

Introductory Essay: Nietzsche's "New Psychology"

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That a psychologist without equal speaks from my writings, is perhaps the first insight reached by a good reader—a reader as I deserve him.

—*Ecce Homo*

In many places Nietzsche referred to himself as the first great and "new psychologist" of the West.¹ In a letter to August Strindberg (in 1888) Nietzsche describes himself proudly: "*Ich bin ein Psychologe*" and hence, not surprisingly, in a letter to Carl Fuchs in the same year, he complained that no one had still characterized him "*als Psychologe*."²

Over a century has passed, yet most Nietzsche interpreters have disregarded his wish for recognition as a psychologist, and have failed to come to grips with the *essential* psychological aspects of his thought.³ Since the status and function of psychology *within* the framework of Nietzsche's thought was seldom explored, Part 1 of the present collection aims at remedying this situation. In this introductory essay I will argue that psychology, being one of the most significant components of Nietzsche's philosophy, assists him in carrying out the existential project of his teaching, that of enticing readers to reactivate for themselves their creative powers and use them in authentic patterns of life. In attempting to foster authenticity, Nietzsche needed a special type of psychology that would entice his readers into discovering for themselves the genuine roots of their creative powers.

When addressing Nietzsche's psychology we must distinguish between his unique psychological-genealogical *method* that "freezes" our will to believe in life-nihilating values, and the *positive content of his psychology* that had a formative impact on depth psychology and antic-

ipated some of its leading ideas, as the essays in Part 2 of this present volume clearly demonstrate. Here I will limit myself to describing Nietzsche's method of psychologizing (part A), as well as his psychology (part B), purported to affect his readers' "transfiguration" toward authenticity (part C). By doing this I hope to elucidate and justify Nietzsche's rather enigmatic claim that his *new* "psychology is now again the path to the fundamental problems"⁴—the problems of morality.

In what follows it should be clear, however, that I do not intend to reduce Nietzsche's philosophy to psychology. Moreover, I do not claim any priority for my perspective, productive though it may be. To be faithful to Nietzsche one must regard various perspectives as legitimate as long as they abjure such claims. And though the present essay serves here as an introductory piece for the collection as a whole, I am in no way presuming to represent faithfully all the multifarious perspectives delineated in the essays below. However, some fundamental beliefs are common to all of the contributors, especially the feeling that Nietzsche's psychology and its formative impact on depth psychology are of such importance that they are worthy to be dwelled upon. Perhaps some of us also share the present editors' conviction that deeper understanding of Nietzsche's psychology will assist some of us to become "what we are."

A. NIETZSCHE'S "UNMASKING" AND "FREEZING" PSYCHOLOGIZING

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, we find the question that constitutes a major methodological principle in Nietzsche's psychological investigations: "what dreadful need was it that could produce such an illustrious company of Olympian beings?"⁵

This question can be paraphrased as: "what is the psychological function of any given area of culture, such as Greek myths, religion, metaphysics, and any other theoretical preoccupation?" The question is not concerned with a rational justification of any given realm, rather it seeks to expose why we are prompted to believe in the existence of such a realm, and what sort of psychological need is fulfilled through it.

Nietzsche's essay "Schopenhauer as Educator" makes explicit Nietzsche's method of psychologizing, which later developed into a comprehensive psychological theory. Nietzsche claims in this essay that a human being is "a thing dark and veiled."⁶ Although potentially creative and powerful, we are afraid of expressing ourselves freely, fully, and uniquely, and hide behind various dogmas and ideologies. We typically prefer empty generalizations to our own remarkable particularity. This is

the thesis that motivates Nietzsche's method of unveiling one's dependence on external conditioning and internal deception.

One of the main purposes of Nietzsche's psychologizing method was to "freeze" our needs to believe in some transcendental agencies at the expense of believing in ourselves and freely creating our selves. Nietzsche realized that psychologizing alone is unable to liberate us completely from our attachments to metaphysical viewpoints since this devotion is sustained by powerful psychic needs. Nietzsche is thus compelled to concentrate on "cooling down" and freezing these needs. To ultimately subdue the metaphysical drive (his own as well as ours) Nietzsche himself adopted—and prescribed for his entire culture—the freezing tactics. Because our intellectual beliefs serve to satisfy certain powerful psychic needs, an attempted refutation would have provoked an emotional resistance motivated by those same needs, resulting in a reinforcement of the very dogmas one wished to refute. For this reason, Nietzsche preferred his psychologizing method to rational and direct refutation:

Do not deride and befoul that which you want to do away with for good but respectfully *lay it on ice*, and, in as much as ideas are very tenacious of life, do so again and again. Here it is necessary to act according to the maxim: "One refutation is no refutation."

At this point one might argue that Nietzsche's psychologistic "treatment" of metaphysics and other intellectual preoccupations involves a genetic fallacy: it tends to judge the value and validity of any given philosophical position by reference to noncognitive functions and motives. Hence it might be held that his ambitious program of overcoming metaphysics by means of genetic psychologizing is irrelevant to any serious attempt at logical refutation. Thus, the project of uncovering the psychic motives that draw humanity to some preoccupation with certain metaphysical commitments cannot inform questions concerning the truth or falsity of those commitments themselves.

Nietzsche might defend himself by contending that the objective of psychologizing is not intended to produce a rational refutation. The first purpose of the genetic uncovering is to freeze the motivating force or driving power—not to provide proof of their logical invalidity. In any case, he is aware of the danger of genetic fallacy and thus abstains from suggesting that his psychologizing is equivalent to refutation.⁸ On the contrary, he explicitly rejects the claim that metaphysical beliefs are strictly (or necessarily) false per se.⁹ However problematic the concept of truth may be in Nietzsche's philosophy,¹⁰ it will suffice to say here that the acceptance of Nietzsche's arguments does not depend on their truth-value, for with respect to rational validity they are no more or less

preferable than the views he attempts to “put on ice.” They are acceptable only if, like Nietzsche, we adopt a certain existential perspective—a lived attitude—that will enable us to exemplify in our own lives a particular pattern; and this pattern, Nietzsche holds, is latent in every individual. If we allow ourselves to be enticed into accepting the proposed life perspective, it is not because we recognize it as objectively “true,” but because it successfully reactivates the elements of our inherent power (*Macht*), previously repressed by other psychological forces. Nietzsche understands that his freezing tactic is distinct from a rational refutation: “if one has a mistrust of metaphysics the results are by and large the same as if it had been directly refuted and one no longer had the *right* to believe in it.”¹¹

From this (and other quotations)¹² it becomes clear that Nietzsche’s main concern in his applications of the psychologistic method is to evoke a mood of deep suspicion and distrust toward metaphysics (and other dogmatic views as well).

The appropriate affective mood would, in his view, be tantamount in practice to a direct refutation: its lived consequences would be the same. The evocation of a psychic (rather than strictly philosophical) doubt in the viability of metaphysics (or religion and any rational-objective ethics), would freeze our motivation for believing in them and would check our efforts to repeatedly resurrect their various manifestations. An authentic and healthy culture would then emerge, a culture no longer relying on metaphysical comforts, able to function creatively without the traditional philosophical crutches.

Nietzsche’s method found a powerful contemporary ally; namely, the world historical process that was bringing about “the death of God”—a “metaphysical Being”—who had functioned as the main source of inspiration for constructing metaphysical philosophy. However, the shadows of the deceased God (including metaphysics itself) were extremely slow to disappear, as they still served powerful and pervasive psychic needs. Although our belief in God as such had subsided, the need for God remains quite alive. In order for humanity to take its fate and future into its own hands, it had to dispel these lingering shadows. The constitution of a new metaphysics could not accomplish this, as it would only create yet a further shadow. Psychology, on the other hand, might function to support humanity’s aspirations for achieving complete spiritual autonomy. Here, one can locate another reason for Nietzsche’s indirect tactic of attack: to engage in a direct confrontation with metaphysics would have required the development of some new metaphysical doctrine. Any potential success it might have enjoyed would have left Nietzsche with his destructive instrument still in hand; another metaphysical system, another illusionary consolation, another

redundant shadow of the dead God. Of metaphysical needs, Nietzsche writes: "A philosophy can be employed either to satisfy such needs or to set them aside."¹³ The second route is clearly preferable by Nietzsche: "the ideal is not refuted—it freezes to death."¹⁴ This freezing of emotions is the objective of Nietzsche's method of psychologizing. Hence there is no basis for the accusation of genetic fallacy, which applies only in an argumentation explicitly attempting to refute the rational validity of any given statements by psychological means.

However, Nietzsche's psychologizing is much more than a means of overcoming metaphysics or reevaluating all values. It also fulfills a specifically existential function by addressing the psychic needs of humans, easing the burden of our life, giving us peace of mind and "cooling" us.¹⁵ These existential effects flow directly from the capacity of psychologizing to freeze the metaphysical need that has never been adequately satisfied by metaphysics itself: every "metaphysical comfort" was subsequently shattered by the collapse of the system that provided it. A state of disquiet and discontent naturally ensues, perpetuated by the individual's skepticism about the adequacy of any system. This has been the historical predicament of philosophy, but if Nietzsche's method can successfully freeze the need for metaphysical consolation and support, he will have helped to relieve us of a profoundly distressing condition. In this respect, then, Nietzsche offers a kind of existential salvation precisely by redeeming us from our need for salvation. The salvation from salvation was to become a central motif of Nietzsche's mature philosophy.

Nietzsche expounds the many personal benefits and "blessings" conferred on us when the psychologistic "axe" finally eradicates the metaphysical need and a liberation ensues.¹⁶ Our present condition is conceived as a state of illness, and that need—as a primary symptom—requires the treatment of "icepacks" that can enable us to be "steady, inoffensive, moderate."¹⁷ Psychologizing is a personal therapy prescribed for anyone suffering a perturbing intellectual or ideological fever; it is a prescription for the restoration of a healthy tranquility through personal emancipation.¹⁸

We should not, however, ignore the fact that the very process of freezing our belief in most of the prevalent values is founded on the assumption that the "frozen" personality will reject certain values and accept other norms, which already exist both in our social surroundings and within ourselves. Hence the striking similarity between the procedure of "coolly placing on ice"¹⁹ and the aporetic tactics employed by Socrates, whom Nietzsche ambivalently admired. Socrates "froze" by logical means, whereas Nietzsche does so by means of genetic psychologizations. In his dialogues, Socrates seeks to freeze the listener's belief in

X, for example, by showing that this logically entails a belief in Y. The listener is not ready to endorse belief in Y because of their belief in the set of values: p, s, t . . . which they share with Socrates.

Nietzsche employs almost the same method. He shows his readers that their most "sacred" values have negative roots, and the "effects" of their endorsement are stagnation, repression, inhibition of creativity, depression, regression, and so on. Most of us typically consider these effects undesirable and wish to eliminate them; yet on the other hand, we often blindly adhere to the same "ideals" that propagate these states. Thus the freezing process is employed indirectly by means of a genealogy, revealing the negative origins of prevalent norms, arguing that the effects of our accepting these norms are psychologically and existentially destructive.

B. NIETZSCHE'S PSYCHOLOGY OF POWER

Nietzsche's subsequent exercise of psychologizing in the sphere of morality issues in a set of positive principles: the psychology of the weak and their "slave-morality"; the psychology of the powerful and their "master-morality"²⁰ and underlying them, the principle of the will to power. All these elements constitute a quite comprehensive psychology.

This transformation from psychologizing to psychology is mainly implicit and *a posteriori*; it occurs only when Nietzsche recognizes that he requires a positive psychological doctrine to successfully substantiate and intensify its therapeutic aims. Specific principles and criteria must be made explicit if the method is to be practically viable and coherently applied. In articulating his method Nietzsche already appealed to certain psychological principles, that is, the unconscious, sublimation, and repression.²¹ He now perceives that this assortment of positive ideas may combine into an organic whole which, if not consistent *de jure*, may nonetheless endow his "science" of psychology with a *de facto* applicability.

Nietzsche's psychological findings are not accidental or particularistic: his theses are consolidated and unified by a pivotal principle of mental life—the concept of *Macht*. It is the discovery, explication, and consistent application of this principle that represents the culmination of Nietzsche's psychology. It follows that the specific object of the psychologist's task is power and its appearance in culture and history; we can say that Nietzsche-as-psychologist is actually a philosopher dealing with power and its exhibitions. And thus, Nietzsche's "new psychology," which—unlike others—"dared to descend into the depths," became what he called "the doctrine of the development of the will to

power.”²² In so doing, it unmask the basic instinct of the human-all-too-human soul: its power. This power has two diametrically opposed psychological manifestations: the negative and the positive.

There are recipes for the feeling of power, firstly for those who can control themselves and who are thereby accustomed to a feeling of power; then for those in whom precisely this is lacking.²³

This is the hard core of Nietzsche’s psychology or, to be more exact, of his theory of personality. Negative power does not express itself spontaneously, but derivatively: it is fundamentally deficient and defective, striving to encourage and fortify itself by enjoyment obtained from abuse and cruelty.

The tendency of certain individuals to excel at all costs, moved by the “*drive to distinction*,”²⁴ also belongs to this negative pattern. The ambitious, competitive personality lacks the “feeling” of genuine power, and struggles to attain it through overpowering their rivals. By contrast, one who possesses positive power needs neither the approbation of their external surroundings, nor medals and decorations their culture often affords. They do not require the various satisfactions stemming from abusive domination to intensify their “*feeling of power*”—for it is already intrinsic to them.

Nietzsche employs this characterology to his criticism of moral patterns prevalent in his culture and throughout history. Thus he proposes an active morality of positive power *against* the traditional passive type, opting for courageous creativity and autonomy based on the acquired selfhood of the moral agent. The mechanism for adopting the prevalent morality includes a passive internalization of external maxims, making them into a habit, an acquired “second nature” or, to use a Freudian notion, the superego, which Nietzsche anticipated.²⁵ This habitual morality, conditioned in childhood, stands in contrast to the evaluations made by a mature “selfhood.”

The transmitted “morality of tradition,” which mechanically and arbitrarily conditions our “highest selves,” is in fact anti-individualistic, obscuring and repressing the original personality. Hence this morality (generally conceived as altruistic), actually suppresses the ego and directs excessive violence against the “*individuum*,” making us into a “*dividuum*.” Nietzsche proposes morality that instead springs out of the ego’s power and self-expression. The violence of the “highest self” against the ego explains the impoverishment, pessimism, and depression of the individual. Their vitality withers away, leaving a feeling of weakness, discontent, and “the profoundest misery” (*D* 106). This moral wretchedness, and other expressions of the traditionally accepted ethos, are all manifestations of power. However, this is only the supreme

expression of negative power, characterized by fear and weakness. The power impelling traditional morality is not sufficiently strong or independent; thus, the person suffers from a perpetual anxiety that it may be undermined. This causes us to develop defense mechanisms by means of which we seek to guard and intensify our doubts and instabilities. Nietzsche therefore maintains that the supporters of authoritative morality are directed by "an obscure anxiety and awe"²⁶ of losing their influence and authority. In consequence, their "moral commands" must be oppressive, attempting to enhance and reinforce power by exploiting other human beings.

In contrast to oppressive culture, Nietzsche draws an ideal picture of an entire culture conducted by powerful individuals: independent, unprejudiced, creative, gentle, and courageous, lacking any desire for expansion or domination.²⁷ What is novel in his morality of positive power is not the specific content of its values but their origin. Not "what" but "how" is of importance here, and Nietzsche seeks to overcome the prevalent moral patterns not because of their content, but because they originate in (and serve to perpetuate) a negative, impotent, and cowardly drive.

Until now, Nietzsche's criticism of current morality has been based on the concepts of positive and negative power. He offers another critique, which originates from his psychological interpretation of human consciousness as "a more or less fantastic commentary on an unknown, perhaps unknowable text."²⁸ Nevertheless, the concept of the will to power assumes an unconscious mental agency that urges us to action, although we are unaware of the nature and content of its underlying drives. Will to power, especially negative power, drives the weak to establish moral patterns that lend them support. But we are not typically aware that by pursuing power we are being driven to dominate others through a "refined cruelty" obscured in authoritative standards of "duty and guilt." Hence Nietzsche requires the notion of active, but unconscious, mental life, to present the idea of power while rejecting those moral patterns it has invented through ethical rationalizations.

Nietzsche's shift in emphasis in moral theorizing follows directly from the role his psychology ascribes to the unconscious dimensions of the human character.²⁹ In place of the naive Socratic demand to "know thyself," Nietzsche asks us to explore and come to terms with our unconscious realm of interests, wishes, and motives. Thus an additional element is introduced into the essential process of self-overcoming: the overcoming of the unconscious by uncovering, mastering, and creatively utilizing it within a free, conscious moral context.

Negative power is externalized in negative morality, driven by unconscious, antimoral motives disguised in various pseudomoralistic

rationalizations. The morality of guilt also belongs to this category, for it originates in “a new excitation of the *feeling of power*.”³⁰ A frustrated, impotent personality exploits guilt in order to avenge itself on others and intensify its own sense of superiority. Allegedly altruistic patterns likewise may be manifestations of negative morality inasmuch as self-sacrifice can be a means of providing oneself with the sense of a “positive enhancement of the general feeling of human *power*.”³¹ By exposing the unconscious motives underlying the “altruistic” morality, Nietzsche reveals that these deficient virtues cannot generate an authentic altruism.

From this all it follows that a perceptive depth psychologist must contend with these unconscious processes and subject them to an exhaustive genealogical analysis. The shift in Nietzsche’s attitude faithfully reflects his altered approach to the purpose of psychologizing: it is in fact derived from it. As long as the purpose of psychologizing was basically negative—to expose unconscious motives—Nietzsche needed only to commit himself to the position that we are unconscious of certain mental processes. But in entrusting to psychology a positive role in fostering an authentic morality, he is obliged to view the unconscious not merely as functional but as a structural substratum of the mental life. In order to activate authentic morality, Nietzsche has to affirm that such a power potentially exists and should be reactivated, and that this potential has lain dormant within the realm of our unconscious mind.

This change from negative psychologizing to positive psychological doctrine was not made instantaneously, but gradually. So too, the transition from a functional description of the unconscious to ontological structuralism is a developmental process, beginning in Nietzsche’s first works where he speaks of the “Dionysian barbarian” forces that are quite similar to what Freud later categorized under the concept of the *id*. Freud too initially spoke of the unconscious merely from a functional economical and epistemological point of view; but at a later stage he committed himself to an ontological structure, postulating the existence of the *id* as a viable component of our mental lives.³²

In short: the emergence of Nietzsche’s notion of an authentic morality required a deeper understanding of the ontological status of the unconscious. It demanded a knowledge of its formation, its sublimation, its rise to consciousness, and its employment in reactivating the morality of power.

C. NIETZSCHE’S “NEW PSYCHOLOGY” AS THE ENTICING MEANS TOWARD AUTHENTICITY

The fundamental *raison d’être* of Nietzsche’s philosophical psychology is to be influential in the work of enticement to positive power. This is

the basic function and objective of his psychology. This objective, that is, the enticement toward personal authenticity is what endows his “new psychology” with a moral dimension and turns it into a vital “ladder” of his existentialist philosophy. I will end this concise exposition of Nietzsche’s “new psychology” by dwelling upon its enticing function and the objective of this enticement, namely authentic patterns of positive power.

1. Nietzsche’s Enticing Psychology

Nietzsche’s philosophy, and the psychological means he employs, purports to move us closer to the “great spirits”³³ who—like Zarathustra—are skeptics out of an abundance of power, and who sustain their skepticism in all vitality and creativity.

To dance “even near abysses” is the only alternative left after the “Death of God”; the ability to embrace this alternative is the free spirit’s “proof of strength.” Nietzsche’s objective is thus to provide and prepare modern’s with an intellectual therapy, a creative life in a world without dogmatic beliefs. The death of dogma will not lead to the end of humanity and culture, but will unleash the resources heretofore constrained by repressive morality. It will open new horizons to new beliefs, that now will function as life-enhancing “perspectives.” Once they lose their usefulness, such beliefs will be discarded and easily exchanged for other perspectives.

Nietzsche’s own psychology should be regarded as just such a belief—a temporary perspective—to be left behind once it has fulfilled its therapeutic aim. Hence, Nietzschean psychology is a means, “a mere instrument”³⁴ to lure us to touch and freely employ our positive powers. In view of this, Nietzsche unquestionably belongs to “these philosophers of the future” who may have a right to be called “*Versucher*”: “This name is in the end a mere attempt and, if you will, an enticement.”³⁵

Versuchung is an “experiment,” an “enticement,” and an “hypothesis” directing our efforts toward positive power, and testing our ability to reach and activate it. These “tests” are Nietzsche’s psychology of power, which becomes his principal “instrument” for attaining his philosophically existential goals.

Nietzsche is aware that his therapeutic enticement is not appropriate for everyone. In fact, he considers our reaction to his therapy as an additional criterion of distinction between different patterns of power. He suggests that if we fail to respond to him and to his books, this is not because of any inner flaws in the therapy or because it lacks any moving appeal. Such failure would be a consequence of our own inability to raise ourselves to the level of its demands:

What serves the higher type of men as nourishment or delectation must almost be poison for a very different and inferior type.³⁶

This passage suggests three kinds of responses or challenges to enticement. The challenges stand in direct correspondence to the psychological type at whom they are directed: (1) the “inferior type” (of negative power) rejects the enticement, is confused by it and escapes from its consequences, (2) the “higher type” (of positive power) accepts the doctrine and becomes more powerful, independent, and authentic, and (3) the “*Übermenschen*” of optimal power do not respond to this enticement since they do not require it. They are already endowed with the highest capacity for self-creation, and overcome even this Nietzschean enticement by creating their own perspectives and values. Here the rejection of Nietzsche’s challenge does not stem from cowardliness or weakness (as in the first case), but out of a surplus of power and an abundance of self that requires no psychological crutches—not even Nietzsche’s.

Psychology thus becomes the path to the fundamental patterns of positive power. However, being only a path, it is naturally abandoned once it has come to an end. Nietzschean psychology will then have become a type of temporary scaffolding, a provisional hypothesis to be abandoned once it has served its purpose.

One may think of Nietzschean psychology as being simultaneously an instrument for freezing repressive ideologies and a means for enticing and intensifying the will. In the preliminary stages of maturation, power still needs therapeutic and psychological crutches. But with the full ripening of power—with the attainment of Nietzsche’s “self-creation”—our authentic power must shed its supports and prove its authenticity by being able to thrive without them. So the way leading to power must already include this very power; it carries this power as a potential for full actualization through a painful and gradual process of reactivation. The psychological ladder does not create the power or its positive patterns and pathos *ex nihilo*. It merely explicates and activates this power. This is the meaning of the Nietzschean conception of the philosopher’s “thinking,” which is, in fact, far less a discovery than a recognition, “a remembering, a return and a homecoming to a remote, primordial, and inclusive household of the soul.”³⁷

This explicative-descriptive dimension of the ladder also includes a personal meaning clearly indicated by Nietzsche’s mention of “the personal confession” and “*memoire*.”³⁸ His instrumental psychology is intended to fulfill Nietzsche’s needs as well as our own; his explication of power becomes at the same time a kind of self-psychoanalysis. Freud was probably well aware of this.³⁹ Nietzsche’s analysis of power and self-analysis are parallel and complementary processes, but they are not

derived from one another. For while it is true that in his enticing psychology Nietzsche himself is enticed, and that in giving directives for our maturation Nietzsche himself matures and becomes powerful, these two processes are nonetheless clearly distinct. Both of them are separate manifestations of Nietzsche's one "common root," of his "fundamental will" (*GM*, preface, 2). The "common root" is always power, whether used for self-overcoming or for the overcoming of one's epoch. More precisely, this power is used to overcome all these patterns of life and their cultural rationalizations that hinder the spontaneous and creative use of positive powers hidden in Nietzsche and his contemporaries.

This self-psychoanalytic component of Nietzsche's thought accounts for his personal manner of writing and for its partially aphoristic and associative form. This form closely resembles the psychoanalytic treatment that employs spontaneous outburst of primary associative processes, as well as more objective interpretations and theoretical reflections upon these processes. Both evoke and nourish these processes and are in turn elicited by them again and again.⁴⁰ And hence the legitimacy of our efforts in this present collection to introduce part 3 below, which deals with "The Psychology of Nietzsche." Nietzsche himself provided us with the example and the clues for undertaking such research on his own personality as far as it does not reduce it to merely a psychoanalytical patient but, on the contrary cultivates an authentic individual.

2. Nietzsche's Ideal of Authentic Life

Nietzsche did not use the term *authenticity* explicitly, but it is possible to locate its origin in his recurrent distinctions between *Wahrheit* (truth) and *Wahrhaftigkeit* (truthfulness): "a proof of truth is not the same thing as a proof of truthfulness . . . the latter is in no way an argument for the former."⁴¹ The shift from philosophy to philosophers and that from the traditional meaning of truth to personal authenticity show up repeatedly in Nietzsche's writings. After the "Death of God" one has to adopt for oneself the Godlike role of being the originator of truth and of one's own self. The absence of a "pre-established harmony" between our cognitions and reality permits us to shift our emphasis to the creation of our own genuine selves.

It appears that two seemingly contradictory models of authenticity are in Nietzsche's thought. The first model derives its inspiration from the biological metaphor of a plant actualizing the potential of the seed. One becomes authentic, according to this model, if one manages to fully manifest this complex in one's lifetime. The second model employs the metaphor of art and artistic creation. The search for authenticity is seen

as the wish to reflect one's own indeterminacy by spontaneous choice of one out of the many possible ways of life. Individuals are types of artists who freely shape themselves as works of art.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that Nietzsche embraced these two models equally. The second conception, that of artistic creation, is surely primary. Nietzsche rejects crude naturalism and determinism and does not believe that the innateness of one's individualistic nature completely determines one's self. Nietzsche is less concerned with biological nature and more concerned with cultural conditioning and formative influences that blindly shape one's character. To become "what we are" is not to live according to our so-called "innate nature," but to create ourselves freely. To that end we have to know ourselves to distinguish what we can change in ourselves and in the external circumstances that have shaped us; we must realize what we have to accept as inevitable, and must do so in the heroic manner of *amor fati*.⁴²

Nietzsche's use of an artistic model of authenticity begins in *The Birth of Tragedy*, where he delineates an "Apollonian principle" that exercises its drives in direct opposition to the "Dionysian barbarian" instincts. It does this through the creation of sophisticated images, and the imposition of order and a causal network onto the world.

The subjugation by Apollo of the unrestrained drives of the Dionysian barbarian is the source of art in general. This synthesis provides "the metaphysical comfort" that allows humans to affirm existence despite its horrors. By this process, where humans are purified of their cruder components, one is transformed into an object of art, into an artistic sublimation: "He is no longer an artist," Nietzsche tells us, "he has become a work of art" (*BT* 1). This is the image of the authentic individual who individualizes and creates himself. In this act of creation, creator and creation merge and any possible alienation between man and his created objects is overcome, since these objects become an integral part of his own self.

Nietzsche is well aware of the strong pressure exerted by social convention and educational systems. Hence the road to authenticity and spontaneous creativity requires the three "stages" described by Nietzsche's Zarathustra: "the spirit becomes a camel; and the camel, a lion; and the lion, finally, a child."⁴³ The individual ("the lion") must liberate oneself from "the camel," that is, from all the external layers imposed by institutional conditioning. Only then, after attaining a childlike state of "innocence,"⁴⁴ can one proceed to the second stage, in which one consciously adopts and assimilates moral norms. These norms may well reflect the traditional values discarded in the first stage; it is not their content that matters, but the unconstrained manner in which they are chosen.

Nietzsche was not searching for new, esoteric values; he sought to reactivate authentic modes of living. This can easily be seen by looking at some of the descriptions of positive power in his writings. We do not find any original or new values there but rather values that have already appeared in traditional philosophical ethics: self-sufficiency, heroism, creative sublimation of instinct, intellectual tolerance, generosity, nobility, courage, vitality, self-control, faith in oneself, the ability to accept contradiction, the lack of bad conscience, and the like. Most of these values can be found in the ethics of Plato, Spinoza, and Kant. By the term *ethic*, I mean a doctrine aiming at a rational justification of moral norms. However, Nietzsche did not believe that we are capable of providing any such rational foundation, especially when it comes to the value of authentic life, which denotes, among other things, a subjective pathos of inwardness that in principle cannot be judged by any external and objective criterion. Nietzsche is well aware that only the individual who strives to attain authentic life is able to feel whether he or she has been successful (*BGE* 41).

This strive for authenticity appears at the twilight of the rational ethic—at the “twilight of the idols.” It is an explicit expression of revolt against the spirit of objectivity. Thus it is inconceivable to have a fully authentic individual living in society, which by nature is founded upon a set of objective norms and a common ethos. To clarify this point let me draw an analogy from the domain of psychoanalysis. If neurosis is, as Freud claims, a natural outcome of the repressive society that is founded upon such repression, can we imagine a society where there are no neurotic people? This question remains valid even for a society in which all neurotic individuals have successfully undergone a psychoanalytic treatment. But once they try to live in that society under—more or less—the same conditions that caused their neurosis in the first place, will they not to some degree regress? The same consideration is relevant to the individual whose quest for authenticity is supposedly finally fulfilled. Since such a person continues to be a member of the society, the processes of social conditioning and leveling will continue to exert their inauthenticating effects. Hence the search for authenticity faces what seems to be a paradoxical situation: it cannot be materialized without society, nor can it be lived within its framework.

Nietzsche, I think, was well aware of the difficulty of trying to allow for the “ought” of authenticity within the social “is.” The fact is that he leaves this issue intentionally vague in the closing sentence of his book, where Zarathustra, who personifies the ideal of authenticity, leaves his “cave” in order to do—what? To return to society?

Thus spoke Zarathustra, and he left his cave, glowing and strong as a morning sun that comes out of dark mountains.⁴⁵

The metaphor of a “sun” implies that Zarathustra, not being able to become part of the human-social nexus is like the sun, which not being part of the earth, only warms it from above. Zarathustra can only inspire us to try and become authentic, to be what we really are. Authenticity is a kind of regulative and corrective ideal rather than a manifestly viable norm.

Hence we must understand Nietzsche’s basic idea of the “transfiguration of all values” not as radical abolition of the inauthentic ethic but as a gradual approximation to authenticity. This process is constantly taking place “within a *single* soul” (BGE 260) vacillating between opposed modes of living. Here I must stress once again that Nietzsche does not reject the “negative” (inauthentic) types of power because they are less “true.” They are rejected as detrimental and destructive to his ideal of authenticity, which is concretized in the notion of the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche is aware that such a personality cannot be realized completely; the *Übermensch* provides only a regulative idea, a supra-historical model to approximate and emulate. It is a corrective to the overemphasis on the equality, the objectivity, the leveling processes of modernity that result in dissolution of the self.

Authenticity does not attach itself to fixed values. Rather, as Nietzsche stresses (BGE 41), drawing a model of authentic life-patterns, it is determined by impermanence. At every stage of his philosophizing, Nietzsche is conscious that this stage is actually only a “step” to overcome and proceed further:

Those were steps for me, and I have climbed up over them; to that end I had to pass over them. Yet they thought that I wanted to retire on them.⁴⁶

Here, however, we reach the limits of our capacity to speak rationally in a world without a *logos*. And perhaps Nietzsche intended to bring us to this ultimate boundary in order to help us transcend his own thought as well, thereby assisting us to reach real maturity of positive power: standing on our own feet and throwing away all crutches, including Nietzsche’s psychology.

Nietzsche’s Zarathustra incites us as follows:

This is *my* way; where is yours?—thus I answered those who asked me “the way.” For *the* way—that does not exist.⁴⁷

And thus, Nietzsche’s psychological-philosophical therapy is a dialectical one: the more efficiently power is uncovered and reactivated, the greater the likelihood that the individual will persevere through the more advanced stages, being able to withstand the reality looming at every step on the road to authenticity. If we have already reached this point,

our power will have been most favorably revealed. Only then will Nietzsche be able to throw away his psychological crutches he has given us and send us to our own walks of life and their authentic manifestations.

NOTES

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1966), 12. Cf. also Nietzsche's *BT*, preface, 2; *HU*, preface, 8; *GS*, preface, 2; *BGE* 45; *GM* I:1; II:11; and III:9, 19, and 20; *TW*, preface; "Maxims and Arrows," sec. 35; "What I Owe to the Ancients," sec. 3 and 4; *AC*, 24, 28 and 29; *NCW*, preface; *EH*, preface, 3, and "Why I Am So Wise," sec. 8. Most notably, see Nietzsche's remarks in *EH*, "Why I Am a Destiny," sec. 6:

Who among philosophers was a psychologist at all before me, and not rather the opposite . . . ? There was no psychology at all before me. To be the first here may be a curse; it is at any rate a destiny.

2. Friedrich Nietzsche *Werke*, ed. Karl Schlechta (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1972-80), 4:930, 900.

3. Walter Kaufmann suggests rightly that the psychological aspects of Nietzsche's thought are no less significant than the philosophical: "Nietzsche als der Erste Grosse Psychologe," *Nietzsche-Studien* 7 (1978): 261-75. However, in his well-known work *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) referring to Nietzsche's psychological leanings, he proceeds largely to ignore them. Apart from several insights and lengthy aphorisms little is offered in this pioneering study to justify the word *Psychologist* in the title. Moreover, Nietzsche's "psychological inquiries" were presented by Kaufmann as side effects and temporary digressions from the main issues of values and happiness.

4. *BGE* 23.

5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, in *The Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1968), 3. I translate "ungeheures Bedürfnis" as "dreadful need," and not as Kaufmann's colloquial "terrific need."

6. Friedrich Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 129. Cf. my "Nietzsche's Early Educational Thought," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 19 (1985): 99-109.

7. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Wanderer and His Shadow* in *Human, All-too-Human*, 2 vols., trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 211. And see Nietzsche's description of his "free-thinking" as consisting of "a highly perilous wandering on glaciers and polar seas" (*WS* 21); and also his declaration that *Human*—as a book "for free spirits"—expresses the "inquisitive coldness of the psychologist" (*WS* p, 1).

8. Moreover, he is not blind to the possible abuse of psychologizing by people who might try to evade a direct intellectual confrontation with a viewpoint they find unacceptable (see *WS* 39). The very fact that Nietzsche himself

persistently uses this method indicates, at least, his belief that he does not abuse it. His warning against the danger of genetic fallacy, and his confidence that he has avoided it is even more pronounced in the following passage:

If there is anything in which I am ahead of all psychologists, it is that my eye is sharper for that most difficult and captious kind of backward inference in which the most mistakes are made: the backward inference from the work to the maker, from the deed to the doer, from the ideal to him who needs it, and from every way of thinking and valuing to the want behind it that prompts it. (*Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, trans. Walter Kaufmann [New York: Viking Press, 1968], "We Antipodes"; see also GS 370)

9. HU 20.

10. With which I had dealt with in chapters 4 and 7 in my *Nietzsche's Enticing Psychology of Power* (Jerusalem and Ames: The Hebrew University Magnes Press and Iowa State University Press, 1989).

11. HU 21. Therefore I concur with David E. Cooper's observation in *Authenticity and Learning* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), that "Nietzsche, incidentally, is not guilty of any 'genetic fallacy' (at least in any crude form)," 24.

12. Like, for example section 254 of *The Will to Power*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968).

13. HU 27.

14. EH, "Human," 1.

15. HU 56 and 35.

16. HU 37.

17. HU 38.

18. Actually Nietzsche's method of psychologizing aspires also to become a kind of group therapy, treating the cultural neurosis of his period, HU 244.

19. EH, "Human," 1.

20. BGE 260.

21. See part 1 of my *Nietzsche's Enticing Psychology of Power*, and some of the essays of part 2 below.

22. BGE 23.

23. *Daybreak*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 65.

24. D 30.

25. In his essay "Schopenhauer as Educator," Nietzsche posits the existence of a mental agency functioning as a focus for the process of identification. This agency is also the locus of internalization of the moral patterns and values of our various educators (parents, teachers, historical heroes, and intellectuals):

Your true nature lies, not concealed deep within you, but immeasurably high above you, or at least above that which you usually take yourself to be. (p. 129)

In an aphorism entitled "Traffic with one's higher self (*Verkehr mit dem höheren Selbst*)" Nietzsche writes:

Many live in awe of and abasement before their ideal and would like to deny it: they are afraid of their higher self because when it speaks it speaks imperiously. (*HU* 624)

These self-abasing traits of the “higher self” are the origin of our conscience. For this reason Nietzsche thinks it necessary to somewhat weaken and placate this tyrannical faculty, thereby opening a space for the expression of a spontaneous, free, and creative morality.

This idea of the higher self has received far less attention than it deserves. It anticipates Freudian psychoanalytic theory by introducing and defining one of its key terms: the superego (*Über-Ich*). For a more detailed elaboration of this comparison, see chapter 3 of Golomb, *Nietzsche's Enticing Psychology of Power*.

26. *D* 107.

27. *D* 163, 164, 546.

28. *D* 119

29. See also *D* 129, where Nietzsche speaks about “the actual ‘conflict of motives’—something quite invisible to us of which we would be quite unconscious.”

30. *D* 140.

31. *D* 146.

32. For a more detailed comparison between Nietzsche's notion of the “Dionysian barbarian” and the Freudian *id* see my *Nietzsche's Enticing*, chapter 1. Here it is sufficient to point out that the adjective “*unbewusste*” was initially used by Freud to describe mental elements outside the field of the conscious at any given moment. This usage was merely “descriptive” and not yet clearly topographical. In the ontological structural sense the concept “*das Unbewusste*” began to be used by Freud to describe one of the mental systems, that which contains all the repressed elements whose conscious reappearance is prevented. Freud arrived at this later concept as a consequence of his rich experience in psychoanalytical treatment, which showed him that the mind cannot be reduced to the area of the conscious alone, and that certain of its elements can only be uncovered and revealed when the patient's resistance has been overcome. This brought Freud to postulate the existence of an independent mental realm and to affirm that the unconscious belongs to a special place in the mind, which cannot be described as a secondary consciousness, but as a complete autonomous system containing its own elements, mechanisms, and energy. See Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols., ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953–74), 1:233; 2:262ff.; 14:148ff., 181ff.

33. *AC* 54.

34. *BGE* 6.

35. *BGE* 42 (my slightly revised translation). See also the statement that “the genuine philosopher feels the burden and the duty of a hundred attempts (*Versuchen*) and enticements of life (*Versuchungen*),” *BGE* 205 (my translation). Nietzsche's play on the words “*Versuch*” (hypothesis or experiment) and “*Versuchung*” (seduction or enticement) is far from unintentional; it clearly points to one of the most significant features of Nietzsche's psychological philosophy, namely that it is a sophisticated mode of enticement.

36. BGE 30.

37. BGE 20.

38. BGE 6.

39. Witness his biographer Ernst Jones, who in describing the meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society of October 28, 1908, devoted to the analysis of *Ecce Homo*, remarks that Freud several times referred to Nietzsche as the man who "had a more penetrating knowledge of himself than any other man who ever lived or was likely to live," E. Jones, *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work* (London, 1955), 2:385. Coming from the founder of psychoanalysis this is no small compliment. Moreover, Freud and his followers believe that humans are able to reach deep self-knowledge only by following a long and intensive psychoanalysis. Freud therefore implies in this passage that Nietzsche, who possessed self-knowledge "more than any other man who ever lived" (including Freud himself, who, as is well known, performed self-psychoanalysis while writing *Die Traumdeutung*), had acquired such knowledge through a painful process of introspection, similar to Freud's. That this is the case appears from several comments made by Freud at the same meeting: "He makes a number of brilliant discoveries in himself. . . . The degree of introspection achieved by Nietzsche had never been achieved by anyone, nor is it likely to be reached again." *Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society* (New York, 1967), 2:32. And see also Freud's other observation concerning Nietzsche in his 1934 letter: "In my youth he signified a nobility to which I could not attain," quoted in Jones (New York, 1953-57), 3:460.

40. The interlocking of Nietzsche's self-analysis with the wider, theoretical context of his thought is manifested also in the sporadic nature of his writing. His is not an ordered and established style, but rather one resulting from thoughts composed while walking, written in various notebooks, on scraps of paper, in sudden eruptions, and in fragmented flashes of intensive creativity. And see Hollingdale's description of Nietzsche's characteristic solitary monologues in *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), ch. 8.

41. D 73. See also GS 357; BGE 1; and my *In Search of Authenticity from Kierkegaard to Camus* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), ch. 4.

42. Love of fate. And see EH, "Clever," 10 where he says: "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different. . . . Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it . . . but *love* it."

43. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, pt. I, "On the Three Metamorphoses."

44. Z I, "On the Three Metamorphoses."

45. Z IV, "The Sign."

46. *Twilight of the Idols*, "Maxims," sec. 42 in *The Portable Nietzsche*.

47. Z III, "On the Spirit of Gravity," sec. 2.