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Nietzsche's Aristocratic Radicalism

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Nietzsche's Aristocratic Radicalism

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Humanities

By

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I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under my supervision by Jonathan Michalski entitled Nietzsche's Aristocratic Radicalism be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Humanities.

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Abstract

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My thesis is that Nietzsche's political philosophy is a form of aristocratic radicalism, which means that society should be ruled by the few. The goal of Nietzsche's political system is the furthering of higher culture. He rejects most modern ethical and political philosophies, because they are harmful to life, especially for the aristocratic noble types of people. Nietzsche favors an aristocratic politics, because this system can best accomplish his goals, such as the revaluation of old values and the creation of new ones. I will be arguing against those who think that he is either a radical democrat or that he has no political philosophy at all.

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Introduction

In this essay, I want to argue that Friedrich Nietzsche's political philosophy is a form of aristocratic radicalism. He asserts that society should be ruled by the few, because of their natural talents and abilities. The goal of this political system is the furthering of higher culture, which is achieved through the creation of great works of art and philosophy. Noble and great cultures were the product of exemplary philosophers, artists, writers, and political leaders. Individuals like Goethe, Michelangelo, and Spinoza were considered to be noble individuals, because they were talented, had a great ability to spiritualize their passions, and had great intellectual integrity and insight. These traits define the noble type, which are used for higher achievements and goals. The problem with modernity is that these characteristics are attacked by modern moralities as evil.

Nietzsche attacks these moralities as herd-like, because they only further the interests of the common types at the expense of the noble types. He includes Christianity, liberalism, utilitarianism, and egalitarianism as herd moralities. These moralities condemn noble passions, like lust, hostility, enmity, and cruelty, as evil, which the noble types need to use for their higher pursuits. For example, the spiritualization of cruelty can be used to toughen and strengthen an individual to allow him or her to accomplish their higher tasks. Nietzsche condemns these moralities as hostile to life, because they devalue a natural and earthly existence. The only things they support are

other-worldly things, like the eternal soul and the after-life, which causes individuals to reject their existence as evil and sinful. These moralities are the causes of nihilism.

Nietzsche believes that the best political system is an aristocratic one, because only this society furthers the enhancement of the human race, and only it provides the foundations for the creation of noble individuals. His new philosophers will be very influential in this system, because they will decide who will be the aristocrats within this society, and they will also have the responsibility for the creation of new values. Also, only hierarchical societies support the breeding of higher types of individuals, like the Hindu law of Manu. These claims are very controversial, and I will deal with the appropriate objections to them in turn. I will also consider the different interpretations of Nietzsche's political philosophy. I will address the criticism that Nietzsche's aristocratic society is a fascistic one. I will also address the interpreters who argue that Nietzsche either supports an agonistic form of democracy or he does not offer a positive political philosophy at all, which will be discussed in the final chapters of this essay.

Chapter One:

The Goal of Higher Culture

The aim of Nietzsche's aristocratic political system is the furthering of the ends of higher culture. Higher culture is important for Nietzsche, because it has the power to help individuals affirm life. He contends that society should establish the conditions, which allow the creation of higher types of individuals. His early writings seem to give more importance to art, but his later writings seem to place more emphasis on philosophy and exemplary individuals. These great individuals improve the cultures in which they live in, which makes these societies stand out above the rest. This is accomplished through the creation of great works of art and philosophy. The goal of any society should be the creation and education of these individuals. I will investigate the importance of higher culture in affirming human existence through an overview of the pertinent selections of Nietzsche's writings, especially in his early and late periods. This will show his commitment to higher culture throughout his philosophical career.

Nietzsche asserts that the goal of any society should be the creation of higher types of individuals, which is accomplished through education. In his early writings, Nietzsche argues that the current cultural conditions seem to do nothing but stifle the creation of exceptional individuals. The people who are supposed to be the scholars and supporters of culture do not aid in the cultivation of genius. He writes that "we discover talent devoid of that longing, in the world of scholars or that of the so-called cultivated, we are repelled and disgusted by it; for we sense that their intellect, such people do not

promote an evolving culture and the procreation of genius – which is the goal of culture – but hinder it” (“Schopenhauer” 142; § 3). In On the Future of Our Educational Institutions, Nietzsche asserts that limiting higher education to the noble few would revive higher culture (Intro). Higher culture should only be open to those who can further the ends of it, but modern educational institutions do not acknowledge this: “That . . . is the result of the worthless character of modern education. The rights of genius are being democratized in order that people may be relieved of the labor of acquiring culture, and their need of it” (11). Nietzsche is not excluding the people from any participation in the creation of culture, and the problem of modern education is that it removes the necessity of culture. The people participate in the creation of culture by working for the creative geniuses, but modern culture does not give them this task. As I will discuss below, people working under such individuals will find meaning in their lives through their work. Nietzsche concludes that modern educational institutes have the effect of creating a low and corrupt culture. This system of education hurts the creation of the exemplary few and the creation of an aristocratic culture. He condemns such a system, because “[o]ur public schools established, it would seem, for this object have either become the nurseries of a reprehensible culture which repels the true culture with profound hatred i.e. a true, aristocratic culture, founded upon a few carefully chosen minds” (Educational 40). Nietzsche asserts that modern education is being undermined by society when it makes education subservient to the state, and also when it favors education for all.

Firstly, Nietzsche argues against the desire for universal equal education. His criticism is that the democratizing education will stifle the cultivation of creative genius.

The powers that are hurting society's educational institutions exhibit a "striving to achieve the greatest possible extension of education on the one hand, and a tendency to minimize and to weaken it on the other," explains Nietzsche. "The first named would fain spread learning among the greatest possible number of people, the second would compel education to renounce its highest and most independent claims in order to subordinate itself to the service of the State" (Educational Intro). The problem with universal education is that there only exist a small number of people with the capacity to create higher culture in any society; so, education should only be open to the few and the rest of society should not interfere with the proper workings of higher education (Educational 10).

Nietzsche's second point against modern educational institutions is that they have become subservient to the state. He contends that the state educates the youth only in order to make them become obedient citizens. He states, "The all too frequent exploitation of youth by the State, for its own purposes that is to say, so that it may rear useful officials as quickly as possible and guarantee their unconditional obedience to it by means of excessively severe examinations had remained quite foreign to our education" (Educational 9). Nietzsche disagrees with the way the modern state uses education for its own ends, which he contrasts with the proper way in which the ancient Greeks viewed the relationship between higher culture and the state. He approves of the means in which the Greek state protected culture, which allowed it to grow on its own. He argues that "the ancient State emphatically did not share the utilitarian point of view of recognizing as culture only what was directly useful to the State itself, and was far from wishing to destroy those impulses which did not seem immediately applicable." He continues that

the “[ancient Greek] clearly recognized not only that without such State protection the germs of his culture could not develop, but also that all his inimitable and perennial culture had flourished so luxuriantly under the wise and careful guardianship of the protection afforded by the State” (Educational 38). This statement shows that Nietzsche is not completely anti-political in his view on the relationship between culture and state. The state should only get involved to the extent that it protects its culture, and it should refrain from unduly interfering with it.

Nietzsche argues in his later writings that culture is better served when higher education only serves the cultivation of the few. In the Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche still argues that great culture is still the product of the few, and he also continues his attacks on the democratization of education in Germany. Higher education should only be open to the outstanding few, because only they have the advantages and abilities to create works of art and philosophy. He states, “All higher education belongs only to the exception: one must be privileged to have a right to so high a privilege. All great, all beautiful things can never be common property” (510; VIII.5). Nietzsche contends that the decline of German culture is tied to the democratization of its institutions of higher education. This has the effect of making culture more unexceptional and more unremarkable. This creates a qualitative decline in culture when it becomes the purview of the people. “What conditions the decline of German culture? That ‘higher education’ is no longer a privilege—the democratization of *Bildung* [culture], which has become ‘common’—too common,” writes Nietzsche (510; VIII.5). Nietzsche continues his attack against the democratization of higher education here that he had made during his lectures on education in 1872. His contention is that only the select few should be

allowed to participate in creating high culture. Culture is the product of the talented, exceptional few, which the democratization of education is hurting. He laments that future students would be deprived of “a noble education,” because the universities have become mediocre (510; VIII.5). He asserts that modern German education has hurt German culture.

Nietzsche contends that German institutes for higher education have also failed to serve the interests of higher culture. This is marked by the decline of German spirituality, which is their capacity to channel their passions for higher purposes. He argues that their spirit has become “cruder” and “shallower,” and that their “seriousness” and “depth” have declined. This change is most visible within the German universities at that time. “The verve has changed, not just intellectually. Here and there I come into contact with German universities: what an atmosphere prevails among their scholars, what desolate spirituality,” writes Nietzsche (Twilight 507-508; VIII.3). He seems to argue that the prevalence of specialized sciences (which include the social sciences) prevents those with a higher and nobler nature from wanting to join the university. This situation “is a main reason why those with fuller, richer, *profounder* disposition no longer find a congenial education and congenial *educators*” (508; VIII.3). As in his earlier writings, Nietzsche argues education plays an important role in the building of higher culture. He continues the argument that education should not be dependent upon the state; instead it should serve the purposes of higher culture. This is the problem with modern German education, because its purpose is to serve the new, unified German state. The whole ends/means analysis has been totally turned upside down, because education should be the means to the end of culture and not of the state. He writes, “The essential

thing has gone out of the entire system of higher education in Germany: the *end*, as well as the *means* to the end. That education, *culture*, itself is the end – and *not* “the Reich” (Hollingdale’s translation) (74; VIII.5).

He argues throughout his writings that education should only be the purview of the higher few in society. Education should be used in the cultivation of higher types of individuals, who will greatly contribute to the cultures in which they live in. Society should be changed so that the creation and cultivation of these great individuals can be more successfully accomplished. In the next few chapters, I will discuss Nietzsche’s contention that these individuals are the types with the dispositions to create greater meaning in people’s lives by being the creators of new values. In “Schopenhauer as Educator,” Nietzsche argues that culture is furthered by the creation of great creative talent and thought, and society’s goal is the production of such individuals. He writes, “It is the fundamental idea of *culture*, insofar as it sets for each one of us but one task: *to promote the production of the philosopher, the artist and the saint within us and without us and thereby to work at the perfecting of nature*” (160; § 5). The idea here is that society should find and educate exceptional talent, which would improve the inner spirit of a people and society at large. Nietzsche also argues that one needs to change or use the conditions within society to allow the creation of these noble types. He writes that “[t]he conditions that one would have partly create and partly exploit for their [the noble types] genesis” (Beyond 307; §203).

Nietzsche, in his early period, argues that art serves a very important purpose in helping people affirm an existence of pain and suffering. Ancient Greece is given particular attention, because they seem to be able to give greater meaning to people’s

lives through art than any other civilization (maybe except for the Renaissance). In The Birth of Tragedy, he writes about the way that the ancient Greeks were able to create great works of art that gave deeper meaning to people's lives, and the way it also furthered the ends of greater Greek culture. Nietzsche describes the way that the ancient Greeks were able to use art in the affirming one's existence: "it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*" (53; §5).

Ancient Greek culture and art continue to play an important role in Nietzsche's discussion of culture in his early writings. Nietzsche continues this line of thought about the way that art and culture has had the ability to affirm human life in his essay "The Greek State." There he asserts that only the few with artistic abilities can overcome the terrible meaninglessness of existence: "Only those individuals can emerge from this horrifying struggle for existence who are then immediately preoccupied with the fine illusions of artistic culture" ("Greek State" 164). The Greeks knew about this condition of humanity, but the problem of modern culture is that it tries to invent weak concepts that fail to make existence affirmable. They use Socratic notions like the "dignity of man" and the "dignity of work" to try to make the existence of those who work tirelessly for survival meaningful (165). Nietzsche contends that the Greeks did not have any need for such illusions: "The Greeks have no need for conceptual hallucinations like this. . . . [T]hey voice their opinion that work is a disgrace with shocking openness – and a more concealed, less frequently expressed wisdom, nevertheless alive everywhere, added that the human being was also a disgraceful and pathetic non-entity and 'shadow of a dream'" (165). Even though artistic creation was undignified labor, yet the power of artistic inspiration still made the artist feel compelled to create ("Greek State" 165-166).

The ancient Greek conception of art is very peculiar, because they viewed the means out of which such higher creativity came from as something reprehensible, yet necessary. It was necessary because the end product was something that which gave one's existence greater meaning. Nietzsche contends that the Greeks viewed any process of reproduction and work as something disgraceful, including artistic creation. Even though similar acts of production and procreation were viewed as unclean; nevertheless, it does serve the higher goal of creation. Nietzsche writes, "That same feeling that sees the process of procreation as something shameful, to be hidden, although through it man serves a higher purpose than his individual preservation: that same feeling also veiled the creation of the great works of art, although they inaugurate a higher form of existence, just like that other act inaugurates a new generation" ("Greek State" 166). Artistic work may be disgraceful as a laborious activity, but, like giving birth to a new life, it serves a higher, more meaningful aim.

Nietzsche also argues that the existence of slavery is necessary for the creation of higher culture. Just as art relies upon the disgraceful act of labor, higher culture depends upon the institution of slavery. Slavery is necessary to allow the artistic types of individuals the leisure time to create, while the rest of society must be forced into slavery or work for their survival. Nietzsche states:

Culture, which is first and foremost a real hunger for art, rests on one terrible premise: but this reveals itself in the nascent feeling of shame. In order for there to be a broad, deep, fertile soil for the development of art, the overwhelming majority has to be slavishly subjected to life's necessity

in the service of the minority, *beyond* the measure that is necessary for the individual. (“Greek State” 166).

He argues that the artistic types must be freed from this type of labor, because they must be allowed the time and the luxury to pursue their cultural pursuits (166). Both art and higher culture serve the purpose of promoting a meaningful existence within a people, but the ground from which this grows is dirty. Culture derives from the problematic basis of the necessity of labor and the cultural need for a slave based economy. Nietzsche argues that this need is not inherently evil, because the service that the slaves provide to the creative genius type gives greater meaning to the slave’s work. These individuals gain dignity in their work by working for the artistic genius in his or her task of affirming existence (“Greek State” 172-173). I think that in our post-slave labor society this concept needs to be explained. Nietzsche describes anyone who works for a living as a slave, where this individual helps the higher types in whatever endeavor they have ventured on. The analogy of a political campaign can help explain what Nietzsche means, where the campaign workers do the ground work that allows the candidate the freedom to develop his or her platform and to win the election. I will expand on this notion in a later chapter.

Nietzsche stresses the importance of ancient Greek culture and education in his early writings, because of their ability to affirm a meaningless existence. Nietzsche views the origin of ancient Greek tragedy as the combined powers of two distinct artistic forces. He names these two forces after the Greek gods Apollo and Dionysus. Dionysus represents the artistic affirmation of existence, which was needed because the Greeks viewed existence as mired in the meaninglessness of suffering and the incapability of the

individual to change the world. The god Apollo represents the societal conventions that were created in order to give one's life the appearance of permanence and importance. It is important to understand that the Dionysian is the dissolution of the individual, and the Apollonian is the reconstruction of the individual. Tracy Strong argues that the Dionysian represents the knowledge that the foundations of any culture are based upon a societal illusion (140-141). Nietzsche compares the Dionysian individual to Shakespeare's Hamlet, whose knowledge about one's inability to change the world inhibits his or her ability to act. Nevertheless, the power of art can lead such a person to actively affirm such an existence (59-60; §7). Apollo represents the return of the individual by creating values that allow the individual to overcome the hindering effects of Dionysian knowledge and be able to constructively act again. The social constructs of the Apollonian rescue the individual from the resigned pessimism of a person stuck in a Dionysian malaise. Nietzsche seems to reject Arthur Schopenhauer's contention that tragic poetry helps the individual accept the meaninglessness of existence.

The ancient Greek artist used these two creative forces in his or her tragic poetry to affirm life, instead of just surrendering to its meaninglessness. Thus, the ultimate end of Greek tragedy was to give meaning to a meaningless existence of suffering. Nietzsche writes that "when the danger to his will is greatest, *art* approaches as a saving sorceress, expert at healing. She alone knows how to turn these nauseous thoughts about the horror and absurdity of existence into notions with which one can live: these are the *sublime* as the artistic taming of the horrible" (Tragedy 60; §7).

It seems necessary to explain here what Nietzsche means by moral-cultural illusions, and what role they play in his philosophy. Nietzsche provides the example of

religion where gods and myths were invented in order to give meaning to senseless suffering (Genealogy 504; I.7). It seems that a false illusion or belief may further the existential needs of an individual's life and of a particular society. Tracy Strong correctly points out that because the moral world is illusory, this does not mean that the moral world is therefore false. This is so, because Nietzsche argues that they are still necessary for life (Strong 49). In the Gay Science, Nietzsche argues that it is wrong to assume that, because a particular morality's origins were problematic, therefore we can reject that entire morality. It is not enough just to prove this in order to refute an entire morality. "How foolish it would be to suppose that one only needs to point out this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to *destroy* the world that counts for real, so called 'reality,'" writes Nietzsche (Gay Science 122; §58). Strong argues that these illusions are important and necessary for the survival of any culture (73). This is important in Nietzsche's early period where artistic illusions are necessary for a culture to thrive.

The way a culture is judged to be great is determined by the way it can better the lives of those living within it. There are three different artistic impulses which produce three different types of cultures. Nietzsche argues that the artist, within any culture or society, is driven by a desire to affirm existence, and that the creation of higher culture is a consequence of this desire. He identifies three different desires, which create three different types of cultures, respectively (Tragedy 110, § 18). One is defined by the Socratic drive for Apollonian knowledge, because the principles it creates is supposed to give absolute and unchanging meaning in one's life. Another drive compels one to create, because of one's love for beauty. The third drive forces one to find higher meaning in the horror of everyday existence. These three drives are what create Socratic,

artistic, and tragic cultures, respectively. Nietzsche writes, “All that we call culture is made up of these stimulants; and, according to the proportion of the ingredients, we have either a dominantly *Socratic* or *artistic* or *tragic* culture” (Tragedy 110, § 18). Nietzsche is arguing in this essay that only a tragic culture can successfully give existence some consistency in the face of a reality of a dizzying array of constant flux and change.

A culture completely defined by a desire for absolute and categorical truths will undermine the mythical bases that allow individuals to affirm life. Nietzsche argues that Socratic cultures, which value knowledge over everything else, fail to affirm life. This type of culture is defined by a belief that science and knowledge alone can bring happiness to our lives. This type of culture cannot affirm a tragic existence. Nietzsche uses the example of the slave’s existence in ancient Greek society, where the slaves revolted after a Socratic culture became dominant. This culture created ineffective ideals, like the dignity of individual life and work that made the slave feel that his or her existence was unjust, which consequently caused them to revolt (Tragedy 111, § 18). He explains that “[t]here is nothing more terrible than a class of barbaric slaves who have learned to regard their existence as an injustice, and now prepare to avenge, not only themselves, but all generations” (Tragedy 111, §18). Anyone living within any particular society will experience the meaninglessness of suffering, which creates the need for a tragic culture. Since a Socratic culture cannot justify a slave’s existence without causing them to rebel, because a tragic culture can allow any individual affirm even the most terrible existence. Socratic culture does not recognize the Dionysian, the effect of this is its inability to explain the suffering of individuals, like slaves. Tragic art rests on myths that can explain suffering in the world, like most religions, but the quest for truth and

knowledge will undermine most of these beliefs. Nietzsche asserts that Socratic culture will undermine the beliefs of many people that gave their suffering meaning (Birth 111-112; §18).

Nietzsche stresses the importance of culture in “Schopenhauer as Educator,” and he says that modern nationalism and capitalism are harmful to culture, because they only recognize the importance of culture when it can serve its own interests. In this essay, he makes the case against both of these cultures and shows that both of them undermine higher culture;

[W]e are experiencing the consequences of the doctrine . . . that the state is the highest goal of mankind and that a man has no higher duty than to serve the state: in which doctrine I recognize a relapse not into paganism but into stupidity. . . . The sciences, pursued without any restraint and in a spirit of the blindest *laissez faire*, are shattering and dissolving all firmly held belief; the educated classes and states are being swept along by a hugely contemptible money economy (“Schopenhauer”148; § 4).

The problem with each of these societies is that they place their own interests ahead of higher culture. Nationalism makes the state or the nation its ultimate goal, and capitalism puts wealth and general happiness as its end. Nietzsche also argues that science pursued for its own sake has hurt higher values and beliefs. Consequently, culture is sacrificed or used as a means to any particular end. He writes that “those forces at present most actively engaged in promoting culture do so for reasons they reserve to themselves and not out of pure disinterestedness” (“Schopenhauer” 164; § 6).

Nietzsche then relates to us the way that capitalism has hurt the end of higher culture by only recognizing culture as a means for its own ends. He criticizes capitalist culture for viewing value as a market commodity, which has certain monetary and commercial worth. Capitalism also promotes the utilitarian ethic of generating the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. It wants to produce things in mass amounts; this kind of thinking sacrifices quality of production for quantity (“Schopenhauer” 164; § 6). It also uses its educational institutions to further its ends. Nietzsche explains, “Thus the sole intention behind our modern educational institutions should be to assist everyone to become current to the extent that lies in his nature, to educate everyone in such a way that they employ the degree of knowledge and learning of which they are capable for the accumulation of the greatest amount of happiness and profit” (“Schopenhauer” 165; § 6).

Nietzsche asserts that a capitalist society uses its societal institutions to create individuals who will pursue their own happiness and wealth. A capitalist economy only produces works of culture based on the needs of the market-place. Market value is the determining factor in the worth and value of a particular work of culture; this degenerates the value of a culture. The pursuit of wealth is not something that an aristocracy would value, because this redirects one’s energies away from cultural creation and towards the accumulation of wealth. Nietzsche explains that “*the greed of the money-makers*, which requires the assistance of culture and by way of thanks assists culture in return, but at the same time, of course, would like to dictate its standards and objectives” (163; § 6). A capitalist society does not give culture the open-ended commitment that allows it to pursue its own ends. Nietzsche seems to claim that a capitalist society micromanages the

aims and goals of culture to serve its own goals. This is similar to the way movies are made in order to enrich the investors and to make the greatest monetary return. It is important here to stress the point that Nietzsche does not support art for art's sake (Beyond 320; §208). A capitalist society uses culture to support its ends of generating wealth and human happiness. I will discuss Nietzsche's critique of utilitarianism further in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that it is wrong in wanting to end suffering. Nietzsche argues that such suffering is needed, because the noble type of individual needs to suffer and to discipline themselves in order to achieve self-mastery. They need this in order to overcome morality and to create life-affirming values.

Nietzsche contends that nationalism hurts the ends of higher culture for the same reasons that a capitalist culture does; it treats culture as a means to its own ends. Culture is only used by the state to serve its own petty political interests. Nietzsche suspects that the nation-state uses its culture to stifle any new ways of thinking and creativity. He uses the example of the degeneration of Christianity which, when it became married to the state, gave up its higher goals and purposes to the state. He writes that "since it [Christianity] has been employed in a hundred ways to propel the mills of state power it has gradually become sick to the very marrow, hypocritical and untruthful, and degenerated into a contradiction of its original goal" ("Schopenhauer 166; § 6). The nationalist state only educates its people in order to indoctrinate them into believing that its aims are the only right ones. The ends of culture are used in a cold war mentality in the struggle against nations. Nietzsche proclaims that a state that "knows itself sufficiently strong to be able, not only to unchain energies, but at the right time also to yoke them, presupposing its foundations are sufficiently broad and secure to sustain the

whole educational structure, then the dissemination of education among its citizens can only be to its advantage in its competition with other states” (“Schopenhauer” 164; § 6). Nationalism and capitalism are two social phenomena that Nietzsche mentions among others, but the common theme among all of them is that culture is made subservient to some other goal.

Nietzsche argues for the importance culture in many of his early writings of the 1870s. This continues to play a prominent role in his writings right up to the final year of his productive life before his untimely mental breakdown in 1889. In his later period, Nietzsche gives a more prominent role to the philosopher, instead of the artist, in furthering culture. Philosophy will play a more prominent role in creating a life affirming morality. Nevertheless, he deemphasizes the importance of art and the meaninglessness of existence in his later writings. Now he contends that the higher individual is a person with the capacity for beautifying his or her self through the spiritualization of the passions (I will expand on this in Chapter Two). While he argues that culture is still important in affirming life and that education has a role in furthering it, there is some break in emphasis in the way he conceives the self and the role that philosophy will play. In the Twilight of the Idols, he explains that modern Germany has failed to attain higher culture, and that its institutions of higher learning have also failed Germany in this endeavor. The beginning of the degeneration of German culture began after the unification of Germany under Bismarck and with its growing political strength. “The new Germany . . . is *not* a high culture that has become master, and even less a delicate taste, a noble ‘beauty’ of the instincts” (506; VIII.1). The quest for political power and dominance has had the unintended consequence of destroying Germany’s

capacity to create great philosophers: “[o]ne pays heavily for coming to power: power *makes stupid*”. He continues, “The Germans—once they were called the people of thinkers: do they think at all today? The Germans are now bored with the spirit, the Germans now mistrust the spirit; politics swallows up all serious concern for really spiritual matters. *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*—I fear that was the end of German philosophy” (506; VIII.1). The problem with German culture in Nietzsche’s time was that the creative and intellectual energies of a people were being used up for the purposes of the state, which did not have the best interests of culture at heart. Their strength was being used up in the European political game of imperialism and *realpolitik*, instead of philosophy. Nietzsche thinks that the creation of great German thinkers like Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Johann Wolfgang Goethe would not have been possible in this cultural-political environment.

Nietzsche argues for the importance of furthering the ends of higher culture throughout most of his writings, and asserts that most modern educational institutions have failed in this attempt. Nevertheless, it seems that his views on culture may have changed in his later writings. He earlier placed greater weight on the way art can help in affirming a life devoid of meaning and purpose. One of the greatest virtues of ancient Greek culture was that it was able to create art that made people’s existences worth living. He even emphasized that illusions can allow an individual to affirm his or her existence. But, in his later writings, Nietzsche rejects the idea that illusions can be used to affirm existence, because Christian morality posits realms that do not exist and are unhealthy for life (*Zarathustra* 142-145, “On the Afterworldly”). He places greater emphasis upon the role that philosophy and great individuals will play in affirming life

through natural moralities. Greatness in a culture is now defined by exemplary individuals. In the next chapter, I will discuss the way certain moral systems have had the effect of hurting the higher individuals who are the ones responsible for this task. These individuals are defined by their ability to spiritualize their passions, and to gain mastery over them by ordering the many different competing passions. Philosophy plays a more prominent role in affirming people's lives, and the future philosopher-legislators will be the ones to create new values that will do just that. Culture still involves giving meaning to one's life, but it can be achieved through a philosophical affirmation of life.

In Nietzsche's later writings, he argues that certain individuals were great, because they were able to produce great cultures and civilizations. These cultures were defined by these great types of individuals who resided within these civilizations at their cultural apex. In his earlier writings, he seems to include only artists, and not that many philosophers, but, in his later writings, he includes more philosophers and political leaders. Nietzsche uses ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy as examples of great cultures (Beyond 400; §262). Nietzsche considers ancient Greece to be great, because of its cultural contributions. In the Birth of Tragedy, he celebrates the works of the tragic poets for their indelible impact upon the lives of those within Athenian society. They were able to face a world and a life devoid of meaning, and to use art as a way to give it significance. This is something that Nietzsche finds particularly fascinating. "The Greek knew and felt the terror and horror of existence. That he might endure this terror at all, he had to interpose between himself and life the radiant dream-birth of the Olympians." Nietzsche continues that "all this was again and again overcome by the Greeks with the aid of the Olympian *middle world* of art" (Birth 42; §3). In "The Greek State," Nietzsche

also thought that the Greeks were exceptional in the way they viewed the purpose of the state. They viewed the state as something necessary, because it allowed the creation of geniuses through whom the world was justified philosophically and artistically. The state redirected the war-like energies of its warrior types from constant killing to the creation of higher culture. Nietzsche states, “We must . . . construe the Greeks, in relation to the unique zenith of their art, as being *a priori* ‘political men *par excellence*’; and actually history knows of no other example of such an awesome release of the political urge, of such a complete sacrifice of all other interests in the service of this instinct towards the state” (“Greek State” 169). The Greeks also approached religion in a more noble way than did Christian Europe. The ancient Greeks affirmed existence, and only a higher type of person can affirm life in such a noble manner. “What is amazing about the religiosity of the ancient Greeks is the enormous abundance of gratitude it exudes,” comments Nietzsche, “it is a very noble type of man that confronts nature and life in *this way*” (Beyond 254; §49). He laments the wasted potential of the noble civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome. He commends their desire for the future improvement of their societies, and for their ability to organize themselves to attain this goal (Antichrist 651; § 59). In “Homer’s Contest,” Nietzsche praises the way the ancient Greeks used open competition in order to further the ends of their culture (176-178). Nietzsche cannot name another civilization that came close to the example of the ancient Greeks, except the Italians of the Renaissance.

Nietzsche praises Renaissance Italy for being a great culture, not just because it was an artistically rich era, but because it was represented by great types of individuals. He points out great artists like Michelangelo and Dante Alighieri, but also thinkers like

Niccolò Machiavelli and political leaders like Cesare Borgia. He praises the Renaissance Italians for their free thinking, for their liberation from authority, for their freedom of knowledge from the past, and their love of truth and science. “The Italian Renaissance contained within it all the positive forces to which we owe modern culture . . . ; indeed, the Renaissance possessed positive forces which have *up to now* never reappeared in our modern culture with such power as they had then,” writes Nietzsche (Human 113; § 237). In the Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche characterizes our modern age as weak, while the Renaissance as strong. Such a noble culture would view modern virtues, like pity and humbleness, as signs of weakness. He states, “Ages must be measured by their positive strength—and then that lavishly squandering and fatal age of the Renaissance appears as the last *great* age; and we moderns . . . appear as a *weak* age” (540; IX.37).

Nietzsche also decries the way that the German Reformation prevented the cultural maturation of the Italian Renaissance. He accuses the Germans of “cheating” Europe from the “great cultural harvest” that the Renaissance appeared to promise. He states, “The *revaluation of Christian values*, the attempt, undertaken with every means, with every instinct, with all genius, to bring the *counter-values*, the noble values to victory” (Antichrist 653; § 61). Nietzsche thinks that the attack against the Roman Catholic Church by Martin Luther did not hurt or divide Christendom, but made it stronger. Nietzsche imagines a counter-factual situation where the Renaissance was allowed to follow its natural course, eventually overcoming the Christian-moral worldview. This would have been accomplished through the overthrow of the Pope through the election of a noble aristocratic type as Pope. “*Cesare Borgia as pope*. Am I understood? Well then, that would have been the victory which alone I crave today: with

that, Christianity would have been *abolished*” (Antichrist 654; §61). Nietzsche imagines here an alternative history where the noble and political elite take over the Vatican, and hence allow the revaluation of the Christian-moral worldview. Nietzsche praises a political leader like Borgia, not necessarily for what he actually did, but for the type of person he represented. He criticizes morality for attacking such a person, not just because he committed evil acts, but because he was a strong and healthy type of individual (Beyond 298-299; § 197). He would naturally praise the Renaissance for being the soil from which great works of art were created. It seems that this era was great, not just because of its great art, but also because of great individuals like Michelangelo and Raphael, who were responsible for these great works (Human 68; §125).

Nietzsche praises great individuals themselves, because they represent higher and nobler characters. He considers the German poet Goethe and the philosopher Baruch Spinoza to be exceptional, because they had such dispositions. They both shared common characteristics that Nietzsche considers to be noble, such as, great intellectual acumen and for rejecting most modern moralities. He also defines the noble type as one who maintains the pathos of distance, which is “the ingrained difference between strata—when the ruling caste constantly looks afar and looks down upon subjects and instruments and just as constantly practices obedience and command, keeping down and keeping at a distance” (Beyond 391; §257). The noble type recognizes the differences between people and wishes to maintain the hierarchical structure of society. I will go into more detail in the next chapter on the character traits that define the noble type, such as, greatness in spirit, greatness in will to power, and greatness in spiritualized passions and feelings. I will also explain that their ability to spiritualize their passions is the impetus

behind many great creative activities. Nietzsche compares the importance of Spinoza and Goethe to that of Plato (Daybreak 202-203; §497). He has only the highest acclaim for Spinoza in Human, All Too Human, where he calls him “the purest sage” (175; § 475). In a postcard to his friend Franz Overbeck in July 30, 1881, Nietzsche proclaims that Spinoza was his intellectual ancestor, because he discovers that Spinoza reached similar conclusions that he has. Nietzsche writes:

I am utterly amazed, utterly enchanted. I have a *precursor*, and what a precursor! I hardly knew Spinoza: that I should have turned to him just *now*, was inspired by ‘instinct.’ Not only is his over-all tendency like mine—making knowledge the *most powerful* affect—but in five main points of his doctrine I recognize myself; . . . he denies the freedom of the will, teleology, the moral world order, the unegoistic, and evil (Portable Nietzsche 92).

Nietzsche recognizes that there are dissimilarities between Spinoza and himself, but he attributes this to differences in “time, culture, and science.” He also relates to Overbeck that his discovery of Spinoza makes him feel that he has an intellectual ally in his previously lonely task (Ibid). He praises Spinoza’s philosophy for its many life affirming and natural aspects. For example, Spinoza rejects metaphysical ideals such as the existence of moral evil, the disembodied subject, and free will. Spinoza represents a break with traditional philosophy, because his views are a good start in the direction that Nietzsche wants to take with his philosophy, which is a life-affirming and natural morality.

Nietzsche praises Goethe for representing a higher type of person, because he represents a more natural and life-affirming way of existence. Goethe epitomized an attempt at a revaluation of the previous century's values. Goethe was "not a German event, but a European one: a magnificent attempt to overcome the eighteenth century by a return to nature, by an *ascent* to the naturalness of the Renaissance" (Twilight 553; IX.49). This aspect of Goethe is important for Nietzsche, because Goethe wanted to transcend the petty politics of nationalism. Goethe was a more life-affirming and natural type of person, because he also rejected the absolutist and categorical dogmas of Enlightenment morality. Instead, Goethe sought inspiration from history, science, classical antiquity, and Spinoza. He also rejected the metaphysics of Immanuel Kant, who Nietzsche considers to be Goethe's "antipode."

Goethe also recognized something significant in Napoleon Bonaparte. He noticed a type of person who was "strong, highly educated, skillful in all bodily matters, self-controlled, reverent to himself, and who might dare to afford the whole range and wealth of being natural, being strong enough for such a freedom" (Twilight 554; IX.49). Goethe and Nietzsche both notice in Napoleon these traits, which constitute the noble type of individual. Nietzsche's praise for Napoleon is similar to his praise of Borgia, where he only respected the noble type and not the individual person per se. He perceived that Goethe also noticed the traits that made Napoleon a great individual as well, even though Napoleon was an enemy of the Germans. Nietzsche supports the type Napoleon represented, because his arrival corresponded with the triumph of the herd morality in France after the democratic revolution. His type was in contradistinction to the small and mediocre type favored by the herd morality. Napoleon's type signified a return of a great

type of leader and commander that Nietzsche praises as noble, which is placed against the herd ideal of the elected representative (Beyond 301; § 199).

The goal of society should be the creation of noble types of beings, who would be the great artists and philosophers of the future. In his early period, Nietzsche places greater emphasis on the power of artistic creation. But in his later period, he emphasizes the role that great individuals and philosophers play in this task. He considers individuals like Spinoza and Goethe to be exceptional, because they were persons who affirmed earthly existence and resisted attempts to negate earthly life. In the next chapter, I will discuss the reasons why Nietzsche condemns most moral and philosophical systems. He contends that most modern moralities deny life, and that they affirm realms and existences that are metaphysical or otherworldly. They are fundamentally unhealthy and life-denying, because a system that only affirms an immortal soul and hates the physical body as something evil. Christian morality argues that the body is sinful, and the soul is the only guarantee of afterworldly salvation. So, Nietzsche's initial task is to refute these moralities in order to make way for a new, life-affirming morality.

Chapter Two:

Problems with Anti-natural Moralities

Nietzsche is a harsh critic of many ancient and modern moral and political philosophies. In this chapter I will present Nietzsche's criticisms of Christianity, liberalism, utilitarianism, and egalitarianism. His views here represent his later period, where culture is not primarily advanced through the creation of great works of art. These moralities all negatively affect the ends of culture, because they stifle the creative characters of the higher individuals. Nietzsche also rejects modern democratic theories, because they are a secularized political form of Christianity, this maybe one of the reasons why Nietzsche opts for an aristocratic society, which I will explain in Chapter Three. Culture is furthered by these individuals who will be the creators of new values that will affirm life. These higher types are what Nietzsche considers to be noble, because they have a great natural ability to spiritualize their passions for higher purposes. They are also defined by the way they master themselves through the inner conflict between competing drives and passions. He attacks thinkers from Socrates and Plato to Kant and Schopenhauer, because he questions the legitimacy and the rationality of many of their philosophical beliefs. Many, incorrectly according to Nietzsche, try to find absolute and universal truths according to which human actions and characters are to be judged. Moralities derived from Platonic and Christian worldviews posit the existence of realities and subjects beyond the world of everyday experience. Thinkers from this tradition attack the apparent world as immoral or rationally problematic, because our

world is a reality of constant flux and change. This world cannot provide categorical truths or an unchanging reality in which to find absolute knowledge. These are the moral systems that Nietzsche considers to be life-denying and anti-natural.

Nietzsche states that different moralities serve different types of people. He contends that there are higher, noble types of people and there are lower, common types. The noble types are the exemplary individuals within a society, and they are the ones who will further the ends of culture. These two types of people do not share the same moralities, because what one type considers virtuous would be called vicious by another. He writes, “What serves the higher type of men as nourishment or delectation must almost be poison for a very different and inferior type” (Beyond 232; § 30). Nietzsche contends that no single morality can or should fit all people; he argues against any morality that tries to impose itself upon everyone. He condemns modern moral systems as herd moralities, because they aim at the leveling of all types to a common denominator. Therefore, these moralities are bad for imposing their values upon noble types. He states, “Let us finally consider how naïve it is altogether to say: ‘Man *ought* to be such and such!’ Reality shows us an enchanting wealth of types, the abundance of a lavish play and change of forms—and some wretched loafer of a moralist comments: ‘No! Man ought to be different.’ He even knows what man should be like, this wretched bigot and prig: he paints himself on the wall and comments, ‘*Ecce homo!* [Behold the man]’” (Twilight 491; V.6).

Nietzsche condemns the imposition of the Christian-Platonic worldview, because it imposes its moral values upon everyone. He argues that these value systems try to impose their judgments upon everyone within society, “because they address themselves

to ‘all,’ because they generalize where one must not generalize” (Beyond 299; § 198).

Christian morality posits itself as the only ethical system that should rule over human moral characters and actions, and it will not acknowledge the existence or the legitimacy of any rival system, especially not any noble morality. Nietzsche writes:

Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality—in other words . . . merely *one* type of human morality beside which, before which, and after which many other types, above all *higher* moralities, are, or ought to be, possible. But this morality resists such a ‘possibility,’ such an ‘ought’ with all its power: it says stubbornly and inexorably, ‘I am morality itself, and nothing besides is morality.’ Indeed, with the help of a religion which indulged and flattered the most sublime herd-animal desires, we have reached the point where we find even in political and social institutions an ever more visible expression of this morality: the *democratic* movement is the heir of the Christian movement (Beyond 305-306; § 202).

It imposes itself upon different types of people, except this morality is only good for some and not for all. Nietzsche concludes that herd morality is “hostile to life” (Twilight 487; V.1). He contends that only a noble morality properly fits the higher types of people, because this morality is better suited to the noble types.

Nietzsche argues that Christianity is an anti-natural morality, because it advocates for the eradication of certain human passions and feelings that it views as evil. These passions were originally condemned by Christianity, because they were abused by individuals in the past. He contends the Christian moralists were wrong for doing this, because they failed to realize that these passions were used stupidly, where stronger

individuals could spiritualize them for better purposes. He writes, “All passions have a phase when they are merely disastrous, when they drag down their victim with the weight of stupidity—and a later, very much later phase when they wed the spirit, when they ‘spiritualize’ themselves (Twilight 486; V.1). In one of Nietzsche’s unpublished notes, he argues that the desires for “power, love, revenge, possessions” should not be exterminated. The Christian moralist argues that these passions are potentially dangerous; therefore, they must be eliminated. Nietzsche disagrees, because these feelings, like the lust to rule and sensuality, are a part of one’s natural life. Therefore, it is wrong to eliminate them, because they can serve a healthy life. He writes, “This is the same logic as: ‘if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.’ . . . [T]he consequence is, unfortunately, not only the loss of an organ but the emasculation of man’s character—And the same applies to the moralist’s madness that demands, instead of the restraining of the passions, their extirpation” (Will 207; §385). Even if the passions were a problem, the Church’s solution would be more harmful to life. It is hostile to the notion that the passions can be spiritualized in order to accomplish something higher. He writes, “The church fights passions with excision in every sense; its practice, its ‘cure,’ its *castration*. It never asks: ‘How can one spiritualize, beautify, deify a craving?’” It has at all times laid the stress of discipline on extirpation (of sensuality, of pride, of the lust to rule, of avarice, of vengefulness)” (Twilight 487; V.1). This theological-ethical system appears to Nietzsche to be an enemy to noble values and judgments.

Nietzsche argues this slave morality is fundamentally unhealthy, while noble morality is different, because it maintains the *pathos of distance*, which is the feeling that differences exist between different types of people. It affirms things like sensuality, the

lust for power, the feeling of power, strength, intelligence, et cetera as good. These are the things that nobles affirm, and it allows them to be what they naturally are. This represents a life-affirming morality for the noble types, which will allow them to successfully further the ends of culture. Nietzsche argues, “The cleavage between man and man, status and status, the plurality of types, the will to be oneself, to stand out—what I call the *pathos of distance*, that is characteristic of every strong age” (Twilight 540; IX.37).

Slave morality operates in a completely different manner, because it tries to level down different individuals’ characters traits. It demands that the higher individual reject and eliminate certain aspects of his or her character, because it views such things as evil. Nietzsche relates the way that this occurred in Europe after the advent of Christianity. He uses the example of what happened to the noble Teutons after they converted to Christianity. He argues that these people were leveled down to the ideal Christian type. He writes that “how did such an ‘improved’ Teuton who had been seduced into a monastery look afterward? Like a caricature of man, like a miscarriage: he had become a ‘sinner,’ he was stuck in a cage, imprisoned among all sorts of terrible concepts.” In the same section, he explains the way that moral improvement has hurt these people. Christianity has made such types weaker and unhealthy, and made them despise their previous ways of being. He continues that “there he [the Teuton] lay sick, miserable, malevolent against himself: full of hatred against the springs of life, full of suspicion against all that was still strong and happy. In short, a ‘Christian’” (Twilight 502, VII.2). The noble types cannot live a healthy existence under a slave morality and its leveling influences. Nietzsche denounces all of its modern moral offshoots as being anti-natural,

because they deny life. They favor the immortal soul or the disembodied, metaphysical subject instead of a finite and natural human life. A natural morality would affirm life in the real, non-metaphysical world, and it would also affirm all the natural characteristics of it (Twilight 489-490; V.4).

Christianity condemns values like greatness of spirit, power, and anything else that the nobles consider to be good. It claims that these values are evil, and it demands that these types should conform themselves to its moral ideal. Nietzsche accuses this morality of trying to destroy noble values and suppressing noble types. He writes that “Christianity should not be beautified and embellished: it has waged deadly war against this higher type of man; it has placed all the basic instincts of this type under the ban; and out of these instincts it has distilled evil and the Evil One: the strong man as the typically reprehensible man, the ‘reprobate’” (Antichrist 571; § 5). In the same aphorism, Nietzsche argues that Christianity favors the values of the herd and the mediocre types. It values what is “weak and base” and it posits “the instinct[s] of [a] strong life” as bad. This religion teaches the noble individuals that the values that made them healthy and productive are in fact sinful, because these values will lead them down into the path to falsehood. Nietzsche contends that Christianity “has corrupted the reason even of those strongest in spirit by teaching men to consider the supreme values of the spirit as something sinful, as something that leads into error—as temptations” (Antichrist 571-572; § 5). Christian morality is harmful to noble individuals and the creation of such types.

Nietzsche states that Christianity is “hostile to life,” because it is harmful to noble characters and their cultivation (Twilight 487; V.1). The suppression of these individuals

hurts the creation of higher culture, because they need the full use of their faculties for higher creative purposes. Nietzsche argues that Christianity has attacked the foundations of culture when it suppresses the higher types of individuals. When it attacks these base passions as sinful, it indirectly attacks the sublimation of these passions that noble types use for their higher activities. In an unpublished note, he writes, “Let us see what ‘the true Christian’ does with all that which his instinct opposes:—he sullies and suspects the beautiful, the splendid, the rich, the proud, the self-reliant, the knowledgeable, the powerful—in summa, the whole of culture” (Will 144; § 250). Christianity, in attacking the natural world and any sensuality of the body, also attacks human passions and feelings. Nietzsche writes that the “Christian too is mortal enmity against the lords of the earth, against the ‘noble’—along with a sly, secret rivalry. . . . Christian[ity] . . . is the hatred of the *spirit*, of pride, courage, freedom, liberty of the spirit; Christian[ity] is the hatred of the *senses*, of joy in the senses, of joy itself” (Antichrist 589; § 21). Nietzsche argues here that Christianity is against any worldly naturalness and the physical body. It, instead, affirms otherworldly realms or metaphysical concepts, like the soul, heaven and hell, and God. In Thus Spoke Zarathustra, in the section entitled “On the Afterworldly,” Nietzsche argues through Zarathustra that those who create new realities hate the body and the real world (commonly called the apparent world). This represents a sign of sickness, because a healthy individual does not need to create new realities (Zarathustra 142-145). Instead of destroying the human passions, Nietzsche contends that they must be spiritualized.

In Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche discusses the spiritualization of cruelty. He argues that modern philosophers need to rethink what the word denotes. Cruelty is

normally connected to savagery and suffering, which modern morality wishes to condemn and eliminate. Nietzsche disagrees, because “everything we call ‘higher culture’ is based on the spiritualization of *cruelty*, on its becoming more profound: this is my proposition. That ‘savage animal’ has not really been ‘mortified’; it lives and flourishes, it has merely become—divine (Beyond 348; § 229). He presents us with many examples of the way that different individuals have used cruelty for uncommon purposes. One of the creative instincts of tragic art is cruelty, because the feelings of tragic pity and sublimity receive its highest apex when they are mixed with spiritualized cruelty.

Nietzsche also notes the way that cruelty is spiritualized when it is turned inward against one’s self. Examples of this include the religious hermit who practices self-denial and penitence; this is the ascetic type, who uses the means of self-cruelty in order to affirm his or her faith. Cruelty also has a role in the scientist and the academic, whose quest for knowledge may lead them to discover life harming discoveries. This is against his early period where he suggests that illusions are good, because they could help individuals affirm a meaningless existence. Now Nietzsche argues that life can be served by hard truths, because they undermine the beliefs of life-denying moralities. “Finally consider that even the seeker after knowledge forces his spirit to recognize things against the inclination of the spirit, and often enough also against the wishes of his heart—by way of saying No where he would like to say Yes, love, and adore—and thus acts as an artist and transfigurer of cruelty.” Nietzsche continues that “in all desire to know there is a drop of cruelty” (Beyond 349; § 229). The scientific discoveries of evolution and the Big Bang theory have had the effect of making people question many of their religious

beliefs and tenets. A religious believer with an intellectual conscience would be at pains to reject many of his or her religious beliefs in order to accept new pieces of knowledge. The spiritualization of cruelty was the impetus behind many higher human activities, such as tragic poetry, asceticism, science, and philosophy. Tragic art still has a place in Nietzsche's later philosophy, because it is a product of the spiritualization of the passions. The spiritualization of this feeling, commonly associated with the suffering of others, allowed these individuals to achieve higher goals and accomplishments.

Nietzsche offers more examples of spiritualized passions, like hostility. The spiritualization of this passion is what Nietzsche seems to appreciate the most in his endeavors to overcome modern morality. He writes, "Another triumph [over Christianity] is our spiritualization of *hostility*. It consists in a profound appreciation of the value of having enemies: in short, it means acting and thinking in the opposite way from that which has been the rule" (*Twilight* 488; V.3). This gives one the value of having adversaries, because they are the motivation for overcoming them. This is in contrast to the common belief that hostility means the elimination of one's enemies. This is what the Christian church wants to do with its enemies. Nietzsche tells us that the spiritualization of hostility allows an individual to become "much more sensible, much more thoughtful, much more *considerate*" (*Twilight* 488; V.3). He respects the Church's existence, because it provides the fodder for his attacks against its moral evaluations. This also applies to the political realm, where the survival and enhancement of a political party relies upon the existence of an opposition party. This could also apply in Nietzsche's aristocratic politics, where the philosopher-aristocrats would be able to check each other's power through this need for opponents (I will discuss this further in Chapter

Four). Nietzsche writes that having enemies or opponents allows one to feel that one's existence is necessary. "Our attitude to the 'internal enemy' is no different: here to we have spiritualized hostility; here too we have come to appreciate its value." Nietzsche continues, "The price of fruitfulness is to be rich in internal opposition; one remains young only as long as the soul does not stretch itself and desire peace" (Twilight 488; V.3).

All forms of the spiritualization of hostility, including against oneself, lead an individual to greater triumphs and the fulfillment of higher purposes. The opposition within an individual means that there is a conflict between different drives and passions; the noble type of person achieves mastery through the triumph of a single passion above all others. This creates great individuals like Alcibiades, Julius Caesar, and Leonardo de Vinci (Beyond 302; § 200). This fight between the passions is what also defines a great individual; he or she has the constitution that can withstand such a conflict (Beyond 231-232, 302; § 29, 200).

Liberalism is another moral system that Nietzsche accuses of being an enemy of life. He contends that modern liberalism and democracy are the political expressions of herd morality. He writes that "we have reached the point where we find even in political and social institutions an ever more visible expression of this morality: the *democratic* movement is the heir of the Christian movement" (Beyond 306; § 202). The traditional liberal ideal of fundamental and inherent equality originated from Christian theology, because it argues that all people are inherently equal before God. This may appear to attack all forms of political equality, but some interpreters have argued that Nietzsche is not necessarily rejecting all form of democratic equality (I will have to save further

discussion of this for another chapter). It overturned the feeling that maintained the distance between persons and castes, and it openly contested the supremacy of noble values. Nietzsche argues that “out of the *ressentiment*¹ of the masses it [Christianity] forged its weapon against *us*, against all that is noble, gay, high-minded on earth, against our happiness on earth. ‘Immortality’ conceded to every Peter and Paul has so far been the greatest, most malignant, attempt to assassinate *noble* humanity” (Antichrist 619; § 43).

Nietzsche states that liberalism is not just a degeneration of social and political institutions, but also a deterioration of life. It has the effect of leveling people, and making them more common. He exclaims that “to us the democratic movement is not only a form of the decay of political organization but a form of the decay, namely the diminution, of man, making him mediocre and lowering his value” (Beyond 307; § 203). Nietzsche accuses liberalism of imposing a morality that aims at undermining the will to power. He defines the will to power in both the individual and in society at large. A person wants to dominate and master his- or herself in order to increase the feeling of power. He argues that the philosopher’s will to power borderlines on self-cruelty in order to gain toughness and intellectual honesty (Beyond 349-351; § 230). He also argues that will to power is the “will to life,” which he defines as “*essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest exploitation—but why should one always use those words in which a slanderous intent has been imprinted for ages’

¹ This term refers to the feeling of resentment that the slaves felt for their masters, but their inability to act against their masters only fed this feeling. Hence, this feeling keeps feeding on itself till it creates values in contradistinction to the values of the noble morality. This is their form of revenge (Genealogy 472-484; I.10-14).

(Beyond 393; § 259). The will to power underlies all forms of human activity, including both noble and common types. We have already seen the way that herd morality was imposed upon all types of human beings. It is also important to keep in mind that the higher types can use their will to power in ways differently than commonly perceived. Bruce Detwiler explains that the problem with liberalism is that it wants to deny these aspects of the will to life; therefore, denying life is denying the will to power (45).

Nietzsche contends that liberalism promotes a mediocre form of freedom, which is characterized by the absence of constraint and suffering. He argues that this form of freedom is harmful to life. He explains that “[t]heir effects are known well enough: they undermine the will to power; they level mountain and valley, and call that morality; they make men small, cowardly, and hedonistic—every time it is the herd animal that triumphs with them. Liberalism: in other words, herd-animalization” (Twilight 541; IX.38). Freedom is properly felt when one fights for it; Nietzsche argues that freedom is fully felt during a war, because it allows “illiberal instincts” to arise when one fights to attain it. But once freedom is attained and liberal institutions of government are established, a lower form of freedom is imposed. Once freedom is attained, one loses the obstacles that enhanced one’s feeling of power and freedom (Twilight 541; IX.38).

Nietzsche claims that the best form of freedom is one that promotes suffering and self-mastery. “For what is freedom?” Nietzsche answers:

That one has the will to assume responsibility for oneself. That one maintains the distance which separates us. That one becomes more indifferent to difficulties, hardships, privation, even to life itself. That one is prepared to sacrifice human beings for one’s cause, not excluding

oneself. Freedom means that the manly instincts which delight in war and victory dominate over the other instincts, for example, over those of 'pleasure' (Twilight 542; IX. 38).

Freedom is acting against one's own happiness, and the means to attain freedom means putting one's own life and that of others in jeopardy. It is also about the way one's will to power makes one surmount any obstacle and hardship in order to reach mastery over oneself. His version of freedom is obviously opposed to the common conception of freedom. He writes that "the curious fact is that all there is or has been on earth of freedom . . . and masterly sureness, whether in thought itself or in government, . . . in the arts just as in ethics, has developed only owing to the 'tyranny of . . . capricious laws'; . . . the probability is by no means small that precisely this is 'nature' and 'natural'—and *not* . . . *laisser aller* [letting go]" (Beyond 290; § 188).

Nietzsche states that this form of freedom requires the discipline to obey self-imposed rules that allow the development of one's higher talents and abilities. The proper form of freedom allows the noble individual to achieve self-mastery and discipline, which will be needed when he or she begins the creation of new values. There are ranks of freedom that different individuals can attain; they are measured by the amount of opposition an individual had to conquer. "The highest type of free man should be sought where the highest resistance is constantly overcome: five steps from tyranny, close to the threshold of the danger of servitude." Nietzsche continues, "This is true psychologically if by 'tyrants' are meant inexorable and fearful instincts that provoke the maximum of authority and discipline against themselves; most beautiful type: Julius Caesar" (Twilight 542; IX.38). It is clear here that Nietzsche uses the word tyranny to

denote something different from common usage. It means that one attains a level of self-mastery, which the highest type of person is well constituted to attain. I think that the example of the artist would clarify what Nietzsche means by freedom. The good artist must suffer for his or her art, and that individual must discipline and master his or her talents in order to become great. This harder form of freedom is what allows an exceptional creative talent to fully exercise his or her natural endowments and abilities. Nietzsche explains, “Artists seem to have more sensitive noses in these matters, knowing only too well that precisely when they no longer do anything ‘voluntarily’ but do everything of necessity, their feeling of freedom, . . . of creative placing, . . . and forming reaches its peak—in short, that necessity and ‘freedom of the will’ then become one in them” (Beyond 329-330; § 213).

The freedom supported by modern liberalism is the opposite of what Nietzsche contends what freedom ought to be. He states that his conception of freedom would be too much of a burden for weaker individuals to handle. He writes that “the claim for independence, for free development, for *laissez aller* is most pressed hotly by the very people for who no reins would be too strick. . . . [T]his is a symptom of decadence: our modern conception of ‘freedom’ is one more proof of the degeneration of the instincts” (Twilight 546; IX.41). Liberalism is harmful to this elevated form of freedom, because the necessity of overcoming hardships and strict self-discipline are not viewed as valuable. Nietzsche argues that aristocratic societies understood freedom properly: “Those large hothouses for the strong—for the strongest kind of human being that has so far been known—the aristocratic commonwealths of the type of Rome or Venice,

understood freedom exactly in the sense in which I understood it” (Twilight 542-543; IX.38).

Nietzsche considers utilitarianism to be an unhealthy morality because it wants to eliminate higher suffering. Suffering is another passion that noble types can spiritualize for higher purposes and achievements. He writes, “The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering—do you not know that only *this* discipline has created all enhancements of man so far?” (Beyond 344; § 225). Displeasure within an individual can be sublimated and used to cultivate his or her strength. Such strength is required to endure the level of suffering that requires courage and creativity in order to overcome suffering and achieve greatness. Nietzsche notes that this kind of suffering is what brings out the creative energies within a person of great passions and feelings. Great suffering is the stuff out of which a higher creator is made. He writes that the “tension of the soul in unhappiness which cultivates its strength, its shudders face to face with great ruin, its inventiveness and courage in enduring, persevering, interpreting, and exploiting suffering, and whatever has been granted to it of profundity, secret, mask, cunning, greatness.” He continues, “In man *creature* and *creator* are united: in man there is material, fragment, excess, clay, dirt, nonsense, chaos; but in man there is also creator, form-giver, hammer hardness, spectator divinity, and seventh day” (Beyond 344; § 225).

Nietzsche concludes that utilitarianism must be opposed, because it wants to put an end to such suffering, which the higher types use to harden themselves to face any task that is before them. He argues against herd-like pity that people feel over the sight of the suffering of others. He does seem to affirm a noble form of pity where the noble types are allowed to feel pity for those below them, but only towards one’s inferiors (Beyond

395; § 260). He contends that harmful pity must be done away with, because suffering is what disciplines and strengthens an individual. He states that “*your* pity is for the ‘creature in man,’ for what must be formed, broken, forged, torn, burnt, made incandescent, and purified—that which *necessarily* must and *should* suffer?” (Beyond 344; §225). Such suffering could be compared to art, where the material a sculptor uses must be cut, molded, and formed into a masterpiece of high art. Great suffering is the cause of the improvement of humanity, because it instills the noble attributes of courage and strength.

Nietzsche rejects ethical utilitarianism as another offshoot of modern herd morality: “As long as the utility reigning in moral values judgments is solely the utility of the herd” (Beyond 302; § 201). His argument against utilitarianism is that it promotes a bad form of happiness, which is contentment. It wants to encourage the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest amount of people, which means that it tries to maximize the greatest amount of contentment and the minimization of suffering. This cannot be the ultimate goal for humanity (Detwiler 81). Nietzsche thinks that utilitarianism is only an expression of the moral prejudices of the British. “Man does *not* strive for pleasure; only the Englishman does” (Twilight 468; I.12). He also contends that British utilitarianism is an outgrowth of and secularized version of Christian morality. He accuses the British utilitarians of abandoning their faith in God, but only to affirm many of its moral precepts after the fact. “In England one must rehabilitate oneself after every little emancipation from theology by showing in a veritably awe-inspiring manner what a moral fanatic one is. That is the penance they pay there,” he argues (Twilight 515; IX.5). Nietzsche believes that if one rejects one’s faith in the Christian God, then it logically follows that

one should also abandon its moral principles and tenets. This is supposed to happen, because Christianity demands that only God knows what is good and evil, not humanity. Therefore, only God's revelation can give the human race morality. Since people still think they know what is good and evil even after the refutation of God's existence, therefore this knowledge is only a lingering byproduct of Christian morality in society. Nietzsche argues that "when they [the English] therefore suppose that they no longer require Christianity as the guarantee of morality, we merely witness the *effects* of the dominion of the Christian value judgment and an expression of the strength and depth of this dominion" (Twilight 516; IX.5).

Nietzsche is a critic of egalitarianism, which is an ideal supported by liberals, utilitarians, and Christians. As I mentioned above, the notion of equality of rights developed from Christianity. Equality of all arose out of "[t]he 'equality of souls before God,' . . . this explosive . . . concept which eventually became revolution, modern idea, and the principle of decline of the whole order of society" (Antichrist 655; § 62).

Utilitarianism favors the happiness of the majority over the needs of the few. Nietzsche argues that the attainment of equality could degenerate into violence against the noble types. The common majority in society could attack the noble few, and violate their freedom and self-autonomy (Nietzsche's version). Political equality could degenerate into a tyranny of the majority "when 'equality of rights' could all too easily be changed into equality in violating rights—I mean, into a common war on all that is rare, strange, privileged, the higher man, the higher soul, the higher duty, the higher responsibility, and the abundance of creative power and masterfulness" (Beyond 329; § 212). Nietzsche considered this to be a real possibility and this seems to reflect what he argues about herd

morality, where it has the effect of “taming” the higher types and making them hate what they are.

Nietzsche criticizes Jean-Jacques Rousseau, because he believes that Rousseau’s political arguments gave rise to the French Revolution. In Human, All Too Human, he writes that revolutionaries believe that they can build a utopia through the overthrow of existing social orders. Rousseau argued that society is what corrupted human beings, and that they were more moral and pure in the state of nature. Such thinking is wrong, according to Nietzsche, because “[t]he experiences of history have taught us, unfortunately, that every such revolution brings about the resurrection of the most savage energies in the shape of long-buried dreadfulness and excesses of the most distant ages” (169; § I.463). In “The Wanderer and His Shadow,” Rousseau does not represent Enlightenment philosophy, because Rousseau set it “on its fanatical head” and made it “violent and repulsive” (Human 367; § 221). Also in the Twilight of the Idols, the concept of political equality is connected with the philosophy of Rousseau and the French Revolution. He blames this concept for the “gruesome and bloody events” that occurred during the French Revolution, which he believes has “seduced” Europe and a few noble types. He excludes Goethe from this list, because he experienced it with “*nausea*” (Twilight 553; IX.48). It is clear from these passages that Nietzsche despised political violence and revolution. He sees the possibility of such political revolution when the cry of equality is used to violently overthrow society and government.

The decline of the pathos of distance is tied to the rise of the political and philosophical concepts of equality. The demand that all people are inherently equal means that there are no substantial differences between individuals. He contends that it

has the goal of making different people similar. He writes, “‘Equality,’ as a certain factual increase in similarity, which merely finds expression in the theory of ‘equal rights,’ is an essential feature of decline” (*Twilight* 540; IX.37). He denounces political equality, because it would be better to acknowledge inequality than to make people be equal. “The doctrine of equality! . . . But there exists no more poisonous poison: for it *seems* to be preached by justice itself, while it is the *termination* of justice.” Nietzsche continues, “‘Equality for equals, inequality for unequals’—*that* would be the true voice of justice; and, what follows from it, ‘Never make equal what is unequal’” (Hollingdale’s translation) (*Twilight* 553; IX.48). Nietzsche was a harsh critic of the political and social implications of the popular demand for equality. He blames Rousseau for the way his political views were used by the revolutionaries in France, where many people were killed during the Terror. The call for equality is something that could be used to eliminate the noble type’s way of being. Equality would demand that they be different from what they are, and lower themselves to the level of the rest of society. Nietzsche argues that modern democracies are harmful to these types, which, therefore, would hurt the creation of culture. Traditional egalitarianism, according to Nietzsche, has the effect of demanding some level of conformity. The noble types would be forced to level themselves down to a common denominator. Noble morality rejects conformism when it supports the feeling that individuals are different, and that they should be allowed to be so.

The moralities of Christianity, liberalism, and utilitarianism are attacked for being unhealthy for the higher creative types. They have the effect of leveling different types of people to a common dominator. Christianity wants to excise the passions that it views

as evil, because they have the capacity to do bad things. Nietzsche responds that passions are only bad because some weaker individuals cannot handle their feelings constructively. These individuals only end up hurting themselves and others, but this does not mean that these passions must be eliminated. He contends that stronger individuals can spiritualize these passions and properly discipline them. These controlled passions can be the catalyst for higher creation and thought, therefore it is wrong to demand that everyone needs to rid themselves of these feelings. Liberalism and utilitarianism want to eliminate suffering and constraint, because they posit the notion that human actions aim at pleasure and happiness. They support a notion of freedom that it is simply the absence of constraints, which does not allow the individual to gain self-mastery. Nietzsche argues that this is wrong, because creative types need to discipline and constrain themselves. They need to suffer deeply in order to nurture and discipline their passions, which are needed for cultural achievements. Freedom should be conceived as the ability to strengthen and toughen one's self in order to achieve personal self-mastery. Nietzsche argues for the rule of an aristocracy of artists and philosophers, of who will be the legislators of new values, which will affirm a natural existence after the advent of nihilism.

Chapter Three:

Nietzsche's Aristocracy of Philosopher-Legislators

In this chapter I will discuss Nietzsche's support of an aristocratic political system. He endorses this political system during his late and early periods, but in his middle period he supports democracy. He argues that the "democratization of Europe is irresistible" and a democratic society will build barriers around itself in order to protect its culture "against barbarians, against pestilences, against *physical and spiritual barbarism*" (Human 376-377; "Wanderer . . ." § 275). He also asserts that democracy will overcome socialism, because it will institute a progressive tax system that will level out the inequalities of income and create a large middle class. He writes that this "middle class . . . will be in a position to *forget* socialism like an illness it has recovered from" (384; "Wanderer . . ." § 292). It is clear from these writings that Nietzsche was not wholeheartedly against democracy, but why the change in his later period? Keith Ansell-Pearson offers a good suggestion that Nietzsche's aim of changing our moral worldviews stays the same throughout both periods, but the means to this goal changes: "The principle difference between Nietzsche of the middle period and the Nietzsche of the later years is that, whereas the former envisages social and moral change taking place through a process of liberal recommendation, the latter construes the same process in terms of an aristocratic legislation" (96). The evidence that I use to support the aristocratic thesis is controversial, and I will deal with these issues near the end of this chapter.

Nietzsche supports the idea of an aristocratic politics, because it is the best political system that can accomplish his goals for humanity. He asserts that a hierarchical society is better suited for the enhancement of the human race: “Every enhancement of the type ‘man’ has so far been the work of an aristocratic society—and it will be so again and again—a society that believes in the long ladder of an order of rank and differences in value between man and man, and that needs slavery in some sense or other” (Beyond 391; § 257). Nietzsche does argue for the necessity of slavery for his aristocratic society, and that it will require the “sacrifice of untold human beings” who must be lowered to “incomplete human beings” (Beyond 392; § 258). This issue will be dealt with in the next chapter, suffice it to say here that the phrase denotes anyone who must work for a living. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean forced labor. It is important here to know that Nietzsche compares scholars to slaves, because they are a means to an end. He argues that the scholar “is an instrument, something of a slave though certainly the most sublime type of slave. . . . The objective man is an instrument, a precious, easily injured and clouded instrument for measuring . . . ; but he is no goal, no conclusion and sunrise, no complementary man in whom the *rest* of existence is justified” (Beyond 318; § 207).

Nietzsche contends that an aristocratic society is not an end in itself, but is a means for the creation of higher types of individuals (Beyond 392; § 258). This society will allow the higher types to elevate themselves up above everyone else, and complete their tasks of higher cultural achievements through the spiritualization of their passions. He contends that an aristocratic society is the preferable political institution for this task, because no other society respects the pathos of distance. He writes, “Their fundamental faith simply has to be that society must *not* exist for society’s sake but only as the

foundation and scaffolding on which a choice type of being is able to raise itself to its higher task and to a higher state of *being*” (Beyond 392; § 258). This system will be the greatest validation of society itself, and it will not serve any other higher political authority. He argues, “The essential characteristic of a good and healthy aristocracy, however, is that it experiences itself *not* as a function (whether of a monarchy or the commonwealth) but as their *meaning* and highest justification” (Beyond 392; § 258). Nietzsche contends that this political system will inaugurate a new era of political society.

Nietzsche describes the establishment of his political aristocracy as an era of “*grosse Politik*” or grand politics. This era is founded after the degeneration of European political institutions by the democratic movement. He contends that this movement has had the effect of leveling the many different European nationalities, and turning them into a homogeneous and nomadic race (Beyond 366; § 242). This group of people will need their existences to be justified, and this will require new types of political leaders. Nietzsche argues that “the over-all impression of such future Europeans will probably be that of manifold garrulous workers who will be poor in will, extremely employable, and as much in need of a master and commander as of their daily bread” (Beyond 366; § 242). He states that Europe will need to move away from the irrelevant politics of nationalism, which has divided the creative energies of its different nationalities and cultures. Also, Europe will need to counter the threat that Russia could present in the future. It is a threat, because this nation with its great stores of energy can erupt into a destructive nihilism: “uncertain whether as a will to negate or a will to affirm” (Beyond 321; § 208). Europe will need to counter this threat by uniting under the leadership of an

aristocratic class, where each European nation will bring its own particular creative abilities to build a better culture than what they could produce individually. Nietzsche argues:

I mean such an increase in the menace of Russia that Europe would have to resolve to become menacing too, namely, *to acquire one will* by means of a new caste that would rule Europe, a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goals millennia hence—so the long-drawn-out comedy of its many splinter states as well as its dynastic and democratic splinter wills would come to an end. The time for petty politics is over: the very next century will bring the fight for the dominion of the earth—the *compulsion to [grossen Politik]*” (Beyond 321; § 208).

This “new caste that would rule Europe” will have the united strength and the creative energies of an entire continent, which will allow it to face up to the challenge of nihilism. A ruling aristocracy of philosophers will be that class of leaders who will move Europe away from the petty politics of nationalism to the grand politics of the future (Ansell-Pearson, 148).

Nietzsche states that *grosse Politik* will be achieved through future wars that humanity has never experienced, and he calls this conflict a “Geisterkrieg” or war of spirits. It seems appropriate here to quote Nietzsche in full:

For when truth enters into a fight with the lies of millennia, we shall have upheavals, a convulsion of earthquakes, a moving of mountains and valleys, the like of which has never been dreamed of. The concept of politics will have merged entirely with a war of spirits; all power

structures of the old society will have been exploded—all of them are based on lies: there will be wars the like of which have never yet been seen on earth. It is only beginning with me that earth knows *grosse Politik* (Ecce Homo 783; IV.4).

He connects the coming of grand politics with future conflicts; I will argue that this is Nietzsche's attempt to engage in the wars started by Christianity and Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. I will answer the few objections of interpretation over the concepts of *Geisterkrieg* and *grosse Politik* later in this chapter. Nietzsche asserts that one of the goals of his aristocratic society will be the enhancement of the human race through a project of breeding.

As I mentioned above, Nietzsche argues that the enhancement of the human race occurs within an aristocratic society. This culture will use methods of breeding and cultivation in order to guarantee the survival of its people. This is necessary for the persistence of a culture that it continuously creates those who further its ends. He contends that, “[n]ow look for once at an aristocratic commonwealth—say, an ancient Greek *polis*, or Venice—as an arrangement, whether voluntary or involuntary, for *breeding*; human beings are together there who are dependent on themselves and want their species to prevail” (Beyond 400; § 262). He is relating to us here that aristocratic societies support themselves through the continuous cultivation of individuals who will continue the work of the enhancement of the human species. In the first chapter, I discussed the role that education played in the cultivation of higher types in individuals. This furthers the ends of higher culture through the creation of types with exceptional abilities and capacities for higher thinking and creativity. Nietzsche argues that the

qualities that allowed these aristocratic societies to survive and flourish were viewed as virtuous by them. The highest caste recognized that these virtues should be used in the nurturing of those who will become members of the aristocracy. Nietzsche states, “They [the aristocrats] do this with hardness, indeed they want hardness, every aristocratic morality is intolerant—in the education of youth, in their arrangements for women, in their marriage customs, in the relations of old and young, in their penal laws . . .—they consider intolerance itself a virtue, calling it ‘justice’” (Beyond 400; § 262). Nietzsche praises the Hindu law of Manu for developing a hierarchical society and for the cultivation of higher individuals.

Nietzsche commends the law of Manu for its attempt to breed individuals who will fit into a hierarchical society. He argues, “Let us consider the other case of so-called morality, the case of *breeding* a particular race and kind. The most magnificent example of this is furnished by Indian morality, sanctioned as religion in the form of ‘the law of Manu’” (Twilight 503; VII.3). Nietzsche also applauds the law of Manu for its recognition that differences in rank exist between individuals. The members of highest caste were the “pre-eminently spiritual ones,” the second caste was the physically strong ones, and the third caste represented the rest of society. Nietzsche argues that the highest caste had the task of creating aesthetic beauty, which was used to justify their world and the lives of those living within it. He writes, “The highest caste—I call them *the fewest*—being perfect, also has the privileges of the fewest: among them, to represent happiness, beauty, and graciousness on earth. Only to the most spiritual human beings is beauty permitted: among them alone is graciousness not weakness” (Antichrist 645; § 57). Only these individuals have the noble task of justifying earthly existence through philosophy

and art. Nietzsche's philosophers will play the role that the priestly caste played in the law of Manu as those with the privileged access of creating values. Nietzsche also gives the creation of new values that will overcome nihilism as another goal for his aristocratic society. It is through an aristocratic society that the creation of new values gets started: "it is the characteristic *right of masters* to create values" (Beyond 399; § 261).

Nietzsche contends that the task of the new philosophers will be to overcome nihilism through the creation of new values. It is important now to clarify the issue of nihilism in Nietzsche's philosophy. Ansell-Pearson defines the problem of nihilism as: "Western civilization [is] caught in the grip of debilitating and demoralizing nihilism in which our most fundamental conceptions of the world are no longer tenable and believable" (7). Nihilism is a problem because the values that gave our lives meaning have become rationally suspect and illegitimate after the death of God. This is connected to my earlier discussion about the way that culture gives value and meaning to life. Nietzsche, in his later period, does not blame reality for the meaninglessness of existence, but on nihilism. Philosophy will play a major role in the creation of values, which will affirm life. Nietzsche's clearest, yet most literary, writing on nihilism and the death of God occurred in The Gay Science in the parable of the madman. He writes that a madman enters into a village screaming that he is searching for God, but when he fails to find Him, he accuses the people there of killing Him. Nietzsche writes, "'Whither is God?' [the madman] cried; 'I will tell you. *We have killed him*—you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now?'" (Gay Science 181; § 125). The

madman then compares our situation to a planet cast adrift in space with no purpose or direction, it floats aimlessly. This passage is supposed to represent the way our civilization has lost its compass and direction, which was previously given by religious doctrine. Now, without God, humanity loses its meaning and purpose in the world. The loss of the “entire horizon” means the loss of our traditional foundational beliefs and worldviews. Nihilism is the loss of all metaphysical and moral principles that supported human existence (Ansell-Pearson, 7). Nihilism is also beneficial because this allows the conditions for the establishment of an aristocratic society (Abbey & Appel 103). Nietzsche argues that it “brings to light the weaker and less secure among them and thus promotes an order of rank according to strength, from the point of view of health: those who command are recognized as those who command, those who obey as those who obey” (Will 38; § 55).

The new philosophers will be the lawmakers of these values; they will decide what things should be and the way things ought to be. They will posit new goals for the human race, and they will use anyone who will be useful in this endeavor. Nietzsche writes, “*Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say, ‘thus it shall be!’*” They first determine the Wither and For What of man, and in so doing have at their disposal the preliminary labor of all philosophical laborers, all who have overcome the past” (Beyond 326; § 211). Nietzsche clarifies who these laborers are; they are the scientists and scholars of knowledge, which he refers to in an unpublished note. The philosopher-legislators will use those who contribute to knowledge in their creative endeavors. They will use these individuals’ scientific and intellectual labors to further the end of creating new values. Nietzsche states that “they [the new philosophers]

dispose of the preparatory work of scientific men, and all knowledge is for them only a means for creation” (Will 510; § 972).

The creation of new values is tied to the revaluation of old values, because the old ones must be replaced to make way for the new ones. Nietzsche contends that there cannot be creation without destruction, because in order to overcome nihilism, one must overcome the values that caused it. Nietzsche’s Zarathustra states that ‘whoever must be a creator in good and evil, verily, he must first be an annihilator and break values. Thus the highest evil belongs to the highest goodness: but this is creative’ (Thus Spoke Zarathustra 228; “On Self-Overcoming”). In an unpublished note, the destruction of nihilistic values is necessary in order to provide the conditions for the creation of new ones. In the past, great individuals and artists were the creators of laws and values, which gave meaning to life. Nietzsche argues, “Law-giving moralities are the principle means of fashioning man according to the pleasure of a creative and profound will, provided that such an artist’s will of the first rank has the power in its hands and can make its creative will prevail through long periods of time, in the form of laws, religions, and customs” (Will 501; § 957). The problem with this occurring in modernity is that such individuals are missing today, because of the prohibitions and consequences of herd morality. In Chapter Two, I explained that this morality hurt the creation and cultivation of these higher types. This is why the overturning of old values needs to be accomplished before the creation of newer ones. Nietzsche writes, “To prepare a *reversal of values* for a certain strong kind of man of the highest spirituality and strength of will and to this end slowly and cautiously to unfetter a host of instincts now kept in check and calumniated” (Will 503; § 957). This task can be accomplished through the works of great

philosophers. They will have the goal of enhancing the human race by creating values that will affirm human existence during an age of nihilism. The new philosophers will exercise significant influence over society, but this does not mean that they will necessarily control the levers of power.

Nietzsche argues that his new philosophers will exercise political influence over society by creating the criterion that will decide who will become members of the aristocracy. He contends that the new philosophers can influence society through indirect means; this path to political power is for those who do not wish to get actively involved in the everyday work of government. They still have political power, but political power does not necessarily mean that one needs to be in government. For example, the media has political power by keeping those in power accountable, and think tanks and special interest groups also exercise political power outside of government as well. The new philosophers will use their influence to choose those who will be members of Nietzsche's political aristocracy. The new philosophers can use outside influences, like religious institutions, to change and reorder society. He writes that:

[I]f a few individuals of such noble descent are inclined through lofty spirituality to prefer a more withdrawn and contemplative life and reserve for themselves only the most subtle type of rule . . . , then religion can even be used as a means for obtaining peace from the noise and exertion of *cruder* forms of government, and purity from the *necessary* dirt of all politics (Beyond 262-263; § 61).

Nietzsche uses the example of the Brahmins of India, who influenced their society through similar means. They had the power to manipulate the state into getting people in

power who were more in line with their views. This allowed them the power to control those who had to do the work of running the government, so that they can concentrate on their higher aims and pursuits. Nietzsche explains that “by means of a religious organization they gave themselves the power of nominating the kings of the people while they themselves kept and felt apart and outside, as men of higher and supra-royal tasks” (Beyond 263; § 61).

These new philosophers will use their greater influence to choose the aristocrats in their society. This is one way that the members of Nietzsche’s new aristocracy would be chosen. Like the Brahmins, these philosophers will use their higher and respected status to choose those who would lead the government, without necessarily being in power themselves. An example will clarify what I mean: philosophers can influence those in power through powerful think tanks and universities in order to influence the government’s political agenda. Another example is the political power that Grover Norquist exercises over Republican politicians whose campaigns’ success rests upon his endorsement, this the way that powerful individuals can exercise authority outside of government. This aristocracy will be chosen by a criterion based upon one’s natural talents and abilities. Such a society is consistent with Nietzsche’s goal of a hierarchical system.

The evidence that I have used to show that Nietzsche supports an aristocratic politics is very controversial. Many interpreters question whether he really did support such a system. David Owen claims that Nietzsche did not support the establishment of aristocratic political institutions, because the enhancement of the human race could be accomplished within a democratic system. Maudemarie Clark also asserts that Nietzsche

supports democracy, because, while it does degenerate our modern political institutions, it is acceptable because the creation of higher individuals can occur within a decadent society. The issues of a “*Geisterkrieg*” and “*grosse Politik*” are also controversial, because it is unclear by what Nietzsche means by “war.” I will deal with the secondary literature over these issues, which views that this war is violent and that *grosse Politik* does not show that Nietzsche has a coherent political philosophy. Also, Nietzsche’s support of the law of Manu is controversial as well; Thomas Brobjer questions whether Nietzsche actually views this past hierarchical society as a political society that should be emulated. I think that it is important to deal with these arguments now before I answer the many different conceptions of Nietzsche’s political philosophy (or lack thereof) in the following chapters.

I will first answer the objections made by Owen and Clark. Owen argues that the enhancement of individual human beings need not necessarily occur within an aristocracy. He argues that a noble morality can be developed without recourse to hierarchical institutions. He uses what Nietzsche said about the development of the sovereign individual and the way that the ascetic priest has used *ressentiment* to make individuals critically reflective, which can be used to make a higher type of individual. Owen argues, “What is crucial about this development is that it involves a *reflexive* ethical relationship of the self to itself, which is not mediated through forms of social hierarchy” (124). Nietzsche appears to recommend the sovereign individual, because this person has reached a level of noble self-mastery and self-respect. The sovereign individual is superior, because he or she cultivates a sense of self-respect and self-appraisal. Owen argues that “to recognize oneself as a being who can stand as a

sovereign individual is the ground of recognition self-respect, the ground of appraisive self-respect is standing to oneself as a sovereign individual with all the demands it entails” (116). Nietzsche’s overman ideal is an individual who conceives of his- or herself as a sovereign individual (125). Owen asserts that “[t]he noble soul reveres itself because it is engaged in overcoming itself. To stand as a sovereign individual is, thus, to stand to oneself as one who seeks to extend oneself beyond one’s current powers. In holding this view, Nietzsche is committed to a processual (i.e., non-teleological) perfectionism” (118).

Owen is wrong in presupposing that Nietzsche endorses the sovereign individual as an ideal. The evidence that Owen uses to support this claim comes from the second essay from the Genealogy of Morals. Hatab argues that the sovereign individual is something that Nietzsche does not endorse, because this was a concept that was created in order to make people “calculable, uniform, and morally responsible” (“Breaking” 171). He points out that the sovereign individual is problematic for Nietzsche, because this person was developed through tortures and punishments that made the individual morally accountable, which is connected to the ascetic ideal that Nietzsche denounces (172). In Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche considers our modern age as one that developed people to judge their actions by their intentions based on a notion of self-knowledge (Beyond 233-235; § 32). Nietzsche then argues that this era will be overcome by a new era of morality, and Hatab concludes that this proves that the sovereign individual is not someone of the future, but part of the modern era (“Breaking” 172). I contend, therefore, that Owen is wrong in arguing that the sovereign individual is the future übermensch,

because Nietzsche conceived of the sovereign individual as a social construct that society created to control the masses.

One could still object by arguing that Nietzsche still respects the sovereign individual as an ideal. Ansell-Pearson points out that the sovereign individual is a person who is developed to be “supra-ethical,” which is an individual who has overcome the morality of custom and can hold his- or herself as responsible for his or her own character (135). It seems that the sovereign individual who was firstly a product of herd morality can eventually overcome it. So, this individual is someone Nietzsche can endorse. Christa Acampora points out that the idea of making oneself responsible for oneself to oneself is inconsistent with Nietzsche’s support of *amor fati*, or the love of fate (133). The sovereign individual is a person cultivated to believe that being responsible for his or her character can help this individual overcome fate. This is inconsistent with Nietzsche’s conception of the higher individual’s love of fate (133). Nietzsche argues that “[m]y formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity (Ecce Homo 714; II.10). Acampora concludes, “*Replacing* the ideal that would prevent one from loving one’s fate is precisely what Nietzsche envisions at the end of the second essay, and Zarathustra is supposed to make such overcoming possible (133). Also, she makes the point that nowhere in Nietzsche’s mature writings does the sovereign individual appear (134). This person is not mentioned along with the overman in Thus Spoke Zarathustra nor was he or she mentioned in in Beyond Good and Evil. This concept only returns in his unpublished notes, which do not lend themselves to any positive interpretation. Acampora concludes

that there is not enough textual evidence to support the claim the Nietzsche endorses the sovereign individual (134).

It seems that the sovereign individual is a supra-moral entity shows that this individual has been liberated from herd morality, a prospect that Nietzsche endorses. Hatab recognizes that supra-moral is *übersittlich* in German and that the sovereign individual is only liberated from *der Sittlichkeit der Sitte* (the morality of custom) (Nietzsche's On the 76). He argues, "It seems that *übersittlich* is more in line with the modernist notion of liberation from custom and tradition (*Sitte*), and therefore it is closer to the modern construction of rational morality (*Moralität*), and the term Nietzsche generally uses for morality is *Moral*" (Nietzsche's On the 76-77). The sovereign individual is closer the Kant's position, which Nietzsche wants to overcome, that rational autonomy and the morality of customs are mutually exclusive (77). The sovereign individual is only liberated from a conservative morality of customs, but Nietzsche wants an individual to overcome all modern moralities. So, the sovereign individual is a person that Nietzsche wants to overcome with a new type of person who is "post-rational, post-autonomous, post-sovereign" (Nietzsche's On the 78).

Clark offers a different argument as to whether Nietzsche actually endorses an aristocratic political system in Beyond Good and Evil. If these philosophers were to literally rule, then when would they find the time to be the creators of new values? Clark grants that Nietzsche considers modern democracies to be the decay of political institutions, but, because this decay can be the impetus behind the creation of great individuals, he is in fact endorsing democracy (124-125). Nietzsche argues that the improvement of individuals can occur in degenerate societies, and democratic systems

are what degenerated societies (Clark 125). She argues a democracy can create great individuals and aristocratic values. She writes that “the ‘decay’ of the political order brought about by the development of democratic institutions has made possible the very aristocratic society that Nietzsche wants to encourage, that of his ‘new philosophers’” (125). Clark suggests that Nietzsche only supports aristocratic values and not aristocratic political institutions per se. For example, it is perfectly compatible for a democracy to support differences in wealth and status as long as they are merited. A democracy can support economic inequality as compatible with its goal of equal regard under the law.

I disagree with Clark, because even though the support of aristocratic values and the pathos of distance within a democratic society maybe possible, but it may not be enough for Nietzsche’s goals. The establishment of aristocratic institutions and politics is needed in order to make the realization of Nietzsche’s higher goals more successful than just through cultural means. It seems that the efficacy of the legislation of values can be more easily secured, if there is a political aristocracy to make sure that these new values are more effectively implemented throughout society. I also question the capability of a democratic system to sustain the aristocratic pathos of distance that Nietzsche supports. An aristocratic political system, at least for Nietzsche, can successfully maintain a hierarchical society longer than a democratic society can. It seems that, for Nietzsche, the spread of democracy eventually hurts the pathos of distance. Nietzsche’s possible response maybe that a democracy can support the creation of great individuals and aristocratic values for a while, but the constant catering to the general public will lower the quality of the higher individual’s cultural achievements and hinder the pathos of distance.

What Nietzsche means by “war of spirits” is controversial, because he is somewhat unclear as to what this war really means. Detwiler argues that the *Geisterkrieg* means actual armed conflict and violence (56). Paul von Tongeren argues that *grosse Politik* offers an anti-political interpretation and not a positive one. Detwiler connects what Nietzsche said about the threat that Russia presents, and that Europe will have to become “menacing” too in order to face this threat shows that Nietzsche implies a military threat. He also argues that Nietzsche’s use of phrases such as “blood and iron” and that the old political structures will have to be “exploded” shows that great politics will be forged in violence (Beyond §254; Ecce Homo IV.1, qtd. in Detwiler 56). “The final point suggested by the passage from Ecce Homo has to do with the apocalyptic nature of the great politics of the future: ‘There will be wars the like of which have never yet been seen on earth.’” Detwiler continues that “[t]o be sure, these wars are the wars of the spirit at least as much as war of ‘blood and iron,’ but both of the above passages from Beyond Good and Evil suggest that they will be wars of ‘blood and iron’ as well” (56-57). I contend that Detwiler is wrong in his interpretation on the issue of what Nietzsche means by war of spirits. The war of spirits is not about violent conflict, but it is a war between ideas. Violent conflict has been around since the Trojan War, so armed conflict is something that humanity has already experienced. Julian Young argues that the war of spirits is a clash of worldviews, such as, Nietzsche’s conflict with Christianity (194). Rebekah Peery also agrees that the war of spirits is a war of ideas and not of armed soldiers. She writes that “[w]ar, or wars, meant essentially the war of ideas, of words, regarding *values* and *truth* or *lies*” (139). It is wrong to argue that Nietzsche is supporting the notion that great politics can be achieved through armed warfare. This

war is about the revaluation of values and the overturning of old ones where Nietzsche is fighting on the side of a life-affirming morality against all life-denying herd ones (Drochon 67-73).

Paul von Tongeren argues that the concepts of the “war of spirits” and “great politics” do not imply a coherent political philosophy (81). He agrees with the contention that these wars are not about the conflict between nations, which Nietzsche considers to be a part of the petty politics of nationalism. These concepts are not political because this war will be the destruction of all contending parties by turning them into “spectres.” The war of spirits is not against one moral system versus another, because these factions dissolve when “all power structures of the old society have been exploded” (Tongeren 81; qtd in Ecce Homo IV.1). He concludes that “Nietzsche is not (or at least not only) a political philosopher, but rather an ‘über-politischer Denker’ – this time not in the sense of ‘super-political’, but rather in the sense of going ‘beyond’ politics” (81).

Hugo Drochon rejects Tongeren’s contention that the war of spirits will bring the destruction of all competing parties and turning them into “spectres” (79). Nietzsche imagines this as his declaration of war against Christianity and the petty politics of German nationalism. They both use concepts like “geistlicher Kampf [spiritual warfare]” and “kulturrekampf [cultural struggle],” respectively, and this means that when Nietzsche calls for a war he means a war against these two opposing value systems (68-69). Nietzsche places his stance against these two forces in favor of his “party of life.” Nietzsche writes that “let us suppose that my attempt to assassinate two millennia of antinature and desecration of man were to succeed. That new party of life which would tackle the greatest of all tasks, the attempt to raise humanity higher, including the

relentless destruction of everything that was degenerating and parasitical” (Ecce Homo 730; III “The Birth of Tragedy” 4). Drochon concludes that “Nietzsche’s declared a ‘Mind-war’ on behalf of the ‘Party of Life’ against the ‘Party of Christianity’ seriously challenges van Tongeren’s notion that *Geisterkrieg* [war of spirits] is a ‘war of spect[res],’ not between “well-defined and determined parties, but wars in which the parties themselves dissolve” (79). Drochon shows that Nietzsche did envision a war between competing parties. It is a war between life-denying moralities (like Christianity and nationalism) and life-affirming moralities that Nietzsche wants to see created. This new era in politics requires a hierarchical society, because such a society is needed, according to Nietzsche, to allow the enhancement of humanity (Abbey & Appel 101).

It is also controversial as to whether Nietzsche actually supports the law of Manu as an example for a good society and as a breeding program. Brobjer argues that Nietzsche’s use of the law of Manu does not show that Nietzsche endorses this as an ideal political society. He asserts that Nietzsche did not support the law of Manu, because it, along with Christianity, represents holy lies (305). Nietzsche argues against the law of Manu because they stop any new experimentation, which he supports because such experimentation is necessary when creating new values (Brobjer 305). Nietzsche’s critique of Christianity and Hinduism in the Antichrist show that he does not endorse Manu over Christianity, because both of them are nihilistic (Brobjer 307). Brobjer concludes that “Nietzsche clearly states that Christianity and Buddhism both ‘belong together as nihilistic religions – they are *décadence* religions’” (Brobjer 307; Antichrist § 20). Nietzsche does not support the law of Manu as a political ideal, because they represent nihilistic values that cannot serve life.

I disagree with Brobjer in that Nietzsche may object to the means that certain noble cultures use to enhance their people, but that does not mean that he rejects the notion that a hierarchical society can improve the human race. To say that Nietzsche had a few disagreements with any particular idea or ideas, like the law of Manu, does not mean that he did not find something useful in it. He did disagree with its theological foundations, but there may be something interesting in these laws that he approved of. Julian Young argues that just because Nietzsche criticized the law of Manu as holy lies does not mean that Nietzsche is rejecting the hierarchical society that Manu created (187-189). Nietzsche supports hierarchical societies that are based on the natural differences between individuals, and the fault with Manu is that this society created an artificial hierarchy. The law of Manu was unnatural, because it tried to stratify society without any regard as to whether the higher caste was naturally composed of noble types. This is similar to Nietzsche's criticism of liberalism as an unnatural morality, because it tries to erase natural differences between people, instead of artificially creating them like the law of Manu (188). Young concludes that "the fundamental mistake in the Brobjer . . . position is this. Correctly perceiving that Nietzsche objects to the hierarchical society based on the holy . . . lie, [he] wrongly conclude[s] that Nietzsche has no axe to grind in favor of hierarchical societies as such. . . . He does" (189).

Alex McIntyre questions whether the new philosophers will exercise political power or spiritual power. He argues that Nietzsche's order of rank between noble and base is a spiritual hierarchy, and not a social one of political domination and rule (82). He also contends that these philosophers will not exercise direct political rule, but that they are "above and yet over" the real political leaders (McIntyre 82). So, there is no

need for philosopher-kings or for philosophers to become kings, because their power rests upon their creative abilities to create new values. McIntyre concludes that “the only solution is to aim at a spiritual hierarchy of noble and base types of men wherein the philosopher rules as a spiritual legislator rather than as a direct political ruler” (83-84). McIntyre’s argument is similar to Clark’s except that he accepts the apolitical thesis, because Nietzsche’s goal of superior individuals can occur within any political society (1-21). So, my argument against McIntyre is similar, because cultural means of creating new values and greater types may not be sustainable enough for Nietzsche’s aims. Many societies support aristocratic values and individuals, but that does not mean that these values have any effect upon that society. In our modern world, we do celebrate great achievements and great geniuses, but these things do not have much lasting effect upon our society, and even if they do their impact is not to the extent that Nietzsche would have liked. In America, some sectors of our society do support geniuses (like MENSA), but our elected leaders speak at a tenth grade level. So, for these individuals to have a significant impact upon society, they need the power of an aristocratic politics to effectively change society.

Nietzsche argues for an aristocratic political system, because it has the ability to create new values and to enhance the human race. Nietzsche considers the rise of this aristocracy to be the beginning of an era of great politics, which will be achieved through a war of spirits and the leveling of Europe. The enhancement of humanity occurs through a project of breeding. Nietzsche supports the law of Manu because they created a hierarchical society that had the aim of creating great individuals. This system will be headed by a group of philosopher legislators, who will be the creators of new values.

These new values will overcome nihilism. The new philosophers will choose who will become members of the new aristocracy, like the Brahmins in India.

Chapter Four:

An Aristocratic Fascist?

Bruce Detwiler argues that Nietzsche's aristocratic politics implies a fascistic and authoritarian government. He connects what Nietzsche says about the breeding of higher types with his statements about how all weaknesses and failures should perish implies a forced eugenics. Detwiler also asserts that because Nietzsche rejects the moral distinctions between good and evil, rejects conventional justice, and inherent individual rights; his politics, if successfully established, will be fascistic. He reasons that while Nietzsche did not argue, like most fascists, that the individual should be sacrificed for the good of the state, he does appear to make the claim that the individual should be sacrificed for the good of higher individuals (Detwiler 113-114). I agree with Detwiler's broader position that Nietzsche advocates for the establishment of an aristocratic politics, but I disagree with Detwiler that Nietzsche's aristocratic politics implies a fascistic political system.

Detwiler asserts that because Nietzsche calls for the enslavement of the majority in society points towards a fascistic politics. Nietzsche does call for the institution of slavery in many of his writings. In The Gay Science, he asserts that "every strengthening and enhancement of the human type also involves a new kind of enslavement" (338; § 377). He also writes in "The Greek State" that "we must learn to identify as a cruel-sounding truth the fact that *slavery belongs to the essence of a culture*: a truth, granted,

that leaves open no doubt about the absolute value of existence. . . . The misery of men living a life of toil has to be increased to make the production of the world of art possible for a small number of Olympian men” (166). Detwiler interprets these passages (and others) and asserts that because the individual has no inherent worth, the slaves’ existence is of little concern for Nietzsche except as a means to the nobles’ end (106). Detwiler argues, “There are, however, many passages, especially in the later writings, suggesting that the average, all-too-human, and typically slavish individual is of no consequence whatsoever except insofar as his existence has some bearing on the well-being of the higher type” (107).

Detwiler asserts that Nietzsche views the majority of human beings as expendable, and their elimination will help in the enhancement of the human race. In the Antichrist, Nietzsche argues that what is good is what expands one’s power, one’s will to power, and power in general. “What is bad?” Nietzsche asks is “[e]verything that is born of weakness.” He continues that “[t]he weak and the failures shall perish: first principle of *our* love of man. And they shall even be given every possible assistance” (570; § 2). Detwiler connects this to what Nietzsche says about the enhancement of the human race and breeding and argues that “Nietzsche at least toyed with the idea of a compulsory eugenics program” (108). He uses an unpublished note that Nietzsche initially intended for the Twilight of Idols, but removed it at the last minute, to support this argument (108). It is appropriate here to quote the note in full:

Society, as the great trustee of life, is responsible to life itself for every miscarried life—it also has to pay for such lives: consequently it ought to prevent them. In numerous cases, society ought to prevent procreation: to

this end, it may hold in readiness, without regard to descent, rank, or spirit, the most rigorous means of constraint, deprivation of freedom, in certain cases castration.—

The Biblical prohibition . . . of life to decadents: ‘thou shalt not procreate!’—Life itself recognizes no solidarity, no ‘equal rights,’ between the healthy and the degenerate parts of an organism: one must excise the latter—or the whole will perish.—Sympathy for decadent, equal rights for the ill-constituted—that would be the profoundest immorality, that would be antinature itself as morality!” (Will 389; § 734).

Detwiler concludes that these passages show that Nietzsche had no respect for the lives of those whom he deemed inconsequential (108-109).

Detwiler does grant that Nietzsche is not envisioning a breeding program similar to that of the Nazis. He does not call for the elimination of the Jews or the breeding of a pure German race (Detwiler 110). Nietzsche argues that the Jews, as a group, will be included in and help create the new aristocracy (Beyond 376-379; § 251). Also, the “blond beast” in the Genealogy of Morals should not be confused with the Aryan ideal, because Nietzsche includes the Arabs, the Japanese, and the Homeric Heroes within that category (477; I.11). Detwiler also acknowledges that breeding for Nietzsche is not entirely about eugenics, it also includes cultural and educational component: “The word ‘breeding’ (*Zucht, Züchtung*) both in English and in German can have a cultural as well as biological connotation. . . . There is also abundant evidence that Nietzsche’s thoughts on ‘breeding the man of the future’ include a strong cultural component” (111).

It cannot be denied that biological breeding plays a major role in the creation of the higher types. In Nietzsche's later writings, he stresses the importance of biological breeding over education. He argues in favor of hereditary breeding: "There is only nobility of birth, only nobility of blood" (Will 495; § 942). Detwiler concludes that "it seems somewhat irresponsible to ignore the frightening implications of what Nietzsche does say. Politically as well as spiritually, Nietzsche inhabits a realm that is beyond good and evil, beyond any conventional notion of justice, beyond the sanctity of the typical individual, and beyond all conventional notions of compassion" (113).

I contend that Nietzsche's aristocracy does not have affinities to fascism. Against Detwiler, Nietzsche's conception of slavery is not forced labor, because he includes scientists and scholars as slaves. They serve an important purpose in aiding and helping the higher philosophers in their tasks. In Chapter One, I wrote that these individuals will find meaningful work under the higher types. In an unpublished note, Nietzsche argues that an individual's will to power can be expressed through working under a noble type. He writes, "Enrollment, so as to satisfy the will to power in a larger whole: submission, making oneself indispensable and useful to those in power" (Will 406; § 774).

Detwiler is wrong to argue that Nietzsche's program of breeding implies the elimination of weak and decadent human beings and races. Detwiler is mistaken in his interpretation of what Nietzsche says in The Anti-Christ, because the elimination of "the weak and the failures" is not about actual people and races. Nietzsche continues in the same aphorism that "[w]hat is more harmful than any vice? Active pity for all the failures and all the weak: Christianity" (570; § 2). Detwiler does include this line when he quotes Nietzsche, but he does not elaborate on it. Nietzsche connects failures with

Christianity, so he only wants to eliminate this herd morality as the cause of the weaknesses and failures in humanity. Nietzsche argues that pity (*Mitleid*), which in German means “suffering-with,” is nihilistic, because it diminishes one’s capacity for action and it only increases the number of sufferers when people begin to suffer with those who were already suffering (Antichrist 572-574; § 7). He does not reject all pity, because he argues that pity is appropriate for a noble type only if he or she feels it for a social inferior (Beyond 395; § 260). It is appropriate for the noble types to feel pity, but not between themselves. Frederick Appel points out that pity is condescending towards the one who is pitied, which will not be good if this is practiced amongst the higher orders (91). The relationship between the nobles is one that is hard and competitive, where one noble is encouraged to call out another noble’s faults. They are hard against each other in this manner, because this allows the nobles to overcome resistances, which allow them to accomplish their higher goals (Appel 92-93). So, the aristocrats in Nietzsche’s philosophy would feel pity towards their social inferiors, which suggests that they will not willingly harm them. Pity is only prohibited amongst the aristocracy.

Nietzsche wants to overcome all moralities and worldviews that are harmful to life and degenerate it. It is clear that Nietzsche only wants to eliminate the causes of failures. Yet, he wants these moralities to continue the march of nihilism, but only in order to let them fail. This will allow the philosophers to fill in the void that these devalued beliefs served in the lives of those living within society. I contend that he removed the quote from the Twilight of the Idols, because he did not want to eliminate lower types of people. In another unpublished note, Nietzsche argues that the existences of the higher individual and the herd-like individual are both necessary (Ward 18; qtd in

KSA 12:10[59]). Ward argues that while Nietzsche does say that both types are necessary to each other, but they cannot be equally valuable (19). So, this should not imply that Nietzsche is giving equal worth to the lower and higher types. As Ward states, “So if one were to pose the question of Nietzsche . . . ‘Does this mean that both types are equally valuable?’ it would be legitimate . . . for Nietzsche to answer: ‘No, for the solitary type, as a powerful, internally disciplined type, possesses a further intrinsic value which the herd type does not’” (19). So, the respect for others is still consistent with the societal pathos of distance.

In The Antichrist, Nietzsche makes it very clear that the higher types should treat their social inferiors with kindness. He writes this after his praise for the law of Manu, which shows that breeding should not include the purposeful harm of lower types of people. He asserts, “It would be completely unworthy of a more profound spirit to consider mediocrity as such an objection. In fact, it is the very *first* necessity if there are to be exceptions: a higher culture depends on it. When the exceptional human being treats the mediocre more tenderly than himself and his peers, this is not mere politeness of the heart—it is simply his *duty*” (Antichrist 647; § 57). The noble types do not want to eliminate any degenerate people, because this will destroy the pathos of distance. This feeling of superiority is necessary for the noble types, and to eradicate any group or people from the lower orders will undercut this feeling. In the past, the elimination of any group of people was done out of a hatred or bigotry, which appears to be a form of herd-like *ressentiment* that one wishes to see one’s enemies destroyed. Nietzsche argues against the Christian Church on the grounds that it wants to eliminate its enemies (Antichrist 488; V.3). So, the desire to eliminate a group of people because they are

offensive in some way is just the type of response that Nietzsche would expect from a herd type of individual, not from a noble person. The pathos of distance is built upon the necessity of a hierarchical structure, which allows the nobles to have their feeling of superiority over the masses. The existences of the mediocre and herd-like individuals are necessary for this society and for this feeling of distance. When Nietzsche calls for new commanders (Beyond 307; § 203), this implies the necessity of the existence of those who obey.

Even supposing that Nietzsche endorses the note he removed from the Twilight of the Idols, this still does not prove that Nietzsche would have wanted to eliminate any group of people to accomplish the breeding of noble types of individuals. Drochon points out that while Nietzsche's views on breeding do seem authoritarian, nevertheless, he did not call out for the willful destruction of any group of people (78). Drochon also argues that the removed note from the Twilight should not be interpreted as saying that Nietzsche supported the elimination of any group of people. Even though Nietzsche did say that society had a responsibility over the breeding of people and that castration should be used, he did not advocate for genocide. Drochon asserts that Nietzsche "states his desire to 'annihilate everything parasitical,' this must be understood as either the overcoming or the dying out of such life-forms" (78). Nietzsche in an unpublished note asserts that some groups will eventually die, because "those who do not believe in it [the eternal return²] will finally, because of their nature, *die out*," which suggests that such people will not be eliminated through force (Drochon 78; qtd in KSA 9:11[338]).

² The Eternal Return is a test that figures out who has the strength to affirm an earthly and finite existence. One is asked if he or she can accept the notion that he or she will have to relive his or her entire life over and over for all eternity. Nietzsche contends that only the strong types would affirm the Eternal Return (Gay Science 274; § 341).

Drochon concludes that the overcoming of herd morality will help in the enhancement of the human race by getting rid of the philosophical worldviews that causes the degeneration within a group of people: “Nowhere does Nietzsche ever suggest that massacres should be committed” (78).

One could object that Nietzsche’s support of an aristocracy of blood and birth could show that he had an interest in separating bad bloodlines from good ones. Also, even the fact that he even thought about eugenics shows that his politics is dangerous. There is no way that Nietzsche could condemn the nobles’ violent acts if they could further Nietzsche’s political goals. My response is that such actions would be inconsistent with the political aims of Nietzsche’s aristocracy. He informs his readers in the Genealogy of Morals about the way the first nobles treated those below them and what happened to them. He relates to us that these nobles killed, murdered, raped, and pillaged those weaker than themselves (Genealogy 476; I.11). This can be used to show that Nietzsche’s new aristocrats would behave in the same manner. Yet, Nietzsche tells us that these nobles bred *ressentiment* within the lower orders, which led to the overthrow of the first nobles. This is a fact that Nietzsche recognizes and expects his future readers within the new nobility to also comprehend. If the nobility commits such acts in the future, then history will repeat itself. If the new nobility eliminates groups of degenerate people, then this will breed resentment against this nobility again and cause them to be overthrown again. The goal of the enhancement of the human race and the breeding of higher types would be stifled again if the nobility tries to murder those within the lower orders of society. The nobility described in the Genealogy of Morals is the nobility of the past that Nietzsche expects his new aristocracy will learn from and not repeat their

mistakes. So, violence against inferiors is inconsistent with Nietzsche's political goals, because this will cause the new aristocracy to be overthrown and will prevent Nietzsche's higher goals for humanity from being realized.

Werner Dannhauser makes the additional point that while Nietzsche was not a Nazi nor would he have supported their views on racial purity and anti-Semitism; his words did inspire individuals like Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. He states that "the fact remains that in various ways Nietzsche influenced fascism. Fascism may have abused the words of Nietzsche, but his words are singularly easy to abuse. . . . A man who counsels men to live dangerously must expect to have dangerous men like Mussolini heed his counsel" (849). Alexander Nehamas carries this argument further by questioning whether Nietzsche could denounce a type of person like Hitler and Mussolini. Nietzsche's rejection of most modern moralities and his support of immorality and cruelty show that he has no grounds to denounce them. If there is a Hitler-type that fits all of Nietzsche's descriptions of a noble type of person, then on what ground does Nietzsche have to reject this individual? Nehamas says no, because Nietzsche rejects the notion that there are no actions that are morally wrong-in-themselves. So, based on these grounds, Nietzsche could not have denounced the actions of such an individual (96-100).

It is true that based on Nietzsche's rejection of absolute moral laws means that he could not condemn genocide as an evil-in-itself. He cannot, like Kant, say that some actions are always and forever wrong, because they treat other people as means to an end and not as ends in themselves. Nevertheless, Nietzsche would not have supported the elimination of certain groups of people just because they are decadent. He only

advocates for the elimination of worldviews and philosophies that cause the degeneration of a people. Also, Nietzsche rejects most forms of political violence, such as when he rejects Rousseau's philosophy because of the way that his ideas were used to justify the violence of the French Revolution and Robespierre's regime during the Terror.

One could still be object that Nietzsche cannot denounce any immoral action as absolutely wrong in itself, which means that a Nietzschean is at pains to denounce any possible immoral action by any noble type of political leader. Only point against this, based on Nietzsche's writings, is when he argues that the noble type has a duty to show kindness to those below him- or herself. It is still possible that this commandment of Nietzsche's could fit into his philosophy, because it is not beneficial to life if people are executed by higher individuals for whatever reason. Also, Nietzsche's new philosophers will have the task of creating life enhancing values, and this would be oxymoronic if this was accomplished through killing people. So, it is hard to think of a way that war crimes and genocide could serve life.

One could argue that what is to prevent Nietzsche's aristocracy from becoming a fascistic government, if it could be established? Nietzsche values the need of opponents and enemies as a motivation for higher achievements and accomplishments. It is important here to discuss the difference between good Eris and bad Eris in "Homer's Contest." Nietzsche asserts that good Eris compels individuals towards higher goods and achievements, while bad Eris leads one towards war and violence. He writes that

And not just Aristotle, but the whole of Greek antiquity thinks about grudge and envy differently from us and agrees with Hesiod, who first portrays one Eris as wicked, in fact the one who leads men into hostile

struggle-to-the-death, and then praises the other Eris as good who, as jealousy, grudge and envy, goads men to action, not, however, the action of a struggle-to-the-death but the action of the *contest* [*agon*] (177).

Nietzsche favors good Eris, because this deity causes individuals to engage in constructive competition, which furthers the ends of culture. A good example is the contest between Homer and Hesiod, where their competition created the greatest works of antiquity. Nietzsche contends that this Eris is superior, because violence is avoided and the needs of culture are served (“Homer’s Contest” 177). He also mentions the way that ostracism was used to keep the competition fair, when a competitor got too strong and powerful, he or she would be removed to allow competition to resume and to let new players with new ideas to compete. “The original function of this strange institution is, however, not as a safety valve but as a stimulant: the preeminent individual is removed to renew the tournament of forces,” writes Nietzsche (“Homer’s Contest” 178).

When this is applied to his aristocratic politics, it answers the objection that Nietzsche offers no means to stifle the accumulation of too much power that an aristocrat holds. Like in the ancient Greek contest, there are similar rules imposed upon the aristocracy. Ostracism will prevent one individual from gaining too much power, which will prevent the institution of an authoritarian government. The competition for power amongst the nobility prevents any one person from gaining too much power. Also, they can sublimate their lust for power in competition where there is less incentive to abuse one’s power and to dominate the rest of society.

I believe that I have successfully shown that Nietzsche’s political aristocracy is not necessarily fascistic. Nietzsche does not call for the elimination of decadent groups

of people, but only decadent value systems. He asserts that higher types recognize the need of mediocre types, and that they will not harm them. Even though Nietzsche does not give us grounds to judge certain actions to be wrong-in-themselves, there are ways that Nietzsche could denounce the Hitler-like noble. I have also shown the means that the aristocracy wields its power will be held in check. Nietzsche's support of competition would place limits on the exercise of power by any individual aristocrat. Nevertheless, some interpreters have seen in "Homer's Contest" a different form of politics. They assert that this shows (along with other aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy) that Nietzsche actually supports of new form of democracy. They say that what he saw wrong with democracy was its many contemporary manifestations, but he actually supports an agonistic (competitive) form of democracy (Schrift 231), which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Five:

An Agonistic Democrat?

So far I have presented the aristocratic radical thesis, in which Nietzsche supports a hierarchical political system. In this chapter, I will present objections to this interpretation by those who argue that Nietzsche's philosophy can support a postmodern democracy. They use the "Homer's Contest" essay to show that Nietzsche could have supported a democratic contest between different perspectives and identities. They argue that Nietzsche could have supported an agonistic democracy, because it does not rest upon the notion of inherent equality, which Nietzsche clearly opposes. Hatab asserts that "democracy can be sustained without its traditional banner of human equality" and that it "need not imply any kind of substantive or intrinsic equality" (Nietzschean Defense 57). Hatab agrees with Nietzsche that contemporary liberal arguments for democracy and inherent equality are based upon problematic metaphysical presumptions (Nietzsche Defense 59). Agonistic equality does not rely upon such beliefs, because equality is secured through equal access to the political agon and respect between competing individuals. The best will rise to the top, so there is no threat of mediocrity. Hatab also asserts that experimentation and debate are essential to a democratic politics, which are things that Nietzsche supports (Nietzschean Defense 62-63).

Maudemarie Clark agrees with Hatab in that Nietzsche's disagreement with democracy does not mean he rejects all forms of democratic institutions. She asserts that

“I completely agree with Hatab that a commitment to democratic institutions need not depend on a belief that human beings are of equal worth” (133). Against Hatab, she argues that individuals with noble characters can be made compatible with a democratic system (133). Hatab only argues that excellence is only achieved through specific talents and professions, and not whether one is an exemplary type. He states that a car mechanic is superior to a philosopher when it comes to the profession of automobile repair (Nietzschean Defense 115-117). Clark accepts Nietzsche’s contention that there are superior types of people, but she argues that this can still be made compatible with an agonistic democratic system (135). She questions Hatab in not recognizing this, and assumes that Hatab may still be influenced by a need for egalitarianism that is not necessary in an agonistic democracy. Clark writes that “a commitment to democratic institutions, to institutions that embody a commitment to treating people as equals, does not commit one to a substantive egalitarianism” (137).

Even though Clark disagrees with Hatab’s conception of equality, she does not argue against Hatab’s use of Nietzsche’s epistemic theory of perspectivism, which is used to show that Nietzsche could have supported an agonistic democracy. Perspectivism states that we gain better knowledge of an object through as many different perspectives that is possible. This rejects the notion that there is an objective perspective from which one can gain absolute knowledge on an object. So, there is no single authority on truth, and we can gain better knowledge on an object through multiple perspectives. Hatab argues, “If we presume Nietzsche’s critique of truth and his perspectival alternative, and then concentrate on politics as *praxis*, as the practical requirement to make *decisions*, we notice an opening for democracy” (Nietzschean Defense 64). If this is applied to the

political realm, then a democracy would be a better fit, because perspectivism supports the competition and debate between different perspectives and views. Agonistic democracy “would be an arranged contest of *all* perspectives, decided by a majority (or plurality) of votes, where votes designate the preferential judgments of all participants in, or witnesses of, the verbal contest” (Nietzschean Defense 64). It could be objected that this would create a tyranny of the majority where popular opinion would always win and stifle creative thinking. Hatab answers that because truth is not presupposed, the majority’s position is not more correct than the minority’s. He asserts that “[d]emocracy in an agonistic sense can be understood not precisely as ‘rule of the people,’ but as ‘agonarchy’ or the rule which is decided by a contest among the different perspectives in the political field” (Nietzschean Defense 65).

This system is better suited to Nietzsche’s perspectivism than an aristocratic society, because it does not rely upon the notion that the natural rulers of society should rule, because they have better access to knowledge than the masses. Aristocratic rule was justified by the nobles’ superior position in society, because only they had the privileged access to a proper education and knowledge, which made them better suited to rule. Hatab explains, “Aristocracies and authoritarian regimes have historically defended their right to dominance and unchecked power by way of confident knowledge claims about the nature and order of things.” Also, “[p]olitical power should never be put in the hands of those who lack the intellectual or ethical aptitude to apprehend the truth or the good—so goes the argument for aristocracy” (Nietzschean Defense 70). These traditional bases for an aristocratic government are false, because Nietzsche rejects the notion that anyone has privileged access to the truth. Hatab contends that based upon Nietzsche’s

perspectivism we can put these traditional justifications for hierarchical societies in question (Nietzschean Defense 71). He writes that “aristocratic politics . . . depends upon this cognitive certainty. If that certainty is suspended, as it is for Nietzsche, so too should the political structure” (Nietzschean Defense 72). Nietzsche’s perspectivism should not lend itself to an aristocratic political system; it fits easier to a democratic openness to a competition between competing perspectives (Nietzschean Defense 73).

I contend that Hatab is wrong, because Nietzsche can discard perspectives that reject perspectivism. Nietzsche rejects perspectives that claim that there are no other perspectives. He is not picking worldviews on their truth values, but on their ability to affirm life. It is true that Nietzsche discards philosophies and religions that posit the notion that we can gain objective knowledge either through God’s understanding or through a person’s reason. My point is that Nietzsche does not treat all perspectives equally, because he believes in the ranking of perspectives. He ranks Christianity and Platonism lower, because they believe that objective knowledge is attainable. Nietzsche does not reject these views just because they are wrong, but that they do not affirm a reality defined by change and becoming, for which perspectivism is better suited. He can reject the perspective of an anti-Semite, because this individual does not accept the perspectives of Jews and those who are not anti-Semites.

Perspectivism is not the only justification used to support the agonistic democrat thesis. Most use Nietzsche’s rejection of the essentialist view of the self or the soul to show that competing identities can support a democracy. Nietzsche considers the notion of the human subject to be a grammatical error, because of the way that our languages separate the subject from the object. He asserts 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.'" (Beyond 214; § 17). So, it is argued that the self is not universal and absolute, and the self is something that is created.

William Connolly argues that contingent and unfixed identities support a democratic politics. He writes, "When democratic politics is robust, when it operates to disturb the naturalization of settled convention, when it exposes settled identities to some of the contestable contingencies that constitute them, then one is in a more favorable position to reconsider some of the demands built into those conventions and identities" (192). This system is best suited to allow one to alter and reexamine one's identity. Agonistic democracy furthers the open contest between competing identities. This also furthers the need of societal co-operation. Connolly contends that "the democratic contestation of settled identities and conventions can help to call forth a more robust affirmation of interdependence and strife in the politics of identity" (193).

Alan D. Schrift agrees with Connolly that "Nietzsche's destabilization of the subject and his affirmation of agonism" can facilitate a form of radical democracy (223). Schrift interprets Nietzsche's ideal human, the *übermensch* (or overman), as an individual without a set identity, and whose identity is in a constant process of experimentation. The *übermensch* is, as Schrift claims, a being always in the process of becoming. He thinks that this is the case, because Nietzsche did not explicate what the *übermensch* is, it is something that one becomes: "Instead, an experimental approach to Zarathustra's own experimentalism, noting as he does that one must find one's own way, 'for *the* way – that does not exist!" (Schrift 225; qtd. in Zarathustra "On the Spirit of Gravity" § 2). Schrift

agrees with Connolly that the problem of identity in Nietzsche's philosophy makes his views on it more compatible with an agonistic democracy (230). Schrift contends that "Nietzsche's agonal dynamism operates both interpersonally and intrapersonally as Nietzsche's account of the multiple self – of the self as a struggle between competing drives and impulses – like wise serves as a model for a dynamic and pluralistic polity" (230).

Both Connolly and Schrift argue that Nietzsche's rejection of the essentialist view of the self proves that Nietzsche's philosophy implicitly supports an agonistic form of democracy. Nietzsche's command to "[b]ecome what you are" (Zarathustra 252; "The Honey Offering" Hollingdale trans.) means that one should develop one's own identity and experiment with it in the public square. I contend that this interpretation of Nietzsche's conception of the self is wrong, because one's identity is a product of a long process of cultural and genetic influences; this means that one's identity, while changeable, is relatively fixed within a single lifetime. Nietzsche writes, "It is simply not possible that a human being should *not* have the qualities and preferences of his parents and ancestors in his body, whatever appearances may suggest to the contrary" (Beyond 404; § 264). In the Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche asserts that the notion that an individual's identity is somewhat fixed: "The single human being is a piece of *fatum* from the front and from the rear, one law more, one necessity more for all that is yet to come and to be" (491; V.6). If our identities are relatively fixed, then the efficacy of an agonistic politics is lessened. Therefore, an aristocratic political system is better suited to maintain the difference between those with noble identities from those without them.

This system, for Nietzsche, would better protect the identities and characters of the noble types by maintaining the pathos of distance.

In this chapter I have presented the agonistic democrat thesis. Commentators who support this claim use what Nietzsche said in “Homer’s Contest” to show that he could have supported an agonistic democracy. They use his arguments for perspectivism and his arguments against the essentialist self as evidence to support this thesis. I argued that they are wrong, because Nietzsche did reject perspectives that rejected perspectivism. Also, I have argued that Nietzsche did not view the self as something that was unstable and changeable, but as something that is somewhat relatively fixed within a lifetime.

Chapter Six:

An Anti-political Thinker?

Nietzsche, in Ecce Homo, describes himself as “the last *anti-political* German” (681; I.3). This statement presents problems for anyone who wants to find a positive political philosophy within his writings. Nietzsche does argue that the state is a power that can have a destructive affect upon a culture. In the Twilight of the Idols, he asserts that the creation of the new German state has hurt German culture. Also, in “Schopenhauer as Educator,” Nietzsche decries the way the state uses its culture only to serve its own ends and agendas. It is clear that Nietzsche held a hostile view of the state. Some interpreters have argued that Nietzsche could not or refused to offer a positive political philosophy. Daniel Conway argues that even though Nietzsche preferred some future aristocracy, he realized that such a project would be impossible. Tamsin Shaw argues that Nietzsche’s political system lacks legitimacy, because the people do not have the intellectual ability to recognize the authority of his new philosophers. While Shaw takes a hard line that Nietzsche did not have a political philosophy, Conway argues that Nietzsche abandoned his aristocratic political system in favor of cultivating noble individuals regardless of what political society an individual happens to live in.

Conway grants that Nietzsche hoped for an aristocratic society, because it can accommodate the breeding of higher types, the creation of new values, and the enhancement of the human race (40-41). He contends that Nietzsche eventually

abandons this project, because of the irreparable nature of modern political institutions: “Following [Nietzsche’s] ‘discovery’ of the decadence of modernity, however, Nietzsche realizes that his earlier faith in the salvageability of modern institutions was egregiously misplaced. He consequently withdraws his plans for macropolitical reform” (Conway 44). Nietzsche does so, as Conway claims, because he viewed his task of overcoming modernity through political reforms as impossible. Nietzsche is quoted that:

Our institutions are no good any more: on that there is universal agreement. However, it is not their fault but ours. Once we have lost the instincts out of which institutions grow, we lose institutions altogether because we are no longer good for them. . . . The whole of the West no longer possesses the instincts out of which institutions grow, out of which a *future* grows (Conway 45; qtd in Twilight IX.39).

Conway asserts that Nietzsche could not find a political solution to the problem of modern decadence. Nietzsche did hope for the creation of new philosophers who will fix this problem, but he recognizes within himself a decadence that prevents him from accomplishing this task (Conway 46). Nietzsche recognizes that neither he nor anyone else can overcome the decadence of modernity: “It is a self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists if they believe that they are extricating themselves from decadence when they merely wage war against it. . . . [T]hey change its expression, but they do not get rid of decadence itself” (Conway 46; qtd in Twilight II.11). Nietzsche abandons his political project, because he views the decadence of modernity as insurmountable.

Conway argues that Nietzsche favors a smaller approach of individual improvement: “The overarching goal of his politics is to preserve the diminished *pathos* of distance that ensures the possibility of ethical life and moral development in late modernity” (47). Nietzsche contends that the enhancement of humanity must occur through individual improvement rather than through political institutions. This means that Nietzsche is taking an apolitical stance, because individual improvement can occur within any political system. He only concentrates on the creation of noble types of individuals, without the establishment of a hierarchical society. So, Nietzsche’s goals can be accomplished in either an aristocratic or democratic society. Conway states that Nietzsche’s “perfectionism is compatible with cultures of virtually any degree of vitality, and it consequently requires only minimal institutional support. His retirement from macropolitics therefore does not signal the termination of his program to contribute to the production of superlative human beings” (48-49).

It is true that Nietzsche believed himself to be a part of the decadence that has taken over Western Civilization, but I contend that this does not mean that Nietzsche abandoned his goal to establish an aristocratic political system. Degeneration does not mean that the damage to society is irreparable, because the advent of nihilism is not a defeat but a new possibility. Abbey and Appel point out that Nietzsche believes that nihilism will provide the groundwork for the establishment of a hierarchical society (103). They write that “[a]n unintended advantage of the spread of democracy is that, by weakening people’s wills, it increases the opportunities for those who can . . . command (103). Nietzsche argues that he is not disheartened by the degeneration of society,

because the weakening of average Europeans means that they are more pliable to be ruled by a stronger type of person. He asserts:

I have as yet found *no* reason for discouragement. Whoever has preserved, and bred in himself, a strong will, together with an ample spirit, has more favorable opportunities than ever. For the trainability of men has become very great in this democratic Europe; men who learn easily and adapt themselves easily are the rule: the herd animal, even highly intelligent, has been prepared. Whoever can command finds those who *must* obey: I am thinking, e.g., of Napoleon and Bismarck (Will 79; § 128).

Abbey and Appel argue that this condition of the European will allow the political rise of a new ruling caste (105). Nietzsche contends that “the democratization of Europe is at the same time an involuntary arrangement for the cultivation of *tyrants*” (Beyond 367; § 242). This shows that Nietzsche did not view nihilism with hopeless defeatism, but with renewed hope for the potential for the creation of a political aristocracy.

Tamsin Shaw and Lester Hunt argue that Nietzsche is an anti-political thinker. Hunt argues that Nietzsche is anti-political because he places culture above the state and views the two to be antagonists (455). Nietzsche was disgusted by the way the state tried to gain legitimacy by trying to replace the church as the object of the people’s reverence and awe. Nietzsche gave higher praise to the church over the state, because the former exercised its authority through its higher religious message than through the “cruder instruments of force” that the state used (Hunt 456; qtd in Gay Science § 358). Hunt states that “Nietzsche clearly accepts . . . two important political conclusions . . . that

culture and state are by nature antagonistic, and that the state is inferior to culture.” Hunt also contends that “the modern state, which possesses *par excellence* the characteristics which make the state inferior, is an especially ignoble institution” (456).

It is true that Nietzsche viewed the power of the state to be insidious, but he does say that the state can play a positive role in culture. In his lectures on education, Nietzsche argues that the state, instead of controlling and manipulating culture, could protect it (Educational 38). He praises the ancient Greeks for conceiving the state as something that protects the seeds of culture and allows them to grow. Nietzsche asserts that the “[ancient Greek] clearly recognized not only that without such State protection the germs of his culture could not develop, but also that all his inimitable and perennial culture had flourished so luxuriantly under the wise and careful guardianship of the protection afforded by the State” (Educational 38). In the Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche argues that culture and the state are “antagonists” and the state lives at the expense of culture, which Hunt uses as evidence to support his claim (Twilight 508-509, VIII.4; Hunt 455). Nietzsche should be interpreted as arguing that the state should not place its own interests ahead of culture, but that the state should serve the interests of culture. He writes in the same passage that “the rise of the “*Reich*” means one thing above all: a displacement of the center of gravity.” He continues: “It is already known everywhere: in what matters most—and that always remains culture” (509; VIII.4). Nietzsche is arguing that culture needs to be the top priority of the state, and the state should only be used to further the interests of culture. The proper role of the state is to protect and serve the interest of culture, and it should use its power towards that end.

Shaw argues that Nietzsche was skeptical about the political legitimacy of the state. He contends that Nietzsche wants to find a legitimate basis for the state, but the problem is that the modern state gives itself its own legitimacy through its ideological control of the people. Nietzsche believes that philosophy and culture could provide independent legitimacy to the state outside of its control, which can be accepted non-coercively by the people. The problem that Shaw sees is that philosophy cannot be accepted by the people, because they do not have the intellectual capacity to recognize the authority of philosophers and their intellectual betters. Shaw argues that past political systems gained legitimacy through the normative authority of religious institutions. They gave political society normative legitimacy, which anyone could agree to, but since religion has lost this authority, it cannot provide the state the legitimacy it requires (Shaw 2-3; Hunt 460).

The problem with the modern state is that its legitimacy does not rest upon some outside authority, but on its coercive power to impose its ideology upon the people. Nietzsche argues that culture and philosophy should give the normative authority to society, but the state has put these institutions within its power and control (Shaw 18). Shaw argues, "Since the state, on Nietzsche's view, cannot tolerate anyone who 'applies the scalpel of truth' to politically necessary faith, it has an interest in having broad control over intellectual life" (25). Philosophy is one of the authorities that can counter the power of the state, and it can provide the legitimacy a state requires. The problem that Shaw sees here is that philosophy can give the state its legitimacy, but the people living within this society do not have the intellectual ability to recognize the authority of the philosophers (36).

Philosophy and culture can provide legitimacy for a political system, but the problem is that it cannot gain the support of the people, because they do not have the intellectual capacity to recognize such authority. Therefore, Shaw contends that philosophy “may be necessary to establish reflectively the validity of our beliefs, but it cannot in itself be an effective instrument for influencing popular belief more generally. The kind of authority wielded by intellectuals therefore seems peculiarly problematic” (38). Shaw claims that there is no way that the people themselves will recognize the authority of the philosophers over the ideological control of the state, because a person’s inherited beliefs are harder to change with rational arguments. Shaw argues, “In this situation, it seems that although deference to authority is discouraged, there is a special vulnerability to ideological manipulation (77). Shaw questions whether people can even recognize outside authority, because most people are intellectually incapable of critical thinking, and cannot acquire the knowledge necessary for them to recognize such authority. Shaw concludes, “Not only is there an absence of recognized normative expertise, but the vast majority of people do not even acknowledge the need for or existence of such authority” (134).

Against Shaw, I contend that people look to intellectuals with new life-affirming values that will allow them to affirm their existences during an age of nihilism. At least for Nietzsche, the reasons why a people believe in a political system do not need to be true nor completely understood and comprehended. In The Anti-Christ, Nietzsche does not object to the use of the holy lie to serve some higher purpose. He only argues against the ends that holy lies have been used to serve like Christianity, for example. He writes that “[u]ltimately the point is to what *end* a lie is told. That ‘holy’ ends are lacking in

Christianity is *my* objection to its means. Only *bad* ends: the poisoning, slandering, denying of life, the concept of the body” (Anti-Christ 187; § 56). The legitimacy of Nietzsche’s aristocracy rests upon the way that it could make the lives of those living within it better by giving their lives new meaning during an age of nihilism. If this system can accomplish this, then the people will accept it regardless whether they can fully comprehend it or not.

As I discussed previously, the advent of nihilism is a crisis, which creates the need for the creation of new values. My contention is that during times of crisis people will recognize the need for new leaders. For example, the economic crisis during the 2008 presidential election created the need by the American people for new leadership with new ideas that could get the nation out of that crisis. This shows that people can recognize outside authority during times of great crises, such as the crisis of nihilism. It could be objected that there is no way that the people (with their limited intellectual capacities) could recognize the efficacy of these new values. I would answer that these new values would serve to increase the health of those living within society with life-affirming values. These are a part of a natural morality that does not deny earthly existence, so it will overcome nihilism, which was caused by life-denying moralities like Christianity and Platonism. The legitimacy of Nietzsche’s aristocratic politics is their ability to create these values. Abbey and Appel argue that Nietzsche’s aristocracy is composed of individuals who wish to take on heavy responsibilities, and one of them is the creation of new values (99-100). As I have also discussed previously, the people who work under the philosophers will find greater meaning to their existences and their work. Nietzsche writes that “every man, with his whole activity, is only dignified to the extent

that he is a tool of genius, consciously or unconsciously; whereupon we immediately deduce the ethical conclusion that ‘man as such’, absolute man, possesses neither dignity, nor rights, nor duties: only is a completely determined being, serving unconscious purposes, can man excuse his existence” (“Greek State” 173). Nietzsche uses the example of the military soldier who gains significance in his or her life in serving the military genius. I used the example of the campaign worker who finds meaning in his or her work by getting a good candidate elected into office.

In this chapter, I have discussed the issue of whether Nietzsche has a coherent political philosophy. Conway argued that Nietzsche abandoned his search for a political philosophy, because of the insurmountable nature of decadent modern political institutions. Nietzsche recognizes, as Conway claimed, that all attempts to change the world only made the decadence worse, including his own. I have argued that Nietzsche saw the spread of decadence and the coming crisis of nihilism as an opportunity to establish an aristocratic political society. Instead of viewing this crisis with apprehension, he saw a new hope to establish a political society, which can accomplish his higher aims. Shaw argued that Nietzsche could not give a political philosophy, because Nietzsche could not find a normative ground where people could freely and independently endorse the legitimacy of the state. I asserted that Nietzsche did view the state as something inherently insidious, which should mean that the state can be rethought to where it could protect culture instead of abusing it. I also argued that the people would be able to recognize outside authority during times of great crises.

Conclusion

I have argued that Nietzsche wants to establish a hierarchical society, which will provide the foundation for the enhancement of the human race and to further the ends of higher culture. He believes that these higher goals can only be achieved through an aristocratic society. These ideas may seem out of touch with most modern readers, of whom most have been raised to support republican and democratic forms of government. So, what is the worth of considering Nietzsche's philosophical and political views? For the same reason to consider the views of Karl Marx, whose ideas have challenged most aspects of contemporary liberalism. Marxism challenged liberalism's claim that free markets and representative governments can best serve society. The Twentieth-Century has been about the testing of both of these ideas in some form or another, and, with the fall of the Soviet Union, it seems that liberalism has won out. Except, it has not answered to the criticisms made by Friedrich Nietzsche. He presents a challenge to us, and we must answer back, which is out of the scope of this essay.

Nevertheless, we must first try to gain an understanding of what Nietzsche argues for. It seems that in the last few decades, there have been attempts to reach this. I have made my attempt to further the discussion along in the hopes that we can gain a better understanding of Nietzsche's political views. This is important, because Nietzsche was a great and challenging thinker, whose ideas must be included in our philosophical discourse. It is important to remember what President John F. Kennedy said about why we face down tough challenges: "not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

Nietzsche is a very hard and difficult philosopher, which I have personally found out while working on this project. He is very important to our age, because of the loss of religious faith will mean that people will be seeking new meaning in their lives. This is also a hard task, but Nietzsche considered it important enough to make the first attempt at it. This is why we should critically engage Nietzsche as a serious thinker, and make more attempts to further understand his views.

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