolish comes to light, much playful tenderness that is lavished even on problems that have prickly hide and are not made to be caressed and enticed? This whole book is nothing but a bit of merry-making after a long privation and powerlessness, the rejoicing of strength that is returning, of a reawakened faith in tomorrow, of a sudden sense and anticipation of a future, of impending adventures, of seas that are open again of goals that are permitted gain, believed again.¹⁵²

In *The Gay Science*, convalescence is seen to be the only way in which health is intelligible, is likened to a supernova coming with a great light,¹⁵³ and taken to be the best evidence of healthy organism because it shows the ability to overcome the disease.

...from such abysses, from such severe sickness, also from the sickness of severe suspicion, one returns newborn, having shed one's skin, more ticklish and malicious, with a more delicate taste for joy, with a more tender tongue for all good things, with merrier senses, with a second dangerous innocence in joy, more childlike and yet a hundred times subtler than one has ever been before.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 3.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 7.

This passage openly indicates that the individual with great health can recoil from the periods of decline with a renewed ability to affirm life. We have seen that for Nietzsche the healthy one is healthy even in sickness, because one's health is not the absence of sickness but rather a health beyond the duality of health and sickness, a strength to overcome sickness, the great health.

The general meaning of the term Convalescence is a gradual recovery from an illness. In other words, convalescence involves time. One does not enter a state of health in the manner of a sudden accomplishment; rather, it concerns a time of getting over in which the source of the illness never really withdraws completely. Thus the proof of lasting health and vital power is ongoing recovery, overcoming sickness repeatedly (recurrently). Nietzsche contends that convalescence affords the ability to "become bright again" irrespective of periods of sickness.

We, openhanded and rich spirits, standing by the road like opens wells with no intention to fend off anyone who feels like drawing from us—we unfortunately do not know how to defend ourselves where we want toBut we shall do what we have always done: whatever one casts into us, we take down into our depth--for we are deep,and become bright again.¹⁵⁵

Life itself, as will to power, says to Zarathustra: "I am that which must overcome itself again and again".¹⁵⁶ Given the will to power's function as a will to growth, an organism may, Nietzsche explains, actually destroy itself in an attempt to become more.¹⁵⁷ Life always overcomes itself. "Life is continually shedding something that wants to die... constantly being a murderer."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 243.

¹⁵⁶ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 78.

¹⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 366.

¹⁵⁸ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 50.

Consequently, convalescence entails loss and change, in resisting experience of pain, some aspects die and new aspects develop. One can undergo temporary deterioration when what is valued ceases to promote one is flourishing, rebound from this deterioration, and value anew. Thus, one of the central claims/insights of this thesis is that there is a strong relationship between convalescence and forgetting.

4.3 Forgetting

Forgetting is essential to action of any kind, just as not only light but darkness too is essential for the life of everything organic. ...¹⁵⁹

Nietzsche notes many times that Christian morality is thoroughly nihilistic though its embodiment in culture through centuries may make it difficult to recognize it as such. As the institutionalization of resentment, it constitutes the victory of nihilism. This means that in Christian culture, reactive forces have gained a victory over active forces. The first characteristic of resentment has to do with 'memory'. Nietzsche writes that the human type with full of resentment knows "how not to forget."¹⁶⁰

The noble type, contrasted with the slave type, is motivated towards consuming and exhausting itself in an immediate reaction, and therefore does not get poisoned with resentment.¹⁶¹ This is the distinction between one who is capable of forgetting and one who is incapable of forgetting.

In this sense, memory is a prominent characteristic of those natures that are full of hate and resentment. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche notes, "Men and things obtrude too closely; experiences strike one too deeply; memory

¹⁵⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life in Untimely Meditations* Trans. R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Daniel Breazale (Cambridge, U.K. New York : Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.

¹⁶⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 21.

¹⁶¹ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 57.

becomes a festering wound."¹⁶² Memory is the rigid form of consciousness, it solidifies painful experiences. Forgetting, on the other hand, is "an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression... like a doorkeeper, a preserver of psychic order, repose, and etiquette"¹⁶³

Acampora focuses on the notion of forgetting in Nietzsche's philosophy and how forgetting plays role in Nietzsche's account of the formation of the self in her essay "Forgetting the Subject". Reconsideration of the second section of the second treatise has a prominent role since it extends understanding of Nietzsche's second treatise in a completely new direction.

Nietzsche begins the second essay of his *On The Genealogy of Morality* by raising a fundamental question: "*To breed an animal that is permitted to promise-isn't it precisely the paradoxical task nature has set for itself with regard to man? Isn't this the true problem of man?*"¹⁶⁴ What Nietzsche calls the paradoxical task depends on the triumph of the force of memory over forgetting that enables the act of promising in parallel to the breeding program that human animal undergoes a dramatic change.

Nietzsche begins with an analysis of forgetfulness which is a "*positive faculty of suppression*" He states that forgetfulness as an active and positive force is an unconscious happening that enables the "*nobler functions and functions*"¹⁶⁵ of humans to emerge-ordering of experiences and knowledge, clearing of consciousness and opening a place for the activity of unconsciousness which creates a new space for "*ruling, foreseeing and predetermining*".¹⁶⁶ It has a parallel function with unconscious and

¹⁶² Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 80.

¹⁶³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 35.

automatic on-going activity of the organs during digestion. Nietzsche uses the metaphor of digestion in order to point out that forgetting happens by itself and just like digestion it is natural and necessary for human being's health. This active force, "this active forgetfulness, a doorkeeper as it were, an upholder of psychic order, of rest, of etiquette: from which one can immediately anticipate the degree to which there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no present without forgetfulness".¹⁶⁷ It is crucial for existing in time, there is "*no present without forgetfulness*" and it represents "*a form of strong health*".¹⁶⁸

However, in the course of the breeding a historical human being, an opposite force emerged which eliminated the productive and positive effect of forgetfulness on human beings. This counter-veiling force is memory, which enables promises to be made and makes the active force of forgetfulness ineffective. This triumph force is "*not a passive no-longer-being-able-to-get-rid-of-the-impression*" rather it is an "*active no-longer-wanting-to-get-rid-of.*" Thus, it is a memory of the will rather than a memory of the consciousness. The memory of the will paves the way for promising and developing a human being who is able to make promises.

The entire system of the human animal should be trained during this breeding process in such a way that human animal becomes calculable, domesticable and regular. The triumph of the force of memory and the ability of the human animal to make promises stand for "the paradoxical task nature has set for itself" in creating promising animals. An animal who makes promises is paradoxical if one takes into consideration the triumph of the force of memory over the positive faculty of forgetting. Acampora states that the second treatise is mainly about the struggle of forgetting and remembering. It aims to offer an account of how the triumph of memory

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 124.

emerges and show the negative effects of the default of forgetting in the course of the entire process.

Acampora links forgetting to the Dionysian, underlining that it is an active mode.¹⁶⁹ She reminds us that rather than eliminating experience forgetting allows experience, because an overdose of remembering results in too much experience and exhaustion, mitigating one's motivation for new experiences. Nietzsche accomplishes the Dionysian with forgetting, he writes: "Dionysiac stirrings [...] cause subjectivity to vanish to the point of complete self-forgetting".¹⁷⁰ This Dionysian forgetting is mainly about the forgetting of the individual self—i.e., the subject.¹⁷¹ It means the process of the dissolution from the illusion that there is an individual subject. The metaphor of diving in the river of forgetfulness implies that all who are immersed in the river are unified together as a result of forgetting. In the view of the fact that there is no illusory self anymore to which to attach memories since they forget their own memories like they forget themselves.¹⁷²

It is useful to note that the Dionysian does not have a memory. Nietzsche describes the dithyrambic chorus as "the chorus of transformed beings who have completely forgotten their civic past and their social position".¹⁷³ Greeks perform self-forgetting and they become servants of their god beyond time.¹⁷⁴ The Dionysian state is one of self-oblivion, which is why

¹⁶⁹ Christa Davis Acampora, "Forgetting the Subject", in *Reading Nietzsche at the Margins*, ed. Steven V. Hicks and Alan Rosenberg (West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University Press, 2008) p. 48.

¹⁷⁰ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy in The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, edited by Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, translated by Ronald Speirs (Cambridge, U.K. New York : Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 17.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*

¹⁷² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 18.

¹⁷³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 43.

¹⁷⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 44.

Nietzsche pits the Dionysian reality against everyday reality, as he believes that the belief in self, subject or individuation are fictions. In the modern era, human beings have followed the Socratic tradition and have forgotten how to forget and become a prisoner of Memory. As they have forgotten how to forget, they have consequently forgotten how to heal, how to convalesce.

Happiness, even the smallest one comes through “forgetting or, to express the matter in a more scholarly fashion, through the capacity, for as long as the happiness lasts, to sense things unhistorically”.¹⁷⁵ Historical human being with a strong attachment to memory does not feel happy about his/ her physiology. It is necessary to immerse the body in forgetting in that it is crucial to get rid of the poison of the past to feel the courage to continue living. An example of Luther in Nietzsche’s text fortifies the idea of forgetting as an active force:

Luther himself once voiced the opinion that the world only came into being through the forgetfulness of God; if God had thought about "heavy artillery," he would never have made the world. From time to time, however, this same life, which uses forgetting, demands the temporary destruction of this forgetfulness.¹⁷⁶

This passage suggests that convalescence will require an active forgetting that entails a certain kind of measure-taking with respect to itself: “one’s being just as able to forget at the right time as to remember at the right time”; one must possess “a powerful instinct for sensing when it is necessary to feel historically and when unhistorically.”¹⁷⁷ Nietzsche gives an “extreme example” of an imaginary person “who did not possess the power of forgetting at all” to emphasize the importance of forgetting.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* , p. 62.

¹⁷⁶ Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* , p.76.

¹⁷⁷ Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* , p. 63.

¹⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* , p. 62

A human being who wants to feel only historically would be like someone who refrains from sleep. Nietzsche likens the historical sense to insomnia, in that through too much rumination, one's health is compromised. This is the same for a people or a culture as it is for a person.

For this reason, Nietzsche argues that it is "possible to live almost without memory".¹⁷⁹ He thinks that the animals demonstrate that in fact. On the other hand, Nietzsche thinks that "it is generally completely impossible to live without forgetting."¹⁸⁰

Nietzsche's health deconstructs the hierarchized dichotomy of health and sickness, in that health constantly turns to sickness in order to become more of itself. Here Nietzsche's emphasis on forgetting reveals itself. Body needs to forget about the sickness during convalescence so that it could get sick again. This constant destruction and self-expenditure of the organism is never searching for sameness. It is differing itself perpetually, a constant agon of different forces induce the organism to give birth to an evaluation, another self appears after a period of convalescence. Nietzsche's forgetting becomes an unending movement of self-overcoming of life.

4.3.1 Forgetting History

Nietzschean convalescence includes a recovery with respect to history. Since the subject is a historically socialized being in Nietzsche, and since physical healing and psychological healing are intertwined, the relation between convalescence and forgetting will have to be traced in a deep process. As Jackson notes in his article, the Nietzschean subject "carries the weight of pathological history".¹⁸¹ Thus, Jackson argues, the work of convalescence

¹⁷⁹ Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, p. 62.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 150.

requires healing scars deeply rooted in our bodies as well as psyches through various instruments of civilization and cultures of resentment.¹⁸²

4.3.2 Freud and Nietzsche

To articulate this process, Jackson attempts a reading of Nietzsche's notion of convalescence in comparison with Freud's notion of the "work of mourning".¹⁸³ He begins by acknowledging the fundamental differences between them that would at first glance seem to complicate such a reading: first, usually mourning is considered to be a psychological process, while convalescence is physiological. Second, while convalescence is related to the future, mourning is related to the past. Third, the mourning process should end with "finding a new sociality". In contrast, Nietzsche often celebrates solitude and convalescence also seems to be a process which can only be gone through alone. However all of these are only superficial differences for Jackson: as we have seen in Nietzsche's physiological way of thinking, the psychological and the physical are inextricably intertwined (the same can be said for Freud's concept of the libido).

Nietzschean convalescence is related to the past as well as the future because it requires forgetting. As for the third seeming point of contrast, the rest of Jackson's article is about undermining that contrast by articulating Freudian mourning as a process of *recathexis* and showing precisely how Nietzschean convalescence can also be understood/interpreted as a similar process of *recathexis*.

Cathexis is commonly defined as "the concentration of mental energy on one particular person, idea, or object (especially to an unhealthy degree)". It generally refers to the Freudian concept of investing libidinal energy (mental and emotional energy) on a person or object. This investment could be on a

¹⁸² Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 151.

¹⁸³ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 152.

particular “fantasy, or of psychic energy on a specific idea or goal.”¹⁸⁴ Decathexis is the withdrawal of cathexis from an idea or instinctual object, i.e., the process of dis-investment of mental or emotional energy.¹⁸⁵

According to Jackson both Freudian mourning and Nietzschean convalescence are in brief processes of decathexis and recathexis. While it may seem objectionable to use Nietzsche’s notion of will to-power interchangeably with Freud’s libido, there are undeniable similarities between them that are sufficient for the scope and purpose of this comparison.¹⁸⁶ As Assoun explains in *Freud and Nietzsche*, both are “interpretive principles” that are used to explain instincts and drives. They are “quasi-physiological hypothesis”,¹⁸⁷ conceptualized as “primary energetic material” whose “transformations, repetitions and displacements” present an explanation which allows them to unify variegated phenomena.¹⁸⁸ The explanation of psychic phenomena are made with reference to these principles.

4.3.3 Convalescence as de-idealization

We can look at Nietzschean convalescence in terms of decathexis as a “gradual detachment” from internalized social norms. Put differently, it is “a movement of de-idealization”.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ <https://psychologydictionary.org/cathexis/>

¹⁸⁵ Purdue University, accessed 01.08.2019, <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/psychoanalysis/definitions/cathexis.htm>

¹⁸⁶ Raul Laurent Assoun, *Freud and Nietzsche*, Trans. Richard L. Collier, Jr London New York: Continuum, 2002), p.70

¹⁸⁷ Assoun, *Freud and Nietzsche*, p.93

¹⁸⁸ Assoun, *Freud and Nietzsche*, p.91-2

¹⁸⁹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 154.

In *Ecce homo* Nietzsche writes:

It was the ignorance in physiologicis – that damned ‘idealism’ – that was the real calamity in my life, totally superfluous and stupid, something of which nothing good ever grew y my whole spiritual diet, including the way I divided up my day, was completely senseless abuse of extraordinary resources y I simply posited myself as equal to any nobody; it was a ‘selflessness,’ an oblivion of all distance between myself and others that I shall never forgive myself. When I was close to the end, because I was close to the end, I began to reflect on this fundamental unreason of my life – this ‘idealism.’ Only my sickness brought me to reason. ¹⁹⁰

In this passage Nietzsche suggests that convalescence requires de-idealization. Idealism can be seen as “the lingering manifestation of the dead God”¹⁹¹, and the remains of the concept of God continue to maintain the herd psychology and function as the various dimensions of “the cultural superego”. This culture is infected by resentment through and through, and “ressentiment is not something that simply affects others, which Nietzsche diagnoses from afar.” ¹⁹²

As Nietzsche notes in *Ecce Homo*, his own convalescence forced and taught him to reckon with resentment: “Freedom from resentment, enlightenment about resentment – who knows how much I am ultimately indebted, in this respect also, to my protracted sickness”.¹⁹³ For Nietzsche, liberation from resentment truly requires de-idealization—i.e., detachment from this herd psychology and its superego.

This de-idealization “coincides remarkably with the ‘bit by bit’ process of decathexis” which is also discussed in Freud’s account of mourning.¹⁹⁴ Jackson emphasizes the slowness of the process of convalescing on the cultural level. It is a complicated process to eliminate the instincts that

¹⁹⁰ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 88.

¹⁹¹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 154.

¹⁹² *ibid.*

¹⁹³ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 155.

incline one to cling to traditional ideals, since those instincts are libidinal, based on self-preservation and the need for social recognition, so the herd is insistent on them. “[M]ost (that is the ‘good’, the ‘herd’) refuse to accept God’s death, and thus live in a chronic state of resentful fixation on idealism.” While going against the cultural norms requires disinvesting any libidinal investment one might have made in other human beings, “the obliteration of singularity implicit in resentment is infused with the herd’s warmth”, in Jackson’s words. Thus de-idealization and revaluation will most likely meet with resistance and cause one to be ostracized since the herd mentality is characterized by resentment of those who are strong and independent.

Zarathustra makes his resolution to convalesce by abandoning the herd and their values by declaring, toward the end of Part One: “the earth shall yet become a site of recovery! And already a new fragrance lies about it, salubrious – and a new hope!”¹⁹⁵ However, convalescence requires more than a momentary announcement. It’s an “ongoing ordeal” which is most often “thwarted by one’s social environments” and facilitated by one’s ability to detach from them. As Jackson notes, Zarathustra part three beginning with the section entitled ‘The Wanderer’, “valorizes cold and loneliness”. “Zarathustra praises ‘what hardens’ and incites himself to ‘climb over’ himself until even his ‘stars are under’ him”.¹⁹⁶

Zarathustra’s climbing the mountain symbolizes the detachment and self-overcoming that is required by and is part of the creation of new values, new possibilities and convalescence.

4.3.4 Re-cathexis

Here a return to the analogy between Nietzschean convalescence and Freudian mourning will be useful. In Freudian mourning, coming to terms

¹⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 122

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

with the death of a loved one is a kind of de-cathexis. One needs to remove the libidinal investment they have made on before. Hence completing the process of mourning requires finding a new sociality and this means reinvesting the libido.

Jackson suggests that Nietzsche's convalescent, as exemplified by Zarathustra, has also had to remove his libidinal investment from traditional values and now has to reinvest it. To make this argument he draws attention to a passage from "The Convalescent" in Zarathustra. As Zarathustra struggles with his "most abysmal thought" (eternal recurrence), at the end of seven days, his animals speak to him. They encourage him to "step out of his cave" and go out in the world: "All things long for you, while you have stayed away for seven days—step out of your cave! All things want to be your physician!"¹⁹⁷ Jackson interprets this passage as showing that Zarathustra's convalescence, prompted by his animals, goes through relinquishing his solitude and reconnecting with the world. In other words, the need for re-cathexis is emphasized here. As for where Zarathustra will reinvest his energy, the animals indicate materiality. "[T]he suffered loss of one's socialized attachment to the herd, [...] demands a simultaneous reinvestment of love into 'things themselves.'"¹⁹⁸

Jackson draws attention to how the animals are "speaking as a dimension of Zarathustra's own psyche—as symbols of his own animality, of his own materiality"¹⁹⁹, and sees the fact that his animals speak to him as a symbol of de-idealization (embracing his materiality and animality) and convalescence; the animals speaking to Zarathustra are "voices calling for and provoking the recathexis with the world."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 175.

¹⁹⁸ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 156.

¹⁹⁹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 157.

²⁰⁰ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 158.

4.3.5 The “Suffered Basis” of Convalescence

This emphasis on the cultural dimension of convalescence should not lead us to overlook its “suffered basis”.²⁰¹ In other words, the de-idealization involved in convalescence is not merely a mental play of destabilizing concepts. Nietzsche always reminds us of the deep relationship between thinking and suffering, which is underlined by his physiological way of thinking which positions itself beyond the mind body duality. Nietzsche writes in *The Gay Science*:

We philosophers are not free to divide body from soul as the people do we have to give birth to our thoughts out of our pain y Only great pain, the long, slow pain that takes its time – on which we are burned as it were, with green wood – compels us philosophers to descend into our ultimate depths and to put aside all y things in which formerly we may have found our humanity. I doubt that such pain makes us ‘better’; but I know that it makes us more profound...²⁰²

Jackson makes the same observation by stating that “Suffering is not a concept or ideal, and cannot be deconstructed”. However, it is suffering that creates the conditions for deconstruction. Ironically, it is also suffering that causes the creation of dogmas and metaphysics, when the suffering is interpreted and given meaning to by the weak. Idealism refuses to acknowledge the reality and inescapability of suffering. It is the self-deception that those who are not able to embrace their vulnerability and flee into, which inevitably results in “cultures of self hatred” .²⁰³

In reflecting on his life, Nietzsche claims that he owes the subtlety of his philosophical acumen to his physical sufferings, while the same types of physical sufferings can also mislead other philosophers into metaphysical or nihilistic thoughts. In this respect, it can be said that it was Nietzsche’s

²⁰¹ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 167.

²⁰² Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 6.

²⁰³ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 165.

ability to confront pain squarely that led him to develop a convalescent way of thinking:

After such self-questioning, self-temptation, one acquires a subtler eye for all philosophizing to date; one can infer better than before the involuntary detours, side lanes, resting places, and sunny places of thought to which suffering thinkers are led and misled on account of their suffering; for now one knows whether the sick body and its needs unconsciously urge, push, and lure the spirit – toward the sun, stillness, mildness, patience, medicine, balm in some sense. Every philosophy that ranks peace above war, every ethic with a negative definition of happiness, every metaphysics and physics that knows some finale, some final state of some sort, every predominantly aesthetic or religious craving for some Apart, Beyond, Outside, Above, permits the question whether it was not sickness that inspired the philosopher.²⁰⁴

In his article, Jackson elaborates on this idea of “convalescent thinking”. Firstly, he emphasizes repeatedly that convalescent thinking is akin to labor in that it requires time and patience since it is a slow process. Secondly, (and this is why Nietzsche must always be read with special attention given to context and detail) convalescent thinking is intimately connected to the uniqueness of the sufferer and his/her pain. Thirdly and lastly, convalescent thinking is oriented to the future and to what is novel. Thus one is able to, and not afraid to “suffer again”.²⁰⁵

For Nietzsche, wisdom arises from the ‘ability’ – understand subjectively and objectively, individually and culturally – to embrace our vulnerability, to bear what happens to us and what has been made of us, so that we may live again.”²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 5.

²⁰⁵ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 165.

²⁰⁶ Jackson, *Nietzsche on Cultural Convalescence*, p. 167.

CONCLUSION

In the late nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche launched a radical assault upon the Western system of values. In Nietzsche's view, Platonism paved the way to Christianity through the injection of the idealized Forms, which were described as the source of all value and reality while this living world was maligned as illusory. The transition from Platonism to Christianity was easily realized by the two-world theory and transformation of the Forms into God as the source of all reality. Kant, by imposing distinction between the noumenal and phenomenal world, held a similar metaphysical structure. All of this oppositional metaphysical structure had in common the positing of an utter transcendence beyond this world and the sheer denial of the value of "this life".

The first chapter of this thesis gives an account of this critique of metaphysics by Nietzsche. The vital point in Nietzsche's analysis and critique of Western metaphysics is that he sees a life-denying aspects at the roots of Western traditional metaphysics. Nietzsche himself is not a nihilist. As a matter of fact, his whole philosophical project can be read as an attempt to overcome nihilism.

Nietzsche's project is not an easy task since it requires him to dismantle the entire structure of metaphysical thinking and establish a different, life-affirming paradigm. The first chapter also presents Nietzsche's new paradigm by focusing on his physiological thinking and his doctrine of will to power.

Physiological thinking is precisely his attempt to find a register that cuts across the dualistic structure of traditional metaphysics. Physiology is the most important technical term in Nietzsche's philosophy owing to the fact that physiology is to show how thought emerges out of a material context. Physiological thinking is not only an aspect of Nietzsche's thinking, but it is a method of investigation. For him, the body and physiology must be taken

as the starting point because the correct idea of the nature of our subjectivity can be obtained only in this way.²⁰⁷ For Nietzsche, all thinking arises out of “physiological needs” by emphasizing , “Physiology teaches us better!”.²⁰⁸ Physiological thinking is in terms of production of the impersonal and material. For this reason, Nietzsche is not a humanist. He intentionally avoids an anthropocentric understanding of life because the idea that human being is at the center of the universe or everything is nothing more than an illusion for Nietzsche. Actually, for him nihilism and anthropocentrism are not different. For Nietzsche, values are impersonal happenings without beginning, without origin or telos. Life itself is the issue and human being is only incidental to life.

What are our evaluations and moral tables really worth? What is the outcome of their rule? For whom? in relation to what?- Answer: for life. But *what is life?* Here we need a new, more definite formulation of the concept "life." My formula for it is: Life is will to power.²⁰⁹

The will to power, is the building block of Nietzsche’s way of doing philosophy and it is considered to be the very ground and highest expression of the entire development of Western thought.²¹⁰ It is not a concept or a single thing, it is a way of thinking. Basically, it is sheer becoming. There is always a state of constant struggle within will to power since it looks for challenge incessantly. The will to power interprets and evaluates. It is crucial

²⁰⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 271.

²⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 314.

²⁰⁹ Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, p. 155.

²¹⁰ David B. Allison , *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p.xi.

to apprehend that the will to power is impersonal and is always motivated to constant self-overcoming.²¹¹

Morality does not come from human action, will to power articulates itself as morality. That is why the will to power is a key strategy in Nietzsche's overcoming of the metaphysical paradigm. For Nietzsche, nihilism manifests itself in the European culture. He enacted his genealogical approach in order to achieve a more comprehensive picture of Judeo-Christian morality, and interpreted the Christian fulfillment of Platonism as the internalization of values which are in fact the product of will-to-power. The second chapter focuses on the Nietzsche's *On The Genealogy of Morality* where the triumph of nihilism, in the forms of resentment, bad conscience and asceticism are explained as arising from the triumph of reactive forces over active forces. Nietzsche's genealogical method does not simply serve as a description and prescription but also as symptomatology.

In the first essay of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche mainly narrates two types of positing value: Noble and slave. It is important to remind that neither 'noble' nor 'slave' are absolute concepts. They are only tendencies.²¹² According to Nietzsche, the belief in a subject is nothing more than the need for self-preservation of the slave type and for holding the noble responsible for their acts and imputing guilt to them.²¹³ In the second treatise of *On The Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche begins with a very crucial question in order to show the formation of the subject: "To breed an animal that is permitted to promise – isn't this precisely the paradoxical task nature has set for itself with regard to man? isn't this the true problem of man?"²¹⁴

²¹¹ Andrea Rehberg, "Introduction to the Thought of Nietzsche." Lecture, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, TR, September 28, 2011.

²¹² Andrea Rehberg, "Introduction to the Thought of Nietzsche." Lecture, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, TR, September 28, 2011.

²¹³ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 39.

²¹⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 35.

To appreciate why Nietzsche sees promise-making as a paradoxical task for human beings, we must understand Nietzsche's unique emphasis on the force of *forgetfulness* as a vital force for human health and flourishing.²¹⁵ This diagnosis which identifies memory as an important factor in the decadence and nihilism that Western culture is infected with shows why Nietzsche's philosophical project is not easy. Since he wants to enact a revaluation and transvaluation of all values, the question arises as to how a life-affirming and healthy way of thinking can be established after deconstructing the subject all the way to the dismantling of the faculty of memory.

The third chapter takes up this question, reading Nietzsche not only as tracing the origin of decadence but also as a philosophical physician of the kind that he himself has been longing for:

I am still waiting for a philosophical physician in the exceptional sense of that word -- one who has to pursue the problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity -- to muster the courage to push my suspicion to its limits and to risk the proposition: what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all 'truth' but something else -- let us say, health, future, growth, power, life.²¹⁶

The sense of 'health' in Nietzsche's philosophy, what he often refers to as the 'great health', is a synonym for the will-to-power. Health is not merely the absence of sickness. Nietzsche regards health and sickness, not as ontologically opposite entities, but as different degrees of the same condition. Indeed, he goes further: health is essentially dynamic and it is measured by how much one can take on and overcome to become healthy. Sickness, in other words, is the stimulus, which activates a healthy organism's transformative ability for self-overcoming. Nietzschean health is not a static physiological state or an ultimate goal of an organism.

²¹⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 35.

²¹⁶ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 6.

Once it is acquired, it is necessary to give it up as Nietzsche says:

We who are new, nameless, hard to understand; we premature births of an as yet unproved future - for a new end, we also need a new means, namely, a new health that is stronger, craftier, tougher, bolder, and more cheerful than any previous health.any person needs one thing above all – the great health, a health that one doesn't only have, but also acquires continually and must acquire because one gives it up again and again, and must give it up!²¹⁷

Health always aims at greater health and overcoming itself. One must welcome suffering and pain to be more healthier and stronger. To have this kind of health, transformation of suffering into a kind of triumph is necessary.

The continuum of convalescence between sickness and health manifests itself as becoming in Nietzsche, a process through which one must go through to achieve this 'great health'.²¹⁸ He articulates first, the sickness of extreme nihilism; second, the convalescence from that nihilism; third, that sickness revalued as cure; fourth, the diseases that this revalued sickness cures; and finally a fifth revalued health that embraces self-difference as intensive and chronic convalescence.

Nietzsche recognizes that metaphysics is not something that can easily be left behind or put aside but it remains resistant within the organism and from which we are recovering. What is needed for convalescence then? If the memory of being defines metaphysics, then convalescence will be a recovery from this memory, but in such a way that it cannot get over the remembering as such. The destructive element of forgetting is highly important to understand both in terms of convalescence and great health just as destruction of the sick or weak cells in the metabolism is necessary for the production of new ones. Convalescence is not an absolute term; rather it is immanent to life itself. While convalescing, the sickness and health are nested and since there is no such a thing as absolute health, the only things

²¹⁷ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 199.

²¹⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 66.

that matters is the strength of the physiology to affirm the recurrent process. Convalescence is from nihilism and permanent daylight of reason.

Nietzsche's understanding of convalescence is based on his understanding of life as will to power. In Nietzsche's physiological way of thinking, 'sickness' is a condition for 'health' and 'health' is always towards 'great health'. In the direction of the physiological thinking Nietzsche offers a new understanding of life, as 'great health' which embraces the sickness, pain, suffering since 'great health' can be described as the power to convalesce from sickness whether it is cultural, individual or metaphysical.

In my opinion, under the cloak of modern subjectivity, what we need, in the face of nihilism, is overcoming anthropocentric understanding of life. Life itself is a convalescent and both on the individual and cultural level, we need "one thing above everything else: the *great health-that* one does not merely have but also acquires continually, and must acquire because one gives it up, again and again, and must give it up".²¹⁹

²¹⁹ Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, p. 246.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

F.W. Nietzsche okuması çok kolay gibi görünen çok zor bir filozoftur. Kısa ve anlaşılır cümlelerle, anlattıkları parça parça gayet anlaşılır gelebilir. Ancak, bir sistematik düşünce filozofu olmayan Nietzsche ile iletişim kurmak o kadar kolay değildir. Nietzsche çekiçle felsefe yapar ve felsefesi genellikle yıkım, mutlak bir eleştirelilik olarak tanımlanabilir. Felsefesi Platonizm'in devamı olan Hristiyan kültürün ve Batı değerlerinin esaslı bir analizi ve eleştirisi olarak özetlenebilir. Deleuze, Nietzsche'nin felsefesinin genel olarak "felsefeye anlam ve değer kavramlarını dahil etmek" olduğunu söyler.

Metafizik geleneğin ikili keskin ayrımı Nietzsche için nihilist ve hayatı değilleyen temellere dayanır. Nihilizm, Nietzsche'nin felsefesinde yaşamı değersizleştiren, yaşamı olumsuzlayan her şey için kullanılan bir kavramdır. Nietzsche'nin fizyolojik düşünme biçimi tüm Batı metafiziği ve onun türettiği değerleri içerden bir alt üst etme aracına dönüşmüştür. Nietzsche'nin metafizik geleneği içeriden etkisiz hale getirmek ve yaşamı insan merkezci düşünceden çıkarıp insanı doğaya içkin kılmak için geliştirdiği strateji ise güç istenci doktrinidir.

Güç istenci kavramı Nietzsche felsefesinin merkezinde yer alır. Nietzsche'ye göre hayat ve tüm içindekiler güç istencinden başka bir şey değildir ve hep daha fazla gücü ister. Güç istenci belirli bir amaca yönelmeksizin oluştaki sürekli akıştır. Burada aklımızın bir köşesinde bulunması gereken önemli bir husus Nietzsche'nin bir sistem filozofu olmadığıdır. Bu nedenle düşüncelerini belirli bir yapı içerisinde vermek ve tüm fikirlerini güç istencine indirgemek kesinlikle doğru bir yaklaşım olmaz.

Pek çok filozof gibi Nietzsche'de Platon'la derin diyaloglara girmiştir. Burada şunu belirtmek gerekir ki Nietzsche için Platon ve Platonizm aynı şey değildir. Nietzsche felsefe yaparken Platonizm'i hedefe alır ve onun yarattığı eleştirir, Platon'u kendisini değil. Aynı argümanı Sokrates içinde düşünmek gerekir çünkü aynı şekilde Nietzsche'nin hedefinde olan Sokrates değil Sokratik değerler zinciridir. Nietzsche'nin eleştirisi iki ana temele dayandırılabilir: Bu dünyayı değilleyen iki dünya anlayışı ve kaynağını Platon'un "idealar dünyası"ndan alan ahlaki değerler.

Sokrates-Platon çizgisiyle başlayan tüm Batı metafiziği ve onu yarattığı metafizik değerlere dayalı bir inanç sistemi olan Hıristiyanlık ve onun ahlaki, herşeyden çok, insanı ve yaşamı değersizleştirmiştir. Nietzsche'ye göre, Batı felsefe geleneği öteki dünya anlayışı ve hayatı yadsıyan değerler üzerine temellenmiştir. "Tanrının ölümü" nün ardından en yüksek değerler değerlerini kaybetmiştir ki bunların en önemli olanları ahlakın temelinde oturan 'iyi' ve 'kötü' kavramlarıdır. Nietzsche tüm felsefe tarihinde iz bırakan "Değerlerin değeri nedir?" sorusunu sormuştur. Değerleri derin sorgulara maruz bırakılan kavramlar arasında hiç kuşkusuz ahlak kavramı en büyük yeri işgal eder. Ahlak'ın değeri nedir? sorusu felsefe tarihi boyunca sorulmamış ve sorgulanmamıştır. Bu önemli soruyu sormaya cüret eden Nietzsche *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne* adlı eserinin önsözünde "iyi insan" kavramının gerileyici ve tehlikeli bir boyutu olup olmadığını sorgular. Nietzsche'nin sorularla dolu değerlendirmelerinde ereksellik olmadığını hatırlamak gerekir. Bu bağlamda Nietzsche'de cevabı verilmiş bir soru olmadığını belirtmek gerek. Belirli amaçlar güden cevaplar yerine Nietzsche farklı perspektifler sunar. Hayat insanların iradelerinden bağımsız dönüşür, değerler insanların ürettiği şeyler değildir. Nietzsche, değerlerin yeniden değerlendirme tasarısında "iyi" ve "kötü" yerine yeni değerlendirme ölçütlerine ihtiyaç duyar. Nietzsche'nin değerlerin yeniden değerlendirmesi tasarısı için benimsediği bu ölçütler sağlık ve hastalık kavramlarıdır.

Nietzsche'nin soykütütsel yönteminin özgünlüğünü kavramak önemli. Soykütütsel yöntemle yapılmak istenen, tarihsel kavramların kökenine ulaşip onları ortadan kaldırmak değildir. Nietzsche'ye göre soykütütsel soruşturma, evrensel bir doğruluk doğuracak hakikat arayışı değildir. Anlamak için kökene yöneliriz; ama bu kökün, kökenin sapıyla olan ilişkisi doğrusal bir zaman içindeki neden-sonuç ilişkisine indirgenemez ve kök kendine özdeş değildir. Sürekli bir oluş içerisinde çözümlenen, rastlantısallıkların dinamik yapısıdır. Dolayısıyla, soykütüğün tarih anlayışı, tesadüfî, kesintili ve çoğulcudur. Foucault birçok alanda olduğu gibi tarih anlayışında da Nietzsche'den oldukça etkilenmiştir. Foucault, "Nietzsche, soykütük, tarih" adlı makalesinde soykütütsel analizin yıkıcı ve parçalayıcı yönüne vurgu yaparak soykütütsel yaklaşımla ilgili şunları söyler: "Soykütütsel bakış, meşrulaştırıcı bir köken ya da özsel bir amacı kurgulamak yerine, kurum ve söylemlerin çıplak iktidar mücadeleleriyle bağlantısını kurmak arayışındadır."

Soykütük iki istencin birbiri üzerindeki egemenliklerin, bu egemenliklerin ayrışik ögesi olan güç istenci üzerinden değerlendirilmesini içerir. Güç istenci, bu sebeple "gücü istemek" olmadığı gibi, "gücü isteyen" bir "bütünsel öz" olarak herhangi bir özneye göndermez. Daha ziyade, güç ilişkilerin oluşturduğu bir topografi boyunca dağıtılmış bulunan özneler ile nesnelere toplanışına özgü egemen istençler ile boyun eğen istençlerin bileşkesine dahil olan, egemenliğin mevkidir. Bu yüzden, her tekil durumda ve kültüren "anda", örneğin Antik Yunan ve Modern Avrupa, sorular şöyle sorulur: Hangi tür güç istenci burada etkindir? Nasıl egemen olmuştur? Ne aracılığıyla işlemektedir? Yaşama karşıt mıdır? Yoksa yaşamı besler mi? Bu noktada Nietzsche'de önemli bir kavram olan *decadence* kavramına değinmek yerinde olacaktır.

Latineden gelen *decadence* kavramı, çözüme, bozulma, zayıflama anlamına gelen çöküntüdür. Nietzsche *decadence* kavramını yazılarında hastalık kavramıyla neredeyse eş anlamda kullanmıştır.

Bir nevi yozlaşma olan *decadence* kavramı Nietzsche için, özellikle “hastalıklı” ve yozlaşmaya yüz tutmuşluğun temsilcisi olarak gördüğü Sokrates ile ve onun öğretilerinde en iyi hayat bulur. Sokrates’in yok ettiği insan doğasına uygun, yaşamı olumlayan güçlü ve trajik kültürün yarattığı değerlerdi. Nietzsche için Sokrates ile başlayan ve Hristiyan kültürle devam eden “akıl = erdem = mutluluk” önermesi sağlıklı hayata aykırı önermedir. Nietzsche felsefesinin değerlerin yeniden değerlendirilmesi tasarısının en önemli unsurlarından birisini oluşturur çünkü Nietzsche’ye göre, Sokrates ve onun öğrencisi olan Platon birer çöküş semptomlarıdır.

Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne kitabında Nietzsche, yaşam karşısındaki tutumları ile farklılık gösteren iki farklı güç eğilimi üzerinde durur: aktif karakterli ve reaktif karakterli. Daha bilinen şekliyle efendi ve köle ahlakı. Uygarlık, reaktif değerlerin aktif değerlere üstün gelmesiyle meydana gelir ve bu süreçte reaktif kuvvetlerin etkinliği altında köle ahlakı ve bu ahlakın öğretileri ile hakimiyetini sürdürmüştür. Nietzsche’ye göre aktif güçler, enerjilerini dışa vurma ve harcama olanağı bulamadığında kendi içine döner ve bu içine dönme sürecinde reaktif güçler oluşur. Nietzsche’nin perspektiften, uygarlık süreci reaktif güçlerin doruk noktasıdır. Bu süreçte, içgüdülerin ve dürtülerin yerini akıl alır ve bilinç pusulasında dürtüler bastırılır. Bu amaçla hem fiziksel hem de ahlaki araçlar kullanılır. Uygarlık süreci boyunca insanın hayvani oluşuna ket vurma ve dürtülerini bastırması ile yeni bir içselleşme süreci başlamıştır.

Nietzsche *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne* adlı eserinin ilk bölümünde Efendi ve Köle ahlakı olarak iki karşıt yönelim betimlenir. Soylu/Efendi ahlak kendiliğinden eyleme geçerek, sadece kendini olumlayarak hayata “evet!” derken, köle ahlakı, kendinden olmayana, kendi gibi olmayana, tepki gösterir ve ötekileştirdiği diğerine hınç duygusu besleyerek hayata “hayır!” der. Bir tür nefret olarak tanımlanabilen hınç (ressentiment) , bastırılmış dürtülerin içe dönerek bir duygulanım oluşturması olarak görülür. Nietzsche, Hristiyan/Musevi Batı geleneğinin tüm değerlerinde hıncın izini görür.

Kölenin hıncı ise hep bir reddetme ve hayata karşı bir “hayır”a dönüşerek kendi ahlakını üretir. Batı metafiziğinin zaferi köle ahlakının efendi ahlakına üstün gelmesiyle meydana gelmiştir. Bu tarihsel oluş sonucunda aklın idealize edilişi ile duyuların değersizleştirilmesi, öteki dünya anlayışı ile bu dünyanın değersizleştirilmesi ve doğasından kopuk salt akıldan meydana getirilmiş bir özne tanımını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Nietzsche’ye göre her iki ahlak tipi de güç isteminin bir tezahürüdür ve biri diğerine üstün değildir. Burada belirtmek gerekir ki ne mutlak bir “Efendi” kavramı ne de mutlak bir “Köle” kavramı yoktur. Bu kavramlar sadece birer eğilimdir. Güç istencinin sürekli devinimiyle raslantısal olarak ortaya çıkan kavramlardır. Güç istenci sürekli yorumlar ve değerlendirir, bu değerlendirmeler insan merkezli olmadığından ve insan tarafından yapılmadığından dolayı ahlaki bir yargı taşımazlar ve nihai bir amaca yönelmezler. Nietzsche’nin Güç istemi ontolojik bir ilke olarak görünebilir fakat sahip olduğu çoğulcu ve dinamik yapısıyla varlık ontolojisinden tamamen farklıdır ve Nietzsche felsefesinde dönüşünün ve dönüştürmenin bir aracı olarak işlev görür. Kendi yazılarında bir çok kere belirttiği üzere Nietzsche için hayat güç istencidir, başka birşey değildir. Hayat, yaşam yorumlar, değerlendirir ve dönüştürür. Bu tarihsel süreçlerde de hep bu şekilde olmuştur ve bu durum engellenebilir ya da değiştirilebilir değildir.

Nietzsche’nin modern özne eleştirisinin temellerinde hiç kuşkusuz Kartezyen felsefe unsurları bulunmaktadır. Descartes, “cogito ergo sum” önermesiyle, bütün felsefe tarihini kökten etkileyen bir düşünce kanalının yolu açılmıştı. Descartes’in her şeyden şüphe duyması bir kesinlik bulmak içindi ve sonunda bulduğu kesinlik “ben”iydi. Akıl kavramının felsefeye akışı Descartes’in cogito’sundan başlayarak kesintisiz bir biçimde birbirini takip eden düşünceler zincirinde birleşmiştir. Kant, Descartes sonrasında transandantal ego kavramı ile sorunu gidermek yerine mevcut sorunu daha üst düzeyde tekrarlamıştır. Nietzsche için temelinde nihilist olan metafizik düşünce modeli sadece kavramların yerleri değiştirilerek çözülemez. Kant’ın yaptığı da bu nedenle sorunu çözmek değil soruna ortak olarak

mevcut hastalıklı yapıyı tekrar etmekten ibarettir. Bu metafizik yapı dışarıdan değil ancak içeriden çözümlenebilir. Nietzsche için yapının içeriden çökertilmesi demek yeni karşıtlıklar oluşturmak değildir, bu nedenle bedeni aklın üzerine konumlandırmamıştır. Bu bağlamda fizyolojik düşünme şekli anlam kazanır çünkü fizyolojik düşünme biçimi ile ikilikli yapının önüne geçilir.

Nietzsche için akıl, dünyayı anlama çabamızda elimizdeki en güçlü araçlardan biri olabilir ama akıla atfedilen üstün özellikler hayatı ve bedeni olumsuzlamanın ötesine geçemez. Nietzsche için asıl mesele hiçbir zaman bir insan meselesi değildir. Mesele hep güç istenci meselesidir. Nietzsche *Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt* adlı eserinde aklın bedene karşı galip gelişindeki anlamsızlığı vurgularken asıl bedenin anlamını pekiştirir. “Bedenim ben,...”, başka hiçbir şey değilim; ruh ancak bedendeki bir şeyin adıdır diyerek bedeni bilinmeyen bir bilgi olarak tanımlar.

Nietzsche'nin kurgu olarak betimlediği modern özne fikrine böylesine saldırması ilk bakışta paradoksal gelebilir. *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne* kitabının ikinci bölümünde öznenin kurgusunun tarihsel bellek kullanılarak nasıl inşaa edildiği anlatılmaktadır. Nietzscheci anlamda öznelliğin kurulmasına ilişkin tarihsel bir analizi, Foucault harmanlamıştır. Foucault için, soykütük yöntemi, özneyi kuran süreçlerin tarihsel bir analizini sunma konusunda son derece yetkin bir analitik araç haline geliyordu.

Nietzsche'ye göre, iki bin yıllık Batı felsefe tarihinde *doğal-karşıtı*, diğer bir deyişle dürtülerinden ayrıştırılmış ve içgüdülerine düşman bir insan anlayışı hakim olmuştur. Metafizik kriterlerle kurgulanmış bu öznenin ahlak anlayışı tüm Batı dünyasında hüküm sürmüştür. *İyinin ve Kötünün Ötesinde* kitabında Nietzsche bu durumu, “tehlikelerin tehlikesi” olarak tanımlar ve öznenin, “daha küçük, neredeyse gülünç bir tip, bir sürü hayvanı, hoşnut olmaya hevesli, hastalıklı ve vasat bir şey” olmaya zorlandığından bahsetmiştir.

Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üstüne kitabının üçüncü bölümünde sağlıklı olan efendileri kıskanan, küçümseyen yeni bir tip olan “Rahip” vardır. Rahip çileci ahlakın temsilcisidir ve yayılmasını sağlar. Hınçla doludur. Rahip tipolojisinin kanal görevi gördüğü, reaktif güçlerin aktif güçlere baskın gelmesinin sonucunda ortaya çıkan çileci idealler modern dünyanın temellerine ve insan anlayışına işlemiştir.

Batı felsefe geleneğinde Platon’dan başlayan ve Descartes’le zirve yapan “aklın ve egonun gölgesinden kurtulamayan beden” fenomeni Nietzsche ile sadece biyolojik bir nesne olmaktan çıkmış, her yerinde yoğunluk, akış ve belirli bir sürecin etkilerini taşıyan kültürel ve tarihsel bir fenomen olarak yeniden değerlendirilmeye alınmıştır. Kartezyen felsefenin temel ögesi olan beden-zihin ikileminin gölgesinde silikleşen bedene bir anlam veren ve ona felsefi kuramlarının oluşumunda rol veren en önemli filozoflardan birisidir Nietzsche. Tüm eylemleri bedenden ayıran ve akıl ile düşünme eylemini bedenden üstün kılan Kartezyen “Cogito” karşısında Nietzsche, zihin-beden ayrımının her iki tarafında da durmayı reddeden bir tavırla bedeni akıl karşısında bir metafor olarak kullanır. Beden-zihin ikilemini yenmek adına Nietzsche, bedenin olağanüstü zekasını öne çıkararak ego’ya bedenin bir enstrümanı gibi yaklaşır. Bedenin, Nietzsche felsefesindeki rolünü anlamak fizyolojik düşünme biçimi açısından önem arz eder.

Nietzsche için “bedenin” anlamı, yalnızca gönderme yaptığı referansı ile yani kanlı canlı “beden” objesi ile sınırlanamaz. Bu bağlamda, bedenin anlamı, beden kelimesinin sınırlı ve değişmez bir nesneye işaret eden yönüyle değil, bir metafor olmasıyla ele alınmalıdır. Bedenin metafor olarak kullanılmasından hangi anlam kastedilmektedir?

Nietzsche’ye göre beden, kendisi ile ilgili bizi yanıltmak için dili icat eder. Nietzsche için dilin güdü ve dürtüleri kavraması gerçekleşmemektedir. Dil kendini bize şeylerin gerçekliğiymiş gibi sunar. Bütün kavramlar değişen şeyleri yakalamaya ve sabitlemeye çalışan sözler ve imgelerden oluşur. Bu nedenle, sözler ve imgelerde mevcut olan anlam metafordur. Yani, ne kadar

sabitlenmeye çalışılırsa çalışılsın, hep bir deęişim vardır. Bu nedenle, “beden” kavramı da bir metafor olarak kullanılmıştır. Çünkü dildeki beden kavramı, Nietzsche’nin anladığı bedene tam olarak tekabül edemez.

Nietzsche, Kartezyen felsefedeki beden-zihin düalizminin her iki tarafında durmayı reddeden bir tavırla bedeni akıl karşısında bir metafor olarak kullanır. Nietzsche’nin bedeni, kendini beden-zihin ikileminden kurtarmış, içkin bir rehberdir. Bu rehberlikte beden muazzam bir çokluk olanak kendini açığa vurur. *İnsanca Pek İnsanca* adlı kitabında Nietzsche, “Bedeninde en derin felsefede olandan daha çok bilgelik vardır” diyerek bedenin olağanüstü zekâsını öne çıkarır. Nietzsche için beden itici, harekete geçirici bir kuvvettir. Fakat genel klişelerin aksine, Nietzsche bu kuvveti sadece “sağlıklı beden”e gönderme yaparak betimlemez; çünkü hastalıklı bedenin de kendine özgü bir itici kuvveti ve anlamı vardır. Dolayısıyla hastalıklı beden, ne patolojik ne de sağlıklı bedenin değillenmesine indirgenemeyen, kendine has bir anlama sahiptir. Nietzsche için hastalık, sağlığı karşıtlamaz; yani tersi değildir. Ona göre hastalık genellikle sağlığın önceleyenidir ve her ikisi de gereklidir. Hastalık bir araç; sağlık bir hedeftir. Sağlıklı hayat durumuna kavuşmak yani iyileşmek çok daha fazla bir şeydir; deęişim, yükseliş ve bir inceliştir.

Nietzsche sistematik bir filozof değildir; yani bütün fikirlerini dayatan bir felsefe sistemi oluşturmaz. Aksine hiçbir sistem oluşturucusuna güvenmez. Nietzsche bir yaşam filozofudur: Felsefesi, soyut idelerle değil; hayatıyla ilişkilidir. Nietzsche’nin felsefesi, hayatın kendisini, hayata aykırı, düşman realiteler veya evrensel özlerle sınırlandırmayı istemez. Nietzsche, yaratıcı olan trajik insanı, yani yaratan, değerlerin sürekli olarak yeniden değerlendirmesini yapan, hayata evet diyen insanı arar. Nietzsche, bedeninin düşünce ile olan etkileşimlerini gözlemleyebilmiş ve felsefesini laboratuvar haline getirdiği hasta bedeninden yola çıkarak oluşturmuştur. Kısacası, Nietzsche’de beden sadece içkin bir aracı değil, bütün araçların altında yatan bir potansiyel olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Nietzsche felsefesinin yapı taşı olan güç istenci kuramını Nietzsche'nin tüm felsefesi bağlamında doğru kavramak oldukça önemlidir. Peki, Nietzsche "güç istenci" kavramı ile ne demek ister? "Güç istenci" açgözlüce gözünü dikip almak anlamına gelmez, ortada güçten bağımsız bir istenç bulunmaz. Güç istenci, karmaşık bir organizmada varolan kuvvetlerin ve onların karşılıklı niteliklerinin türetildiği bir yaratma ve verme ögesidir. Hayat süregelen bir savaştır: Türler türlere, bedenler bedenlere ve dürtüler dürtülere karşı savaş halindedir ama bunlar daha üst bir beden oluşturmak için yapılan çarpışmalardır.

Nietzschenin bu içkin savaştan tasarladığı güç istenci hastalık durumunda gözlemlendiği bedeninin kendi içinde çözümlerinden ve çarpışmalarından ortaya çıkmıştır. Hayat güç istencinden başka bir şey değildir. Nietzsche, fizyolojik düşünme biçimini ele alarak güçlerin metafizik ve özsel yorumunun ötesinde bir hareket alanı yaratabilmiştir. Nietzsche'ye göre bütün güçler bedenden gelir ve bedende toplanmıştır. Başka bir deyişle diğer felsefi sistemlerde aşkınsal özneye verilen değer Nietzsche'de bedene verilir. Nietzsche iyileşirken tehlikeden uzaklaşmak yerine tehlikelerin üstüne yürür. Nietzsche, hasta bedenini iyileşmeye açar, bağına basar ve onu olumlar ve aşar Zerdüşt'ün övgü dolu 'evet'ini ve coşkulu 'bir daha'sını haykırır. İyileşme yani nekahet dönemi, mevcudiyetini yeniden değerlendirip yıkma ve tekrardan yaratma istencini verir. Yok, etmek, yeniden meydana getirmek ya da yeniden yaratmak anlamında bir yok edıştır ve böyle bir riski ancak en kuvvetli güç istenci alabilir. Güç istenci ne gerçekliğin mutlak doğası, ne bir özsellik, ne de aşkınsal bir temeldir. Güç istenci transformatif bir düşünme biçimi gerektirir; bir çeşit yaratma egzersizidir. Sürekli yok etme ve yaratma işlemi çeşitli sağlık halleri ile kendini gösterir.

Hastalık, iyileşme döneminde, değişim ve gelişim için gerekli koşulları yaratır. Çünkü hastalık durumunda beden, yeniden yapılanma ve seçiş sürecine girerek kendi üzerine döner, kendini dinler, kendi içinde çözümler.

Bu içerikte iyileşme, arı bir oluş süreci olarak da yorumlanabilir, katı bir hafızaya bağlı kalmaktan ziyade, unutmanın sağlayacağı çoğulluklar ve çeşitliliklere açıklıktır. İyileşme sürecinde tekrarlanan bir değişim vardır; çeşitliliğin ve çoğulluluğun yeniden üretimine hizmet eder. Her şeyin yıkılıp yeniden kuruluşunu, sürekli değişimi dehşet verici yanlarıyla istemek ve sevmek iyileşmenin bir parçasıdır. Unutmak bize, tek ve mutlak doğru, ulaşılabilecek tek bir nihai amaç ve tek bir dünya perspektifinin ve yorumunun ötesine taşır bize yeni bir sonsuzluk getirir.

Nietzsche üzerine literatürde onun felsefesinde unutmanın önemine ilişkin ayrıntılı bir çözümlenme yok denecek kadar azdır. Bu çözümlenmelerden birinde “Kültürel İyileşme Üzerine Nietzsche” adlı makalesinde Jeffrey Jackson Nietzsche'nin iyileşme süreci ile Freud'un yas tutma süreci üzerine görüşlerini karşılaştırmış ve Nietzsche ile Freud'un düşünceleri arasındaki farklılıklarla benzerlikleri ortaya koymuş koymuştur. Benzer şekilde Nietzsche'nin unutmak kavramı üzerine de literatür oldukça azdır. Christa Acampora, “Özneyi Unutmak” başlıklı makalesinde Nietzsche'nin pek çok metninde ama ağırlıklı ve açıkça bahsi geçen ağırlıklı olarak da *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üzerine* adlı kitabındaki unutmak kavramını tartışmıştır. Acampora'ya göre Nietzscheci anlamda unutmak kelimesinin genel olarak yüklediği olumsuz anlamı taşımaz. Tarihsel süreçte sürekli hatırlama üzerine kurulan, kurgulanan özne anlayışını yeniden değerlendirilerek, aktif unutmak ile tanımlanan yeni özne anlayışını çıkarsamayı amaçlar.

Nietzsche *Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt*'te okuyucularına kendisini yitirip kendimizi bulmanızı önerir. Bir nevi tarihin, geleneğin ve uygarlığın bize öğrettiklerini unutup kendimizi iyileştirmemiz ve yeniden yaratmamız anlamı taşır bu cümle. Nietzsche'nin evreninde teleoloji yoktur. Hayat bir süreçtir; gerçeklik kesintisizdir ve hiçbir şey son bulmaz. Nietzsche'ye göre yaşam en iyi şöyle tanımlanır: hayatın kendi içine kesildiği bir mekân ve yaşama olan bütün istençler aynı zamanda yok olmaya ve yeniden

değerlendirmeye olan istençlerdir. Hatırlamak gerekir ki, Zerdüş'te bize “Erdem bedene geri iade edilmelidir çünkü erdem sahibi olan bedendir” der. Bu söz “bedenine geri dön, hayata geri dön çağrısı yapar. “Beden büyük bir ustur, tek anlamlı bir çokluk savaş barış sürü çoban senin küçük usun dahi bedeninin bir aracıdır” der Zerdüş'te ve erdem bedene geri verilmesi gerektiğini savunur. Burada beden erdemi onun yeryüzü ve hayata olan açıklığını ve uyumunu ifade eder. Nietzsche Zerdüş'te hayat ve dünyanın hareketlerine yeni bir etkilenebilirlik, özellikle de bedensel bir duyarlılığı savunur. Zerdüş'te erdem bedende bulmanın iki önemli öncülünü verir: Yeryüzüne geri dönmek ve hayata geri dönmek. Çünkü bedendeki erdem hayat ve yeryüzü ile uyumu, duyarlılığı ve hayata açıklığı sunar.

Yaşam kendinde bir değer bir anlam taşımaz ama insan denilen varlık da anlam ve değer olmadan yaşayamaz. Peki değerlendiren kimdir? Değerlendiren tek şey güç istencidir yani yaşamdır. Yaşam, Nietzsche'nin değerleri yeniden değerlendirme projesi içinde temel kavramdır. Bir yaşam filozofu olan Nietzsche'nin felsefesinin temelini oluşturan sorgulama yaşamın değerinin yeniden yaşama verilmesi çabasıdır. Nietzsche *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üzerine* kitabının önsözüne insanın kendisini tanımmasının imkânsızlığını şöyle işaret eder: “ Kendimize her zaman yabancı kalacağız ve bunun iyi bir nedeni var” diyerek başlamıştır. Bu cümle sadece bir başlangıç cümlesinin ötesine geçerek derinde taşıdığı imalarla tarihsel özne kurgusuna bir nevi meydan okumadır. Nietzscheci perspektiften bakıldığında baştan kabul etmek gerekir ki, insanın kendini tamamen tanımmasının olanağı yoktur. Hayatın hep bir akış içerisinde ve dolayısıyla oluş halinde olmasından kaynaklanan bu talihli olanaksızlık, iyileşme olanağı sunar.

Nietzsche'nin perspektifinden bakıldığında yaşam denilen oluşta, ne tanrıya ne de sabit bir insan / özne anlayışına yer vardır. Bunların hepsi oluş sürecinde ortaya çıkmış birer kurgudur. Nietzsche'nin güç istenciyle devinen, ereksiz ve anlamsız yeryüzünde unutmak; bazen tarihselliğini bazen kim olduğunu bazen hasta olduğunu ve kendini hayatın kaotik oluş

sürecinde kaybetmek ve her defasında yeniden bulmak, yeniden kaybetmek için bulmak ve yeniden bulmak için yeniden kaybetmektir iyileşmek. İnsan unutmadan iyileşemez der Nietzsche. Nietzsche değer eleştirisi ile birlikte, Batı metafiziğinin aşılmasını sağlayacağını düşündüğü alternatif bir dinamik dünya yorumu da ortaya atmıştır. Bu yorumda metafizik felsefenin temel kavramlarının karşıtları, yaşamın ve dünyanın temeline yerleştirilmekte, böylece “oluş”un “varlık” karşısında kaybettiği değeri ona yeniden kazandırmak amaçlanmaktadır. Gerçeklik ise artık, ancak yaşama hizmet ettiği ölçüde değerli sayılacaktır.

Nietzsche eleştirel felsefesiyle, Batı metafiziğinin aşılmasını amaçlayan için bir dinamik dünya yorumu önermiştir. Bu yorumda iyileşme yoluyla karşı metafizik kavramlar ve metafizik insan anlayışı yaşamın içine tekrar yerleştirilmektedir. Aynı zamanda “oluş”un yerine koyulan “varlık” anlayışının tarihsel süreçleri ortaya koyulmuştur. Bilim, hakikat ve diğer tüm bilgiler Nietzsche için sadece yaşama hizmet ettiği ölçüde değerli olacaktır. Batı metafiziğinin aşılmasıdır iyileşme. Batı metafiziğinin bize empoze ettiği ve her farklı yollardan sürekli hafızalarımızda tazelenen, unutmamıza fırsat verilmeyen değerlerden kopuş. Metafiziğin duyuları hiçe sayma, insanı ait olduğu yeryüzünden, doğasından koparan “öte” merkezli hayat anlayışı hiçlik istencinin ötesine geçememiştir. Nietzsche, *Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt* adlı kitabında “Zerdüşt” aracılığıyla yeni bir insan anlayışını müjdelere. Zerdüşt, “üst-insan”ın habercisi, yaklaşmakta olan “büyük sağlığın” ilk temsilcisi, yaşamın, acının ve dönüşün savunucusudur.

Bir yaşam filozofu olan Nietzsche'nin felsefesinin temelini oluşturan sorgulama yaşamın değerinin yeniden yaşama verilmesi çabasıdır. *Ahlakın Soykütüğü Üzerine* adlı eserinin girişindeki can alıcı cümlede Nietzsche kendimize yabancı oluşumuzun altını çizerek bu yabancı oluşun aslında iyi bir şey olduğunu söyler. Yüzyıllardır süregelen kendimizi bilme çabamızın aslında bizi iyileşmeden alı koyan bir faktör olup olmadığını sorgulamamızı sağlar. Kendini bilmek kendini tamamlamak anlamında bir nevi kendini

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